

Public Administration and Public Policy/116

**Handbook of
Organization Theory
and Management
The Philosophical Approach
Second Edition**

edited by
Thomas D. Lynch
and
Peter L. Cruise



Taylor & Francis
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Handbook of Organization Theory and Management

The Philosophical Approach

Second Edition

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND PUBLIC POLICY

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Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

Boca Raton London New York

A CRC title, part of the Taylor & Francis imprint, a member of the Taylor & Francis Group, the academic division of T&F Informa plc.

Published in 2006 by
CRC Press
Taylor & Francis Group
6000 Broken Sound Parkway NW, Suite 300
Boca Raton, FL 33487-2742

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CRC Press is an imprint of Taylor & Francis Group

No claim to original U.S. Government works
Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

International Standard Book Number-10: 0-8493-3834-4 (Hardcover)
International Standard Book Number-13: 978-0-8493-3834-2 (Hardcover)
Library of Congress Card Number 2005043996

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Handbook of organizational theory and management : the philosophical approach / [edited by] Thomas

D. Lynch, Peter Cruise.-- 2nd ed.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-8493-3834-4 (alk. : alk. paper)

1. Industrial organization (Economic theory) I. Lynch, Thomas Dexter, 1942- II. Cruise, Peter.

HD2326.H283 2005

338.6--dc22

2005043996

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Preface

This is the second edition of the Handbook, again addressed to uniting philosophy and public administration. Few subjects are more influenced by philosophy than the form of governance a public selects to guide and administer its public affairs. Yet, the literature continues to be strangely silent about the relation between the two. It continues to be our hope that this book will inspire many more efforts to explore this most important of relationships, especially because the real work has only just begun. In the 21st century, it is particularly appropriate to build such bridges from the past to the future and to rediscover our roots while contemplating our intellectual progress.

Originally, the first edition of this book grew out of a doctoral seminar conducted by Thomas D. Lynch at Florida Atlantic University. Concerned by a lack of integrated literature on philosophical and epistemological foundations of modern organization and political theory, Dr. Lynch enlisted one of his Ph.D. students, Todd J. Dicker, to jointly develop a work in which potential authors, who had already made significant contributions to the literature on their topics and had established reputations as thinkers and scholars, could contribute to a project that analyzed public administration's intellectual roots.

The first edition of the Handbook, published in 1998, proved to be extremely popular, and at the dawn of the 21st century, a revision and expansion was proposed. An important update was the addition of another one of Dr. Lynch's Ph.D. students from FAU, Dr. Peter L. Cruise, as coeditor of the second edition. It is he who gladly assumed the many tasks required of producing this revised and expanded book.

Thomas D. Lynch
Peter L. Cruise

Acknowledgments

In writing or editing a book, a few people stand out as being remarkably positive and helpful. For both of us, we must thank our families, especially Cynthia and Chris, who encouraged us both in this project. We also thank Professor Jack Rabin, who had the faith and commitment in us to do a second edition. We certainly thank our new publisher and their team that turned a very long manuscript into a quality book. And we thank our past publisher, Marcel Dekker, and now our new publisher, CRC Press, especially Rich O'Hanley, Claire Miller, and Karen Schober, for their kind treatment of us and our efforts.

Thomas D. Lynch
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Thomas D. Lynch, Ph.D., is professor of public administration at the Public Administration Institute at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. He is the author of numerous conference papers, refereed chapters, book chapters, and textbooks. His areas of interest include budgeting and finance and the application of virtue ethics in public service.

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Introduction

There are infinite ways to see the realities of the world encompassing a complex subject like public administration. The second edition of this Handbook examines the remarkable patterns of ideas that we call philosophy and how those patterns become our lens of understanding on what we think of as reality. This examination is far from exhaustive, as to achieve such a goal is not humanly possible. Refocusing our lenses in this second edition, many of our contributors have revised and expanded their original contributions. We have added a number of contributions covering individuals, schools of thought, or movements not covered in the first edition, encompassing ten new chapters in the second edition. Moreover, we have added more to the Handbook section covering 21st-century alternatives to organization theory and management, discussing multicratic and virtual organization structures and management approaches.

We identify and discuss some of the most important philosophies and movements that have influenced contemporary public administration. We start with the classics, travel through the postmoderns, and end with 21st-century views on public administration. Along the way, we mention many, but not all, of the greatest, and a few of the less famous, thinkers who have crafted the lenses we use to define and understand what we call public administration.

This is a collection of chapters contributed by various scholars. Authors who wrote about philosophers and thinkers were asked to place the thought and work of the persons being discussed within the context of the endemic influences of their time. Specific world events, historical trends, transitions in power or authority, or changes in thought that have influenced these people are also discussed in each chapter. Personal experiences of the subjects that may have had profound effects upon their thought are important to give the reader insight into the motivation and psyche of the subjects and in explaining how those experiences shaped

their work. Authors were also asked to examine the theoretical influences upon each subject's work. The educational background, including whom the subjects may have studied with and where they studied, is linked to later thought. Specific individuals, schools of thought, and personal relationships are explored, along with the influences such experiences had on the subjects' thinking. The major and minor works of the subjects are developed and linked to modern public-administration theory. Direct comparisons are made between differing schools of thought and the conflicting views of various scholars on the importance and application of each subject's work. Finally, the authors' own assessment of the importance of each individual's work is a thread that ties these various components throughout each chapter.

Chapter authors who focused upon a school of thought or social movements were asked to describe the development of public-administration thought and theory in light of these powerful elements of our history. Theoretical antecedents of each movement are described, incorporated, and linked to other important movements and individuals. Similarities and differences between movements are explored, and influences of one movement upon another are highlighted. Special emphasis is given to discussing the linkages between movements and modern public-administration thought, including the most important personalities that contributed to or opposed each movement.

The organization of the following chapters is fairly simple. In most cases, thinkers and movements are addressed in chronological order. While we also might have organized our chapters along other themes, we believe that a chronological treatment allows the reader to place ideas and movements in historical perspective. A full integration of the development of ideas is achieved when one observes those foundations and ideas that serve as precursors to a concept, and also understand the linkages between that same concept and subsequent ideas that are built upon it.

This combination of presentations provides a unique and remarkable "picture" of the various lenses through which we continually view, understand, debate, and argue over the continuous flow of discussions on proper public management and policy. Once understood, the lens helps explain our myopic corrections that are sometimes more limiting than our natural vision, however limited it might be.

Modernism and Public Administration Theory

Contemporary public administration can be thought of in terms of what is called modernist thinking and, to a much lesser degree, various counterperspectives.

There are 32 chapters in addition to this introduction, and they are organized into seven parts. Less directly related but nevertheless significant are the premoderns, represented in this book by Plato, Aristotle, Jesus, and the Hebrew Testament. Few would argue whether or not Plato has influenced Western thought, but with our tradition of secularization, we rarely speak of Christianity and Judaism except within the walls of churches. Nevertheless, they radically changed Western thought and particularly influenced the views of the nonmodernists.

In defining the modernist, René Descartes, Francis Bacon, and many others could be cited, but the modernist perspective is represented in chapters concerning Niccolò Machiavelli, Jeremy Bentham, John Locke, and Adam Smith. These philosophers were secular thinkers who focused on the good of the people as defined by rigorous rational thought associated with the scientific method. Many defined 19th-century liberalism, with its distrust of government, as a social instrument but had great faith in the rational-thinking capacity of mankind to discover, articulate, and apply knowledge. In contemporary language, the term “liberal” has shifted in meaning — primarily due to progressives, as explained by Professor Sims-Dudley — to embrace and envision government as a social instrument. In both the 19th and 20th centuries, the hallmark of modernists is their faith in human reason and empirical inquiry to discover truth and use it to improve the human condition. Modern science is a product of that faith.

One could easily stop with the modernists, as their influence on Western thought is so significant, but there are other views that are gaining attention and becoming increasingly influential. Two philosophers, David Hume and Edmund Burke, questioned the capability of human reason to seek out and find knowledge that should particularly be used to guide our civilization. Later modernist opponents cited in this book are Marshall Dimock, Jean-Paul Sartre, John Rawls, and the school of thought known as phenomenology. Each builds on earlier philosophers and challenges the fundamental core of modernist thought.

However, returning to the modernists for a moment, how did their thinking influence the creation and later evolution of American public administration? This question is answered in the chapters on Woodrow Wilson, progressivism, the bureau movement, and Herbert Simon. Wilson played the unusual triple roles of academic, practitioner, and progressive reformer. These intellectuals and political reformers literally changed the direction of modernism and made it the dominant agenda for America. Herbert Simon took the epistemological view of Bentham, which was developed to its logical rigorous extent by Ludwig Wittgenstein, and applied it to the new field of public administration.

Possibly because of later modernist opposition, the discontent with American government policy, the rise of information technology, and

increasingly hostile reaction to intellectual thought, there was a direct challenge to modernist thinking. Postmodernism arose first with Friedrich Nietzsche but gained much of its current direction from Ludwig Wittgenstein, who had abandoned his earlier version of modernism called logical positivism. Three chapters are devoted to explaining this powerful and influential lens that is just beginning to influence public administration.

Where does that leave us as we try to understand public administration? Clearly, the modernist lens remains powerful. Students and practitioners go to school and learn subjects like total quality management, risk management, cost-benefit analysis, public-choice theory, and many other approaches grounded in modernism. Nevertheless, there are alternative lenses that are acceptable to the intellectual community, such as organization behavior and stressing the importance of writing in plain English. One emerging contemporary perspective is public entrepreneurialism, and a chapter is devoted to this lens. The final chapter is an attempt to look at 21st-century developments by transcending the historically used lens and refocusing on yet another perspective to view public administration as it emerges into the new millennium.

Premodern

Plato and the Invention of Political Science

Professor Ralph Clark Chandler begins our discussion by going to the very roots of political philosophy, Plato. In astounding depth and lucidity, Chandler shows how Plato moved beyond the endemic semireligious speculation of the day to a much tougher, more precise form of criticism and discussion that explored moral philosophy and logical and metaphysical theory. We learn how Plato understood and taught that conceptual understanding was different from understanding of the natural world and that Plato concentrated on the form and purpose of a thing rather than its material constitution or the cause for something's behavior. Translating much of the material and commentary from the original Greek, Chandler provides us with extraordinary insight into the teachings of Plato and their myriad applications to modern public-administration theory.

Aristotle, MacIntyre, and Virtue Ethics

Professors Thomas and Cynthia Lynch note that virtue ethics is properly associated with Aristotle (284–322 B.C.E.), but in our times it is also properly associated with Alasdair MacIntyre, who currently is a senior research professor at the University of Notre Dame. For many centuries, it was the

primary approach to ethics, but with the influence of modernism and postmodernism in the 20th century, virtue ethics fell out of favor. As Aristotle originally proposed, one of the cornerstones of virtue ethics is the concept of *telos* (end purpose), which their chapter explores in the context of the professional practice of public administration. Essentially, Lynch and Lynch argue that MacIntyre's philosophic contribution to Aristotle's virtue ethics means that virtue ethics is again quite relevant to professions such as public administration. This relevance is applicable to those who not only reject the extremes of modernism and postmodernism, but also to those who embrace them.

What Jesus Says to Public Administration

Professor Lance deHaven-Smith explains how Jesus transformed the Roman Empire and Western civilization from a culture centered on valor into a culture centered on love and mercy. To deHaven-Smith, Jesus was a theopolitical revolutionary in his teachings that focused on ending oppression. Jesus sought to undermine Greek and Roman culture by replacing mercy for justice, forgiveness for judgment, and love for law. Jesus wanted people to accept personal responsibility and not mindlessly follow collective condemnation. We are not to merely bow to and accept status and authority. As administrators, we are to decode the language and peer pressures. We are to look to the moral context of our situation. From this perspective, professional martyrdom does have value. deHaven-Smith calls upon us to face the moral challenges as individuals and as a profession and not to hide from our consciences by thinking in terms of the common structure but to be responsible for the moral judgments that are a part of what we do in life. Ultimately, we must realize there is a higher purpose to be served.

The Hebrew Bible and Public Administration

Professor Ira Sharkansky points out that, depending on one's view of public administration, the linkages with the Hebrew Bible are either inconsequential or extensive. If we conceive public administration as the arrangement and administration of government offices, or as the implementation of public policy, the linkages are weak. There is little in the Hebrew Bible that deals directly with these issues in ways that help us to understand modern public administration. If we stretch the conception of public administration to include issues of how public institutions should function in society, then the Hebrew Bible has profound relevance. This treatment resembles that of Professor Lance deHaven-Smith in chapter 3, "What Jesus Says to Public

Administration.” Insofar as Professor Sharkansky treats Jesus as a late-biblical-era expression of themes from the Hebrew Bible, the two chapters parallel one another. In a discussion of the Hebrew Bible and the concerns of this book, it is appropriate to use general terms like “public administration,” “governance,” and “politics.” It would stretch the linkages beyond credibility if we used the more specific and modern terms of “organizational theory” or “management.” Sharkansky notes that biblical materials are relevant to our concerns with power and authority, plus the legitimacy of those who criticize public authorities and economic elites in the most severe terms. He also finds a concern with social justice to be accorded the weak; the value accorded to pragmatic, limited responses to severe problems; and the problems of an advisor who sees that his boss’s plan is foolish. The linkages between the Hebrew Bible and the modern varieties of these issues in public administration are insightful and impressive.

Modernist Defined

The English Legacy of Public Administration

Professor Pamela T. Brannon begins the modernist section of the Handbook noting that the early history of England, through the commingling of the Anglo-Saxons and the Normans, provides examples of administrative concepts and traditions that are followed to this day in public administration. Examining this part of public administration’s history gives us some insight as to how real people solved real problems of governance and administration. Early administrative activity arose from the need of the kings to perform a variety of duties: provide military leadership, maintain the territories of conquest, govern the people, and run the royal household. The tasks required to maintain the royal household provided the basis for the development of a permanent administrative organization. As the kings’ duties increased in number and complexity, and they were no longer able to attend to everything themselves, they began to assign tasks to their household members. These additional responsibilities were combined with related domestic functions, and eventually they evolved into governmental functions. Brannon notes that William the Conqueror was public administration’s ultimate practitioner. She provides an overview on what has been termed the “administrative kingship” period of English history, and she also considers the administrative legacies of William through the reigns of his descendants, from Henry I through King John. Finally, Brannon’s chapter examines current public-administration institutions and processes in light of the historical developments and innovations discussed in her chapter. Administrative activities of the distant past are placed in context with many current practices in public administration.

Niccolò Machiavelli: Moving through the Future as We Learn from the Past

Professors Christopher Easley and John W. Swain explain the contributions of Niccolò Machiavelli to modern public administration by detailing his life, times, and writings. They then explain the contributions of Machiavelli to modern philosophy, modern science, and public administration. The secularization of public administration began with Machiavelli, who saw life as a human enterprise with humanity serving its own needs in politics, science, and other activities rather than humanity serving God or at least being God-centered. To Machiavelli, human beings are alone in the universe, exercising their capacities to serve themselves as best they can. Machiavelli, who is both blamed and praised for his thinking, is nevertheless influential, as he created the concept of modern public administration.

In the modern view, public administration is primarily a means with values led largely for others to decide how to rule the society for the larger public good. With Machiavelli, effectiveness becomes central and moral neutrality is essential. With remarkable insight, the authors show the relationship between the modern executive and Machiavellian concepts by tracing those views through Hobbes, Locke, Montesquieu, the American founders, and “classical” public administration writers such as Luther Gulick and Frederick Winslow Taylor. Machiavelli’s *Prince* has been constitutionalized in the American political order and can be seen today as hired guns called lawyers, public-management analysts, pollsters, and public-policy analysts. Machiavelli taught us to focus on the public as the primary basis for the political stability. Public needs or wants become the rationale for the state. Thus, polls and building relations with the public via proper media relations becomes important in establishing the all-important “appearances.” The focus on technique and its use of technical neutrality are directly traceable to Machiavelli.

Mercantilism and the Future: The Future Lives of an Old Philosophy

The origins of mercantilism lay somewhere around the lifetime of Machiavelli, and these are explored with great mastery by Professor Paul Rich. Rich describes the extraordinary degree of influence mercantilism had on the structure and form of political governance. Its weaknesses and strengths were debated by a wide range of thinkers, including Jeremy Bentham, Edmund Burke, John Stuart Mill, and Adam Smith, among others. Rich also develops the assumptions and implications of mercantilism to their logical conclusions and applies them to current theories of public organization.

Jeremy Bentham: On Organization Theory and Decision Making, Public Policy Analysis, and Administrative Management

Professor Lawrence L. Martin explains Jeremy Bentham and his influence on modern thought. Martin introduces us to Bentham as an activist, explains his life, summarizes his major works, and explains his influence. Bentham was the leader of reformers who were called philosophical radicals, which included John Mill and his more famous son John Stuart Mill. Bentham was an empiricist who advocated the use of quantitative methods in social observation and the development of a value-free language devoid of emotional and ambiguous terms in the tradition of the early Ludwig Wittgenstein. This influential modernist founder of utilitarianism advocated the “greatest good for the greatest number” and with it shaped the modern notions of democracy, analytical techniques such as cost-benefit analysis, and the role of policy analysis in public-policy making. To Bentham, utilitarianism was the “public interest,” and the welfare state was a series of rewards and punishments designed to regulate human behavior. Bentham was a social activist with the interests of the public central to his values but always mindful of how policies were implemented, including their procedures.

John Locke’s Continuing Influence on Organization Theory and Behavior Entering the 21st Century

Professor Mark F. Griffith explains the influence of John Locke on American government and the version of public administration that evolved in America. Griffith notes that Locke profoundly influenced powers and the idea that property was the basis for prosperity. Locke, the modernist, was the bridge between Thomas Hobbes and Niccolo Machiavelli and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. John Locke was the ultimate spin doctor of words who carefully masked his radicalism with great caution and complex arguments that challenged the then-existing order. Locke embraced constitutionalism, which was later also embraced by Edmund Burke and Woodrow Wilson. Locke’s vision of ethics, with its faith, prudence, and self-control combined with hedonism, greatly influenced the modernist view that stressed the importance of individual pursuit of happiness. To Locke, government was meant to protect private property and business. His views are reflected in such common practices as planning, zoning, and the importance of creating private and public wealth for society. Griffith notes that the critical role of government is to maintain order and that the instrument of accomplishing that end is the political structure of the administrative state. Nevertheless, Locke must be understood not as a 21st-century liberal who

supports growth of the administrative state, but in terms of a 19th-century liberalism that saw government as potentially destructive. He distrusted government power and explained how it should be curbed.

Invisible Hand and Visible Management

Professor David John Farmer explains the modernism of Adam Smith, which reflected neither Hume's skepticism about the power of human reasoning nor the later extreme skepticism that emerged with the post-modernism period. Smith was a 19th-century liberal and a champion of liberal capitalism. Farmer argues that we commonly misread Adam Smith, as he did recognize the limitations of his argument. Farmer applies some postmodern analysis of his own by arguing that economics is rhetoric and pointing out the limits of Smith's reasoning for our times. In particular, Farmer argues against public-choice economics (citing Vincent Ostrom and others), which he considers to be the spiritual descendant of the critical referent of efficiency to this school of thought, and decries its contemporary influence on the field. Farmer asserts that Adam Smith still deserves our attention in the 21st century. The Enron debacle, news-making material in 2002, offers windows into many aspects of society. Not least among these windows are the insights it can bring to our own lack of understanding of the workings of the "invisible hand." Reading Adam Smith provides central insights about public organization and management, and stimulates insights about the relationship between the economy and government and between economic and political concerns. Adam Smith's legacy provides the conceptual space in which government and public administration are now viewed and understood. The conceptual space constitutes part of the basic assumptions, the conceptual foundation, of public-administration thinking and practice. It is more than a mere set of limitations for such thinking; it is the conditioning force that helps to mold contemporary thinking about public administration and government.

Early Loyal Opposition to the Modernist

The Legacy of David Hume for American Public Administration: Empiricism, Skepticism, and Constitutionalism

Professor Michael W. Spicer explains David Hume in terms of his life, times, and contributions to public administration. Hume believed that all knowledge derives from our experience rather than reason and stressed the significance of skepticism in questioning the reality of our knowledge.

Spicer addresses Hume's empiricism, skepticism, and his political writings on constitutionalism. Although logical positivism and linguistic analysts reject Hume's atomistic approach to knowledge, they nevertheless use Hume's empiricism, in which ideas can only be derived from impressions. Thus Hume influenced such public-administration writers as Herbert Simon, as explained by Professor Cruise in chapter 17, "Positively No Proverbs Need Apply: Revisiting the Legacy of Herbert A. Simon." Hume's skepticism ran counter to any objective claims to knowledge and thus challenges a core belief of the modernist. Hume's skepticism appears to have influenced Edmund Husserl's phenomenology — discussed by Professors William and Wesley Waugh in chapter 22, "Phenomenology and Public Administration" — and later affirmed the radical subjectivity of human experience. Meaning is defined by the human mind through its experience in the world.

For Spicer, Hume's notion that political power must be constitutionally checked is particularly important and can be reflected in Madison's *Federalist Number 10*. As defined by Hume, constitutionalism means the use of different institutional mechanisms to check the government officials' abuse of discretionary power. Hume said, "separate interest be not checked, and be directed to the public, we ought to look for nothing but faction, disorder, and tyranny from such a government" (1). Thus, Hume is at the heart of American government and the world of American public administration.

Moral Conscience in Burkean Thought: Implications of Diversity and Tolerance in Public Administration

Professor Akhlaque U. Haque explains that Edmund Burke, who was the voice of dissent of modernism, laid the foundation for a broader role for public administration in the constitutional order. Burke especially contributed to legitimacy of administrative discretion because public administrators are representatives that are guided by the laws made by elected representatives. His views can be seen in John Rawls and public entrepreneurialism, discussed in chapter 24, "John Rawls and Public Administration." He also contributed to our understanding for the need to be aware of human fallibility and self-interest. He felt the potential for abuse of discretionary power must be checked through the formation of a unified administration and adherence to the laws of the land. In Burke's view, we must recruit and retain people of good conduct as a necessary practice of government. Edmund Burke was a critic of human reason, and his 19th-century conservative solution was the application of a constitutional order, much like David Hume.

According to Haque, sparked by the events of September 11, 2001, ethnic and religious diversity in the American culture have opened a new dialogue about tolerance for foreign cultures and religions. Using Burke's views about morality and religious tolerance, Haque argues how ethical guidelines of public administrators ought to be guided by a universal moral law derived from natural principles and constitutional values of the regime. Furthermore, he argues civil law to be inadequate in situations where the majority favors a particular opinion against a minority population. By acknowledging a universal moral law, public administrators can play a dual role as individuals building human relations in a diverse culture, and as public servants upholding constitutional values to preserve the integrity of public institutions.

As ethics continue to grow in importance in public administration, Edmund Burke becomes more important to us. According to Edmund Burke, broader knowledge and constitutional ethics need to be stressed more than technical knowledge. To Burke, trust built upon administrative values is critical to preserve the integrity of public institutions. Public administration must develop systems that allow and encourage ethical values to be developed through our institutions based on constitutional principles. Edmund Burke's contribution to us was his exemplary effort to establish a just, orderly, free society under constitutional principles and moral ideals. His efforts provide us with vital insights into the applications in the art of governance.

American Modernist Influence

Classical Pragmatism, the American Experiment, and Public Administration

Professors Robert Brom and Patricia Shields begin their chapter by explaining that classical pragmatism is generally considered to be the only truly original philosophical school and tradition to have emerged in America. It is also considered to have a recognizably "American" flavor, in that it incorporates the no-nonsense, practical attitude of the Yankee settler concerned with survival, along with the optimistic idealism that may have inspired him into his predicament in the first place: an idealism that this same frontiersman perhaps drew from the lofty proclamations that accompanied the launching of his young nation. Thus the fertile ground for the rise of classical pragmatism was this fresh, broadly held, melioristic brand of optimism that life is getting nothing but better, contingent upon the hard-bitten assumption that folks aren't going to be standing around just waiting for it to happen. According to Brom and Shields, classical prag-

matism offers a way for public administration to overcome the fear of making an imprint without unleashing an attack of random graffiti. An environment deconstructed by postmodern forces may provide an invitation to a second courtship of classical pragmatism by public administration. Nevertheless, pragmatism demands from the relationship a good-faith effort at reconstruction, with all the premodern tools of experience and history available for the job. Classical pragmatism offers the administrator a “method,” sweeping enough to be called a mindset, for navigating these waters. Since the administrator does not have the luxury to be eternally distracted, pragmatism offers her a defensible rationale to recognize and focus on those things that are useful and that work.

“Usefulness” and “workable” are operative concepts in pragmatism. Since the administrator cannot be paralyzed while waiting for absolute certainty before deciding and proceeding, pragmatism offers a justification for reaching a reasonable belief and acting on it. Thus, pragmatism as an organizing principle for the public administrator is likely a necessity. Because, according to Brom and Shields, it does operate close enough to principles of “common sense,” the public administrator does not have to formally recognize and understand the philosophy in order to be a pragmatist.

Therefore, classical pragmatism as developed by the American philosophers and practitioners is more than an art of expediency and compromise, as common usage of the term connotes, but is a philosophy consciously mindful of altruistic consequence. As though to supremely underline this point, the authors cite the case of Jane Addams (a famous early-American pragmatist) who submits a novel case for Jesus Christ as an exemplary practicing pragmatist. The philosophy takes measure of an idea not only for its usefulness, though that is certainly requisite, but for its usefulness in the quest to achieve a state of continuous learning and self-improvement of the human condition.

Making Democracy Safe for the World: Public Administration in the Political Thought of Woodrow Wilson

Professor Brian J. Cook explains that Woodrow Wilson, a late convert to modernism, was influenced by Edmund Burke’s stress on societal order and the controlling force of law. He stressed the critical role and influence of the views of the mass citizens and the importance of subordinating administration to public opinion. For Wilson, the people needed to maintain control over the president as the nation’s leader and interpreter of national policy. Unity, institutional cooperation, and presidential leadership of party and Congress, as opposed to administration, were the centerpiece of governance.

Wilson laid important conceptual and practical building blocks for modernist public administration. He helped establish social science and political science as important academic disciplines. Within them, public administration grew. Certainly, his own research contributed to the academic importance of public administration at its beginning, including at some point the famous and often misunderstood politics-administration dichotomy.

Unfortunately, his more subtle and complex understanding of administration did not have the influence that would be expected from a former president of the United States who also was one of the first three Americans that wrote academically on public administration. For example, his own practical ideas of grants-in-aid and regulatory programs became central to common practice in American public administration. Cook makes the case that the writings of Wilson need actually to be studied more and not less for a proper understanding of public administration.

Enduring Narratives from Progressivism

Professor Larkin Sims Dudley does not address a philosopher but rather a political reform era that largely defined contemporary America and significantly influenced the world. From approximately 1880 to 1914, the progressive reform era changed the political landscape of America and set the reform direction in the nation that would continue until the 1970s. One of its accomplishments was the creation of public administration as a professional field and academic subject. Although remarkably influential, there was no perfect consensus among the reforms. However, they did have a buoyant faith in the progress of mankind born out of the modernist belief in rational thought and scientific protocol to discover and define truth. They sought reform through science and the scientific management based on a Baconian idea of science.

Before 1900, American public life was largely shaped by classical 19th-century liberalism that was wed to laissez faire economics. It was a country that valued nationalism, was committed to representative and weak government, supported personal freedom, and assumed that natural laws governed society. Social reformers, including labor unions, sought and achieved their first reform measure for the whole nation that was a direct reaction to the worst consequences of industrialism. They sought not to dismantle the economic and political institutions, but only to reform them based on their faith in humanity's ability, through purposeful action, to improve their society. They embraced secularization, a rationality of instrumentalism, separation and specialization in life, bureaucratization, and the key role of science to advance humanity. Progressives believed the good society was efficient, organized, and cohesive. Progressive intellectuals

and reformers transformed the dominant 19th-century liberalism, broadening their allegiance to include the bourgeois and working class, and embracing ideals of equality along with their older values of individual freedom. Significantly, they dropped their close association with laissez faire economics and saw government as the best tool for social change, especially to control the power of business.

The Bureau Movement: Seedbed of Modern Public Administration

Professor Camilla Stivers explains the importance of the bureau movement in shaping “classical” public administration and its importance in the larger Progressive Era. The bureaus were privately sponsored agencies of municipal research created by progressives to systematically investigate government practices and lessen the hold of the machine bosses on urban politics and policy making. Stivers traces the history, philosophy, and influence of the bureau movement on modern public administration. She argues the impact is worthy of deeper reflection and more equivocal than the relatively basic and mostly sanguine accounts in the contemporary literature. She stresses that we can learn from their remarkable efforts and raise our sights to encompass more fully the substantive dimensions of public administration for the public good.

Positively No Proverbs Need Apply: Revisiting the Legacy of Herbert A. Simon

Professor Peter L. Cruise explains how Herbert A. Simon brought logical positivism to public administration. In the late 1940s and 1950s, as a young University of Chicago doctoral student, Herbert Simon challenged the pioneering work of classical public-administration writers like Frank Goodnow, Leonard White, W. E. Willoughby, Luther Gulick, and Lyndall Urwick. Although he built on the works of Chester I. Barnard, Simon fundamentally shifted the locus and focus of the study to the point that the new field of public administration almost disappeared from the academic and professional landscape. Simon’s critique of classical public administration was likened to an “atomic bomb,” the “fallout” of which called into the question the academic legitimacy of the field and its traditional approaches. Simon brought logical positivism to public administration, and Cruise explains the evolution of that important epistemological and philosophical bombshell. Its antecedents included empiricism, modern science, the scientific method, and logical atomism. Influences include Alfred North Whitehead, Bertrand Russell, and especially Ludwig Wittgenstein and the other writers

of the Vienna Circle. Cruise details the effects of logical positivism on public administration and places it in perspective by citing counterattacks on it such as phenomenology and the questions raised about qualitative research methodology. Simon forced the field into a period of introspection that eventually led to a countertrend that embraced the importance of value-based issues for the profession.

Mary Parker Follett: Lost and Found — Again, and Again, and Again

Professor Mary Ann Feldheim notes that although well-educated and well-traveled, Mary Parker Follett devoted her life to understanding and building community. Coming from a long tradition of Quaker beliefs, Parker Follett advocated for an integrative unity in the organization or state where members work together, consensus is built, and power is shared. She applied her process of integration to management practices in both business and government. Parker Follett's communitarian ideas and philosophy of smaller, more participative government have often run counter to administration and management's focus on regulation and centralized power. According to Feldheim, this has contributed to the benign neglect of Parker Follett's work in the administrative and management literature. Parker Follett's work has been lost and found repeatedly over the past half century. Feldheim explains that in the rapidly changing and uncertain times of the new millennium we need once again to rediscover her holistic and healing approach to administration and management.

Administrative Statesman, Philosopher, Explorer: The Life, Landscape, and Legacy of Dwight Waldo

Professor Charles Garofalo explains that Dwight Waldo's many contributions to academic public administration have been amply described, documented, defended, and even disputed by a number of scholars. These observations by scholars, combined with Waldo's own articles, essays, and books, guide us through the thought of the elder statesman among American public-administration scholars of the mid-to-late 20th century. These writings illuminate the evolution of Waldo's thinking and establish his place in the pantheon of administrative theorists. As Rosemary O'Leary of the Maxwell School said after his death in 2000: "It's sort of like Elvis dying. The King is dead, and there'll never be anyone else like him" (2). In this context, Garofalo's chapter has three goals: (a) to provide a brief biographical sketch of Waldo's life; (b) to survey the landscape of Waldo's thought and contributions; and (c) to outline the major contours of Waldo's legacy for the future of what he called self-aware public administration.

Later Modernist Opposition

Modernity, Administrative Evil, and the Contribution of Eric Voegelin

Professor Gerson Moreno-Riaño begins his chapter by asking: Just what does it mean to be modern? And, for the purposes of this chapter, what does it mean when we attach the term “modern” to social concepts such as “administration” or “organization?” According to Moreno-Riaño, the existence of such concepts as the “modern organization” or “modern administration” is not to be doubted. But what does the usage of “modern” convey in these instances? Does it denote an historical, sociocultural context? A differentiation of operational mechanisms? A set of moral characteristics?

In providing an answer to the question of “modernity” as it relates to administration and organization, Moreno-Riaño advances the claim that modern organizations have a propensity toward administrative evil of the sort perpetrated on so many innocent human beings in the 20th century and decryed by scholars in the field of administrative ethics. Thus Moreno-Riaño suggests that administrative evil is not a historical oddity or outlier that occurs once or twice a century. Rather, he suggests that administrative evil can be a more common occurrence than we would like to think and has the possibility to be perpetrated at any given time by any organization, public or private. Moreno-Riaño offers a poignant overview of the important 20th century philosopher Eric Voegelin, whose philosophy of consciousness and unique reading of modernity offer an important contribution to an understanding of the moral implications and dangers of modern organizations.

Marshall Dimock’s Deflective Organizational Theory

Professor James A. Stever explains the large and sprawling landscape of concepts, approaches, and arguments that constitute the contributions of Marshall Dimock to public administration. Stever argues that Dimock challenged conventional wisdom with a gradual deflection away from conventional organization and administrative theories and toward the embrace of premises that were not shared by the milieu in which he operated. In the process of explaining Dimock, Stever lays out the evolution of public administration itself in the United States. Dimock linked public administration back to classical thought, and he was the first to renounce modernist presuppositions. This can be seen in Dimock’s theory of organizational leaders and his rejection of the modern idea of progress and growth/decay explanations for organization development.

Phenomenology and Public Administration

Professors William L. Waugh, Jr., and Wesley W. Waugh explain phenomenology and its contribution to public administration. One of the strongest opponents of logical positivism are the phenomenologists, who argued that the research methods of the physical sciences are ill-suited to the study of human behavior and the human “world.” For them, to understand human behavior one must recognize that perceptions differ and that how one perceives the world defines how one acts in the world. Thus, “reality” is merely a social construct. Phenomenology is a philosophical perspective achieved by eliminating one’s assumptions and biases concerning everything except the perceived reality. This philosophical approach underlies the world of existentialists Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus and psychologist Viktor Frankl. Mostly associated with Edmund Husserl, phenomenology is essentially an analytical method or framework for describing and explaining social relationships and psychological orientations. Phenomenologists attempt to account for the subjective qualities that either are assumed by logical positivism and empiricism to be unreal or are treated as objective, observable phenomena when they are not. Briefly, they focus on meaning and not reality. Waugh and Waugh note that phenomenology has been absorbed into the literature and language of the field, especially in terms of how people do and do not relate to bureaucratic organizations and government programs.

The Existentialist Public Administrator

Professor William L. Waugh, Jr. goes on to explain Jean-Paul Sartre and existentialism. Waugh notes that Sartre tells us that individuals have a responsibility to exercise their freedom to act to preserve individual and societal options for the future. By extension, public administrators have a responsibility to themselves and society to understand the true essence of the world around them and to initiate action to alleviate conditions that constrain freedom of action. Interestingly, Sartre borrowed from the German idealists of the 1920s, and he made existentialism a subject of literary commentary and social debate. The debate later influenced the American 1960s and 1970s, fueling the political discussions, and encouraging political activism among students and scholars. Today, existentialism and transcendentalist phenomenology are alternatives to empirical social sciences. They find their greatest influence in determining and applying ethical standards as well as encouraging proactive public administrators.

John Rawls and Public Administration

Professor Stephen L. Esquith explains the influence of the contemporary philosopher John Rawls on contemporary public administration. Although Rawls's ideal democratic society says nothing directly about the practice of governing complex organizations such as government, he does influence a whole school of public-administration thinking called the "new public administration." Like Edmund Burke, Rawls argues that once a just constitution and related laws have been made, then higher rules can be applied with full knowledge by judges and administrators. Rawls, like Edmund Burke, is not a fan of classical utilitarian principles. He rejects the idea that the institutions that form the basic structure of a well-ordered society should be designed to manage society's social resources as efficiently as possible. Rawls does not favor efficient administration for its own sake. Rawls's views constitute an attack on the first 50 years of public-administration theory, which was modernist and stressed the central value of efficiency. Rawls's theory of justice was influential in the public administration of the 1960s and the 1970s, but only implicitly, as his works do not address the field directly. His key influence was the notion of social equity that was embraced by new public administration of the 1970s. Like the premodernist Jesus, he argues that social equity should supersede efficiency and economy as the rationale or justification for policy positions. Thus, to him, ethics, honesty, and responsibility in government become central to the field. New public administration argues that public administrators are not mere implementers of fixed policy decisions of elected leaders, but that those public administrators also have a public trust. They have to provide the best possible public service with the costs and benefits being fairly distributed among the people. With new public administration, effective public administration is redefined into the context of active and participative citizenry. Through supporters like H. George Frederickson, Rawls introduced distributive justice, administrative ethics, and participation back into the field. For example, Frederickson argues that administrators must rise above the rules and routines of organizations to always assert first the self-respect and dignity of the individual citizen.

Rise of Postmodernism

From Positivism to Postpositivism: An Unfinished Journey

The contemporary world of philosophy is called postpositivism. Professor Laurent Dobuzinskis defines this nebulous concept as all societal trends that pose a challenge to the set of institutions and cultural patterns we have inherited from industrial society as it existed prior to the emergence

of the information revolution in the 1960s. He explains to us the segment of modernism called positivism and its impact on public administration at the beginning of the 20th century. He traces the origins of public administration to the time when its political and cultural climate was receptive to the idea that science could provide answers to society's problems. This later-debunked view held that public-administration organizations were like machines that could be designed and controlled by experts. Dobuzinskis continues his chapter by raising the more contemporary question that public-choice theory is a return to the debunked influence of positivism on the field. His chapter notes the postmodernistic character of new public administration and finishes by saying that public administration can develop a "more adequate science" by using a post-positivist perspective.

On the Language of Bureaucracy: Postmodernism, Plain English, and Wittgenstein

Professor Robert P. Watson explains the contribution of Wittgenstein to contemporary public administration. Ludwig Wittgenstein is unique in philosophy in that his contributions were twofold in two significantly different ways. In chapter 17, Professor Cruise explains the influence of Wittgenstein on logical positivism and subsequently on public administration. Watson explains the later influence of Wittgenstein, when he completely disagreed with his earlier work and focused our minds on the profound influence of language on the nature of understanding itself. His later work refocused the very course of modern philosophic thought away from a theory of knowledge based on logic and shifted it to linguistic analysis. Wittgenstein's influence can be seen in postmodernism, which is discussed in chapter 27 ("Postmodern Philosophy, Postmodernity, and Public Organizational Theory") by Professors Fox and Miller. Watson presents a potentially practical and positive contribution of Wittgenstein in his discussion of "bureaucratese."

Postmodern Philosophy, Postmodernity, and Public Organizational Theory

The late Professor Charles J. Fox and Professor Hugh T. Miller explain not one philosopher but a set of philosophers called the postmodernists. If one had to cite the leading postmodern thinkers, clearly Friedrich Nietzsche must be mentioned as the first postmodern philosopher, and Ludwig Wittgenstein must be mentioned as the most influential in the group. If one had to cite an area that developed the philosophy the most,

clearly France is where this philosophy has found the most fertile ground to grow. Fox and Miller define the major themes of postmodern philosophy, sketch the contributions of the major postmodern thinkers, define the postmodern condition, and speculate about the effects of postmodernism on governance.

Fox and Miller introduce us to the vocabulary and concepts of postmodern thought. For example, postmodern thought is defined as the rejection of universalism, essentialism, ontological realism, and metanarratives. In other words, postmodern thought rejects any absolute historical and universal truths such as God or a universal knowledge based on science. They even reject the quest for such truths. Postmodernism's lens sees multiple paradigms in which one paradigm believer cannot logically dispute the correctness of another paradigm believer. However, within a paradigm or localized logic, we can use language games to at least rule out some nonsensical reasoning. For postmoderns, the self is not subjectively determined, but is largely influenced, by the inherited language games of the time and culture. There is no centered unified self, but rather we are split between our conscious and unconscious. Knowledge is merely institutional rules that guide us and our discourse. Truth is merely vocabulary that arbitrarily defines itself as definition, especially to fundamental concepts such as "being." Words are only replacements for things and nothing more.

Fox and Miller pose the question, "What does thought do to help us in public administration?" It teaches us the foolishness of most so-called policy decisions. We also learn that the organization structure is in itself a system of power. Lastly, we learn that reality is not important, but rather what is important is the measure that is used to indicate the condition of reality. Fox and Miller end with a call for a common ground among competing paradigms in public administration to improve public conversation.

Twenty-First-Century Alternatives

Neoliberal Economics, Public Domains, and Organizations: Is There Any Organizational Design after Privatization?

Professors Alexander Kouzmin and John Dixon note that at a time when the Bretton Woods institutions are increasingly concerned about "reinventing" governance and building institutional capacities, the new millennium is an appropriate moment to refocus public discourse and policy-making debates about the complexities of market-state dependencies and emerging public-private partnerships. The emerging willingness to reas-

sess the instruments and practices of economic liberalism in different political milieus also raises many significant questions about the limits and enhanced capabilities of the state, let alone the business corporation, to be an effective manager of the public interest. According to Kouzmin and Dixon, the main thrust of major research undertaken in 21st-century public administration will be to build on the cornerstone concept of public domains in order to audit putatively shrinking public domains and policy capacities in an age of globalization and strategically downsized governments.

Kouzmin and Dixon assert that the state's role in the 21st century will not only be strategically redefined as its budget-funded public-provision role is cut back in the face of burgeoning budget deficits, but it will also become more complex as its regulatory and reregulatory role increases to ensure that the accommodation of off-budget provision by the private, NGO, and state corporate sectors achieve desired public-policy goals. This important repositioning can only occur if, at the political level, policy decision-making institutions and, at the administrative level, budget-funded public agencies are both required and able to design, implement, and evaluate long-term and strategic changes compatible with the way they manage the achievement of public-policy goals. Kouzmin and Dixon assert that governance capacities in globalizing contexts raise significant concerns about the vulnerability of national governments, the appropriateness of free-market rhetoric, and the role of self-interest in new, global economic orders. Economic change and the strategic competence of government have not been widely discussed, nor has the proposition that public sectors can be, and are, strategically deskilled in a putative process of administrative reform, a process that can also be seen as a hostile restructuring for privatization of public domains and their explicit assets.

In the extremities of public-choice theory, claims made on behalf of efficient, privatized managerial action and the new public management's (NPM) complicity in the socioeconomic costs of downsizing and reengineering need to be confronted urgently. In the 21st century, as corporations and privatized agencies begin to recognize and count the long-term damage inflicted by rampant managerialism, the chapter authors raise the question: Has the cost-benefit analysis been carried far enough in an age when managerial elites participating in the "slash and burn" (or, more politely, the "increasing shareholder value") regimes might be asked to justify individual complicity in the economic exclusion experienced by many under neoliberal political and neoclassical economic dogma? Kouzmin and Dixon advocate an epistemological audit of economic rationalism that can help to precipitate and accelerate such an appropriate reckoning. They also recommend that a search for more-sophisticated

managerial voices, ones more prone to reflexivity about economic dogma, may also help.

Public Entrepreneurism: A New Paradigm for Public Administration?

Professor Alan C. Melchior addresses the contemporary and emerging public entrepreneurship that is alerting public administration to the most recent technological and social paradigm shift influencing society. He argues that public entrepreneurial advocates like David Osborne and Ted Gaebler are inadequate, but that they do highlight the importance of competitiveness as a value for public administration that can supplement or replace the concept of efficiency. However, neutral competence and “justice as fairness” remain a moral imperative. Although entrepreneurial theory does not provide a basis to understand the administrative state, it is significantly challenging the older lens of understanding. Propelled by the rapid advances in information technology, technical revolutions permit managerial and even political and social revolution rather than marginal modifications. The ability of society to cope with popular demands for both moderate taxes and high-quality public service may well depend upon the ability to utilize fully the possibilities made available by advancing information technology. Certainly, public entrepreneurship is one of the new possibilities that is emerging as American society moves into the 21st century.

The Multicratic Organization: A Model for Management of Functional Interdependence

Professor Richard Narad begins his chapter by offering an answer to the question posed by Professors Kouzmin and Dixon in chapter 28, “Neoliberal Economics, Public Domains, and Organizations: Is There Any Organizational Design after Privatization?” Narad proposes and describes a new organization form, the multicratic organization, as both a possible answer to Kouzmin and Dixon’s question and as an organization design adaptable for public-sector activities in the 21st century. Narad notes that public-policy objectives requiring the participation of multiple organizations can be harmed by self-optimizing efforts by autonomous organizations. Potential responses range from a laissez faire approach to bureaucratization. According to Narad, the “multicratic organization” is a model that coordinates autonomous organizations with high degrees of functional interdependence. It provides for public accountability while maintaining the sovereignty of individual entities. In this chapter, Narad describes an ideal

type of multicratic organization, develops it, and applies the ideal type to the emergency medical-services system.

Virtual Program Evaluation: A 21st-Century Approach

Professors Peter L. Cruise and Thomas D. Lynch note that program evaluation in the public sector is confronted with many new challenges, most notably new public management (NPM) techniques and virtual-networked organizations spanning across agencies, jurisdictions, and even countries. They ask: How can the practice of program evaluation adapt to the new organizational realities of the 21st century? Their chapter examines the rich history of program evaluation in the public sector by exploring its continuing acceptance of many alternative perspectives as evaluators were presented with new problems and the changing needs and values of society. In particular, the use of various evaluation criteria is highlighted as key to the past success of public-sector program evaluation. Cruise and Lynch then examine aspects of NPM, the growing insular nature of public-sector networked organizations, and the potential ethical dilemmas presented by such networked configurations. In such organizations, the public manager will need to rely even more on tools (such as program evaluation) that can provide useful information developed from a variety of data sources in both actual and virtual configurations, as well as strong steering mechanisms under which to act responsibly and be responsive. Next, at a time when current and future public managers should look to academics for the tools, information, and skills necessary to cope with the challenges ahead, the field of public administration is trapped in an intellectual “box” created by the proponents of postmodern logic. Cruise and Lynch explore aspects of postmodernism and its potential for mischief if it is viewed either as a tool to provide useful evaluation information for the public manager or as a steering mechanism helpful for the public manager to act responsibly or be responsive in 21st-century networked organizations. Finally, Cruise and Lynch discuss several key issues that must be addressed if effective program evaluation is to be conducted in virtual-networked organizations in the 21st century.

Twenty-First-Century Philosophy and Public Administration: Refocusing the Lens

In our final chapter, Professors Thomas D. Lynch and Cynthia E. Lynch bring together many of the ideas and perspectives contributed to the discussion and address the question of where we go from here. In this chapter, they provide a critique of both modernist and postmodernist

philosophy in an attempt to rethink the role of philosophy in understanding public-administration theory. The chapter authors suggest that a primary goal of an epistemologist examining public-administration thought is to have the ability to “think outside the box” created by traditional forms of understanding. By doing this, one identifies those ideas that transcend traditional borders of our limited knowledge and, in the process, expand our boundaries.

According to Lynch and Lynch, the approach to ethics in the public sector used during the latter years of the 20th century is inadequate. They propose an alternative approach for the 21st century. By using a virtues-based approach to ethics combined with the common spiritual wisdom found in the world’s major religious traditions (Hindu, Jewish, Buddhist, Christian, and Islam), Lynch and Lynch suggest that public-administration practitioners and scholars can begin to establish a superior approach to ethics in the 21st century.

Conclusion

Although there are infinite ways that lenses can be used to examine a complex subject like public administration, there does appear to be a pattern to the lenses examined in this book. The pattern is predicated upon the value perspective taken on by the philosopher as they assumed the answer to three questions:

- In making judgments for society, are most of us essentially either altruistic or materialistic and driven by our egos?
- In making decisions and defining knowledge, is it possible for mankind to be successful using rational analysis based on empirical inquiry?
- Is government potentially an appropriate instrument in shaping society?

By applying these assumptions to the authors examined, we can learn a great deal about philosophy and its influence on public administration. Let us scale each question from high to low. Thus for the first question, which addresses the altruistic/materialistic dimension, a rating of “high” means that the philosopher strongly agrees that people use essentially an altruistic decision of how individuals make judgments for society. For example, Jean Rousseau and Thomas Jefferson would rank a “high.” In contrast, Hobbes would rank as a “low.”

For the second question, which addresses the rational dimension, a rating of “high” means a strong behavior in the capability of rational or

Table I.1 Assumptions and Philosophy Matrix

<i>Altruistic/ Materialistic Dimension</i>	<i>Rational Dimension</i>	<i>Government-Capability Dimension</i>	<i>Contemporary Ideologies School</i>
High	High	High	20th-century liberal
High	High	Low	19th-century liberal
High	Low	High	
High	Low	Low	
Low	High	High	
Low	High	Low	
Low	Low	High	19th-century conservative
Low	Low	Low	20th-century conservative

scientific thought as the proper tool to address and resolve important decisions. For example, modernists like Locke and Bentham would rank as “high.” In contrast, Edmund Burke and Rawls would rank “low.” For the third question, which addresses the government-capability dimension, a rating of “high” means a strong believer that government is a positive instrument to address and resolve society’s problems. For example, Woodrow Wilson would rank as “high.” In contrast, modern 20th-century conservatives would rank as “low.”

This comparative scheme is a three-dimensional box with the length, width, and breadth reflecting a low-to-high scale. Thus, one can catalog each philosopher or school of thought that creates the lens that we use to view public administration. Table I.1 presents a simple matrix that summarizes the three dimensions in terms of contemporary ideology. Of note is that 20th-century liberals and conservatives are at polar opposites in this table. This helps explain how various groups in political contests can look at the same facts and reach totally different answers. Their respective lenses are sufficiently different that they come to different conclusions. Although the answers to all three questions are presented in a codeterminant manner, that need not be necessary. Philosophers or reformers can say the answers are really a mix of high and low, depending on the circumstances of the time and place. A good example in American history of a person who answered the questions as a “mix” is James Madison, the father of the U.S. Constitution. Philosophers or reformers could also refuse to answer and say the question is really not that significant as they understand the larger questions of mankind. A good example of the latter is Jesus. He argued that each person should give to

Caesar what is Caesar's but render unto God what is God's; the question of government efficacy per se was not central to Jesus' perspective. In other words, we also can think outside the box used to describe the three dimensions.

Notes

1. D. Hume, *Essays, Moral, Political, and Literary*, Indianapolis, Ind.: Liberty Press, 1987, 42.
2. R. O'Leary, cited in Putting the Purpose in P.A. Maxwell Perspective, The Magazine of the Maxwell School of Syracuse University, 2001; available online at http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/perspective/Spr01_waldo_main.htm

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PREMODERN

I

Chapter 1: Plato and the Invention of Political Science

Until philosophers are kings, or the kings and princes of this world have the spirit and power of philosophy, and political greatness and wisdom meet in one, and those commoner natures who pursue either to the exclusion of the other are compelled to stand aside, cities will never rest from their evils — no, not the human race, as I believe — and then only will this our state have a possibility of life and behold the light of day.

Plato, *Laws*, Book V, section 493

Chapter 2: Aristotle, MacIntyre, and Virtue Ethics

Every practice has an aim, and end purpose, or what we call a *telos*. When people engage in a practice, then rationality can inform them of what is good and bad behavior. Thus, by its very nature, a practice has an end purpose, and those so engaged in it have a *telos*.

MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 1984, 150

Chapter 3: What Jesus Says to Public Administration

Blessed are the eyes that see the things which ye see; For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those

things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear; and have not heard them.

Luke 10:23

Chapter 4: The Hebrew Bible and Public Administration

This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons.... And he will take your daughters.... And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive yards, even the best of them.... And he will take your menservants, and your maidservants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work.... And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the Lord will not hear you in that day.

1 Sam. 8:11–18

Chapter 1

Plato and the Invention of Political Science

Ralph Clark Chandler

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The safest general characterization of the European philosophical tradition is that it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato.

Alfred North Whitehead (1929)

And this which you deem of no moment is the very highest of all: that is whether you have a right idea of the gods, whereby you may live your life well or ill.

Plato (348 B.C.E.), *Laws*, 888

Introduction

The resurgence of interest in Plato among contemporary scholars may be attributed to at least three factors: the decline in civility, leading one to reflect on Plato's solution to incivility in one of the most uncivil ages of all, his own; the increasing interest in soul (psyche)¹ as a category in understanding human behavior, including behavior in organizations;² and the renewed attention to things historical in the theory and practice of public administration.³

The deeper reason behind the Plato revival is man's abiding interest in what Plato called "forms." In our day, we tend to call forms "principles," and they include such things as justice, beauty, honesty, goodness, and courage. Many people feel that these principles are more real than anything we can see, hear, or touch. Despite the flux, change, impermanence, and chaos⁴ astride the world, there are certain principles that are fixed and do not change. A modern Platonist might say, for example, that justice continues to exist no matter how muddleheaded we may be about its precise nature and no matter how baffled we are in complex situations where equally just principles seem to be in conflict. To support his view of the nature of reality, Plato brought to bear impressive quantities of reasonable and emotional evidence, so that even those who disagree with him are forced to take him seriously. His chapter in the history of human thought is well footnoted indeed.

Plato has not been universally admired. Following Thomas Jefferson's denunciation of Plato in the early 19th century (see note 64), scholars in the mid-20th century also found reason to renounce Plato. In 1940, for example, Carl J. Friedrich called on the world to stop idolizing Greek political experience. "So deeply rooted in the state-polis was Greek culture," he wrote, "that any glorification of this particular culture-pattern carries with it an exaltation of the state." Friedrich warned that the effective secular organization of the community is not the highest value of humankind, closing his analysis with the words: "Let us beware of the heritage of the Greek polis: it is a veritable Trojan horse, smuggled into our Christian civilization" (Friedrich 1940, 218–25).

The most seething critique of Plato's political philosophy in modern times was delivered by Karl L. Popper in 1950. Popper viewed Plato's

proposal to reconstruct the natural harmony of society with grave suspicion (Popper 1950, 195):

The more we try to return to the heroic age of tribalism, the more surely do we arrive at the Inquisition, at the Secret Police, and at a romanticized gangsterism. Beginning with the suppression of reason and truth, we must end with the most brutal and violent destruction of all that is human. There is no return to a harmonious state of nature. If we turn back, then we must go the whole way — we must return to the beasts.

The charge that Plato's social conservatism amounted to totalitarianism stands alongside the claim by others that, because Plato was the first champion of the division of sovereign power, he was the first Whig. Only one thing is certain: Plato's description of life in a democratic society remains to this day the most incisive critique of democracy. The buoyant diversity and creative pluralism of the democratic society are its glory, but they are often the path to dissolution and disintegration when its members forget that they are not merely individuals with rights and liberties but also social beings with duties and obligations.

The Life of Plato

Let us try to fix Plato's place in the development of Greek culture. He was born in Athens in 427 B.C.E.⁵ and given the name Aristocles, which he later changed. Plato's father was Ariston, a direct descendant of Codrus, the last king of Athens. His mother was Perictione, a direct descendant of Solon, the lawgiver who laid the foundations for the stable society of classical Athens. Ariston died in Plato's childhood, and his mother then married her uncle, Pyrilampes, an intimate of Pericles as well as a prominent supporter of Periclean policies. Besides Plato, Ariston and Perictione had at least three other children. There were two older sons, Adimantus and Glaucon, who appear as young men in Plato's *Republic*, and a daughter, Potone, about whom we know nothing. Pyrilampes and Perictione also had a son, Antiphon, who appears in Plato's *Parmenides*. Plato tells us regretfully that Antiphon gave up philosophy for horses.⁶

Plato was born four years after the beginning of the Peloponnesian War, which ended in the crushing defeat of Athens at the hands of Sparta. Around him was a brilliant cultural environment. In letters, the arts, religion, and philosophy, the age is unparalleled in the history of the world. The tradition included the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, the first literary monuments of the life and spirit of the Greeks. Then came the lyric poets,

followed toward the end of the sixth century and throughout the fifth by the emergence of both tragedy and comedy.

Contemporary with these literary phenomena, philosophy appeared. A number of speculative thinkers were preoccupied with the problem of the constitution of the external universe. What is its underlying first principle, and what is the nature of being? Their orientation was toward the without, the outer, the outside. Chief among them was Parmenides, who insisted that only being is, and that the world of our senses and the phenomena of motion are illusory. Heracleitus held that the characteristic factors of the external world are flux and change. Nothing is fixed.

Next to the work of the poets and philosophers, we find the sculpture of Pheidias and his associates, and the brilliant architecture illustrated in the buildings on the Acropolis. We see the beginnings of history with Herodotus. A standing mystery is why all of this should have happened in the same 50 years. Heracleitus, Pheidias, Herodotus, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes were all contemporaries.⁷

And then there was Socrates. His dates, 470–399, are not without significance. He was born ten years after the conclusion of the Persian Wars. He lived through the years of Athens's breathtaking rise to the peak of its intellectual and artistic supremacy. He witnessed the operation of Athenian democracy at its best and saw it slowly succumb to the blandishments of imperialism. Finally, he lived through the last horrible days of the Athenian defeat by Sparta and then suffered execution at the hands of a corrupt and decadent caricature of the great Athenian democracy of his youth.

Plato met Socrates in the year 407 when Plato was 20 years old. It was the decisive event in Plato's life. He spent considerable time with the master until Socrates' death in 399. What Plato found was a philosopher who cut radically across the conventional mode of philosophizing and turned its orientation from without to within. Socrates added to the enterprise of philosophy the whole domain heretofore preempted by the epic and lyric poets and dramatists. Since Socrates, philosophy in the West has been concerned not only with the constitution of the external world and the nature of being, but also with ethics, the nature of knowledge, and the relation of the inner man to the outer world. This shift in the orientation of philosophy constitutes one of the most significant events in the development of Western civilization and culture.⁸

As late as 403, four years before Socrates' death, Plato was still looking forward to a political career. It was the standing conviction of his family, rich in the tradition of Solon, that it was the imperative duty of the philosopher to devote the best of his manhood to the service of his fellow citizens as a statesman and legislator. It was the age of Pericles, and the close association of Plato's stepfather with Pericles — elected general

every year from 443 until his death in 429 — meant that affairs of state were commonly discussed in Plato's hearing. Plato's subsequent dislike of democracy was not the dislike of ignorance but that of a man who knew too much.

It was in September 403 that democracy was restored in Athens after a 17-month rule by a group of oligarchs called the Thirty Tyrants. Upon Athens's defeat in the Peloponnesian War in April 404, the Spartan leader, Lysander, chose 30 men to run the Athenian government and write new laws following the "ancestral constitution" (*patrios politeria*) of Athens. Plato's mother was the niece of the leader of the Thirty, Critias. In a systematic purge of their democratic opponents, the Thirty executed some 1,500 prominent Athenians and alienated the people by stationing a Spartan garrison on the Acropolis. When democrats finally overcame the garrison and killed Critias, amnesty was extended to all who had cooperated with Lysander except the Thirty.⁹

Plato was horrified to see that the amnesty excluded the now elderly Socrates, whose circle included not only Critias but Plato's uncle (Perictione's brother), Charmides, who had fallen with Critias in battle. As one of the presidents of the assembly (*ekklesia*), Socrates was understood by the democrats to be an accomplice in the illegal arrest and execution of a fellow citizen whose property the oligarchs had wanted to confiscate. The fact was that Socrates openly ignored an order by the Thirty to arrest the citizen. He was nevertheless charged with impiety, specifically with introducing new gods and corrupting young men. His subsequent condemnation and execution put an end to Plato's political aspirations. In politics nothing could be achieved without a party, said Plato, and the treatment of Socrates by both oligarchs and democrats proved that there was no party in Athens with whom an honorable man could associate. Socrates was 71 and Plato 28.¹⁰

The friends of Socrates felt themselves in danger after his death, and a number of them, including Plato, withdrew for a while to the neighboring city of Megara. They lived there under the protection of Euclides, a philosopher who was among the foreign friends of Socrates present at his death. Plato then visited Italy and Sicily, where he was repelled by the sensual luxury of the life lived there by the well-to-do. He finally returned to Athens, watching the public conduct of the city and drawing the conclusion that good government can only be expected when "either true and genuine philosophers find their way to political authority or powerful politicians by the favor of providence take to true philosophy." At about the age of 40 Plato founded the Academy, at last discovering his true work in life. For another 40 years he would be the first president of a permanent institution designed to pursue a science that would later be called political science.

Plato's contemporary, Isocrates, presided over a similar and older institution, but Isocrates agreed with the man in the street about the uselessness of science. He boasted that the education he had to offer produced expertise in opinions that would provide the ambitious aspirant to public office with points of view that could be expressed with a maximum of polish and persuasiveness. So far was Plato's Academy from such an interest in rhetoric that the backbone of his curriculum was pure mathematics. The two types of men who would be successfully turned out at the Academy over the next three centuries were original mathematicians on the one hand and skilled legislators and administrators on the other. The Academy was the direct progenitor of the state university in its classical manifestation. It was an institution that aimed to supply the state with legislators and administrators whose intellects had been developed in the first instance by the disinterested pursuit of truth for its own sake. The immediate and perceptible outward sign of the new order of learning in the Greek world was that, whereas in the age of Plato's birth aspiring young Athenians had to depend on the lectures of peripatetic foreign sophists for their higher education, they could now learn from Plato and his faculty at a university with a fixed domicile and a constitution.¹¹

During the 20-year period from 387 to 367, Plato was mainly occupied with the work of organizing and maintaining his school. Lecturing was part of his work, and we know from his pupil Aristotle that he lectured without a manuscript. Plato's firmest pedagogical conviction was that nothing really worth knowing could be learned by merely listening to instruction. Learning happened in dialogue as mind interacted with mind, as words spontaneously forced other words, and as the partners in learning discovered things they did not know until they spoke. As long as reason guided their discourse, they would discuss what they had always known but did not know that they knew until they rescued it from their minds and the common store of the race.

The best minds of the Mediterranean world joined Plato. The first mathematician of the time, Eudoxus of Cnidus, moved from Cyzicus to Athens to make common cause with Plato. The academic movement went outward as well. As new Greek settlements were established all over the Mediterranean Basin, representatives of the Academy were called upon to help establish constitutions in the colonies. Aristotle was such a consultant and gathered a collection of 158 of these constitutions.¹²

Most of Plato's dialogues had been composed by his 40th year. Between the ages of 40 and 60 he labored to stabilize the curriculum of the Academy and establish there a comprehensive inquiry about the nature of political things. Then, in his 60th year, Plato went off on an adventure. In his earlier travels in Sicily he had won the wholehearted devotion of a young

man of ability and promise, Dion, son-in-law of the reigning tyrant of Syracuse, Dionysius I.

Dionysius I died in 367, leaving as his successor Dionysius II, a young man of 30 whose education had been neglected, leaving him totally unfit to take up his father's task of checking the eastward expansion of the Carthaginians. This trading empire was threatening the very existence of Greek civilization in Sicily. The strong man of Syracuse at the moment was Dion, brother-in-law of the new tyrant, the same man who had been so powerfully attached to Plato 20 years before. Dion thoroughly believed in Plato's views about the union of political power with science and conceived the idea of bringing Plato to Syracuse to educate his brother-in-law. Plato did not feel the chances of success were promising, but the Carthaginian danger was very real if the new ruler of Syracuse should prove unequal to his task. It would be dishonorable to the Academy if no attempt were made to put its theory into practice at this critical juncture in Greek history. Accordingly, Plato agreed to accept Dion's invitation.¹³

Upon arrival, Plato at once offered Dionysius a serious course on geometry. For a while things went well. Dionysius liked Plato, and geometry became the fashion at his court. But the educational scheme wrecked on a double obstacle. Dionysius had limited intellectual capacity on the one hand, and he developed strong personal jealousies of Dion on the other. Dion was therefore banished, and Plato was told to return to Athens. Dionysius kept up a personal correspondence with Plato, however, and Plato did everything in his power to reconcile Dionysius and Dion. His efforts failed. Not only did Dionysius confiscate Dion's property, but he also forced his wife, Dionysius's sister, to marry another man. Stubbornly, Plato made another voyage to Syracuse and spent nearly a year there (361–360) trying to remedy the situation. Still a diplomatic failure, Plato eventually went back to Athens to spend the rest of his long life lecturing to his associates in the Academy and composing his longest and most practical contribution to the literature of moral and political philosophy, the *Laws*.¹⁴

The Societal Circumstances of Plato's Thought

It is important to understand the context of Plato's personal life. It is equally important to understand the societal circumstances in which Plato invented political science. His ideas about organization theory and management will follow in Part V, with the reader hopefully bearing in mind that Plato's ideas about these subjects were often contrary to actual Athenian practices. By understanding the practices in the first place, we

will be able to appreciate more fully Plato's objections to them and why the debate he instigated continues in our own day.

In the pre-Greek world, advanced peoples had learned to live with nature by wresting secrets from her through patient observation and then applying them to gainful purposes. But such practical knowledge never lost its close association with demons and myths, fears and hopes, and punishments and rewards. The pre-Greek conception of nature viewed physical phenomena as essentially individual, unique, and incalculable rather than general, universal, and predictable. The Greeks were not the first to think about the recurrent regularities in the natural world, but they were the first to develop — going beyond observation and knowledge — the scientific attitude, a new approach to the world that constitutes to this day one of the distinctive elements of Western life. Classical Greek thought tried to tame man and nature through reason.

Greek inventiveness and originality lay not in this or that political theory but in the invention of the scientific study of politics. Pre-Greek political thought had been a mixture of legend, myth, theology, and allegory.¹⁵ If there were an element of independent reasoning, it served as a means to a higher end, usually to be found in the tenets of a supernatural religious system. The contribution of Jewish thought to the political heritage of the world has been the idea of the brotherhood of man, a concept deeply rooted in monotheism. By contrast, polytheism made it difficult for the Greeks to see the basic oneness of mankind, and their religious pluralism reflected their inability to transcend, intellectually and institutionally, the confines of the city-state.

From a social point of view, the Judeo-Christian tradition was opposed to slavery on principle, a unique position in antiquity. It established a weekly day of rest, still unknown in many parts of the world, and it contained a host of protective rules in favor of workers, debtors, women, children, and the poor. The concept of covenant, first appearing in the agreement between God and Abraham, is a frequent theme in the Bible whenever momentous decisions were to be made. The concept was revived centuries later in the Puritan attempt to build a new religious and civil society; when President Woodrow Wilson, a devout Presbyterian, named the constitution of the League of Nations a covenant; and when President Bill Clinton baptized his legislative program in 1992 "a new covenant" between his administration and the American people.

However significant Judaic contributions to Western civilization may be, they never were, nor were they meant to be, political science. They were political and social ethics rather than science, and as such constitute one of the three chief tributaries to the mainstream of Western civilization, the other two being the Christian principle of love and the Greek principle of rationalism.

The first work that deserves to be called political science, in that it applies systematic reasoning to political ideas and institutions, is Plato's *Republic*.¹⁶ After almost 2400 years, it is still matchless as an introduction to the basic issues that confront human beings as citizens. To understand fully the concerns of the *Republic*, however, it is first necessary to recount the immediate constitutional history of at least two Greek city-states, Sparta and Athens. The city-state, the polis, was a territory and a set of institutions of great variety in size, shape, and social and political organization. It was a community of citizens (adult males), citizens without political rights (women and children), and noncitizens (resident foreigners and slaves). The community lived under a written constitution, and it was independent of any outside authority. It occupied a defined area, often much larger than the city itself. Athens, for example, controlled the entire peninsula of Attica. Although the land at large may have been virtually empty of residents or occupied only intermittently by farmhouses, villages, or small towns, there was a single focal point around which religious, political, and administrative authority gathered. That was the city, the polis proper. It was usually fortified, and it always offered a market (an agora), a place of assembly, and a seat of justice and government, both executive and deliberative. The early city-state government tended to be either monarchic or aristocratic; the latter was usually oligarchic or democratic.

The sense of community was everything. By the classical period of the fifth and fourth centuries, there were hundreds of federations of Greeks living around the shores of the Mediterranean "like frogs around a pond," as Plato put it. From the central sea of the Aegean with its island communities, and the coastal towns of Turkey and eastern and southern Greece, the colonies had spread to northern Greece, the Black Sea coast and southern Russia, to Sicily and southern Italy, and as far west as Provence, Spain, and North Africa.¹⁷ The Greeks said that living in a polis was the only form of civilized life.

Aspects of the social and economic life of the cities varied greatly from region to region. Some had large agricultural territories and serf populations. Others were heavily engaged in trade in raw materials such as corn, olive oil, dried fish, wine, metals, timber, slaves, or manufactured goods, either made on the spot or imported from other cultures. There was a huge outflow of Greek goods from such cities as Corinth and Thebes, and of skilled labor such as doctors, stonemasons, and professional mercenaries from Athens and Sparta. The functions of the cities varied greatly as well. Some were essentially fortresses. Others were founded on a religious shrine. Most had ports, and all had interior land and an administrative center. Plato in the *Laws* and Aristotle in the last two books of the *Politics* insisted that it was possible to discover an ideal city behind the multifariousness of the real Greek cities.

In his dialogues Plato portrays Athens in vivid detail as a world of young and godlike intellectuals meeting in private houses for conversation and social drinking, strolling in suburban parks, or walking down to the Piraeus for a festival, listening to famous visitors skilled in rhetoric or philosophy.¹⁸ But when Plato was writing, Athens was fighting a long and bloody war in which at least half her population died, many of them from a particularly horrible plague that scarred even those who survived it. The plague was partly the consequence of the unsanitary conditions in which vast numbers of Athenian citizens were camped on every available yard of open land within the city walls. The way down to the Piraeus must have been as filthy, stinking, and crowded as the slums of Calcutta.

The polis was essentially a male association. Male citizens joined together in making and carrying out all decisions affecting the community. The origin of this phenomenon lay in military campaigns and the right of warriors to approve or reject the decisions of their leaders. The development of the polis was the extension of this practice of approval to all aspects of social life, with the partial exception of religion.¹⁹ Direct participation in making rational choices after discussion was the central political commitment of all Greek cities.

The organization theory behind the polis was related to natural and earlier forms of association. Anthropologists often call these associations kinship groups. Most Greek cities divided their citizens into hereditary tribes. Dorian cities traditionally possessed three tribes and Ionian cities four.²⁰ The divisions were for military and political purposes, sanctioned by tradition and reinforced by specially organized state religious cults. A closer look at organization theory in Athens will illustrate.

In about 507, Cleisthenes, head of the great noble house that had supported Solon, the Alcmeonidae, took advantage of recently successful Spartan arms and political intrigue to offer a new sociopolitical structure to Attica that would serve it well for 200 years. Cleisthenes changed the number of tribes from four to ten. The essence of the new system was the recognition that small local units, i.e., country villages, towns, and territorial wards of the city, should control their own affairs independent of local aristocrats such as himself. For state purposes, these demes, as they were called, were grouped into larger coherent geographical blocks (with some gerrymandering), and it was from these blocks that the ten new tribes were constructed. Each tribe would have one block from the geographical regions called the Plain, the Coast, and the City. The army and all other parts of the administrative system, above all the Solonian council, were based on the tribes. The Solonian council, the primary governing conclave, was composed of 50 representatives from each tribe, each tribal contingent serving as a standing committee of the whole council for one-tenth of the year.

Thus an Athenian in his village could make good use of whatever self-confidence he may have had. He could simultaneously develop a sense of nationality as the citizen of a city-state. Did Cleisthenes promote a change of attitude with his reforms, or did he merely reorganize a change that had already occurred? Whatever the answer, he was wise enough not to tamper with existing social groups and their cherished cults. Instead, he created a new organizational structure. The village or deme became an administrative unit,²¹ and the principle of *isnornia* was established. *Isnornia* was the condition in which final political authority was vested in the citizenry, and the city's fate was determined by majority vote.

Even more important to the ordinary Athenian citizen than local or central governmental organization was the phratry (*phratria*). This is the sole context in Greek of the important linguistic root common to most Indo-European languages found, for example, in the Celtic *brathir*, German *Bruder*, English "brother," Latin *frater*, and French *frere*. In Greek it designates the nonfamilial type of brotherhood that originally was an aristocratic warrior band but became the larger social organization that dominated a citizen's life. The community, the polis, was a brotherhood. Each phratry worshipped a male and a female god. In Athens it was Zeus Phratrios and Athena Phratria. Annual festivals were held in honor of these gods, and various rites of passage were observed in what the Greeks called the seasons of the soul. At an early age, for example, the young male Athenian was presented to the phratry by his father and relatives at the altar of Zeus Phratrios. Later, the acceptance of his first sacrifice signified his acceptance into the community. In adolescence he was again presented and dedicated his shorn hair to the god. The phratry then voted to admit him as a member and inscribed his name on the list of the brotherhood. It was also the phratry that witnessed the solemn betrothal ceremony that was the central public act of an Athenian marriage, and who celebrated the final consummation of the marriage with a feast paid for by the bridegroom. Thus the phratry was involved in all the main stages of a man's life and was the focal point of his daily activity. When in difficulty, when a man needed witnesses at law, for example, he turned first to his phratry.

Sparta had a similar theory of brotherhood but worked it out quite differently. The male citizen body was divided into *sysstitia*, or mess groups, on which the entire social and military organization of the state rested. From the age of seven, boys were given a state-organized upbringing and brigaded into age groups. They lived communally from the age of 12 and were taught multiple skills useful to self-reliance and survival. The boys were provided with inadequate food and clothing to toughen them. At age 20 they were officially inducted into their *sysstitia*, where they had to live until the age of 30. Even thereafter, they were required to eat daily

common meals in their mess groups, to which they contributed food from the land allotted to them and farmed under their supervision by state-owned slaves. The slaves were descendants of the original inhabitants of the Spartan territory, and they required constant suppression. The theoretical elegance of the Spartan social system and the way it built on traditional Greek customs much impressed ancient political thinkers and offered a counterideal to Athenian democracy.²²

Unlike Sparta, who froze her institutions, the other Greek cities were networks of associations in transition. There were aristocratic religious groups called *gennetai* who claimed descent from a common ancestor and monopolized the priesthoods of the more important city cults. There were drinking groups occasionally mobilized for political ends. There were groups associated with the various sporting complexes or gymnasias of the city. There were benefit clubs, burial clubs, and clubs associated with individual trades and activities. There were mystical sects and intellectual organizations such as Plato's Academy. The range of such associations is shown by the Athenian law relating to them: "If a deme or phrateres or worshippers of heroes or *gennetai* or drinking groups or funerary clubs or religious guilds or pirates or traders make rules amongst themselves, these shall be valid unless they are in conflict with public law."

The associations helped to create the sense of community and belonging that was the essential feature of the polis. The ties of kinship by blood were matched by multiple forms of political, religious, and social groupings, and of companionship for a purpose, whether it was voyaging, drinking, or burial. This conception of citizenship made civil war an even more poignant experience. When the democrats and oligarchs of Athens battled in 404, friend fought friend to the death.

In such a world it might be argued that multiple ties limited the freedom of the individual, and there is certainly a sense in which the conception of the autonomy of the individual apart from the community is absent from Greek thought. The freedom of the Greeks was public freedom, externalized in speech and action. It derived from the fact that the same man belonged to a deme, a phratry, a family, a group of relatives, and a religious association. Living in this complex world of conflicting groups and social duties, he nevertheless had the freedom to choose between their demands and so to escape any particular dominant form of social patterning. This explains the coexistence of the group mentality with the amazing creativity and freedom of thought in classical Athens. The freedom that results from belonging in many places is no less a freedom than that which results from belonging nowhere.²³

In many ways the Greek family is the key to Greek organization theory. It was monogamous and nuclear, being composed of a husband and wife with their children. But Greek writers tend to define the household as an

economic unit and to regard other dependent relatives and slaves as part of it. The family fulfilled a number of social functions apart from economic ones. It was the source of new citizens. In the classical period, the state established increasingly stringent rules for citizenship and thus for legitimacy. In Athens, a citizen had to be the offspring of a legally recognized marriage between two Athenian citizens whose parents were also citizens. It became impossible for an Athenian to marry a foreigner and very difficult to obtain recognition for the children of any foreign liaison. This was a democratic ideal, the imposition of the social norms of the peasant majority on an aristocracy that had previously behaved very differently. The aristocracy had frequently married outside the community and determined its own criteria for legitimacy. Even the great Pericles, the author of the first citizenship laws, was forced to seek permission from the assembly to legitimate his son by his Milesian mistress, Aspasia. Pericles had divorced his Athenian wife in 445, and his two sons by her had died of the plague during the Peloponnesian War. The Athenians granted legitimacy to Aspasia's son, but not without considerable debate.

Intimately connected with citizenship was the inheritance of property. Greek society in general did not practice primogeniture, the right of the eldest son to inherit. Rather, the property was divided equally by lot between all surviving sons, so that the traditional word for an inheritance was a man's *kleros* or lot. The Athenian family tended to be unstable for this reason, because each family survived only as long as its head. Athenian government was unstable for the same reason. Leaders were replaced virtually every year as new ones were selected by lot. The ideal was to keep government in the hands of amateurs and out of the hands of professional administrators. Government agencies would thus be more responsive to citizen demands. The lot could fall on any citizen, who, having served as commissioner of grains for one year, for example, was not subject to reelection to the same position.

Marriage was endogamous, within a close circle of relatives, in order to preserve family property from fragmentation. The Athenian family clearly served as a means of protecting and enclosing women.²⁴ Women were citizens, with certain cults reserved to them and not available to foreign women, but women were citizens only for the purpose of marriage and procreation. Otherwise they lacked all independent status. They could not enter into any transaction worth more than one *medimnos* (54 liters) of barley, and they could not own any property with the exception of their clothes, jewelry, and personal slaves. At all times they had to be under the protection of a *kyrios*, or guardian. If they were unmarried, the *kyrios* was their father or closest male relative; if married it was the *husband*; if widowed it was a son or other male relative by marriage or birth.

The two types of occasion when a woman could be involved in property transactions illustrate the nature of her protection. The first concerns the dowry. It was the duty of the *kyrios* to provide a dowry for all women in his family. The lack of a dowry demonstrated extreme poverty and might lead people to expect that no legal marriage had taken place. The formula in the betrothal ceremony was:

I give this woman for the procreation of legitimate children.
I accept.
And (for example) three talents dowry.
I am content.

Marriage was deemed to have taken place upon receipt of the dowry. Although the dowry accompanied the woman, it did not belong to her. It was in the complete control of her husband. In the case of divorce or the death of the husband, however, it could be reclaimed by the family, along with the woman.

A woman could also be the carrier of property in the absence of a will and of male heirs. In this case, the woman became an *epikleros*, or heiress. Her name was publicly proclaimed in the assembly, and she and the property were adjudged to the closest male relative of the deceased who was prepared to marry her. It was often her paternal uncle.

A system of law and private property reflects the prejudices of the society that creates it. The Athenian attitude toward women was an effect of democracy.²⁵ Aristocratic women had been freer in earlier times, but the coming of democracy meant the imposition of the social norms of the majority. Many peasant societies combine a high value placed on women with mistrust of them. Sernonides of Amorgos in the sixth century described the appalling varieties of women that the gods had made to be a burden on men. Only one type is any good, and she is like the bee (Boardman, Griffin, and Murray 1986, 213–4):

She causes his property to grow and increase, and she grows old with a husband whom she loves and who loves her, the mother of a handsome and reputable family. She stands out among all women, and a godlike beauty plays around her. She takes no pleasure in sitting among women in places where they tell stories about love.

Such attitudes compound fear of the irrational and passionate nature of women with an exaggerated belief in their value and the importance of protecting them from the public eye. In agrarian societies, these attitudes are held in check by the need for women's labor in the fields. With the

advent of urban life, women were confined to the house, and increased wealth brought with it aspirations to liberate them even from domestic duties. In a dialogue of Xenophon, Socrates confronts the problem of a friend who finds himself with 14 female relatives living in his house. All of them were well brought up and therefore unused to any form of work. Socrates persuades his friend that he should nevertheless provide them with suitable work such as spinning; their tempers will be much improved, says Socrates, although they will now complain of the idleness of their protector. But, concludes Socrates, his duty is to protect “as a sheepdog cares for the sheep” (Xenophon 1977, 2.7).

With the honorable exception of Plato, as we shall see, classical Greek philosophers agreed that women were less endowed with reason than men. Even Plato’s celebrated student, Aristotle, could say, “the deliberative faculty is not present at all in the slaves, in the female it is inoperative, in the child undeveloped.” The family is a natural relationship involving ruler and ruled and “as regards male and female this relationship of superior and inferior is permanent.” It was left to the tragedians, however, to portray truly the predicament of women in Athenian society, as they repeatedly made them the most powerful figures in Greek tragedy. Sophocles wrote for everywoman in classical Greece (Sophocles 1981, 583):

But now outside my father’s house I am nothing; yes, often I have looked on the nature of women thus, that we are nothing. Young girls, in my opinion, have the sweetest existence known to mortals in their fathers’ homes, for innocence keeps children safe and happy always. But when we reach puberty and understanding, we are thrust out and sold away from our ancestral gods and from our parents. Some go to strangers’ homes, others to foreigners’, some to joyless houses, some to hostile. And all this, once the first night has yoked us to our husband, we are forced to praise and say that all is well.

It is not easy to come to terms with such attitudes toward women in Athenian society, if only because we idealize the Greeks as the originators of Western civilization. We might remember, however, that the position of Athenian women was in most important respects similar to that of the 200 million women living today under Islam. The systematic mutilation of millions of young women in Africa through so-called female circumcision is another standing reminder of male fear of the feminine.

The consequences of these attitudes in Athens, combined with the importance placed on male social groupings, was to establish public life as the center of the polis. The balance in ancient Athens was shifted away from the family and toward the community, hence the magnificent festivals

and displays and the great public buildings constructed both for religious and political purposes. The Athenian male spent his time in the agora surrounded by these buildings.²⁶ In contrast, his home was mean and unimpressive. It was not safe in a democracy to exhibit a lifestyle different from that of other citizens. A man's life was lived in public, not in private. Here lies the fundamental reason for the achievement of Athens in exemplifying the ideal type of the ancient city. The erosion of the family was the price paid for her success in escaping from the ties of tribalism and kinship to create a new type of social and political organization.

Contemporary Government in the Greek World

We have seen something of Plato's personal history and something of the societal norms in the midst of which he invented political science. Now we must pay closer attention to contemporary government in the Greek world. From the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, an outline of governmental practice in early Greek city-states can be derived.²⁷ There was a king and a series of subkings or nobles and a system of classes. The king consulted his leading subjects in council, and decisions were announced to the people assembled in the agora. Administration at the summit was still largely household administration carried out by a group of domestic servants with specific functions. These were supplemented by *therapontes*, a class of higher servants recruited from the noble families and arranged in ranks. Those at the top assisted the king in his religious duties, or as heralds representing him at public functions, carrying his scepter or insignia of power. The *therapontes* served at the royal feasts, acted as messengers endowed with royal power, convoked the council, made proclamations to the people, carried the royal orders in battle, and bore the royal authority on missions abroad. Junior *therapontes* were assigned lesser responsibilities such as control of the stables or armory. Thus the Homeric king had a group of ministers, not quite an administrative class, in his household based upon the tribe to which the individual minister belonged. Recruitment of the army and the provision of ships and supplies to meet public needs were all allocated according to tribe. Each tribe made its contribution as commanded by the king through tribal leaders who held their hereditary titles from the king.²⁸

By the beginning of the sixth century the Homeric kingship had declined in power. It survived only in Sparta, where a curious system of two kings was devised, the kings representing the two royal houses out of which the state had emerged. The Spartan kings acted jointly and exercised a check upon each other. They wielded simultaneously the authority of high priest and army commander, though they lost most of

their judicial power to the *gerousia*. An interesting exception was the kings' plenary judgment on all matters concerning public roads.²⁹

The *gerousia* was a council of elders consisting of the two kings and 28 members of noble families over 60 years of age. Their selection was acclaimed in the *apella* (assembly) as the "prize of virtue." Every Spartan citizen over 30 years of age sat in the *apella* as a duty rather than a right. Day-to-day public administration was carried out by ephors.³⁰

The ephorate consisted of five citizens chosen by lot, a process Aristotle called "excessively childish." The senior ephor gave his name to the Spartan year. As an administrative class, ephors began as special assistants to relieve the kings of troublesome responsibilities beyond their personal control. Over the years they became guardians of the rights of the people, watching jealously over the conduct of the kings. They accompanied the kings on all official occasions and had the power to call them to account. Each month the ephors exchanged oaths with the kings, the king swearing to rule according to the city's established laws, the ephors swearing on behalf of the city to keep the king's position unshaken as long as he abided by his oath. The balance of obligation was clear. The ephors had general control over the kings' conduct, could prosecute the kings before the Spartan supreme court, and settled disputes between them. The ephors could enforce the kings' appearance before their board at their third summons. Two of them accompanied the kings on all military campaigns.³¹

It would be wrong to interpret Spartan organization theory as a straightforward contest between kings on the one hand and ephors on the other. Though the latter combined executive, judicial, and disciplinary powers and, unconstrained by written laws, dominated the everyday administration of affairs, every Spartan citizen knew that their office was held for one year only and that it was not renewable. The eligibility of all Spartans for the office meant a wide range of possible support for the monarch despite the popular, antiaristocratic nature of the position. Finally, much of the time of the ephorate was spent on dealing with the indigenious and often rebellious helot serf population, over whom the ephorate exercised the arbitrary power of life and death.³²

The development of public administration in Athens took a different form. The important names in Athens on this subject are Draco, Solon, and Pisistratus. By about 630 the kings of the city-state of Attica were being replaced by tyrants, fringe members of the aristocracy who usurped power with the support of discontented members of the community, often democrats. Their popularity depended upon their ability to curb the power of other aristocrats and to build public works. Tyranny was not a special form of constitution, nor was it necessarily a reign of terror. The tyrant might rule directly, or he might retain existing political institutions but exercise a preponderant influence over how they worked.

His rule could be benevolent or malevolent. Tyranny was given a bad name by Plato and especially by Aristotle, for whom it was the worst possible form of government.³³

Doing well by arbitrary methods never satisfied the Greeks. As early as 620 Draco put Athenian laws into writing. He established a constitution based on the franchise of hoplites, the citizens who made up the Greek heavy infantry in times of war. Draco's laws are known for the severity of their penalties. When asked why he specified death as the penalty for most offenses, he replied that small offenses deserved death and he knew of no severer penalty for great ones. The fourth-century orator Demades said that Draco wrote his laws in blood instead of ink.

After just 25 years, Draco's law code was drastically revised by Solon, elected chief magistrate of Athens in 594. Solon was a poet as well as a politician, and he did not like killing people. He could have made himself a tyrant, but, as he wrote, "Tyranny is a very pretty position. The trouble is that there's no way out of it." Solon served as archon, the highest of three magisterial positions that had replaced the Athenian king, while simultaneously he kept the idea of tyrant at bay. The other two positions were *basileus*, who served as a religious leader and judge in religious cases, and *pole march*, who served as a judge in all cases involving noncitizens and as commander-in-chief of the army. The archon was supreme judge in all civil cases and defender of the property rights of citizens.³⁴ All three magistrates were elected annually. The selections were controlled by the Council of the Areopagus, or elders, in whose hands all governing power ultimately rested.

Solon laid the foundations of Athenian democracy. Under his reforms, citizens were to meet in the *ekklesia*, or general assembly, and henceforth participate in the election of the magistrates. All citizens were eligible to sit in a new popular court, the *heliaea*, which gradually took over all the judicial functions of the city. The Council of the Areopagus was deprived of its deliberative function and ceased to participate directly in both administration and legislation. It assumed the new role of protector of the constitution, with supervisory powers over the magistrates and censorial authority over citizens.

In the middle of the sixth century Attica was divided between those who lived along the coast, land that might be generating new wealth in the form of olive oil, for example, and the great outback. The interior was rich enough, but it was geographically and culturally far from the center of commerce. Its leader was Pisistratus, a blue blood who understood economic development and who parlayed produce from the plain of Marathon and silver deposits from Attica's southeast corner into what can only be called a golden age of tyranny. From his consolidation of power in 546 until his death in 527 Pisistratus did more to encourage

Athenians toward national unity, local pride, and individual dignity than any previous leader. He directed attention to the city of Athens as the population center of Attica, and there he built public works, temples, fountain houses, and drains. Most important of all, he fostered the cult of the goddess Athena, patroness of Athens and of Pisistratus himself. He created national festivals and games, the Panathenaea, at which prizes were jars of Attic olive oil, and the Dionysia, where began one of Athens's greatest creations, the drama.³⁵

Pisistratus lent money to poor farmers and established a panel of itinerant judges to settle local disputes, previously in the hands of the local aristocrat. It is a paradox that an autocrat, a tyrant, could in fact promote individual freedom and dignity as much as Pisistratus did. Solon had opened government to new men but had done nothing to diminish the power of the aristocrat at the local level beyond robbing him of legalized mastery over the poor around him. Now the aristocrat had either died in the last battle against Pisistratus, or thought it prudent to go into exile. Even if the aristocrat stayed, he knew he had to acknowledge the existence of someone more powerful than himself. The average citizen either lost his master or realized that the masters who were left did not matter as much as before. Such a realization was the first step toward being one's own master and toward citizenship in Plato's *Republic* as well as St. Augustine's *City of God*.

Following the defeat of the Persians at the great sea battle of Salamis in 480, the Greeks for a time achieved a high degree of unity.³⁶ The unity was based on two factors directly related to organization theory:

1. The Greeks learned that what they called barbarians, i.e., those who spoke a language other than Greek, were militarily inferior to Greek hoplites. The hoplite phalanx, later to be fully exploited by Alexander the Great, proved at Marathon that it could win against cavalry, archery, and any infantry formation thrown against it, however armed or brigaded. Hoplites formed a line eight men deep — helmeted, corseleted, and greaved — presenting a solid front of round shields. The shields were damped on to the left arm of the hoplites by two grips while each hoplite thrust his spear forward. The phalanx won by cooperative weight and cohesion, victory lying with men who kept their order, did not break, and advanced in practiced unison.
2. Revised Athenian political institutions had created a population that fought willingly as free men, “fearing the laws more than Xerxes,” as Demartus, king of Sparta, put it. A new political confidence inspired the Athenians as the old aristocratic control waned in an increasingly powerful assembly. Aristotle illustrates

the matter in his discussion of the curious institution of ostracism, first used by the Athenians in the decade after Marathon.³⁷ Ostracism was Cleisthenes' idea. The assembly could decide every year to send one of the city's political figures into temporary ten-year exile without loss of property. The explicit reason for the first three ostracisms was suspicion of treachery in connection with the Persian invasion. Aristotle shrewdly observed that the courage to exercise such power is as significant as the occasion to exercise it. Appeasement was understood to be treason in unified Athens.

Mainland unity led to the Confederacy of Delos and hence to the Athenian Empire. The victory at Salamis taught the Athenians that supremacy at sea was the key to Greek security. Over 200 cities thereafter joined a sea-defense league. Some contributed ships, others money to build ships. The money was collected by ten *hellenotamiae* or "treasurers of the Greeks," who were all citizens of Athens. The money was paid into the treasury at Delos, where the council of the confederacy met to decide general policy. Each member state had one representative on the council, regardless of size, but Athens, by virtue of her wealth, influenced the votes of the smaller cities and dominated the confederacy. What began as a naval union developed into an empire. Gradually the other city-states were absorbed, leaving only the ship-contributing cities of Lesbos, Chios, and Samos with any real autonomy. In 454 the treasury of the confederacy was transferred to Athens, and Athenian overlordship became an accepted fact. The very idea of empire was anathema to the spirit of the Greeks, however, and within 50 years the Athenian Empire had ceased to be.

It was in the rejection of empire that Athens achieved her greatest glory. The period corresponded roughly with the life span of a single politician, the great orator Pericles (495–429). Plato lived in the generation immediately following Pericles and spent much of his intellectual energy contesting the influence of this charismatic figure and the administrative forms democracy took under his leadership of the assembly in the years 443–429. Pericles was elected general every year during this 15-year period, and Plutarch described him as "Athens' unchallenged leader" (Aristotle 1946, Book VI). We must rely on Aristotle (384–322) for a description of Greek public administration during the Periclean age.³⁸

The constitution of Athens divided the most important public offices into two levels. In the top level were:

The magistrates, who were concerned with general control of the whole range of public life and responsible for convening and introducing matters to the assembly

The generals, who were charged with the defense of the city, including superintendence of the city gates and walls and the inspection and drill of citizens³⁹

The financial officers, known variously as auditors, accountants, examiners, and advocates of the fisc,⁴⁰ who received and audited the accounts of other officers

At the second level of public office, described by Aristotle as “absolutely indispensable,” were:

The *agoranomos*, who was charged with the care of the market place as well as the supervision of contracts and the maintenance of public order

The *astynomos*, or city manager, who was responsible for oversight of both public and private property in the center of the city plus the maintenance and care of buildings and roads

The *agronormoi*, who were to protect the forests, superintend the city-state’s boundaries, and prevent boundary disputes

The receivers of accounts, or treasurers, who received and held public revenues and disbursed moneys to the several departments of government

The public recorders, who were concerned with the registration of private contracts and court decisions and the issuance of indictments

The executors of sentences, the officials who served court decisions on citizens, took custody of prisoners, and recovered debts

These magistrates constituted the executive management department of the city-state.⁴¹ At issue throughout the last half of the fifth century was whether these and other officers of the state should be elected or chosen by lot. Selection was usually by lot on the theory that the gods were more likely to make a wise selection than citizens. Great store was placed in the fact that the Greek magistrate was not a specialist, and that rotation in office every year ensured responsiveness to citizen concerns. It gradually became customary, however, for certain offices with responsibilities of a high order to be elected. These were treasurer of the military chest, disburser of the theatrical dole, curator of fountains, and the *strategoï*, or military commanders. Citizens chosen for diplomatic missions were also elected for the obvious reason that personality was an important factor in the mission’s success.

There was a special class of officers who served the cult of civic deities. They went by various titles in different city-states, e.g., priest, superintendent of sacrifice, guardian of the shrine, and steward of religious property.

Where it was the custom to conduct public sacrifice on the city's common hearth, the duty was assigned to an archon or, where a king remained, to the king as his chief remaining function under a mixed constitution.

As Plato was to lament, the system had serious flaws.⁴² One was that the magistrate's activities were subject to microscopic review at all times. It began with inquiry about his character and reputation at the time of his selection. At the examination, the *clokimasia*, he had to produce witnesses to attest to his character as well as present documents proving his adequate military service, payment of taxes, family conduct, and fulfillment of religious obligations. Any citizen could show cause before the court why the magistrate-elect should not be confirmed in his office. Upon relinquishing office, the magistrate's conduct while in office and his accounts were subject to careful scrutiny by a special board whose report had to go to the courts either for specific charges to be laid or for discharge to be approved. Even if the magistrate were given a clean bill by the board, it was still possible for a citizen to bring charges in the assembly and show why the discharge should not be granted. Given this continuous system of public inquest, it is hardly surprising that Plato characterized Greek public administration as unenterprising.⁴³

Plato had other criticisms such as the payment of magistrates, who he thought should serve gratis as an act of civic obligation, and especially the payment of citizen-judges in the *beliaea*. He reserved his most stinging commentary on Athenian democracy for the expert speechwriters and orators — sophists he called them — who were able to sway untutored judges and make justice a sometime thing. Plato was scandalized by the fact that slaves could be forced to give evidence before Athenian courts under torture. Such assessments drove him to write his two masterworks on political science, the *Republic* and the *Laws*.

Plato's Great Works on Organization Theory and Administrative Practice

Not only Plato, but also other writers such as Aristotle, Thucydides, and Xenophon, advanced a science of politics based on Greek organization theory and administrative practice. Plato alone set out to do nothing less than design an ideal society that would assure the good life for all its citizens. The *Republic* and the *Laws* are successive versions of his utopia.

The *Republic* was composed when Plato was about 40, the *Laws* in the last 13 years of his life. He had not finished revising and editing the *Laws* when he died at age 81. So we have his views on statecraft at two very different stages of his life. The *Republic* was much influenced by the Spartan system. Leadership was to rest in the hands of philosopher-kings,

citizenship was to be divided into classes resting securely on the inherent abilities of the individual, and children were to be educated, perhaps indoctrinated is a better word, so as to develop effectively within the sphere to which they had been called. In the *Laws*, the realities of life overtook Plato, and his ideal state was then closer to earth. His philosopher-kings, originally conceived in the plural, were changed into a philosopher-king in the singular. Plato was deeply affected by the failure of his personal missions to Syracuse to persuade the tyrant Dionysius to adopt the principles of the *Republic*. His new scheme attempted to combine the virtues of monarchy and democracy in a mixed polity.⁴⁴

The Republic

The *Republic* comes down to us with a double title: “The State” or, in Latin, *republica*, whence the name by which it is generally known, and “Or Concerning Justice.” While it is obviously a treatise on political science and jurisprudence, it is considerably more than that. It is an attempt at a complete philosophy of man. It is concerned with man in action, and it is therefore occupied with the problems of moral and political life. But man as a whole cannot be understood apart from his thinking, says Plato, so the *Republic* is also a philosophy of man in thought and of the laws of his thinking. The *Republic* forms a single and organic whole.⁴⁵ The question, which Plato set himself to answer, was simply this: what is a good man, and how is a good man made? Such a question might belong only to moral philosophy, but to the Greek, a good man must be the citizen of a state. Upon the first question, therefore, a second naturally followed: what is a good state, and how is a good state made? Moral philosophy thus ascended into political science. The quest does not end there, however. To a follower of Socrates, it was plain that a good man must be possessed of knowledge. A third question therefore arose: what is the ultimate knowledge of which a good man must be possessed in order to be good? That is for metaphysics to answer. When metaphysics has given its answer, yet a fourth question emerges: by what methods will the good state lead its citizens toward the ultimate knowledge, which is the condition of virtue? To answer this question, a theory of education is necessary. Plato thought that if his scheme of education were to work satisfactorily, a reconstruction of social life must also be attempted, and a new economics must reinforce the pedagogy.⁴⁶

The *Republic* is written in the imperative mood, not to analyze but to warn and counsel. It is in many respects a polemic directed against current teachers and the practices of contemporary politics. The teachers against whom it is directed are the younger generation of sophists, of the type Plato had already portrayed in the *Gorgias*. They and not Socrates, in

Plato's view, were the true corrupters of the youth of Athens by the lectures they gave and the training in politics they professed to give. They had preached a new ethics, or "justice," of self-satisfaction. They had revolutionized politics by making the authority of the state a means to the self-satisfaction of its rulers.

Plato made a strong case against democracy in the *Republic*. Interestingly enough, the origins of Plato's disenchantment with democracy went back to the funeral orations of Pericles, who died the same year Plato was born in 429. By the time of Athens' prolonged war against Sparta in the middle of the fifth century (the Peloponnesian War), democratic institutions had been nearly perfected. An assembly of the people deliberated, with all Athenians who were citizens participating. The selected leader who ruled over and governed the assembly was first among equals. His position was not a permanent leasehold but a temporary obligation and honor. All citizens could speak freely in the assembly as part of the law-making process.⁴⁷

Pericles used the occasion of the burial of Athenian war dead to offer paeans to Athenian democracy. Later democrats embraced his efforts as the most splendid examples of epideictic oratory on record.⁴⁸ In ancient democracy, words reigned supreme, particularly those spoken before one's fellow citizens. Classics scholar Nicole Loraux goes so far as to say that Athenian democracy was "invented" through rhetoric, particularly the funeral oration, a practice peculiar to Athens. "In and through the funeral oration," she writes, "democracy becomes a name to describe a model city" (Loraux 1986, 202).

Pericles used the solemn ritual of burying the war dead in the struggle against Sparta to do more than honor those who "shall not have died in vain," in the words of Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. He used his orations to define and refine Athenian democracy and to explain why sacrifice in her name was a noble and worthy thing. Pericles emphasized the uniqueness of Athens, not just its constitution and laws, but also the qualities of mind and the habits of thought that defined what it meant to be an Athenian. Unlike the Spartans, the Athenians were not forced by painful discipline to conform. Rather, they were self-conscious citizens and patriots who chose the city over their own lives. One can imagine mothers and fathers gathered to bury their beloved sons hearing Pericles proclaim (Thucydides 1980, 143):

Our constitution is called a democracy because power is in the hands not of a minority but of the whole people. When it is a question of settling private disputes, everyone is equal before the law; when it is a question of putting one person before another in positions of public responsibility, what counts is not

membership of a particular class, but the actual ability which the man possesses.

These democratic sentiments ran counter to the traditional Greek outlook, which from Homer onward had divided men into high and low, good and bad, worthy and unworthy. Tradition held that it is through the acceptance of such distinctions, the recognition that all men are not equal, that peace and harmony in the community are to be maintained. The conventions had weakened during the last decades of the fifth century, and Plato wanted to restore them. To this extent, his political thinking can be called reactionary, but in a more profound sense it was revolutionary. Although of high birth and of a wealthy family himself, Plato rejected birth or property as grounds for discrimination. He followed Socrates in seeking a new basis for political power in the inner character and mentality of men themselves. Socrates had held that true wisdom, the right use of reason, was the hallmark of quality among human beings, not possessions or noble blood or the pretended knowledge of those usually regarded as wise. Plato carried this view further by molding it into a coherent picture of human society based not on tradition or convention, but on nature and reality as a whole.

Several strands of thought were interwoven in the formation of the patterns of human society as Plato saw it. One was the idea of differences in natural aptitude, easily recognizable because many skills were obviously handed down from father to son. In the *Republic*, natural aptitude is the foundation for the division of labor and the creation of a professional army from those innately fit for soldiering. The distinction between philosophers, men of true wisdom, and the rest of the community is justified by their inborn aptitude for reason and thought.

A second feature of Plato's approach to social patterns and organization theory is his view of individual psychology. He says the psyche is made up of three elements: appetite, spirit, and reason. Men fall into natural divisions according to the predominance of one or the other of these elements in their makeup.⁴⁹

The most important feature of all, however, is the relation that Plato sees between human groupings and their metaphysical thought. Just as there is a great gulf between the forms known to the mind and the appearances perceived by the senses, between the dark cave of illusion where we live and the bright realm of knowledge to which a few may escape, there is a deep division between "those who can appreciate the eternally immutable and those who lose their way amidst multiplicity and change" (Plato 1958, 484b).

With an innate fitness for the task of knowing, guided by the reasoning element within him, and lifted above ordinary humanity by his vision of

the highest truth, Plato's wise man is thus by nature distinct from all others. He is made of gold. Lesser men are made of silver, and still lesser ones of iron and brass. Thus the ideal state is divided into three classes: the ruler, the fighters, and the working population, e.g., farmers, merchants, craftsmen, and laborers. Each of these has its appointed function, and each concentrates entirely upon the discharge of its functions. Government, defense, and sustenance — the three necessary functions of the state — are made into professions and assigned to professional classes. It is only with the governing and fighting classes that Plato is really concerned. He shares the biases against labor and business that seems to be characteristic of aristocrats in all ages. The regulation of the economic order in the *Republic* illustrates the contempt of the nobleman for the prosaic existence of those who must work for a living. They are only interested in appetite, the desire to fulfill material wants.

The rulers (called guardians) and fighters (called auxiliaries) must be trained for their work by every means available to the state.⁵⁰ The social system surrounding these privileged classes must also include material as well as spiritual things. Plato suggests a system of communism so ordered that it will set the time and the minds of the guardians and auxiliaries free from material cares. He deprives both the administration and the army of private property, thus consecrating them to their public duties.

One of the two points at which the *Republic* is most suggestive for modern public administration is in the threefold class division that distinguishes the functions of ruling and administering the state from all other crafts. The main difference between the philosopher-rulers and the producers in the *Republic* is that between political wisdom and technical knowledge. Only the philosophers have insight into human problems, and that insight is more than specialized learning. The craftsman, by contrast, including perhaps the quantitative analyst, the statistician, the computer information specialist, and the media relations expert in our own day, may have no comprehensive understanding of the purpose of the state or its administrative agencies. He has limited knowledge of a technical nature. Technical, procedural, and instrumental knowledge is advisory knowledge, says Plato, and not policy-making knowledge (Ebenstein 1969, 7–9).

The other point of direct applicability to modern public administration, indeed to all political life in the United States, is Plato's excoriation of rhetoricians. His political argument against democracy is stark and simple. It deteriorates into license as people do whatever they want whenever something much lower in Plato's ranking of human possibilities than "the spirit" moves them. All sorts of unchecked dispositions are given free rein, and they are encouraged by those who manipulate through rhetorical speech. They take over the souls of the young, at whatever chronological

age the young reside. Ideologues confuse the simple-minded and call forth the basest motives and fears of their fellow citizens. Of the rhetoricians — he would have included the political advertising consultants and campaign managers of our day — Plato said (Plato 1958, Book VI, 493):

Once they have emptied and purged [the good] from the soul of the man whom they are seizing,... they proceed to return insolence, anarchy, wastefulness, and shamelessness from exile, in a blaze of light, crowned and accompanied by a numerous chorus, extolling and flattering them by calling insolence good education; anarchy, freedom; wastefulness, magnificence; and shamelessness, courage.

Plato sharply divides rhetoric from dialectic and opinion from knowledge. The high-minded search for truth looks nothing like the forensic feats of Thrasymachus in the Athenian assembly.⁵¹ Plato's dialectic of knowledge is set up in opposition to a democratic rhetoric of persuasion. He calls sophists, who plied rhetoric professionally, panderers. In the Platonic dialogue that bears the name of the rhetorician Gorgias, Socrates maneuvers Gorgias into declaiming that speech making is not concerned with helping the "sick" — the vast multitude to whom Plato's physician would bring philosophic and political health — learn how to live in order to be well. Rather, it involves only freedom for oneself, the power of ruling by convincing others to concur in one's argument. Gorgias is trapped by Socrates into admitting that oratory is not about right or wrong but mere persuasion, a "spurious counterfeit of a branch of the art of government" — the branch known as democracy (Plato 1971, 44).

In Plato's scheme of things, democracy contains no authentic or meaningful speech, only the babble of the ignorant. The ignorant are stuck in mere opinion and frequently give in to base instinct. Hope lies with what Plato called "the more decent few" who can master desire. The more decent few — the guardians — must forbid speeches about the gods and expunge all tall tales of ancient heroes, for poetry inflames the many. Plato found Homer, Hesiod, and other masters of Greek literature opprobrious and corrupting. Toward the end of the *Republic* he presents the conclusion that "all poetry, from Homer onwards, consists in representing a semblance of its subject, whatever it may be, including any kind of human excellence, with no grasp of reality." In fact, the artist is assigned a place below the shoemaker or smith, because these craftsmen have at least a limited direct knowledge of reality, whereas the artist "knows nothing worth mentioning about the subjects he represents." Art, therefore, "is a form of play, not to be taken seriously." Because the poet, by appealing to sentiment rather than reason, "sets up a vicious form of

government” in the individual soul, “we shall be justified in not admitting him into a well-ordered commonwealth” (Plato 1958, 602).⁵²

The ruler must occasionally lie for the benefit of the city. Plato often compares rulers to doctors, and the ruled to patients, and he says that “for a private person to mislead the rulers we shall declare to be a worse offense than for a patient to mislead his doctor.” He attacks such crimes as “fatal” and “subversive” in a state. Though the ruled are under no circumstances permitted to deviate from the truth, particularly in their relations with the rulers, the latter may lie “in the way of a medicine.” Just as a medicine may be handled only by a doctor, “if anyone, then, is to practice deception, whether on the country’s enemies or on its citizens, it must be the Rulers of the commonwealth, acting for its benefit; no one else may meddle with this privilege” (Plato 1958, Book III, 408).⁵³

The achievement of a just state, a perfect antidemocracy, requires the creation of such a powerful, all-encompassing bond between individuals and the state that all social and political conflict disappears, discord melts away, and the state comes to resemble a single person, a fused, organic entity.

Private marriage, family life, and child rearing, at least for the guardian class, must be put away. The guardians must have no competing loyalties other than their wise devotion to, and rule over, the city. A systematic meritocracy must prevail in which children are organized and characterized as raw material to be turned to the good of the unified city. A child from the lower orders of society, those stuck in the mire of ignorance, may perchance show discernible sparks of future wisdom. If so, that child must be removed from his or her parents, “without the smallest pity,” and trained to be one of the brightest and best. Plato’s explicit purpose with this social engineering is to prevent the emergence of hereditary oligarchies and to ensure the continuation of rule by a natural elite. A system of eugenics is devised among his guardians to match up males and females with the most likely mates to produce vigorous, healthy offspring. Immediately after birth, a baby is removed from the biological mother and sent to a central nursery, where its rearing is entrusted to experts.⁵⁴

In the *Republic* we find the prototypical antidemocratic fear, that things will easily fall apart if a city is anything but organically united. Scattered throughout the treatise are words that evoke a sense of chaos and disintegration: “asunder,” “destroy,” “dissolves,” “overwhelms,” “splits,” “evil.” Other terms are designed to prevent the anarchy that democracy leads to: “dominate,” “censor,” “expunge,” “conform,” “bind,” “make one.” For Plato every conflict is a potential cataclysm. Every discussion in which differences are stated is a threat portending disintegration. Every sally is an embryonic struggle unto death. Every distinction is a possible blemish on the canvas of harmonious and unsullied order.⁵⁵

Plato seeks “a rest from trouble.” In perhaps the most famous passage of the *Republic*, he says that unless either philosophers become kings or kings become philosophers, trouble will continue (Plato 1958, Book V, sec. 493):

Until philosophers are kings, or the kings and princes of this world have the spirit and power of philosophy, and political greatness and wisdom meet in one, and those commoner natures who pursue either to the exclusion of the other are compelled to stand aside, cities will never have rest from their evils, — no, nor the human race, as I believe, and then only will this our state have a possibility of life and behold the light of day.

The harmony that results from joining politics with philosophy produces a unique kind of pleasure for him or her who does the joining. The knowledge of the real that wisdom embraces is finally an aesthetic experience that is infinitely more rewarding than power. Beauty is stronger than power, and they who attain it will never make trouble again.⁵⁶

The Laws

The *Laws* is not only the longest of Plato’s writings, but it also contains his latest and most mature thought on the subjects that he held most dear to his heart all his life — ethics, education, and jurisprudence. The purpose of the *Laws* is severely practical and does not appeal to readers who care more for metaphysics and science than for morals and politics. More than any other work of Plato, the *Laws* stands in direct relationship to the political life of the age in which it was composed. It is meant to satisfy a pressing felt need.

In the last 20 years of Plato’s life it was becoming increasingly obvious that the old city-states that had been the centers of Hellenic spiritual life had had their day. Athens herself had become a second-rate power. Sparta had been crushed by the brilliant successes of Epaminondas, who established Thebes as the predominant power in Greece for a generation.⁵⁷ Meanwhile the very existence of Hellenic civilization continued to be threatened by the encroachment of Persia in the east and Carthage in the west. We know now that the historical solution to the problem was to be provided by the rise of the Macedonian monarchy and the achievements of kings Philip and Alexander. But the work of Philip was only beginning in Plato’s last years.

The occasion of the *Laws* was the founding of new Greek cities in the Mediterranean basin and the refounding of old ones. Epaminondas, for

example, built Megalopolis as the new center for Arcadia and restored Messene. According to Greek tradition, the first thing to be done in such a situation was to provide the new or revised community with a complete constitution and fundamental law. The accepted practice was to summon experts in politics as advisers in the task. In the fifth century, Pericles had employed Protagoras in this way, to give advice on the laws to be made for Thurii, for example. In the fourth century, Plato's Academy was constantly being asked for consultants to do the same sort of work.⁵⁸ The Academy was recognized as the society of experts in jurisprudence. Hence it was desirable that men anticipating being called upon to legislate should be provided with an example of the way in which the work should be done. The *Laws* is Plato's example.

The marks of old age are written obvious throughout the *Laws*. Like Prospero in *The Tempest*, the last of Shakespeare's plays, Plato has come to feel that the men who play their part in the "unsubstantial pageant" of life are such stuff as dreams are made of. Plato says that "man in his fashion is a sort of plaything of God, and this, in truth, is the best of him" (Plato 1960, 803c) He has come to feel that God is everything and that man is very little. There is forgetfulness in the *Laws*, and there is less artistic power than in the rest of Plato's work. He virtually abandons the dialogue and makes the *Laws* a monologue by an Athenian stranger in the presence of two patient and generally polite listeners: a Cretan and a Spartan. In reading the *Laws*, one has to remember that Plato believed discourse should wander with the argument.⁵⁹

The first two books of the *Laws* deal with song and dance and wine and their place in education. Plato writes with great psychological insight about the moral influence of music on character and the victory over self that is involved in the proper use of wine. He rejects the Spartan view that wine should be avoided. The seductions of pleasure must be faced in the convivial use of wine, says Plato, just as the Spartans taught valor by exposing the young to pain and peril. The better half of valor is mastery over one's desires, and the true way to master temptation is to stand up to it, not to make its occurrence artificially impossible.

The third book treats the historical development of states. Plato reconstructs prehistory, having man move from the nomad to the agricultural state, and from the life of the family group to that of the city. He has a vivid sense of the enormous lapses of time and the numerous changes that must have gone to the making of society before historical records began. Alone among the Greeks, he has a genuine sense of how recent the historical period of human life is. For the theory of politics, Book III enunciates the principle of the division of sovereign power. Sovereignty must combine the "popular" element with "something of personal authority," and it must unite "monarchy" and "freedom." There must be a seat

of authority somewhere, wrote Plato, but authority must not degenerate into regimentation. The individual must be free, but his or her freedom must not be anarchical (Plato 1960, 694a–701d).

Book IV is the prolegomena of politics. The first lesson in practical constitution making is to be well informed about the topography, climate, and economic resources of the state for which we are to legislate, as well as the character of its inhabitants. Plato wants his territory to be varied, containing arable land, pastures, and woodland, but the land should not be extremely fertile. If it is too fertile, production for the foreign market would be encouraged. The city should be some miles from the sea, though there should be a place in its territory that would make a good harbor. The city-state must be self-supporting and independent of imports. It should not have easy access to the sea, the great highway of commerce. The spirit of the community must not be commercialized. This is the first principle of a good constitution.⁶⁰

The next four books are concerned with the construction of a constitution, including a system of education and social relations to be based on law and to come next in order of excellence to that outlined in the *Republic*. Book V establishes the first rule of the constitution, that of self-reverence. The soul is more than the body, and the body is more than its possessions. A man must prize his soul more than his body and his body more than his goods. The second rule is that we cannot expect men regularly to choose the noble life unless they are persuaded that it is also the most pleasant. Plato contends that even by the rules of hedonic calculus, if one only states the rules correctly and works the sum right, the morally best life will be found to be also the most pleasant (Plato 1960, 732e–734e).

Book V argues that the size of the community, the number of households, must be kept permanent. If the population grows beyond the number the territory can support, it will begin to expand at the cost of wrong to its neighbors. If the population falls below a certain number, it will not be adequate for its own defense. The actual number of households will depend on the size of the territory, but Plato imagines it fixed at 5,040, a number divisible by all integers up to 10. The number is practical, says Plato, because it facilitates the division of inhabitants into administrative groups.⁶¹

Once the idea of administration is thus introduced in Book V, Plato then devotes Book VI to the appointment of various magistrates and administrative boards. The most important magistracy is that of the guardians of the constitution, a body of 37 men of approved character and intelligence who must be at least 50 years old at the time of appointment and who must retire at the age of 70. Their functions are to watch over the interests of the laws in general and in particular to take charge of the

register of properties and penalize any citizen guilty of fraudulent concealment of income. They also preside at the trial of grave offenses. They are elected by votes given in writing and signed with the voter's name. The election has several stages by which 300 names are first selected and finally reduced to 37, three for each tribe, with an odd man to prevent an equal division of income.

The most important administrative board is the board of education, followed closely in prestige by the board of family life. The latter assures that marriage is regarded as a solemn duty to society. It is the duty of married couples, for example, to present the city with worthy offspring. There is a third board, the board of ladies, charged with supervising the behavior of married couples and advising them about conception. The board will have general control over married people for ten years after marriage, and it will treat its responsibilities from both a eugenic and moral point of view. If a marriage remains childless after ten years, the board of ladies will arrange for dissolution on equitable terms. It will also act as conciliator in conjugal disputes.⁶²

The seventh book of the *Laus* contains Plato's most important and detailed scheme for universal education. The level of educational demands has risen from the *Republic*. The task of education must begin before a child is born. An expectant mother must take whatever exercise is required in the interest of her unborn child (Plato 1960, 789d). A baby should be sung to in order to keep it from being frightened. It is a bad moral beginning for the child to be allowed to become fitful or passionate. Children should be left to invent their own games, but from the age of three they should be brought together daily in the various temples to play under the supervision of women appointed by the board of ladies. These women will have the opportunity to see if the nurses are bringing up their charges in the way the state expects (Plato 1960, 793d–794c). At the age of six, lessons will begin in earnest, and with them the segregation of girls from boys. Both genders, however, are to be taught to ride and use the bow, sling, and dart. Care should be taken to train the children to be ambidextrous. It is of great practical importance, says Plato, to have two right hands.

Then Plato launches into a long discussion of the importance of music in one's education. It produces both mood and character, he says, and each type of musical form permitted in the state must be consecrated "as to the culture of a god." It is one of the most important functions of the board of education to see that "wailing" is not permitted and that blasphemy in music is punished. Musicians must feel that their work is prayer.

For the first time in Western education, Plato conceives of secondary schools with proper buildings and grounds. The teachers in these schools will have to receive salaries, and therefore they must be foreigners. The

minister of education must be especially careful to select sound prose works for reading on morals and law. The main curriculum was to be made up of what Plato termed “the three branches of knowledge,” i.e., arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy. We must remember that until Plato’s dialogues and Aristotle’s treatises were written, most of the prose literature in the fourth century consisted of scientific discourses by the Ionians, particularly technical writing on medicine.

Book VIII provides for the culture of the state. Every month of the year and every day of the month is given its appropriate worship. The object of Book VIII is to place the whole of daily life in the community under a religious sanction. There will be gymnastic and musical contests as part of the state’s regular worship. Plato lays down regulations for monthly exercises of the citizen militia as well as for special festivals. The militia training will include strength and endurance contests with “real military value.” Mimic warfare must reflect actual warfare as closely as possible, with the spice of real danger about it. Girls and women must share in the drills, “so far as their physique permits” (Plato 1960, 829–835d).

Books IX through XII are the heart of the *Laus* and represent the finest writing in the Platonic corpus. The ninth book contains the criminal code of the ideal constitution; the tenth is “the book of the law of religion,” in which Plato discusses the principles of true religious belief and fixes the penalties for the crime of heresy; the eleventh deals with legislation for the security of private property and trade; and the twelfth returns to public and civil law in ways reminiscent of the idealism of the *Republic*.

The crimes in the criminal code of Book IX, in descending order of their gravity, are sacrilege, treason, and patricide. Plato says that perpetrators of these capital crimes must die. The laying down of a capital sentence must not penalize the criminal’s innocent family by the confiscation of its property, however, and the family’s honor must not be tainted by the criminal’s offense. The code distinguishes violation of rights from the causation of damage, and in the case of the former, it distinguishes between violence and craft. Plato lists regulations and penalties for the cases of homicide, suicide, maiming, wounding with intent to kill, and minor assaults. The penalties depend both on the main distinctions laid down for each case and the status of the parties, whether citizen, alien, or slave.⁶³

In Book X we see the theology of Platonism. Without it, the theology of the early Christian church would be unintelligible, the neo-Platonist creedal statements of early Christianity would be the curious professions of a mystery religion, and the administrative practices of the medieval papacy might be understood only as the baptized procedures of the Roman imperium.⁶⁴ Plato was at once the creator of natural theology and the first thinker to propose that false theological belief should be treated as a crime

against the state and repressed by the civil magistrate.⁶⁵ Plato was convinced that there are certain truths about God that can be strictly demonstrated, and that the denial of these truths leads to bad living. The three heresies Plato regards as morally pernicious are, in ascending order of their moral turpitude: (a) atheism, the belief that there are no gods at all, (b) Epicureanism, the doctrine that God is indifferent to human conduct, and (c) worst of all, the doctrine that an impenitent offender can escape God's judgment by gifts and offerings. It is morally less harmful to believe that there is no God than to believe in a careless God, and it is better to believe in a careless God than a venal one. Against these three heresies, Plato holds that he can prove the existence of God, the reality of the providential and moral government of the world and man, and the impossibility of bribing the divine justice. In pursuing his proofs, Plato attains a height of argument not far removed from the greatest of the Hebrew prophets.⁶⁶

Book XI establishes regulations to prevent dishonesty in buying and selling, as well as procedures for writing and executing wills, caring for orphans, disinheriting a son, and enforcing the proper supervision of the insane and mentally deficient. Rules are laid down about the admission of evidence in courts of law and the penalties for perjury. Litigiousness, a common Athenian failing, should be checked by penalizing the vexatious prosecutor. If his motive was gain, the penalty should be death.⁶⁷ What the Romans called the commercial law of the first part of Book XI had a considerable influence on the development of Roman commercial law.

With the 12th and final book of the *Laws*, we return to the sphere of public law and the law of the constitution. Embezzlement of public funds, an offense regularly charged against every Attic politician by his enemies, is unpardonable in Book XII, and a citizen guilty of this crime must be punished by death, regardless of the magnitude of defalcation (Plato 1960, 942a). To ensure that magistrates do their duty, Plato adopts the ancient Attic practice of requiring every public administrator at the end of his term of office to submit to an audit, giving special care to the appointment of the board charged with conducting the audit.

Plato concludes that it is not enough to have made a good constitution for the virtuous society. There is a need for constant vigilance to preserve governmental institutions from degeneration. This vigilance will be exercised by the "nocturnal council," so called from the stipulation that its daily sessions are to be held before daybreak. Officially called the committee of public safety, these 20 to 30 men are the brain of the constitutional system.⁶⁸ To discharge its functions, the council must have a thorough understanding of the end to which all social life is directed. Its members will require much more in the way of education than anyone else in the community. To understand what goodness really is, they must be able to see "the one in the many" and to appreciate and realize the

great truth of the unity of all virtues.⁶⁹ They must have genuine knowledge of God and the ways of God.

Finally, the men who are the intellect of the state must thoroughly understand the natural theology laid down in Book X. Scientific astronomy, with its doctrine of the regularity and order of celestial motions, is the chief foundation of the whole Platonic apologia for ethical theism. A complete knowledge of astronomy is indispensable for any member of the nocturnal council. When astronomical knowledge is combined with insight into the true nature of the soul as the one source of movement, it leads directly to piety, and then the guardian grasps the principle of the causal priority of soul in the scheme of things. This mention of the guardian brings us back full circle to the *Republic*.⁷⁰

As a younger man, Plato had believed in the free rule of a personal intelligence duly trained for its work. He had hoped to train such intelligence himself along the lines propounded in the *Republic* and pursued in the practical curriculum of the Academy. At Syracuse he had seemed to find his opportunity. He could show the value of philosophy by turning a young tyrant into a philosopher-king and pointing the way for the salvation of Greece. He failed. Casting about for another way, he concluded that if he could not train a philosophic ruler who could rule without law, then he would make law itself philosophic. He would still be turning philosophy to practical account, which was always the thought dearest to his heart. Thus the law/state, combined with a mixed constitution, came to be the dominant political idea of Plato's later years. In the end, he returned to the traditional Greek idea of the rule of law, an idea against which he had forcefully rebelled most of his life. In the most splendid irony of classical antiquity, its most brilliant mind finally had to give up the project of substituting mind itself for the laws it makes. Man is indeed the plaything of the gods.

The Soul in Greek Political Theory

Greek political theory is distinctive in its focus on the soul. All the major Greek thinkers, led by Plato, held that one cannot reflect well upon political institutions without first reflecting about human flourishing and the psychological structures that facilitate or impede it.⁷¹ Their ideas about virtue, education, and passion are integral to their political theory, since they hold that a just city can only be achieved by emotionally balanced and virtuous individuals. Institutions in turn also shape the souls of individuals and their possibilities for flourishing.

Ideas about the soul and political theory have reentered modern literature in a powerful way.⁷² Many organization theorists are fascinated

by the fact that the Greek word for soul, *psyche*, also means butterfly. The soul can take flight. In the *Odyssey*, Homer speaks of the soul “flitting out like a dream and flying away.” Depth psychologists such as Sigmund Freud (1995) and Carl Jung (1953) tell us, however, that the individual soul can only flourish, and organizations can only flourish, when the soul occasionally flies to the underworld to see where the deeper part of the self resides. We do not like to do that. Jung writes: “The dread and resistance which every natural human being experiences, when it comes to delving too deeply into himself, is, at bottom, the fear of the journey to Hades” (Jung 1953, 336).

Yet Hades is where our collective past and our multiple selves still live during much of the year until, with Persephone, we rise to the spring. We are obliged to confront the shadows there and perhaps suffer the kind of defeat that Plato suffered at Syracuse. The cost of refusing to go to Hades or Syracuse can be severe. The idea of utopia may have to suffer disillusionment before we can construct the laws that give us comfort in the natural rhythms of life. Plato himself endured such disillusionment, but then his butterfly flew to Olympus.

Notes

1. Greek words, as commonly translated in English, will occasionally be referenced so that the reader might associate the other contexts in which the same Greek idea has entered modern discourse. In Jungian psychology, for example, “*psyche*” has its own particular meaning, i.e., the totality of all psychological processes, both conscious and unconscious. Likewise the Latin translation of soul or *psyche*, i.e., *anima*, has itself become a metaphor in analytic psychology, meaning the inner feminine side of a man or, with its masculine ending, *animus*, the inner masculine side of a woman. Together, *anima* and *animus* become what Jung calls the soul-image, or the representation in dreams and other products of the unconscious, of the inner personality, usually contrasexual. The Hebrew version of soul, *psyche*, and *anima* is *nephesh*, literally translated as “hot blood coursing through one’s veins,” with the suggestion that understanding historical activity, both by God and man, is the key to the meaning of life.
2. In current leadership writing, one finds such book titles as *Leading with Soul* (Bolman and Deal 1995), *Gods of Management* (Handy 1995), and *Synchronicity: The Inner Path of Leadership* (Jaworski and Flowers 1996).
3. One of the results of the Waldo Symposium held at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University, June 27–30, 1996, was the observation by several of the 82 scholars present that history should be taken more seriously by American public administrationists. This chapter is one effort in that direction.

4. Platonists have found allies they did not expect among modern chaos theorists, who insist that order always underlies chaos. There are “strange attractors,” argues Margaret Wheatley, for example, that draw random movements into unseen regularities. The computer modeling of assembled strange attractors, first demonstrated in weather systems, can create images of great beauty, thus illustrating Plato’s identification of the rational and the beautiful. See (Wheatley 1992, Gleick 1987).
5. All subsequent dates in this chapter, unless otherwise noted, will be B.C.E. (“before the common era”).
6. Plato never married. He remained devoted to his mother as long as she lived. She was still alive as late as 366 when Plato was 62 and returning to Athens from his latest adventure in Syracuse. Because Socrates became the leading character in Plato’s philosophical dramas, the dialogues, and given the fact that Socrates never wrote anything, there has been a good deal of debate about how much in Plato’s writings is his own and how much is a record of the actual thought of the historical Socrates. The argument is futile. There can be no doubt that Plato’s insight was profoundly conditioned by Socrates, but, given the creative genius and imagination of Plato, it is likely that Plato himself would not be able to say where Socrates left off and Plato began. The Socrates of Plato and the Socrates of history are a double star that I believe not even the spectrum analysis of the latest philology can ever resolve.
7. For these and other observations about Plato and his thought, the author is indebted to the work of F. M. Comford, Benjamin Jowett, Whitney J. Oates, A. E. Taylor, and especially his teacher at Columbia University, John Herman Randall.
8. Despite the cultural genius of the age, there was an incredible amount of political contentiousness that mirrors our own time. Pheidias, for example, was prosecuted and ostracized in 438, charged with impiety. He fled to Olympia, where the Eleans killed him after he made the *Zeus*, often called the most outstanding statuary of the ancient world. It was made of gold and ivory over a wooden core, with embellishments in jewels, silver, copper, enamel, glass, and paint. Despite his ignominious end, Pheidias’s pupils, particularly Agoracritus, Alcámenes, and Paeonius, dominated Athenian sculpture for a generation. Roman neoclassical sculpture looked chiefly to Pheidias for its inspiration and techniques.
9. Most of the 30 escaped to Eleusis but were tracked down and killed within two years. The idea of rule by “the best people” died with them. The idea of rule by “the best person,” i.e., the chief or king, would now compete historically with the democratic ideal.
10. Of the 23 dialogues Plato would later write, four dealt directly with the trial and death of Socrates. In the first, the *Euthyphro*, Socrates stands outside the courthouse in which he himself will soon be put on trial for his life and engages in a discussion on the nature of piety. The dialogue has its roots in the fact that Euthyphro is about to prosecute his own father on a charge of murder. Socrates says that a man who would bring such

a charge based only on ritual observance must either know the true meaning of religion or have a touch of madness in his makeup.

In the second, the *Apology*, Socrates presents his own case to the jury. He reminded the jury that he had served the state as a foot soldier in the battles of Potidaea, Amphipolis, and Delium, where he acquired a reputation for courage. He had served with distinction as an officer of the assembly. But he said unequivocally that disaster awaited his country if the prevailing policies were not modified and if the quality of thought that Athens was now applying to her problems was not improved.

In the third, the *Crito*, Socrates is in prison awaiting execution. A wealthy friend, after whom the dialogue is named, visits him and attempts to persuade him to escape. Socrates explains why he cannot. It would be false to everything he had thought or done in his 70 years if, in this personal crisis, he ran away to save his life. He must follow the course that reason dictates. He is not concerned with what the many think, nor is he fearful of their power. He is concerned only with the man who has understanding. As for the power of the many to destroy him, he does not think the purpose of life is merely to remain alive, but to live the good life. This requires him to affirm that the good man will not do wrong because others have done wrong. He has been a lifelong citizen of Athens; he has accepted her laws; and he has been so devoted to her that he has never had any inclination to travel. He cannot now live abroad as an object of ridicule and a sycophant. If he subverts the laws of Athens, although they may have dealt unjustly with him personally, he will be held in suspicion wherever he flees as a corrupter of law and order.

In the fourth dialogue, the *Phaedo*, Socrates' friend, Phaedo, relates to another friend, Echecrates, the story of Socrates' final hours. He is kind, humorous, detached, and not apprehensive, explaining with animation why he believes the soul persists after death. Socrates then drinks the cup of hemlock as prescribed by law and addresses Crito: "Crito, I owe a cock to Asclepius; will you remember to pay the debt?" Asclepius, son of Apollo, was the Greek and later Roman god of healing, so there is bitter irony in this pledge of a sacrificial offering by a patient who is past healing. "Such was the end, Echecrates, of our friend; concerning whom I may truly say, that of all the men of his time whom I have known, he was the wisest and justest and best."

11. Plato's house was situated just to the northwest of the Dipylon gate in Athens. The gymnasium was nearby, sacred to the hero Academus, who eventually gave his name to the Academy. The gymnasium was originally a place of exercise for citizens serving as hoplites, or heavy infantry, in the Athenian army. It was no more than an open space with a water supply and a shrine. Shade and shelter were provided by groves of trees. In the fourth century, the gymnasium at Athens was frequented more and more by citizens interested in philosophy and became the intellectual center for all of Greece. More-specialized architecture was then required, and the gymnasium became an enclosed area, its buildings arranged on

the courtyard principle. Plato was buried somewhere on the grounds of the Academy, but the exact location is unknown.

12. More than 200 fragments from this collection have been preserved in quotations by later Greek authors, 86 of which are taken from the Constitution of Athens. Both Aristotle and Xenophon wrote commentaries on the Constitution of Athens, with the Spartan sympathizer Xenophon conceding that democracy, though repellent, was rational in Athenian circumstances. Xenophon was one of the most brilliant and courageous cavalry commanders of the ancient world and fought for the Spartan cause at Coronea against, among others, his fellow Athenians. The battle at Coronea in 394 was described by him as “like no other in my time.” It rid central Greece of Athenian control and established the superiority of the Spartan phalanx as an infantry tactic.
13. It has been argued that Plato’s object was to set up in the most luxurious of Greek cities an imitation of the imaginary city of the *Republic*. In his epistles, Plato says explicitly that his object was the practical one of equipping the young Dionysius for the immediate duty of containing the Carthaginians and, if possible, expelling them from Sicily. He wanted to make Syracuse the center of a strong constitutional monarchy to embrace the whole body of Greek communities on the island.
14. The quarrel between Dionysius and Dion went on long after Plato withdrew from Sicilian politics. Dion made up his mind to recover his rights by force. With enlistments of fighting men from the Peloponnese and the active concurrence of many of the younger members of the Academy, Dion made a dash across the water in the summer of 357, captured Syracuse, and proclaimed its freedom. Plato wrote him a letter of congratulations. Like Plato himself, Dion believed in strong, though law-abiding, personal rule and disappointed the Syracusan mob by not establishing a democracy. Neither did he manage his associates well. He dismissed his admiral, Heraclides, which set the stage for Dion’s assassination by another of his entourage, Callippus. Plato continued to believe strongly in the fundamental honesty and appropriateness of Dion’s political aims, however, and wrote two letters to the remnants of his party calling on them to be faithful to Dion’s idealism.
15. The most obvious examples of such a prehistorical mixture of legend, myth, theology, and allegory are Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. These are narrative poems of impressive length — several hundreds of pages of long lines that would take about 24 hours to read at conversational speed. Epic poets do not write history, as Aristotle observed in his *Poetics*. They are large-scale artists who write about life and death, victory and defeat, glory and ignominy, war and peace, as well as courage, pride, and honor. They are also honest enough to write about the mean and the vengeful. The archetypal beauty of man’s struggle with duty in every age is caught, for example, in the *Iliad* in Agamemnon’s speech as he looks at the walls of Troy after nine years of siege (Homer 1976, 49):

And now nine years of mighty Zeus have gone by, and the timbers of our ships have rotted away and the cables are broken and far away our

wives and our young children are sitting within our halls and wait for us, while still our work here stays forever unfinished.

16. The *Republic* belongs in the middle group of the Platonic dialogues completed before Plato was 40. He spent the last half of his 81 years building the Academy and writing the late group of dialogues, closing with the *Laws*, still unedited at the time of his death. The early dialogues are the *Apology* (actually a monologue), *Crito*, *Euthyphro*, *Ion*, *Lesser Hippias*, *Greater Hippias*, *Laches*, *Lysis*, *Menexenus*, *Protagoras*, *Euthydemus*, *Charmides*, *Lovers*, *Hipparchus*, and *First Alcibiades*. The middle dialogues are the *Gorgias*, *Meno*, *Phaedo*, *Symposium*, *Republic*, *Phaedrus*, and *Cratylus*. The late dialogues include the *Theaetetus*, *Parmenides*, *Sophist*, *Statesman*, *Phileus*, *Timaeus*, *Critias*, and *Laws*.

The above lists are placed chronologically by the prominence of certain stylistic features such as the avoidance of hiatus, but this is a fragile aid in the case of a conscious literary artist always revising his work. We do not yet possess an adequate statistical analysis of Plato's style. A rough grouping is possible, however, because the middle and late dialogues are radically different from the early ones. They are much longer, mostly undramatic (especially in their use of Socrates), and above all they are didactic. The stylistic changes reflect a shift away from the personal urgency of Socratic inquiry toward Plato's own views, which the figure of Socrates serves merely to present. This is particularly true in Plato's theory of the good society in the *Republic* and his cosmology in the *Timaeus*.

17. Calling these dispersed settlements colonies is something of a misnomer. A colony was a state-organized enterprise, often sent in a direction that would further the state's interest, but these "colonies," while originally state organized, quickly became independent units. Typically they kept no more than sentimental and religious ties with their mother city, and often, as in the case of Syracuse and Corinth, the daughter far surpassed the mother in wealth and prestige. The settlers remembered more vividly and with more gratitude the man who led them out. Overpopulation, an occasional famine, and political trouble, for example, could easily persuade a government to unload some of its marginal citizens and send them off into the unknown with a religious blessing. Just as mixed were the motives for going: compulsion, desperation, ambition, to farm, to trade, to take a chance. This is precisely how the American colony of Georgia was founded in the 1730s, mostly by the debtors and social outcasts of England. Australia had similar origins.
18. The coup de grace of these idyllic descriptions is when Socrates is in prison under sentence of death. The authorities allow groups of his friends to visit and discuss such questions as whether he should escape and the nature of life after death. Finally, Socrates drinks the hemlock, and his limbs slowly lose sensation as he converses peacefully and rationally. In fact, Athenian prison conditions were not as clean and humane as Plato suggests, and the medical effects of hemlock are not mere numbness of the limbs.
19. The exception is partial because Greek religion is primarily a public religion rather than a religion of the individual. The Greek polis had scores of

gods with anthropomorphic characteristics peculiar to the cult practices of each city. Despite local variations, however, the 12 gods of Olympus presented a recognizable picture throughout the Greek world. The 12 gods are Aphrodite, Apollo, Ares, Artemis, Athena, Demeter, Dionysus, Hephaestus, Hera, Hermes, Poseidon, and Zeus. The personalities of these gods, first explored in the poems of Homer and Hesiod, are given archetypal interpretation in the work of Jungian analyst Jean Shinoda Bolen (1984, 1989).

20. Dorian refers to the powerful ethnic group that invaded Greece in about 1200 and occupied Achaea and especially the Peloponnese about eight years after Troy fell. The Greeks had a romantic story about their arrival called "the return of the Heraclidae." The term "Ionian" refers to the other main linguistic and religious subgroup in ancient Greece, the ethnic group that settled the central west coast of Asia Minor and the offshore islands. They were refugees from the Greek mainland. The precociousness of the Ionians was celebrated throughout the ancient world. See, for example, the brilliant picture in the hymn to Delian Apollo (see Hornblower and Spawforth, 1996).
21. One of the most important functions of the deme was to maintain the citizen lists. There was a complex procedure ensuring enrollment on the citizen list and equally complex legal machinery for appeal in the case of exclusion. Because of the connection with citizenship, membership in the deme remained hereditary, regardless of actual domicile. Every Athenian citizen was required to state his deme in any official transactions. Thus Socrates' official designation was "Socrates son of Sophroniscus of the deme of Alopeke." However great population movements may have been, the deme remained the geographical focus for Athenians not just because they may have lived there at one time, but because that was the place of their authenticated existence.
22. From the early seventh century on, the rules for the Spartan system of military training laid down by her great lawgiver, Lycurgus, turned Sparta into the most efficient military power in Greece. It held ruthless mastery over the southern half of the Peloponnese and by stages acquired subtle control over the rest of the peninsula. Paradoxically, the Spartans also produced a constitution that guaranteed some form of political equality to all citizens. The constitution was unusual in that Sparta retained its hereditary kingship while all other Greek city-states were in process of losing theirs. More oddly still, there were two kings, drawn from two great houses, who by their friendship or rivalries could only emphasize the basic aristocratic principle of the dependence of the small upon the great. The kings were the military commanders. With the council of aristocrats, the *gerousia*, they initiated most political decisions and handed down most judicial opinions. But there was also an assembly of all Spartan citizens that met at fixed times and passed final judgment on most things that mattered. We are speaking of all Spartan citizens who had survived their training and the Spartan wars and who had been allotted state land in the conquered territories with helots (slaves) to work it. They called themselves *homoioi*,

equals. The question remains: what kind of man is produced when a child is completely robbed of home and family between the ages of 5 and 30 and even thereafter is compelled to devote his days to military training and his evenings to the company of his messmates? One answer is the story of Leonidas, king of Sparta from 490 to 480, who marched to the Battle of Thermopylae with 300 men to aid the Athenian cause against a vastly superior Persian army. The 300 were all “men who had sons living.” They repelled Persian assaults for two days, counterattacking fiercely. They all died.

23. The society in which the individual belongs nowhere tends to be united only in its neuroses. American society, easily as pluralized as Athenian society, has increasingly succumbed to Alexis de Tocqueville’s worst-case scenario penned in the 1830s. He feared that narrowly self-interested individualists, disarticulated from the saving constraints and nature of the overlapping associations of social life, would require more and more controls from above to mute the disintegrative effects of individualism. American democracy did free individuals from the constraints of older, undemocratic structures and obligations, but it also unleashed an individualism of a peculiarly cramped sort. An acquisitive commercial republic engenders new forms of social and political domination that Tocqueville called “egoism” to distinguish it from the notions of human dignity and self-responsibility central to a flourishing democratic way of life. All social webs that once held persons intact having disintegrated, the individual finds himself or herself isolated and impotent, exposed and unprotected. He and she then hunker down in defensive lifestyle enclaves, forbidding the entry of others. As political theorist Michael Walzer has written (Walzer 1992, 11–2):

We are perhaps the most individualistic society that ever existed in human history. Compared certainly to earlier, and the Old World societies, we are radically liberated, all of us. Free to plot our own course. To plan our own lives. To choose a career. To choose a partner or a succession of partners. To choose a religion or no religion. To choose a politics or an antipolitics. To choose a lifestyle, any style. Free to do our own thing, and this freedom, energizing and exciting as it is, is also profoundly disintegrative, making it very difficult for individuals to find any stable communal support, very difficult for any community to count on the responsible participation of its individual members. It opens solitary men and women to the impact of a lowest common denominator, commercial culture. It works against commitment to the larger democratic union and also against the solidarity of all cultural groups that constitute our multiculturalism.

24. The position of women in classical Greece changed considerably with the rise of Macedonia under Philip II, 382–336. The great Macedonian princesses of the two generations after Philip’s son, Alexander the Great, 356–323, were, in W. W. Tarn’s words (Tarn 1952, 98),

The most competent group of women the world had yet seen: They played a large part in affairs, received envoys and obtained concessions for them from their husbands, built temples, founded cities, engaged

mercenaries, commanded armies, held fortresses, and acted on occasion as regents or even co-rulers. The influence of a woman like Arsinoe Philadelphus, beautiful, able, masterful, on the men who served her was evidently enormous.

From the Macedonian courts, relative freedom broadened down to the Greek homeland. Those women who desired emancipation, probably a minority, were able to obtain it in considerable measure. Although magistrates called *gnaeconomi* — supervisors of women — appeared in some cities, the only thing they are known to have supervised was the education of girls. Stoicism, which subsequently inspired a better definition of marriage among the Roman jurists, also helped to raise women's status.

25. In Sparta, never a bastion of democracy, the freedom of women was notorious and much disapproved of by philosophers who idealized Sparta otherwise. Spartan women, for example, could inherit land in their own right, so that by the third century two-fifths of the land was in their hands.
26. Agora is simply the Greek term for an area where people gathered together for the political functions of the polis. The area was sacred and subject to rules of purity. There was often a sanctuary there containing an altar to the city's chief god, in the case of Athens of the goddess Athena. The shape of the agora depended on the nature of the available site. It was irregular at Athens but strictly rectangular in newer cities. Architecturally the agora needed to be no more than a space defined by marker stones rather than buildings, as was originally the case at Athens. When buildings were constructed for the various functions of the agora, they were placed along the boundary, which they helped to define, rather than in the agora space itself. The buildings came to include law courts, offices, and meeting places for public officials. Extended porticoes, called stoas, came to dominate the architecture of the agora, often with long lines of rooms behind them.
27. It should be noted that not all Mediterranean city-states were Greek, and that whether they were Greek, Phoenician, Mycenaean, Minoan, or Etruscan, they differed markedly in public administration theory and practice from that of Egypt. Prior to the establishment of the earliest Mediterranean city-state, Carthage, established in 814 by the Phoenician Dido, sister of the king of Tyre-Egypt, had a stable system of public administration based on professionalism and large-scale organization. This system endured for two millennia. Egyptian organization remained personal rather than objective or bureaucratic, contrasting sharply with the small-scale and decidedly amateur public administration of the rest of the Mediterranean basin. Egyptian administration was personal in that civil servants were agents of the pharaoh and partook of his grandeur.
28. This system survives in striking detail in the modern kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The great families, or tribes, of the kingdom are assessed whatever amounts the king finds necessary to remain "protector of the two holy mosques." The king in turn allocates portions of the state's oil revenues to the tribes in his favor. Preference is still given to the descendants of those who fought most valiantly with Abdul Aziz al-Saud when he estab-

lished the kingdom in 1932. Each tribe is also allocated a carefully derived number of ministers to serve in what amounts to a household civil service. When the author traveled to Saudi Arabia several years ago to be made an honorary member of the largest family in Saudi Arabia, the Otabis, he expected to see the family exceptionally well represented in King Faud's service. Not so. "The family of Abdul Aziz is one of the smallest in the kingdom," the author was told. "We must keep the larger families in check by the kinds of offices they are allowed to hold."

29. See Bury (1913, 122). After 85 years of scholarship, Bury remains one of the most dependable sources of information about governmental infrastructure in ancient Greece.
30. Ephors governed in Thera, Cyrene, Euesperides, and Heraclea in Lucania, as well as Sparta. Because these were all Dorian city-states, it is probable that the ephorate predates the Dorian invasion of Greece. The word "ephor" is derived from the Dorian Greek *ouros* meaning "guardian" or "overseer."
31. Alexander Hamilton was taken by the Spartan system and argued for aspects of it at the Constitutional Convention of 1787. He particularly liked the idea of appointing senators for life, after the Spartan *gerousia*. He lost the lifetime-appointment idea for the United States Senate but won it for the Supreme Court. Not quite a monarchist, Hamilton nevertheless believed in strong executive power, and in his official conduct as the first secretary of the treasury he behaved much like an ephor.
32. One cannot consider the relationship between the ephors and the kings of Sparta without recalling the circumstances of the Magna Carta. The "great charter" of English liberties forced upon King John by his barons at Runnymede on June 15, 1215, made England a limited monarchy, as was Sparta. Just as the great Spartan lawgiver, Lycurgus, gathered, adapted, and codified the common law of the Spartan tribes, so did Henry II (1154–1189) send representatives from the King's Bench to the countryside to gather, adapt, and codify the common law of England. King Henry himself, his son John, and every subsequent king and queen of England has been held accountable to the law agreed to at Runnymede. While the Homeric kingship corresponds to modern Saudi Arabia, the Spartan kingship corresponds to modern England.
33. Tyranny hardly ever lasted more than two generations. Tyrants typically ruled in periods of growing confidence and prosperity. They encouraged national cults, sponsored public works, acted as patrons to writers and artists, and glorified both their cities and themselves. But they themselves often became the cause for new discontent.
34. Solon's success lay in his ability to handle property rights issues. Power in Athens at the turn of the sixth century lay with those who controlled a widespread sharecropping system. A large number of Athenians, i.e., "the people," paid one-sixth of their produce to a landowner, not to the state, in return for freedom to work his land. The landowners held a monopoly of the important magistracies and of the membership of the Council of the Areopagus. The council was in fact recruited largely from ex-magistrates. A citizen assembly did exist, but it was allowed only to

show preference for the candidates of one noble faction or another when magistrates were elected. The Council of the Areopagus and the magistrates, indistinguishable in class or interest, ran Athens.

Solon's task, as he perceived it, was to find a way for those who had power to keep it, along with their property and their heads, while giving the people "the dignity that was their due." He accomplished his purpose by focusing on the fact that all debts were secured upon the person of the borrower, so that a defaulting sharecropper became a defaulting debtor. He canceled existing debts and forbade personal security. Sharecropping ceased to exist. "I freed the soil of Attica that had once been enslaved," said Solon (Bury 1913, 108). No Athenian could henceforth suffer the indignity of enslavement for debt. To the property owners, the shrewd Solon gave a radical new law. Access to major political and military office, including the office of archon, previously restricted by convention to a limited group of families, the eupatridae (the "well born"), was now to be determined by wealth in land. All Athenians were divided into four classes. To the top class or classes went the top offices, to the lowest, the thetes, only membership in the assembly. The potential number of "those with power" was doubled. Solon was a practicing politician. He was a good and brave man who gave Athenians a chance at peaceful change. They did not immediately take it. After a half century of intermittent tyranny, a young supporter of Solon, worse still a relative, put himself in charge in 546. His name was Pisistratus.

35. Although Greek contests, *agones*, were most often athletic contests, music, poetry, and equestrian competitions were also popular. The Dionysia and Panathenaea added tragedies, comedies, and dithyrambs (choral songs) to the competitive agenda. They also honored professional reciters of Homer, called rhapsodes, and professional charioteers who would often race nearly nine miles to earn laurel or olive wreaths. Athens was especially generous to victors. By the middle of the fourth century B.C.E., victors at the Great Panathenaea were awarded gold crowns and bulls as well as the traditional amphorae of olive oil. To lose in a contest was shameful, and the incidence of failure-induced depression and mental illness was high.
36. The Persian Wars are a long and complex chapter of Greek history. By 546 the expanding Persian Empire, having absorbed the greater part of the Middle East and Asia Minor, appeared among the Greeks of the Aegean's eastern coastline. The Ionians had previously enjoyed a comparatively nonoppressive dependence on the non-Greek powers of the hinterland, especially Lydia under its amiable King Croesus (560–546). At this time, the Persians installed or supported compliant tyrants in the Ionian cities and moved south to take over Egypt in 525. The Persians then moved along the coast of North Africa and in 514 crossed over into Europe. To the immediate northwest of the Persian homeland they established a presence in Thrace and influence as far west as Macedon. Thus the Greek mainland and offshore islands were beset to the north, south, and east, while another alien power, Carthage, was pressing from the west. The stage was set for a Persian invasion, and the Greek states were divided

in their response to that possibility. Some wanted to collaborate, including the most powerful family in northern Thessaly, the Aleuadae. One of the two Spartan kings, Demaratus, found refuge in the Persian court after a quarrel with the other king, Cleomenes. As Athens was freeing herself of her tyrants and coming to appreciate the democratic constitution that Cleisthenes had advanced, the rejected tyrants were going over to the Persians, including the exiled son of Pisistratus. Finally the Athenians decided to fight. They supported the Ionian cities in a revolt against the Persians in 499 and thus ushered in what the historian Herodotus (1958, 98) called “the beginning of trouble.”

The Persians resolved to punish the Athenians in 490. They sent a fleet with a huge army across the Aegean to land on Attic soil at Marathon. Outnumbered more than four to one, the Athenians won the battle, losing some 200 men to the Persians’ 6,000. Ten years later the Persian king, Xerxes, renewed the war, hurling 200,000 men against the Greeks at the narrow coastal pass of Thermopylae. By now the Spartans had joined the Athenians and sent King Leonidas with a small Peloponnesian force of 300 Spartan “equals” to defend the pass. They held out magnificently for two days against the best that Xerxes could send against them. Every Spartan died. Their Theban allies surrendered. The Greeks evacuated Attica and teased the Persians into a great sea battle in the narrow strait between the island of Salamis and the mainland. The Greek navy under Themistocles won a resounding victory, breaking Xerxes’ fleet and his nerve. On the very same day the Greeks of Syracuse, in Sicily, crushed the Carthaginians at Himera.

37. When an Athenian citizen wished to banish another citizen whom he considered dangerous to the state, all he had to do was pick up one of the many pieces of pottery, known as an ostrakon, that lay about in the market place, write on it the name of the citizen he wished to have banished, and put it in the voting urn placed there especially for that purpose. To be effective, at least 6,000 citizens had to cast such a vote.
38. It is useful to remember that both Aristotle and Plato wrote after the defeat of Athens in the Peloponnesian War, and that both philosophers were concerned about the decline of the city and how to eliminate the ills that beset the body politic. (The material in this section is taken from Aristotle, 1946, Book VI, Chapter VIII).
39. One of Plato’s criticisms of Pericles was that his losing strategy as general during the Peloponnesian War was to stay inside the city walls and rely on Athens’s sea power and superior financial resources to outlast the Spartans. Pericles did not count on a plague that decimated the Athenian population and killed first his two sons and then himself.
40. The fisc or fiscus, originally meaning “basket” or “money bag,” was the public treasury. By Hadrian’s time, in Roman administration, the post of *advocatus fisci* was such a major position that it commanded its own sphere of administrative law, separate from both public and private law.
41. There were still lesser offices, and it is not discernible from Aristotle whether they were common only in the richer city-states or were universal

in the 158 constitutions he surveyed. The responsibilities of these lower offices included the supervision of women, supervision of children, enforcement of obedience to the law, control of physical training, superintendence of athletic contests, and superintendence of dramatic competitions. Aristotle argued forcefully that supervision of women and children was out of place in a democracy.

42. See a complete discussion of these flaws in Bonner (1933).
43. A common practice in Greek public administration about which little is known is the assistance given to magistrates by public and personal slaves, who supplied both scribal ability and administrative expertise to these individuals. The widespread use of boards made up of a representative from each of the ten tribes also added an element of collective responsibility to the use of the power that was available to the magistrates if they chose to use it.
44. Only one theme remains constant in the *Republic* and the *Laws*, and indeed in all of Plato's writings. Foreign trade is such a despised occupation that it must be left to the aliens, who always formed a noncitizen class in Greek cities. One of the worst societies Plato can think of is Carthage, built almost entirely on foreign trade.
45. Despite its organic wholeness, the *Republic* can be seen as a number of treatises. There is a treatise on metaphysics exhibiting the unity of all things in the idea of the good. There is one on moral philosophy investigating the virtues of the human soul and showing their union and perfection in justice. There is a treatise on education, which inspired Rousseau to say of the *Republic*, "It is not a work upon politics, but the finest treatise on education that ever was written." There is a treatise on political science that sketches the polity and the social institutions, especially those of property and marriage, that should regulate the ideal state. And there is a treatise on the philosophy of history that explains the process of historical change and the gradual decline of the ideal state into tyranny. Such differentiation of knowledge into separate studies had not yet publicly appeared, however, as it would with Aristotle. In the *Republic*, the philosophy of man stood as one subject against the other great subject of Greek speculation, the philosophy of nature (see Bonner, 1933, p. 46).
46. In his brilliant *Greek Political Theory*, Sir Ernest Barker (1918) describes the *Republic* as a "philosophy of mind" in all its manifestations. He compares it to Hegel's sketch of philosophy, entitled the "Philosophy of Mind," in which Hegel discusses the inner operations of mind as consciousness and as conscience. Its external manifestations are in law and social morality (the sphere of the state), and its "absolute" activity is in art, religion, and philosophy. The similarities between Platonic and Hegelian thought are striking.
47. See Elshtain (1995), especially chapter 4, "Democracy's Contentious Past."
48. Epideictic oratory is memorial public oratory imbued with an explicit political content. Lincoln's Gettysburg Address is the best American example of this kind of speech making.

49. In drawing these conclusions, Plato was greatly influenced by the Pythagoreans, who looked upon themselves as a small, select community of wisdom in a world of folly. They divided humanity into three types comparable with the three kinds of people who came to the Olympic games: those who came to buy and sell, those who came to compete, and those — the best of all — who came to look on.
50. By the time of the *Laus*, written almost 40 years after the *Republic*, Plato had concluded that the overseer of education should be the best and most illustrious man in the community. In Book VI at 765d he writes that the “President of the Board of Education must be a man over fifty, with children of his own, and elected for a period of five years.” He was to be the premier in Plato’s commonwealth.

The training of the guardians and auxiliaries begins before they are born. The pairing of the parents is arranged by a preconceived plan that is to ensure the highest physical and mental qualities of the offspring. Nothing is left to personal whim or accident from infancy on, and the process of education, both theoretical and practical, continues until the age of 50. Literature, music, physical and military instruction, elementary and advanced mathematics, philosophy and metaphysics, and subordinate military and civil-service assignments (a succession of internships with increasing responsibility followed each time by further study) are the stages of the planned program for training philosopher-rulers. Even after the age of 50, most of the philosopher-rulers’ time will be spent in study, though they all will take their turn at the troublesome duties of public life.

51. The celebrated sophist Thrasymachus argued simply that justice is the interest of the stronger party. He played an important part in the development of Greek oratory by his elaboration of the appeal to the emotions by means of elocution and delivery. He invented a prose style that paid particular attention to rhythm. (See “prose — rhythm, Greek,” in Hornblower and Spawforth 1996, 1260–1261).
52. Modern authoritarian rulers are as well aware as Plato that poetry, fiction, and other kinds of imaginative literature can be more dangerous than factual historical, political, or economic analysis. In this century, three of the most influential books against totalitarian government have been novels: *Darkness at Noon* (Koestler 1984), *1984* (Orwell 1990), and *Dr. Zhivago* (Pasternak 1997).
53. An illustration of a medicinal lie is the fable of the origins of the class system, according to which God put gold into those who are fit to rule, silver into the auxiliaries, and iron and brass into the farmers and craftsmen. “I shall try to convince,” Socrates says, “first the rulers and the soldiers, and then the whole community,” and if they accept this fable, all three classes will think of each other as “brothers born of the same soil” and will be ready to defend their land, which they will eventually think of as “mother and nurse.” It is significant that Plato’s example of a medicinal lie relates not to a matter of subordinate expediency and convenience, but to the root of his ideal political community, namely, the inequality of the threefold class system.

54. Guardian women who have given birth may nurse infants, but not their own. Each mother nurses the anonymous baby presented to her when she enters the segregated children's quarter of the city. Should a mother get to know her own infant, she would have a private loyalty at odds with her unitary bond to the city. Should the infant be inferior, it would be sent down to the lower orders, and a mother bonded to her baby might object to such a necessary move. Plato wanted no unpleasanties in his guardian encampment.
55. J. B. Elshtain (1993) takes Plato fully to task at this point in her *Public Man, Private Woman: Women in Social and Political Thought*.
56. See Portis (1994), particularly chapter 2, "Plato and the Politics of Beauty."
57. Epaminondas's invasion of the Peloponnese in 367 finally put an end to Sparta's 300-year-old Peloponnesian League and liberated Messenia. Plato began work on the *Laws* shortly after that, probably on his return from Syracuse in the year 360 at the age of 68. Thus Plato spent the last 13 years of his life on the *Laws*, dying before he could revise, edit, and polish the work. It was put in circulation by his friends within a year of his death in 347.
58. Plato himself was asked to legislate for Megalopolis, and, though he declined, Plutarch tells us he sent Aristonymus to do the job. At other times he sent Phormio to Elis, Menedemus to Pyrrha, Eudoxus to Cnidus, and Aristotle to Staginus.
59. There is a palpable difference between the *Republic* and the *Laws* in this respect. In the former, the argument may wander from the road, but it stays fairly close at hand and can be readily brought back. In the latter, the argument wanders farther afield until Plato awakens to that fact and seeks to recall it by devious ways. "The argument ought to be pulled up from time to time, and not be allowed to run away, but held with bit and bridle" (Plato 1960, 701c).
60. At this point one can only ponder Madison's (1987, 78) statement about the United States Constitution: "We are founding a great commercial republic in which interest will play the role of virtue."
61. Even a cursory reading of Plato reveals his fascination with numbers. Mathematics was by no means the only science he cultivated at the Academy, but it was the one in which he exercised the most thoroughgoing influence on later intellectual developments. All the chief writers of geometrical textbooks known to us between the founding of the Academy and the rise of the scientific schools of Alexandria were scholars Plato brought to Athens to work with him. Theaetetus completed the edifice of solid geometry at the Academy, for example, and Eudoxus invented the ancient equivalent of integral calculus.
62. Among the many other duties of the Board of Family Life and the Board of Ladies, perhaps the most interesting is Plato's insistence on enforcing the law that men must marry between 30 and 35 and women between 16 (or 18) and 20. One of the reasons we know Plato did not live to edit the *Laws* is that at paragraph 785 he says age 16 for women, and at paragraph 833 he says 18. He was too fastidious a writer to let such an inconsistency go uncorrected. The man who published the *Laws* within a year of Plato's

- death, his pupil and amanuensis, Philip of Opus, chose to let this and other discrepancies stand.
63. The modern reader is impressed by the special severity with which injuries committed by a slave on free persons is treated. Plato and his contemporaries considered such crimes mutiny and the most fundamental threat to the sacred order.
 64. Thomas Jefferson in volume XIV of his collected works strongly disagrees with any credit given to Plato for a positive influence on Christianity. In a letter to John Adams on July 5, 1814, Jefferson (1903, 148–9) says, “In truth Plato is one of the race of genuine sophists, who has escaped the oblivion of his brethren, first, by the elegance of his diction, but chiefly, by the adoption and incorporation of his whimsies into the body of artificial Christianity. His foggy mind is forever presenting the semblances of objects that, half seen through a mist, can be defined neither in form nor dimensions. Yet this, which should have consigned him to early oblivion, really procured him immortality of fame and reverence. The Christian priesthood, finding the doctrines of Christ leveled to every understanding, and too plain to need explanation, saw in the mysticism of Plato materials with which they might build up an artificial system, which might, from its indistinctness, admit everlasting controversy, give employment for their order, and introduce it to profit, power, and preeminence.”
 65. There are striking similarities between Book X of the *Laws* and the beliefs and practices of the theocracy of Puritan Massachusetts. The Puritan divines constantly called upon the civil magistrates to suppress heresy.
 66. The Protestant Reformation is based on the worst of Plato’s heresies. The selling of indulgences by the papacy, with the buyer escaping God’s judgment by such a gift of money, was the last straw for Martin Luther and other Augustinian monks who, like St. Augustine, had drunk deeply of Platonic philosophy.
 67. The prosecutor in Athens was very similar in the role he played to the prosecutor in modern American courts. The severe penalty of death for motives of personal gain in the *Laws* is because of the heinousness of the attempt to make the court of justice itself accessory to the infliction of a wrong.
 68. The number of men on the council varies because it must include all ex-ministers of education, as many as are living, as well as the current minister. The other members are ten judges and ten younger men between the ages of 30 and 40.
 69. The *Laws*, P. 965, c, d, e.
 70. A close reading of the *Laws* reveals many echoes of the *Republic*. Plato’s vision of philosopher kings recurs at pp. 709e-712a, for example. At p. 739b-e, and again at p. 807b, he again affirms that the communism of the *Republic* is the true ideal.
 71. See “Political Theory,” *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, pp. 1206–1207.
 72. See, for example, Alan Briskin (1996, 29–31), especially the dance of souls in organizations.

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Chapter 2

Aristotle, MacIntyre, and Virtue Ethics

Thomas Dexter Lynch and Cynthia E. Lynch

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Introduction

Virtue ethics is properly associated with Aristotle (384–322 B.C.E.), but in our times it is also properly associated with Alasdair MacIntyre, who currently is a senior research professor at the University of Notre Dame. For many centuries, it was the primary approach to ethics, but with the influence of modernism and postmodernism in the 20th century, virtue ethics fell out of favor. One of the cornerstones of virtue ethics is the concept of *telos* (end purpose), which this chapter shall explore in the context of the professional practice of public administration.

The organization of this chapter is divided into several parts. After this brief introduction, the next section discusses Aristotle in the context of his life and times and virtue ethics as he created it. Next, the chapter presents a description of the critique of virtue ethics. The chapter then addresses MacIntyre and his concept of practice. Next, the chapter explains the interrelationship of practice and profession. And finally, some conclusions are offered. Essentially, this chapter argues that MacIntyre's philosophic contribution to virtue ethics means that virtue ethics is again quite relevant to professions such as public administration. This relevance is applicable to those who not only reject the extremes of modernism and postmodernism, but also to those who embrace them.

Aristotle

Aristotle in Context

Aristotle was born in 384 B.C.E. at Stagirus, which was a Greek colony and seaport on the coast of Thrace. His father Nichomachus was the court physician to King Amyntas of Macedonia, but he died while Aristotle was still a boy. However, a close relationship to the Macedonian court was established, and it influenced him throughout his life. At age 17 his guardian, Proxenus, sent him to Athens, then the intellectual center of the world, to complete his education.

He joined Plato's Academy and studied under Plato for a period of 20 years and eventually lectured at the Academy, primarily on the subject of rhetoric or what today is often called speech. However, during his tenure at the Academy, Aristotle's worldview grew increasingly different from that of his mentor in many ways, including a great acceptance of democratic political systems and a stronger focus on ethics. His divergence from Plato's teachings prevented him from assuming the leadership of the Academy upon the death of Plato in 347, in spite of his preeminent abilities.

He left the Academy and became a scholar in residence at a succession of Greek city-states. First, at the invitation of his friend King Hermeas, he

served at the court of Atarneus and Assos in Mysia. He stayed there for three years and married Pythias, who was the niece of the king. In later life he was married a second time to a woman named Herpyllis, who bore him a son, Nichomachus. The Persians conquered King Hermeas's kingdom and Aristotle moved to Mytilene. Later, at the invitation of Philip of Macedonia, he became the tutor of Philip's 13-year-old son Alexander (who was later known as Alexander the Great) for a period of five years. Eventually, Alexander succeeded his father to the throne. Both Philip and Alexander had the highest regard for Aristotle.

When Aristotle's teaching assignment was finished in Macedonia, he returned to Athens, which he had not visited since the death of Plato. He found the Platonic school flourishing under Xenocrates, and Platonism was the dominant philosophy of Athens. At Lyceum, Aristotle set up his own school, where he had the habit of walking about as he discoursed, and thus his followers became known as the peripatetics, meaning "to walk about." For the next 13 years he focused on teaching and his philosophical treatises. His habit was to give his more detailed discussions in the morning for an inner circle of advanced students and then give his popular discourses to a larger crowd in the evening.

After the sudden death of Alexander in 323 B.C.E., the pro-Macedonian government in Athens was overthrown. There was a general negative reaction against anything Macedonian, including Aristotle, and a charge of impiety was issued against him. To escape prosecution by the citizens of Athens, he fled to Chalcis in Euboea. In doing so, he recalled how those same citizens a few decades earlier had ordered the execution of Socrates. In the first year of his residence at Chalcis, he complained of a stomach illness and died in 322 B.C.E. (Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy 2001).

Hedonism

Given Aristotle's Macedonian roots, one should not be surprised that he argued against hedonism, which was a popular doctrine in Athens at the time and remains influential in Western civilization today. Hedonism, which is commonly employed today as an ethical philosophy and moral practice, says that the purpose of life is to seek pleasure and avoid pain. Under hedonism, the only moral obligation is a personal gratification of one's desire for pleasure and the eradication or at least minimization of pain so far as possible.

There were several schools of hedonist thought. Some hedonists simply emphasized momentary sensual pleasures, while others devoted equal attention to avoiding pain. The Egoistic school strove for the utmost self-gratification regardless of any painful consequences it brought to others,

but others argued that avoiding pain for themselves and even others was important. The Cyrenaic school, founded by Aristippus (435–356 B.C.E.), argued that a person should enjoy every momentary pleasure to the fullest, lest that person lose the opportunity for such an experience forever. This is a version of the modern aphorism, “Make hay while the sun shines.” They reasoned that because pleasure was the only good, then everyone should take advantage of all opportunities to enjoy pleasure and postpone nothing. This reasoning is reminiscent of the economic notion of opportunity costs. These hedonists were not concerned about any future life that they might have, but only with their personal pleasure at the present moment.

Epicurus (342–270 B.C.E.) disagreed with the Cyrenaic school’s indiscriminate pursuit of all pleasures. He argued that many immediate pleasures are eventually detrimental and that a person should avoid those pleasures. Indiscriminately following the maxim — “eat, drink, and make merry, for tomorrow we die” — often results in disaster because one does not die but instead suffers the consequences of his excesses of ill-chosen pleasures. Therefore, he argued for the use of discrimination in the selection of pleasures. For him, prudence was the best criterion to use in life. The avoidance of pain was much more important than the pursuit of pleasure. The Greek hedonist Ideal Utilitarian school argued for only those pleasures to which a person is rightfully entitled and advocated a goal of the greatest possible benefits for all humankind.

Socrates

Socrates (470–399 B.C.E.), who preceded Aristotle, also disagreed with the hedonists. He argued that all events that affect a person’s life are of great importance and need to be carefully examined because the unexamined life is not worth living. He felt that to know oneself completely, including one’s conscious and unconscious self, permits one to achieve power, self-control, and success in its deepest sense. As humans, we encounter what we call “problems” because we truly do not know ourselves, such as our true nature, limitations, abilities, motives, and personalities. He felt that the reason we commit wrong moral actions is due to our ignorance of self.

To be successful, we need to see our spiritual inner self. Knowing the inner self intimately allows us to know what to do in situations. Unfortunately, proximity to oneself does not guarantee insight into the inner self. It takes the additional knowledge called “wisdom,” sometimes referred to as “spiritual wisdom.” To Socrates, self-knowledge was an essential good, and valuing self-knowledge was a critical virtue. Virtue is happiness because, if one is doing what is right, one is acting morally, which is always in our own best interest and will also result in personal happiness.

Aristotle and Self-Realization

Influenced by Socrates and Plato, Aristotle developed a system of ethical thought focusing on self-realization similar to the highest point on Abraham Maslow's (1908–1970) hierarchy of human needs that was argued many centuries later. Maslow argued that, as humans, we first satisfy physiological needs, next security needs, then needs for esteem from others, then the need for self-esteem from a sense of competence, and finally a need for self-actualization (Gwynne, 2005). Many centuries earlier, Aristotle reasoned that the “good life” gives us pleasure because the individual can fulfill his or her potentialities, character, and personality. Each person must convert these potentialities into actualities. If that is not done, then the person will feel lost and frustrated, which is often manifested in illness and unhappiness.

Aristotle had a deep faith in God, as did Socrates. Unlike most current Western religions, they viewed God as being the universe and more, rather than a separate being apart from humankind. To Aristotle, God does nothing in vain. Rather, God does everything with a purpose, including the creation of all things. Each human being has his or her own natural purposes or *telos*, which is his or her proper function and goal in life. The accomplishment or fulfillment of that function and goal brings a sense of satisfaction, beauty, and happiness to the person. As human beings, we have a variety of goals, but the ultimate goal is happiness, and all other goals are merely intermediate goals toward achieving that happiness.

Aristotle felt that the attainment of happiness depended entirely upon self-actualization. He argued that man's highest nature is found in the realm of the mind. For example, the fullest expression of scientific or philosophic thought produces the greatest happiness. Thus, the contemplation of the mind is the activity that produces a person's highest satisfaction. Each of us has a threefold nature: the physical, the emotional, and the rational. Like Maslow, Aristotle argued that we must fulfill each in succession. For example, good physical health induces a sense of well-being. Proper exercise helps sustain the body. Enjoyment of the senses, such as appetites and instincts, brings fulfillment. However, rationality brings us the greatest happiness that can be achieved as it fulfills the potential of the mind and prevents us from engaging in excesses of the physical and sensual appetites.

Aristotle's Rationality and Virtue

Aristotle associated the highest nature of rationality with virtue. Habitual practice of the moderate virtues allows one to “program” those virtues into one's life. He considered anything done to the extreme always evil;

thus, he argued for virtues that were in the zone of the mean between the extremes. For example, courage is the mean virtue between cowardice and recklessness. The virtuous person is one who practices virtuous conduct such as courage throughout one's lifetime in a habitual manner to the extent that it becomes a part of his or her personality rather than a single one-time act of heroism. Some of the more important virtues in an infinite list of virtues include temperance, magnanimity, gentleness, truthfulness, wittiness, friendliness, modesty, and righteous indignation. The sum of all the virtues in the mean is justice.

For Aristotle, happiness meant a life well lived, which resulted from acting with one's highest virtues. Making moral decisions is simple, but it is not easy. A person makes those decisions based on an inner-self-programmed set of moderate virtues that, practiced over a lifetime, have become habitual. That is the "simple" part. However, to Aristotle, virtue meant doing the right thing in relation to the right person, at the right time, to the right extent, in the right manner, and with the right intent. That is the part that is not easy. Aristotle's concept of "mean" is very similar to the Buddha's teaching on the importance of the middle path.

Aristotle and Virtue Ethics

Over 2,000 years ago, Aristotle approached ethics with a keen awareness of hedonism and the thinking of both his teacher Plato and Plato's teacher Socrates. He dismissed and opposed hedonism by taking the perspective that the good life was more than merely living a life of maximized pleasure. He believed that life, and indeed the meaning of life, has a purpose beyond the maximization of pleasure. He saw everything in terms of causes: material, efficient, formal, and final. Material causes are the elements out of which a person or persons create an object. For example, the material cause of a bronze statue is the bronze itself. The efficient cause is the means by which someone creates the object. In the bronze statue example, it is the creative mind and skilled hands of the sculptor that is the efficient cause. The formal cause is the expression of what it is. For the statue, it is in particular the sculptor's, but also the viewers' idea of the completed statue. The final cause is the end for which it was created.

Thus, the final cause is the final end, purpose, teleology, or *telos*. In some cases, the formal cause and the final cause are the same or are approximately the same. The *telos* is the full perfection of the object itself in terms of the ideal for which it was created. Thus, the final cause is internal to the very nature of the object itself, and it is not something the artist or anyone else subjectively imposes on it.

To Aristotle, life itself has a final purpose for each person. It is in the very nature of the person, and it is not something that the person subjectively assigns to the self or that anyone else imposes on the person. The good life for each person is about moving toward that perfection. Aristotle saw the essence of a person as being his or her human soul, which has both irrational and rational elements involving three tiers. Humans share with animals an irrational element that he called its “vegetative faculty,” which is associated with nutrition and growth. This is the first tier. The second tier is the “appetitive faculty,” which gives us joy, grief, hope, and fear. These emotions and desires are a mixture of irrational and rational behaviors. The irrational behaviors are pure animal behaviors, and the rational is the logic that we exercise to control our dysfunctional irrational behavior. The third tier is the “rational calculative,” which is the focus of morality. It conjoins moral virtue and controls desires with contemplative reason and logic. The mastery of such reasoning is called “intellectual virtue” (Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy 2001).

Critique of Virtue Ethics

The Role of Telos

One way to argue that Aristotle is wrong is merely to disagree that a person has a final purpose and thereby assert there is no purpose or meaning to life. With that logic, life just *is* and nothing more. There is no soul and or human essence that can be perfected. Because there is no final cause, there is no final purpose that is internal to the very nature of humankind, and to the extent that such values are assigned, they are subjectively assigned by the person or imposed by others on the person (Zinaich 2003).

This counterargument simply disagrees with the underlying assumption of Aristotle’s argument. For much of human history, such an argument was difficult to make because most of society believed that God existed, and most concurred that somehow God had created a purposeful life for humankind that had some sort of deeper meaning or *telos*. As the 20th century became increasingly secular, due in part to the influence of modernism and postmodernism, human progress was less associated with the notion of God and the logical certainty of a human *telos*. Thus, this counterargument that there is no purpose to life becomes more socially acceptable in the intellectual community and therefore carries significantly more weight in the early 21st century.

The teleology of Aristotle assumes that the universe has a design and purpose. A correct treatment of Aristotle must emphasize that he used teleology, but he also was highly critical of the use of teleology by his

predecessor and would probably disagree with many that came after him. For example, he did not advocate a teleology that fits with creation, design, and providence, which is central to Christian, Muslim, and even Platonic thought. His was not a mechanistic world picture (Johnson 2002).

Nevertheless, his views were teleological and therefore subject to critiques arguing that there is no end purpose to life or to humans. One can see teleology in Aristotle's concept of nature where he notes that the end of a thing is also its function. For example, plants and animals have natural existence. An acorn has an inherent tendency to grow into an oak tree, and thus the tree exists not by chance or craft but rather by nature. In *Eudemian Ethics*, *Nicomachean Ethics*, and *Politics*, Aristotle argued that humans also have a natural function. For example, part of human nature is that humans are political and adaptive to life in the city-state. Thus, for Aristotle, political naturalism is a foundation of his political philosophy (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy 2004).

To Aristotle, anything that inhibits the fulfillment of the complete attainment of the *telos* is bad or at least dysfunctional. To him, nature operates for the sake of an end, and that end, by definition, is good. For example, sleeping is natural, necessary, and beneficial. For human beings, the ultimate good or happiness consists in perfection of the full attainment of the human natural function, which is the full realization of the soul through reason. He recognized that his notion of the ideal is generally impossible to realize, and his fallback position was to argue for the attainment of the ideal as much as possible. To Aristotle, the good was objective and independent of human wishes, but it was also relative to the organism's natural end (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy 2004).

Modernism and Postmodernism

Modernism greatly influenced Western culture, with its focus on doubt arising out of René Descartes' (1596–1650) famous statement: “Cogito ergo sum,” meaning “I think (doubt), therefore I am.” In other words, the only thing that anyone can know for certain is one's own existence and nothing else. With this landmark logic, modernists subject everything to doubt and demand the most careful inquiry possible to create what they accept as knowledge in the form of theory that they always subject to challenge. This extremely careful methodological approach is the hallmark of modern science and is the basis of the so-called scientific method that has brought so much progress to humankind. Auguste Comte (1798–1857) created a version of modernism called positivism or empiricism by building not only on Descartes, but also on the work of Francis Bacon (1561–1626), Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679), and John Locke (1632–1704).

Locke and others challenged the basic assumptions of virtue ethics. Any normative ethical theory is logically built on assumptions, and all assumptions except one's own existence are subject to doubt according to the logic of Descartes. Locke focused his doubt of Aristotle on the concept that *essence* determines the function of the object. According to Aristotle, each object, including people, have an essence, and the extent of maximization of that essence determines whether the state of the object is poor, acceptable, good, or excellent. As previously noted, the "good life," to Aristotle, was the attainment of human excellence, which meant self-actualization.

Locke took issue with the concept that an object has an essence that could reflect a quality. Philosophers refer to Aristotle's assumption that an object has a distinctive natural goal as *telos*. Locke rejected the Aristotelian essence of an object or *telos* by using the concept of intersubjectivity. Locke said, "To return to general Words, it is plain, by what has been said, That General and Universal, belong not to the real existence of things, but are the Inventions and Creatures of the Understanding, made by it for its use, and concern only Signs, whether Words, or Ideas" (III.iii.11). In other words, Locke argues against Aristotle's notion of *telos* by stating that general and universal natures do not exist, and therefore the concept of *telos* is nonexistent because it makes no sense. Instead, species, such as humans, are merely abstract ideas of our minds. Thus, they cannot have an essence (Sahakian and Sahakian 1993).

Logical Positivists and Postmodernists

The modern empiricist employs experience instead of logical reasoning *per se* as the source of knowledge. In particular, British empiricists argued that a community of scholars, or even one scholar, must base all knowledge or truth upon experience, such as careful observations, rather than using pure logic as a technique for understanding knowledge. In the early and middle 20th century, Bertrand Russell (1872–1970) argued that only assertions affirmed by the rigorous methodology of science were and should be considered knowledge. Thus, all value judgments, including ethics, goodness, beauty, truth, and morality, cannot be considered knowledge but are merely emotions and consequently are not verifiable. Clearly, this very strong and influential argument significantly dismissed ethics in general and virtue ethics especially.

In the middle of the 20th century, Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889–1951) helped develop postmodernism. He argued that our individual and group values place us within logical sets of beliefs called paradigms. One can logically exist and argue right and wrong within a paradigm with its specific values, but one cannot logically argue across paradigms. You

cannot say another person is wrong if they adhere to a different set of beliefs and values. Thus, only moral relativism is possible, and theorizing about a universal code of proper conduct in pursuit of a “good” life is logically impossible (Fox and Miller 1993). Wittgenstein’s very influential argument dismisses universal approaches to ethics such as virtue ethics (Sahakian and Sahakian 1993).

Critical Analysis of the Critics

This section looks more carefully at the logic of the arguments proposed by Locke, by logical positivists such as Russell, and by postmodernists such as Wittgenstein. As noted by Sahakian and Sahakian (1993), the problem with Locke is that his arguments contain two fallacies. He used an intuitionist argument building on the reasoning of Descartes. The fact that one cannot, without a doubt, say that the reality of some general and universal nature exists does not mean that the opposite is true — that it does not exist. It just means that you cannot prove it. This is simple logic.

On all matters beyond one’s own existence, faith and its opposite, doubt, are a part of the human existence called life. Both exist and are needed for us to exist in life. Even the notion that one is awake rather than dreaming requires some faith that one’s assumption is correct. However, to keep an open mind, one must also allow some doubt to exist because one may indeed be dreaming. The solution to maximizing certainty in life is to use a methodology that narrows the necessary leap of faith and thus minimizes the application of doubt given the conditions under investigation. That is the wisdom underlying the scientific method.

A second fallacy of Locke’s position is inconsistency in his argument. In one section of his thesis, Locke argued that all natural thinking has a real constitution of its parts. Thus, he refuted the intuitionist position in one place, but in another place he assumed an intuitionist position. Logic precludes having it both ways. Either one takes or does not take an intuitionist position. Locke’s argument fails because of this inherent contradiction.

The antivirtue-ethics arguments of some positivists and logical positivists also fail due to their flawed logic. Both groups embrace the scientific method as *the* way to define knowledge. However, there is a difference between knowledge and certain knowledge. Reasoning from Descartes, there really is a scale of certainty from knowing your own existence to “knowledge” that is based entirely on faith assumptions. This distinction is important. The fact that one cannot determine a fact or concept as “certain knowledge” does not automatically and necessarily mean that the concept is not accurate and is therefore false knowledge. This is the logical error of the positivists and logical positivists. Instead, it merely means that

doubt is particularly appropriate for that given fact or concept that we take as *possible* knowledge.

Consider the problem of a bridge that is used to move traffic across a river. We do not know for certain that the bridge will not collapse with our weight. Given that we do not have certain knowledge of the safety of the bridge, we could simply refuse to use the bridge. However, under normal circumstances, almost all of us would employ our faith and assume that the bridge is safe and cross over the river. Nevertheless, doubt should always remain in our mind. For example, if we see danger signs such as the poor condition of the construction of the bridge, doubt rather than faith might reasonably prevail, and we would decide to not use that bridge. In other words, faith and doubt are both appropriate, and which prevails is, or should be, a matter of judgment.

The scientific method is merely a methodology. Its value is that it helps us narrow the gap for the leap of faith we take when we use our judgment. The problem with this methodology is that the strictness of its approach can often mean that it cannot be employed in all circumstances where we need to be certain about our knowledge. For example, we cannot run a \$100,000 scientific test on a bridge every time someone wants to cross it. We can test it after it is built and occasionally during its useful life, but absolute certainty that the bridge is safe at a specific moment in time becomes an impossible standard to meet. If the bridge is to be useful to society, some degree of faith is needed that the bridge is safe.

There are some occasions where the community would be wiser to accept a longer leap of faith rather than employ doubt in arriving at what is accepted as “knowledge.” In other words, the scientific method might occasionally be dysfunctional. That certainly appears to be true for practical inquiry involving ethics. Just because one cannot scientifically prove beauty, love, and virtue does not mean that they do not exist and are not important in our lives.

As a practical matter and for purposes of inquiry, we can assume that objects have an intersubjective quality, such as being a chair. This does not dispute the pure intuitionist point, because the asserted quality is merely an apparent consensus on what is “chairness.” Of a practical concern is that others, such as interior designers, can use “chairness” to create forms of chairs for varying circumstances and tastes. In the same vein as “chair,” we can assert, as did Aristotle, that there is something called “humanness.” We can also build on the scholarship of Maslow and accept certain qualities as “acceptable knowledge” that describes “humanness.” Thus, the work of Maslow does serve to reinforce Aristotle and helps us identify a human *telos*.

The arguments of postmodernists against virtue ethics also fail. For instance, assume that there is a strong desire to avoid violence in settling

disputes. If postmodernism is correct, then people arguing with logically different value paradigms cannot resolve their disputes with logic. With some forms of postmodernism, society essentially gives each person ethical permission to be extremely hedonistic, even to the point of killing and stealing, as there is no logical way to assert what is right and wrong behavior. In a society of law and order, the legal system would curb killing and stealing. However, without the added social and individual incentive of ethical norms in society, the legal system would find more people resorting to killing and stealing to advance their hedonistic or other agendas. Thus, there would be an increasing likelihood of a breakdown of civilization. In this example, the postmodernist preference for moral relativism is dysfunctional.

For purposes of discussion, let us agree with the postmodernists that language is a barrier to intersubjective agreement on the meaning of such concepts as the “essence of humanness.” However, even this agreement with the postmodernists is not saying that leaders and intellectuals in the world can *never* reach a practical and working agreement on what they call the “essence of humanness.” To say otherwise would be to fall into the same fallacious logic of Locke and some positivists and logical positivists. If those groups have in common some basis to reach such a consensus, then there is a reasonable hope that a *telos* can be defined. If a practical *telos* can be accepted, then an intersubjective, global virtue ethics is possible.

MacIntyre and Contemporary Virtue Ethics

MacIntyre and the Concept of Practice

In the 20th century, the hedonism of utilitarianism was the dominant ethical norm, but certainly Kantian views were also highly influential. Modernists argued that Aristotle’s virtue ethics was foolishness because of its nonempirical qualities. Postmodernists, such as G. E. Moore (1873–1958) in his *Principia Ethica*, took an emotive approach to ethics and claimed that moral precepts were mere preferences of an individual’s emotions rather than an absolute value that existed separate from the individual. Thus, ethics and morals became individuated and relativistic. There was no common ground for moral reference involving a meaningful dialogue. To MacIntyre, the intellectual community had lost its theoretical and practical moral compass, and his solution was to return once more to virtue ethics.

MacIntyre argues that the failure of the emotive approach to ethics, with its attack on virtue ethics, is separating the individual’s experience from his or her social and historical community. To do so is nonsensical,

and the result is the nonsense of 20th-century moral philosophical dialogue that exists without communication among the parties in the moral debate. There is no established way of deciding among moral claims, and thus moral debate is left as a logical impossibility. Essentially, those in a moral debate merely argue intuitively, and their justifications are hinged on their adopted moral systems, which have no grounding beyond personal preference, thus rendering rational debate impossible (McKay 2004).

Like Aristotle, MacIntyre (1984, 50) wants to define “good” in such a way that reason can be used to determine its existence. In other words, he wants a teleology that is similar to Aristotle’s *telos* and wants a “good” that someone can define without reference to a preferential concept that is only emotive in character. He wants acting morally to be a matter of rational pursuit predicated upon factual determinations. Good must be functionally defined.

MacIntyre (1984, 50) achieves his purpose by noting the functionality of a watch and a farmer. He notes that the concept of a watch cannot be defined independently of the concept of a “good” watch. In parallel, the concept of a farmer cannot be defined independently of the concept of a “good” farmer. In other words, to MacIntyre, like Aristotle, functionality is the key to moral reasoning. Teleology again becomes the basis for introducing rationality into the moral debate, but for MacIntyre this type of reasoning is only possible because of the contextual nature of good in society.

For MacIntyre (1984, 150), every practice has an aim, an end purpose, or what we call a *telos*. When people engage in a practice, then rationality can inform them of what is good and bad behavior. Thus, by its very nature, a practice has an end purpose, and those so engaged in it have a *telos*. Correspondingly, one can use rational thought to define virtues that better enable a person to achieve what Aristotle called *eudaimonia* (happiness), and failing to apply those virtues frustrates the *telos* of the practice. Acting virtuously is to act from an inclination formed by the cultivation of virtues, and thus there is a very central rational component in virtuous behavior. Virtuous behavior is a continual series of choices, often established with a rational selection of traits, that further the likelihood that the *telos* will be achieved. Practice is the key to MacIntyre’s version of virtue ethics.

He defines practice as follows (MacIntyre 1984, 187):

By a practice I’m going to mean any coherent and complex form of socially established cooperative human activity through which goods internal to the form of activity are realized in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence which are appropriate to, and practically definitive of, that form of

activity, with the result that human powers to achieve excellence, and the human conceptions of the ends and goods involved, are systematically extended.

The key to his definition is the notion of internal goods. He illustrates the concept with an example from the game of chess. Although the end result of the game might appear to be defeating the opponent, the true end purpose is mastering the moves, strategies, and intricacies of the game. If one cheats to win and achieves a win “by hook or by crook,” the player only denies himself or herself the true benefit of engagement in the process of the game and has therefore lost any value in the meaning of the game itself.

MacIntyre notes: “A practice involves standards of excellence and obedience to rules as well as the achievement of goods. To enter into a practice is to accept the authority of those standards and the inadequacy of my own performance as judged by them” (MacIntyre 1984, 190). To apply ethics and to be moral requires virtues, and existing without them means that the individual’s “good” cannot be achieved. MacIntyre defines virtue as, “an acquired human quality the possession and exercise of which tends to enable us to achieve those goods which are internal to practice and the lack of which effectively prevents us from achieving any such goods” (MacIntyre 1984, 191).

So what is the link between virtue and practice? Virtues sustain a practice. They give individuals “internal goods” and thus serve as a motivation to overcome the dangers, temptations, and distractions so common in life. Internal goods are intangible positive feelings about the self, whereas external goods are tangible benefits resulting from honor, money, and power. Virtues sustain the person’s activity in practice and encourage the person to move toward the fundamental end purpose of that practice. Virtues are a means, but they also become the ultimate end, as they define the character or inner self of the person who is engaged in his or her practice (MacIntyre 1984, 219).

MacIntyre takes the notion of teleology from Aristotle and redefines it as a social teleology (McKay 2004). Confronting modernism and postmodernism, MacIntyre makes Aristotle relevant again by stressing the social contextual nature of human existence. Morality again is brought back into the realm of the rational, and moral debate is once again coherent. Indeed, virtue ethics is again important.

Practice and Professionalism

This section argues that the notion of “practice” includes the concept of what is commonly called a profession. To enter into a practice is to enter

into a relationship not only with a community of contemporary practitioners, but also with those who preceded you and those who will follow you in that practice. The contemporary community of public administration, as in any other practice, is in a particularly salient relationship with those earlier practitioners who extended the reach and worth of the practice to its present point of evolution. Practices are *not* institutions, which are necessarily concerned with external goods. Nevertheless, institutions are critical to practice, as they sustain both the practice and the practitioner and characteristically form an identifiable order. For example, a doctor often works in the context of a hospital, and a public servant works in the context of a government agency. In addition, the ideals and the creativity of the practice are always vulnerable to the realities of institutions; but the virtuous practice provides a counter to such realities as the corrupting power of institutions and the tendency to overwhelm the government processes with ever more complex Kantian rules and regulations.

In the Kantian and utilitarian contemporary world view, a profession, such as public administration, is simply a social arena in which each individual in the profession pursues his or her own self-chosen concept of the good life. Political institutions exist to provide order, which makes self-determination possible. In this contemporary view, government should promote law-abidingness, but the legislative function should not inculcate any one moral view.

In contrast, the virtue-ethics worldview not only requires the exercise of virtues, but it also encourages the development of moral and ethical judgment in its members. Each member should look to the professional community to define his or her professional *telos*. In this view, political institutions should exist to help each professional self-actualize. The legislative function of government should not be used to create a particular moral view, but rather to foster an environment that facilitates continuing moral development and an improved moral judgment within the profession and the nation's people.

Of importance in Aristotle's modified reasoning by MacIntyre is that a "practice" is a means that members of the profession associate, and that association includes common standards of excellence. In other words, a practice such as public administration involves standards of excellence, often obedience to rules and being influenced by virtues, and the achievement of goods and services. In addition, as noted by MacIntyre, there are internal and external goods that result from the practice. With external goods that characteristically result from competition, there are losers and winners as some gain or lose more than others in what the profession does and does not produce in the various institutions in which they serve. With internal goods, the achievement is a good for the whole institution,

the professional community, and the individual's professional inner self. There are no losers if the professionals produce internal goods.

MacIntyre defines virtue as an acquired human quality that tends to enable us to achieve internal goods. This is important to public administration, as every practice requires a certain kind of relationship among those who participate in it. As public administrators perform their practice, they engage in a shared purpose and shared sense of their standards of excellence. Both influence their professionalism.

In our contemporary world, one can easily ignore, assume, or say that the *telos* of public administration does not exist, and maybe even that it should not exist. They can argue that public administration is just a job and merely a means to advance a person's power and fortune. Certainly, this is a common hedonistic worldview, but one can also argue that being a professional in public administration is a uniquely important job, and maybe more important than many other jobs. Certainly, many private-sector jobs in society are useful to society, but public-sector jobs have a concern for the public's interest at their core. For example, they place a value on teaching a child to read, protecting a neighborhood from crime, treating a patient for an illness, and rescuing lives from a blazing building. By its very nature, public administration implicitly involves higher values that transform a society into a civilization.

Public administration is about internal goods, as achievement in the profession itself is a good for everyone in society. If the institution of government hires the correct employees and trains them correctly for their jobs, then the work of government is performed at a higher level of proficiency, and taxpayers get more for their "investment" in civilization through what we call taxes. If those public servants manage the budget correctly, the allocated resources provide the public with services that maximize the social and economic outcome for the betterment of the whole community. Unlike institutional decisions that have winners and losers, public administration's internal goods create only winners for the professional and the larger community.

Conclusion

Public administration must always exist in the context of public institutions, with their strong tendency to permit and even encourage corruption or other immoral behavior. Thus, public administrators must learn and relearn to exercise virtues in the context of governmental institutions, regardless of their circumstances, if corruption and other immoral behaviors are to be kept to a minimum level. The retention and enhancement of integrity depends on sustaining, and often on improving, institutions. Immoral

behavior in government institutions is due to vices that the exercise of virtue can curb. Unfortunately, institutions often foster and even encourage the erosion of virtues within public administrators. Thus, reformers must reinforce the development of virtues within public administration by addressing both the individuals and the institutions.

Virtue ethics influences external and internal goods differently. Virtue ethics essentially creates internal goods; however, it can and sometimes does hinder external goods. The latter are objects of human desire that are almost always in dispute within a group of any size and sometimes are even in dispute within an individual. In a materialistic culture, individuals place extreme value on achieving riches, fame, and power. In such an environment, virtues such as justice within public administration can hinder the attainment of external goods for many private-interest groups. In such circumstances, political rulers and others would punish public administrators for acting with virtue. However, because virtue ethics also produces internal goods, internal rewards exist, which no one can take away from the professional public administrator. This is in contrast to utilitarianism, where there are no internal goods, as that normative theory does not accommodate the distinction between internal and external goods. Thus, the existential sense of reward is impossible for the utilitarian, where the institutional pressures to amass riches, fame, and power overwhelm virtues such as justice, courage, and truthfulness.

Virtue ethics requires a practice context that has a *telos* or quest. For public administration, that *telos* or quest is the benevolent pursuit of the public's interest as explained by George Frederickson. The quest provides the profession of public administration with an understanding of what is the "good." It gives focus and purpose to the practice, but it also gives focus as to which virtues are most important in any given circumstance. It enables professionals to order other goods and to extend their individual and collective understanding of the purpose and context of the virtues. It permits a conception of the good that enables professionals to understand the place of integrity and constancy in life. Such a quest is always an education both as to the character of that which is sought but also in an ever expanding self-knowledge (Frederickson 1997).

Both modernism and postmodernism greatly contributed to the dismissal of virtue ethics as a meaningful area of inquiry by scholars and as something that is relevant to professionals who base their efforts on the foundations of scientifically acquired knowledge. However, the argument by MacIntyre should encourage modernists to reconsider their position, as they can empirically survey professionals as to what they self-identify as the *telos* of their profession. Thus, modernists do have an empirical subject or focus of inquiry, and their rigorous methodology is applicable to virtue ethics.

In addition, MacIntyre changes the conclusions of the postmodernists who believes that one can only argue ethical and moral matters within a paradigm and not across paradigms. One need only recognize that a profession with a *telos* such as public administration has one paradigm, and the arguments about virtue ethics can be posed within that paradigm. Thus, reasoning with postmodernism also permits the use of virtue ethics as advocated by MacIntyre.

Virtue ethics is coming back into favor, but the subject should be studied with a deeper appreciation of philosophy, particularly the works of Aristotle and MacIntyre. Is there a *telos* or end purpose? Limiting our consideration to just a profession such as public administration, one can empirically demonstrate that the leading thinkers in the field believe there is an end purpose to this profession. Certainly, an empirical study can demonstrate that a consensus exists as to the end purpose of what most in a profession consider as their *telos*. Thus, if an agreed-upon end purpose to a profession exists, then MacIntyre helps us realize that virtue ethics is quite defensible and can help us in our rational debates over moral problems as they relate to professionalism.

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Chapter 3

What Jesus Says to Public Administration

Lance deHaven-Smith

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When it comes to Jesus, the academic discipline of public administration is like an adult who is embarrassed to be in the company of his parents because he still depends on their financial support. Theorizing in public administration contains virtually no consideration of Jesus or his teachings.¹ The discipline has ignored Jesus even when seeking a code of ethics for public employees.²

This oversight is remarkable, because Jesus exerted, and continues to exert, an enormous impact on politics and government in Western civilization. He fostered the idea of government as “public service” (Matt. 20:27), from which grows the modern belief that leaders are accountable to those whom they govern. He taught us to temper law with mercy (Matt. 7:1; Luke 6:37), to put more emphasis on intentions than on actions and consequences (Matt. 15:20; John 13:10), to give everyone a fair hearing, and to avoid judging hastily (John 8:7). Nor is Jesus’ influence limited to his impact on our political institutions and culture. It is evident directly in our ongoing politics and administration — in the rise of the Christian Right, in conflict over abortion, and in policy areas ranging from welfare and health care to law enforcement and criminal justice.

Of course, many public-administration scholars would say that Jesus has little to teach us about real-world politics, that he is studied sufficiently by theologians, and that in any event political practice can no longer be grounded in theological premises. They might also cite Muslim terrorism as an example of what can happen when religion and politics are mixed.

But ignoring Jesus is not nearly as innocent and prudent as these views would have us believe. The field’s inattention to Jesus reflects a fundamental difficulty in the discipline’s definition of its subject matter, a difficulty that we must constantly paper over in our theorizing, teaching, research, and practice. In a word, this difficulty centers on our *values*. Public administration depends on Judeo-Christian values being held by the citizenry, embodied in American political institutions, and expressed in policies and laws. If such circumstances were absent, if the discipline existed in the setting of, say, Stalinist Russia or Nazi Germany, then the field’s management orientation would be indefensible, for it would make us servants of evil. At the same time, however, while we depend on our own culture’s Christian ethos, we view as illegitimate those political systems elsewhere that are explicitly grounded in religion. In short, we want good government, but we refuse to secure this goodness in anything more than tradition, convention, and common sense. This may be fine for the moment, but it leaves the field precariously dependent on its circumstances and unprepared for the possibility of evil in high places and authoritarian tendencies in mass publics. Already, most of the Western industrialized republics have become permanently militarized, and they could very easily be transformed into

totalitarian regimes with democratic facades, especially under conditions of international conflict or terrorism.

This chapter examines the teachings of Jesus with the aim of demonstrating their legitimate relevance to public-administration theory, research, and practice. I begin by discussing the literature on the crisis of Western civilization, a well-known but not fully appreciated line of thought pursued by many of the best minds in modern social science and philosophy, among them Nietzsche, Spengler,³ Weber, Toynbee, and Strauss. I start here because I believe that public administration's reticence toward Jesus is a manifestation of deep problems within the larger culture. The essay then turns to the teachings of Jesus and draws on recent biblical scholarship to differentiate them from the doctrines of Christianity. My purpose in distinguishing Jesus' message from church dogma is to suggest a path by which public administration might recover its relationship with Jesus without falling into religious subjectivism. The chapter concludes with some thoughts on how public-administration scholars and practitioners might contribute to the cultural project now under way in a number of fields to lead the West back to its spiritual wellspring.

Liberalism, Ancient and Modern

Public administration's effort to retain the values of Jesus while distancing itself from the theological premises underlying those values is an example in miniature of the relationship between government and religion in modern industrial republics, which have achieved aQ historically unprecedented degree of political integration by founding their authority on an abstract, theology-free moral code. Modern nations unite peoples of different races and creeds by declaring certain norms of behavior and attitude to be universally valid, regardless of a particular person's, group's, or nation's customs, religious beliefs, or history. Among these norms are freedoms of speech, conscience, and worship, freedoms that require and therefore entail religious tolerance, limited government, and the priority of law over religiosity. Originating with the 18th-century democratic revolutions in America and France, political consolidation via this abstract morality has become a global phenomenon and is now considered to be one of the defining characteristics of modernity.

Nonetheless, this cultural separation of morality, religion, and law is not entirely unique to the modern era. It is actually a new variation on an old solution to an even older problem at the core of Western civilization. The problem is how to unite warring peoples into political units capable of mobilizing a common defense against foreign invaders. In world history, this problem in its most extreme form has been unique to

the West because of the special character of Western cities. One of Weber's most important and yet most neglected observations is that the European city of antiquity differed from cities elsewhere.⁴ The Occidental city, as he called it, was characterized by a martial culture focusing on military discipline and warfare. Each city had its own gods, took responsibility for its own defense, organized city politics and government around military units, and tied citizenship and preparation for citizenship to military training and service. The Oriental city, in contrast, was organized almost exclusively for trade and left military protection to imperial authorities, which governed large geographical areas and were not identified exclusively with any one urban center.

The history of the West can be reconstructed as a long and painful effort to achieve, as it says on all U.S. coins, *e pluribus unum*: "from many, one." Prior to separating morality and religion in the modern era, several other methods of political integration had been tried in the West, with varying degrees of success. Confederations of cities came first, notably among the allies of Sparta and Athens in the years leading up to the Peloponnesian War.⁵ While these alliances allowed the Greek cities to fend off two massive invasions by Persia, they were unstable and short-lived because of intercity rivalries and distrust. Well aware of these problems, Alexander the Great tried, instead, to recreate the blood ties of the martial city on an imperial scale. In an attempt to weave together a Macedonian, Greek, Persian, and Egyptian empire, he had his generals intermarry with local elites. But this biological approach, too, proved inadequate, as Alexander's men quickly forgot their common heritage and began to identify with the peoples of their new lands.⁶

The first empire involving European city-states that was even marginally stable was established by Rome, which took a middle route between the loose confederations of the Greeks and the total fusion sought by Alexander. The Romans required their subject states to make financial payments to Rome, house Roman troops in their territories, and defer to Roman governors on issues of special concern to the empire, but in most other respects it allowed these states to operate as usual. They could continue to practice their local religions, keep their established forms of government, and follow their normal customs.⁷ Conceptually speaking, this quasi federalism was accomplished by separating law from religion and subordinating the latter to the former. The resulting empire lasted for several centuries, and even when it began to break apart, the fractures were not because of rebellions by conquered peoples, but a consequence of class divisions and elite rivalries within the ruling city.⁸

Christianity became the unifying religion of the empire partly by chance, and partly because it fit the empire's legal framework. Jesus lived during the period when the empire, after having replaced its citizen-army

with year-round professionals, had begun to experience civil wars, because the legions now gave their allegiance to individual generals rather than to the city or the military as a whole. As the military power behind the legal superstructure split apart and turned on itself, politically active citizens at all levels of the empire inevitably yearned for some sort of cultural glue capable of rebinding the armies and their generals to the legal order. The teachings of Jesus met this need, because they featured the idea of a “kingdom of God,” a kingdom in which rulers and subjects alike subordinated themselves to higher laws. Hence, the legend and teachings of Jesus spread through the empire along the path established by Roman law, which had been built atop the laws, customs, and religions of the subject territories. Subsequently, after reuniting the empire by force of arms, Constantine took advantage of this cultural reinforcement by declaring Christianity to be the empire’s official religion. He also required the Church leaders to call the Council of Nicea to adopt a single creed, a creed which to this day is accepted by virtually all Christian denominations. From this point forward, the social and political order was no longer to be a multicultural conglomeration of separate city-states bound together by abstract law; it was to become a unicultural empire in which law was once again interwoven with religion as it had been before, in the martial cities.⁹

The separation of morality, religion, and law in the modern era represents, in important respects, a reversal of Constantine’s policy and a return to the method of political integration practiced under the empire before Christianity. This is why Strauss¹⁰ speaks of two forms of liberalism: ancient and modern. Liberalism is a political philosophy that calls for religious tolerance and authorizes religious freedom within a framework of abstract legal rights and obligations. Ancient liberalism was the practice by the early Roman Empire of placing abstract law above religion and allowing subject states to maintain their indigenous cultures within certain limits. Modern liberalism subordinates religion as well as law to an abstract morality. That this morality is higher than law can be seen in the ability of such modern leaders as Jefferson and Lincoln to criticize and change the United States Constitution to bring it closer to the Declaration of Independence.¹¹ It also evident in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, the Nuremberg trials of Nazi officials for “crimes against humanity,” and other instances where the laws of nations are treated as less than ultimate.

Modern liberalism was necessitated by the Protestant Reformation, which broke the Church’s monopoly on biblical exegesis and opened the way for multiple creeds and denominations within an overarching Christian culture. Religious pluralism brought civil war, repression, intolerance, and fanaticism, and just as disorder in ancient Rome had facilitated the rapid

diffusion of integrative religious beliefs, the religious wars of the 15th and 16th centuries caused a compensatory search for common ground between the conflicting sects. The product of this culture-work was a moral code deemed to be inherent in human reason and therefore independent of religious creeds and doctrines.¹²

The End of Western Civilization

The flaw in modern liberalism is that its values cannot be justified without recourse to principles that, while perhaps seemingly self-evident to Western minds in the modern era, are actually rooted in power or accidental circumstances. This problem was first identified by Nietzsche.¹³ It was subsequently studied scientifically by Weber¹⁴ and then retraced in the history of ideas by Strauss.¹⁵ Today, it stands as one of the central topics of concern within several of our most influential schools of social theory, including the deconstructionism of Derrida, the critical theory of Habermas, and the genealogical approach associated with Foucault.

In the beginning, the problematic connection between modern liberalism and religion was well understood. It was the focus of Nietzsche, Weber, and Strauss. But in the last half of the 20th century, social theorists and philosophers working within this intellectual tradition have shifted emphasis from religion to science. Historical reconstructions of this intellectual shift in direction have been offered by, among others, Jay,¹⁶ Habermas,¹⁷ and Alexander.¹⁸ The aim of the new line of analysis has been to unearth the hidden premises and social forces embedded not merely in Western morality and the thinking that generated it, but also in science, which has heretofore been thought to be a pure and unfettered rationality. For reasons discussed below, this targeting of science needs to be reconsidered, for it kicks out from under us the intellectual stool on which we are now standing. A better line of attack can be found by retracing our steps from Nietzsche to Strauss and giving Strauss greater weight in light of Muslim terrorism, which, in a sense, he anticipated.

Nietzsche pointed out that the values posited as self-evident by modern democratic theory are actually the values espoused by Christianity, a religion that most modern scientists and philosophers consider to be based largely in myth and superstition. Moreover, Nietzsche argued that Christian values are not the values that a free and powerful people would want to hold. Christianity arose among an enslaved and repeatedly conquered people, and it reflected the concerns and interests of the weakest elements of humankind rather than the strongest. Against Christian values and liberal morals, Nietzsche held up the virtues of the martial cities of antiquity: courage rather than meekness, suicide rather than subjugation, justice

rather than mercy, vengeance rather than forgiveness, pride and magnanimity rather than love and charity. Soon, Nietzsche predicted, the democratic, mildly humanitarian, consumption-oriented culture of the West would collapse, because its foundation had been dismantled by science, which is itself plodding and uninspiring. From the ruins of Western culture after the fall would arise either the “last man,” the man who completely subordinates himself to the herd, or the “overman,” the man who accepts his own superiority and rules without constraints.

Weber, too, focused on Christianity in his analysis of Western culture, but Strauss, a Jew who had lived in Germany during the rise of Nazism, turned instead to Judaism. Weber’s contribution to Nietzsche’s insights was to show that Protestant Christianity is the source not only of Western morals in the traditional sense of the term, but also of the West’s commitments to efficiency, order, acquisition, hard work, and science — commitments Weber referred to collectively as “the spirit of capitalism.” Weber pointed out that organizational features of capitalism had existed prior to the current era both inside and outside the West, but these features in other times had not led to the frenetic, acquisitive lifestyle found in Western capitalism today. Weber traced the spirit of (modern Western) capitalism to the Calvinist doctrine of predestination, a doctrine that unintentionally caused people to think that divine salvation could be gained from hard work and worldly success.

Both Nietzsche and Weber formulated their views prior to the rise of Hitler, and if their ideas did not contribute to Hitler’s success, they certainly did nothing to guard against it. Strauss, on the other hand, examined the development of Western culture in search of an antidote to the spiritual decay that had made Nazism possible. He agreed with Nietzsche and Weber that Western morality was erected on an increasingly untenable religious foundation, but he believed, or at least hoped, that this religion could be restored. Strauss argued that the West gets its dynamism from an internal, cultural tension between science and religion. In a series of brilliant reinterpretations of ancient texts from classical political philosophy and theology, he traced this tension to a conflict between the two main elements of Western culture, the Greco-Roman tradition of philosophy and science, and the Judeo-Christian theology presented in the Bible. Strauss concluded that Western culture could be preserved only by somehow insulating biblical beliefs from scientific criticism.

Although their analyses differed, all three of these great thinkers anticipated the collapse of the West if its spiritual foundations are not somehow reformed or restored, and each suggested a program for spiritual renewal. Nietzsche hoped to spark a new Dionysian faith based on the myth of the eternal return and his ideas about (or discovery of) the will to power. Weber seems to have thought that Christian theology might be

reinvigorated as it had been during the Reformation by revising its first principles, although he offered no ideas for the form this new Protestantism might take. Strauss tried to initiate a spiritual rebirth by reinterpreting the foundational texts in both Greek philosophy and biblical theology. With respect to the former, he sought to show that political philosophy had been founded by Socrates specifically for the purpose of protecting religious beliefs from criticism. On the biblical front, he suggested that Judaism could sustain its claims to truth against the criticisms of science, but that Christianity could not.¹⁹

As previously stated, theorists in this Western tradition of cultural introspection have recently turned their attention to science, in large part to undercut its position as the only (or at least the highest) source of truth. This course was sketched earlier by Nietzsche, but his enthusiasm for it should now be seen as a sign of danger rather than insight, for he sought to hasten the collapse of Western culture to pave the way for the overman. The effort to critique science is fraught with perils, even though it may offer the prospect of an exciting intellectual journey. The danger is nihilism, which, as a practical matter, typically leads to a tyranny of either the right or the left. Already, the mass publics of Western nations have nihilistic tendencies, and they could very easily be led down the path of fascism, especially if ruling elites are confronted by elements hostile to the West's shaky morality. This is true whether such elements are domestic or foreign. In either case, because Western governments are unable to defend the Western way of life with sound reasoning — because, instead, they rely on principles that must be accepted as “self-evident” — Western governments are often defensive and prone to violence.

My own view is that we should return to the path suggested by Strauss but reconsider his conclusions about how to deal with Christianity. The solution to the cultural crisis of the West may actually reside in the crisis itself, that is, in the obvious fact that Christianity has been unable to withstand scientific criticism without retreating into a Pharisaic fundamentalism. The answer to dogma's deconstruction is not to abandon Jesus in favor of a mystical Judaism (Strauss's program) or to wait for Nietzsche's new Dionysus or Weber's new Luther, but to dig beneath Christianity to unearth the historical Jesus.

Ears to Hear

The key to resurrecting the Jesus of history from the tomb of Christianity is to recognize that Jesus had a special way of conveying his ideas. In an effort evade Roman authorities, Jesus spoke in a code understandable to his followers and to many Jews, but not to outsiders. Jesus often said that

people missed his meaning because they lacked “ears to hear” (Matt. 11:15, 13:6, 9, 43; Mark 4:9, 23, 7:16, 8:18; Luke 8:8, 14:43). Today, this is undoubtedly the case with scholars of public administration. Most cannot hear what Jesus has to say, because even the phrase, “ears to hear,” a phrase taken by Jesus from the Bible, eludes their understanding. Jesus frequently employed biblical quotes like this one, which were known to the Jews but not to the Romans, to convey subtle messages in his public statements.^{20,21} He knew that only his most righteous followers would search the Bible for such quotes and would read the surrounding passages to learn what he had meant.

Jesus knew well the risks of speaking too freely in his captive kingdom. He had been a disciple of John the Baptist, whom Herod beheaded. Moreover, the Gospels contain numerous stories about plots against Jesus. Because of his popularity as a healer, the Pharisees “held a council against him, how they might destroy him” (Matt. 12:14–15). The priests, scribes, and elders plotted to kill him (Matt. 26:3–4). The Pharisees sought out the Herodians, the Jewish supporters of Herod and Rome, and tried to find “how they might destroy him” (Mark 3:6, 11:8). The chief priests and the scribes “sought how they might take him by craft, and put him to death” (Mark 14:1; Luke 6:7, 19:47, 22:2; John 5:18, 7:1). Clearly, Jesus was a marked man, and he knew it.

Additionally, he was not indifferent to the danger. When he learned that the Pharisees were plotting against him, “he withdrew himself from thence” (Matt. 12:15). When he was urged by his disciples to go to the feast of the tabernacle in Judea, he initially declined, saying that he would be persecuted, but later he did attend, “not openly, but as it were in secret” (John 7:2–10). On the day that he sent his two disciples to prepare the room for what would prove to be his last supper, he had made prior arrangements to have them be met discreetly, like secret agents, by “a man bearing a pitcher of water” (Mark 14:13). On the night when he was arrested, he had withdrawn into a garden and had posted Peter, James, and John to watch over him (Mark 14:33), and Peter, if not the others, was armed (John 18:11). Obviously, Jesus wanted to avoid being apprehended.

So Jesus offered two teachings. To his students he taught methods for confronting and subverting power and glory, but to the “multitudes,” as he called them (Matt. 15:32; Mark 8:2), he told parables seemingly about a heavenly kingdom that would eventually descend to earth, righting all wrongs and rewarding the meek, the loving, and the faithful. This explains why he was such a popular speaker. In the heart of occupied Jerusalem, at the center of the temple, watched carefully by the Roman troops, spied on by Herod’s agents, surrounded by the insular priesthood, he could tell the crowds his stories, and many could understand his hidden meanings, but the authorities could never convict him of sedition.²²

The Gospels are replete with numerous anecdotes about the disciples needing to have Jesus' analogies and stories explained to them. The disciples asked about the parables of the tares in the field (Matt. 13:35), the "leaven" of the Pharisees (Matt. 16:6–12; Mark 8:15–17), the seeds that fell in different soils (Matt. 13:18; Mark 4:10; Luke 8:9), the words that defile (Matt. 15:11; Mark 4:36), and the blind leading the blind (Matt. 15:15). The Gospels also say that Jesus took care *never* to speak straight-forwardly to the multitudes. "But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples" (Mark 4:34; Matt. 13:34). That Jesus spoke so often in parables is an indication in itself of the fact he was delivering an encoded message.

The phrase about having "ears to hear" had been used by David, on whom Jesus modeled himself,²³ in a stinging psalm comparing idolaters to their own idols: "Eyes have they, but they see not: they have ears, but they hear not.... They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them" (Ps. 115). By saying that those to whom he spoke lacked "ears to hear," Jesus was implying that they failed to understand him because they worshiped idols. He did not want to say this bluntly, because he did not want to offend, but this was what he intended to convey to biblically knowledgeable listeners.

Of course, to modern minds, this sounds like a shrill and judgmental statement, regardless of how it is said. Except in rare circumstances, we simply do not accuse our interlocutors of being idolaters deafened by false religions. Although we acknowledge that material interests and other factors limit perceptions — our concept of "ideology" sums up this recognition — we see these cognition-shaping influences as something to which everyone is subject, ourselves included. We would also reject Jesus' suggestion that ideological limits on reason are as difficult to overcome as idolatry, which we think of as the type of religion practiced by primitive peoples. We believe that self-serving prejudices can be dissolved through disciplined debate, which forces disputants to look at the world from many points of view.

This confidence in the power of discourse stands at the heart of public-administration scholarship and practice. It is our basis for claiming that our theories are not themselves merely ideologies justifying our power and status as social scientists and professionals. Our claim to special insight, which we posit as "objectivity," rests on our faith in reason's strength and ideology's weakness. We think that the discipline of public administration, along with other sciences of society, arrive at truth by being open to many partial perspectives.

But Jesus calls on us to reconsider these premises — premises so important to our identity and values that we might even call them "idols." His reference to idolatry was part of his overall account of power,

knowledge, and spirituality. He believed that our tendency to rationalize our privileges is a much more resilient spirit than we generally realize. He taught that it responds like the power structure itself, growing stronger, not weaker, when it is challenged. This is one reason why Jesus spoke obliquely, using such subtle references as the phrase about having “ears to hear.” He hoped to smuggle his ideas past our defenses, past the idols of our hearts that block our perceptions.

This chapter is written with a similar intent. I want to discuss the implications of Jesus’ teachings for modern public administration. If we had “ears to hear,” we could easily discern what Jesus has to say to us. We would merely examine the posture Jesus took toward government and then consider what this stance entails for the teaching, study, and practice of public administration. But the values of public administration cause us to misconstrue Jesus’ ideas.

The Politics of Judaism

One misconception is the view that Jesus preached about God and not government. This image of Jesus is widely held both inside and outside academe, but it is nevertheless mistaken. Jesus thought that the spiritual problems of humankind are rooted as much in politics as in religion. The central elements of his ministry were *political* concepts. Jesus preached about “power and glory.” He advocated a loving and merciful social order — a “kingdom of God” — to replace the authoritarian and merciless regimes of his day. Jesus may have been a prophet, but he was a prophet with political aims.

The political focus of Jesus was nothing new to Judaism; issues of politics and government were central to the entire Judaic tradition out of which Jesus arose. Judaism was developed as a creed specifically for the purpose of achieving political liberty from totalitarian oppressors. Abraham concluded that he could secure independence for himself and his children only if he worshiped a single, invisible god, as opposed to the “graven images” of all other nations. Later, in reaction to Egyptian bondage, the Judaic culture was elaborated and codified by Moses, who led the Jews to their own land. Next, other prophets, modeling themselves on Moses, came forward to speak against Babylon.

The teachings of Jesus were simply another step in Judaism’s development, in this instance in reaction to Roman imperialism. Rome necessitated a cultural advance within Judaism because it presented a new form of tyranny. In earlier eras of oppression, the Jews had been held captive in other lands — in Egypt and then Persia — and their overlords had tried to make them adopt what we would call the “state religion.” In this context,

Moses and the other prophets had sought liberty for their people by calling on them to remain true to Jehovah and to return to their homeland.

Roman imperialism brought a more subtle tyranny, a tyranny that was neither direct nor geographically bounded. As we have seen, the Romans allowed subject nations to practice their “local” religions so long as the people obeyed secular (Roman) law governing property rights, the rights of various categories of individuals, and the limits of subjugated states. Suddenly, Judaism, which for centuries had been an unbeatable force for liberation, had little to say (beyond telling the Romans to keep “graven images” of eagles outside the holy temple). Hence Jesus reformulated Judaism to call for a new means of liberation, one based not on *separating* from oppression geographically and spiritually — such a separation was no longer possible — but on *ending* oppression, everywhere and forever. The “promised land” was replaced by a promised “day of judgment.”

Jesus advocated a spiritualized politics not because he favored totalitarianism, but because he saw what we might eventually have to learn once more for ourselves, that a godless government has no conscience and therefore no limits. Philosophically, Jesus sought to merge faith and power with the notion of a divine kingdom. In line with the Judaic tradition of Moses and David, Jesus meant by the “kingdom of God” not a future world order of disembodied souls or resurrected bodies, but an earthly government founded on love and holiness.²⁴

That Jesus had political aims is visible to anyone who reads the Gospels with an open mind. Jesus was called a king by others (Matt. 2:2, 21:4, 27:29, 27:42; Luke 19:38, 23:36; John 1:49, 19:14); he referred to himself as a king (Matt. 25:34, 40); he appears to have been known to the multitudes as a king (Matt. 15:9, 12, 18; Mark 15:31–32; John 12:13, 15, 18:39, 19:3); the central element of his message was about establishing a “kingdom” (Matt. 4:17, 4:23, 9:35, 13:11, 24:14; Mark 1:14–15, 4:11; Luke 4:43, 8:1, 10–11, 9:2, 16:16); the main question at his Roman trial was whether he declared himself to be a king (Luke 23:2; John 18:33–37); at this trial, he did not deny his kingship (Matt. 27:11; Mark 15:2; Luke 23:3; John 18:36–37); and, at the instruction of the Roman governor, a sign was placed on Jesus’ cross saying “THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS” (Matt. 27:37; Mark 15:26; Luke 23:37; John 19:19).

Jesus and Christianity

A second and related mistake in public administration’s view of Jesus is to conflate the teachings of Jesus with the doctrines of Christianity. In reality, the movement Jesus sought to inspire was far different from Christianity and the church. Jesus did not envision his followers as a large

organized religion battling the forces of Rome, but, rather, as a small group of political activists and educators confronting hypocrisy in high places. Jesus believed that political activists, who in his day were prophets and priests, influenced the social order far beyond their numbers. He compared them to ingredients, such as yeast (Matt. 13:33, 16:6, 11–12; Mark 8:15; Luke 12:1, 13:21) and salt (Matt. 5:13; Mark 9:49–50; Luke 14:34–35), which are used in very small amounts in cooking to produce large changes in texture and flavor. Political activists, although few in number, could profoundly alter social and political relations if they possessed the right ideas and confronted authority and status in the right way. Hence Jesus called on his followers to be “the salt of the earth” (Matt. 5:15). He also insisted on being selective: “Many are called, but few shall be chosen” (Matt. 22:14).

Further indicating the differences between the teachings of Jesus and the religion of Christianity, Jesus was quite critical of institutionalized religion in general. He could not say so explicitly, because priests were always following him and would probably have stoned him to death on the spot,²⁵ but Jesus made many statements implying his hostility. He told people not to worship in public but rather to pray in secret (Matt. 6:6); he flatly rejected trying to influence God with the kinds of prayers Christian churches now use, which he called “vain repetitions” (Matt. 6:7); he depicted the inclination to establish religious institutions as a temptation presented by Satan (Matt. 4:5–7; Luke 4:9–12); he called for the temple in Jerusalem to be dismantled and replaced by a purely spiritual congregation, a “temple made without hands” (Mark 14:58); and he refused to develop an organized hierarchy among his followers, even though he was asked to do so on more than one occasion (Matt. 19:27, 20:20–26).

Jesus’ opposition to organized religion explains why, despite having many opportunities, he never established a church, a congregation, or a regular religious practice. Jesus spoke on a number of occasions to very large crowds. His Sermon on the Mount was to a huge audience (Matt. 5–7), and at another time the crowd was so large that he had to address it from a boat at the shore where the people thronged (Matt. 13:1–52). However, in no instance did Jesus try to organize a large flock of adherents. Unlike Peter, who baptized thousands of people at a time (Acts 2:41, 4:4), Jesus never performed mass baptisms, nor did he ask the crowds to follow him. Whenever Jesus sought disciples, he always addressed individuals, not groups. Organized, mass Christianity is the legacy not of Jesus, but of Peter.

Finally, the contrasts between the substantive doctrines of Christianity and the teachings of Jesus are stark. Christianity is especially preoccupied with the idea of sin, but Jesus preached the exact opposite of a sin-oriented faith. He was criticized for his willingness to associate with

“publicans and sinners” (Matt. 11:19; Mark 2:16; Luke 5:30, 7:34). To the Pharisees, who were maniacs about law, ritual, and sin, Jesus said, “Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man” (John 8:15). He specifically admonished us to “judge not, that ye be not judged” (Matt. 7:1; Luke 6:37). He himself refused to judge, even though he was asked to cast judgment many times. To those who wanted him to judge an adulteress, he said, “[L]et he who is without sin cast the stone first” (John 8:7). To the young man who wanted him to speak to his brother about dividing the latter’s inheritance, Jesus responded, “Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?” (Luke 12:13–14).

If Jesus wanted his following to be small; if he never organized a congregation; if he spoke against religious ritual and hierarchy; if the teachings of Jesus are inconsistent with Christian doctrine; and if the Christian Church was organized not by Jesus but by Peter, then, clearly, it is a mistake to view Jesus and Christianity as one and the same.

The Political Philosophy of Jesus

The hidden (political) meaning of Jesus’ teachings has been explicated at length elsewhere.²¹ The doorway beyond a religious, otherworldly account of Jesus’ ideas resides in the meaning Jesus attached to the notion of “spirit.” Then, as now, the word “spirit” was ambiguous; it could pertain to a phantom or, instead, to a motivation. Jesus usually was referring to the latter, even though his listeners tended to assume that he meant the former.

Kingdoms Colliding

Jesus taught that human beings are inclined in two directions, or they experience two “spirits.” On the one hand, they have a tragic inclination to invent rules and standards, and to judge one another mercilessly against their arbitrary conventions. This is their original sin, or is “the sin of the world,” for it occurs all over the world.

When the Bible says Adam and Eve ate from the tree of knowledge, it means, according to Jesus, that they invented human laws. This is explained in the Gnostic Gospel of Philip. The tree of knowledge of good and evil is man-made law. “It has power to give knowledge of good and evil.... The law says, ‘Eat this, and do not eat that’” (Philip, para. 74). God had imposed no laws in the Garden of Eden, not even against murder, except the commandment to not “eat” from the tree of morality. The original sin of humankind was indeed turning away from the commandments of God, but the sin was not becoming *lawless*, but *lawful*.

Through their judging, people create hierarchies of command and status, or “power and glory.” As power and glory grow, or as the judging that creates them becomes more detailed, complex, and pervasive, the social order becomes like a personality, a thinking creature with a will over and above the thoughts and wills of the persons it comprises. Because it has a personality, Jesus gave it a name. He called it “Satan,” a word whose root means “to turn away,” that is, from God.²⁶

On the other hand, while human beings are inclined toward judgment, they also have the potential to be filled with faith, love, and a spirit of holiness. Faith comes first. People have been informed by God (through prophets) that they are creations of a supreme being, a being who is their constant observer, who alone has knowledge of good and evil, and who is their ultimate judge. This belief engenders love, because it causes people to stop judging and ranking. Faith also brings about a “spirit of holiness,” which is a natural human tendency to stand up to authority.²⁷ To the extent that people believe in God and in an ultimate judgment, they become hostile to power because they become less concerned about conventional laws and judgments than about the judgment of their Creator as conveyed to them through their consciences.

Jesus described history or civilization as an evolving conflict between these two motivations, between, on the one hand, power, judgment, and Satan, and on the other hand faith, love, and holiness. Power grows naturally and manifests itself in larger and larger kingdoms, but its growth sparks a commensurate growth of the spirit of holiness, which can be tapped to form a counterkingdom, a “kingdom of God” in which all power and glory will be given to the Creator rather than to human beings. Jesus was the first and only king of the holy kingdom because he was the lawgiver who outlawed law. He saved humanity from its own “eternal judgment” (or “damnation”) by wiping away conventional beliefs about good and evil and replacing them with two simple commandments (to love God and neighbor). Jesus predicted that in the future, or in “the world to come,” the kingdom of the holy would grow, and the kingdoms of those who judge would collapse.

Three “Days” of Transformation

From the perspective of those who view Jesus as a political activist and not as a self-proclaimed deity, the most puzzling statement by Jesus was his assertion that he would “destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days ... build another made without hands.”²⁸ This statement is the best evidence in the entire Gospels for the Christian premise that Jesus believed himself to have supernatural abilities or connections. Out of the numerous parables and aphorisms that Jesus offered

during his brief ministry, it was the only statement brought forward at his trial before the Sanhedrin (Matt. 26:61–62; Mark 14:58). By then, the comment had become so notorious that not only did witnesses report it to the high priests, but those who watched him be crucified quoted it as well and mocked Jesus for having said it (Matt. 27:39–40; Mark 15:29–30).

The meaning of this statement was, and still is, the central question surrounding the mission, nature, and destiny of the movement Jesus initiated. However much modern Christians may wish to assume that the meaning is obvious — that Jesus was referring to his resurrection after the crucifixion — the people who lived during the beginning of the Christian era were deeply divided over the message Jesus intended.²⁹

Assuming that Jesus was using religious metaphors to make points about politics, his statement about destroying and remaking the temple probably referred to the historical process by which worldly systems of power and glory would be overturned. On this view, when Jesus said the “temple made without hands” would come in three *days*, he meant that it would come in three *stages*, three alternating periods of darkness and light. Human systems of power and glory tend to expand continuously, becoming harsher and more judgmental — “darker” — at each step, until the people subjugated within them become so hopeless, so “poor in spirit,” that they are willing to die to salvage their humanity, at which point the old order collapses, and a new era dawns like a new “day.” This image is confirmed in rough form by many modern scholars of civilization, including Weber,⁴ Spengler,³ and Toynbee.³⁰

Many of Jesus’ parables and aphorisms related in some way to this vision of history. He compared the staggered coming of the kingdom to a landowner returning home unannounced (Mark 13:35), a wedding to which some guests are invited at the last minute (Matt. 22:14), a sudden storm presaged only by a red morning sky (Matt. 16:2), a dinner party suddenly opened to the poor (Luke 14:16–24), and a thief in the night who surprises a watchman (Luke 12:37–40). Jesus also spoke of several temptations that would sidetrack humanity from its spiritual growth (Luke 4:1–12; Matt. 4:1–10). Clearly, Jesus saw the coming of a merciful, godly kingdom not as a gradual humanization or spiritualization, but as a process with many sudden stops and starts.

Jesus seems to have thought that he and his followers, and those who would continue their efforts in the future, would function as revolutionary catalysts causing the kingdom to materialize. They would challenge authority, and their defiance would cause authority to react in a manner exposing the force on which it relies, thus sparking further defiance by others, and so on. An exchange between Jesus and Judas, recorded in “The Dialogue of the Savior” (paragraphs 99 and 100), describes the revealing (or apocalyptic) tension Jesus said existed between faith and power. Judas asked,

“How is the spirit apparent?” Jesus answered with a rhetorical question, “How is the sword apparent?” By the sword, Jesus meant the force and coercion underlying political authority and social rank. Generally it is invisible; those at both the top and the bottom of the social pyramid treat authority and inequality as if they were based not on the threat of punishment or death, but on totally reasonable grounds. The sword is exposed only when it is unsheathed, and it is unsheathed only when authority is defied or social rank is challenged or ignored.

The Second Coming of Jesus, or of Pontius Pilate?

At this point in our analysis, we can begin to hear what Jesus has to say to public administration. He tells us that history is a conflict between competing orientations to life, or between competing spirits and corresponding kingdoms. Public administration will inevitably play a part in this conflict, and perhaps a decisive part, for the discipline and the profession stand precisely where the two kingdoms are colliding.

Prophecies Fulfilled

Whatever one makes of the source of Jesus’ insights, it is difficult to deny that many of his prophecies are being fulfilled. The end of the world, which only a century ago appeared to be an impossibility, is now recognized as a real likelihood. Although the potential worldwide cataclysm could come from any one of several places — thermonuclear destruction, ecological collapse, biological tinkering, etc. — the underlying problem is our inability, thus far, to bring technology under the control of our moral intellect.

As Jesus predicted, love and power have expanded steadily in history and are coming into increasing conflict. On the one hand, life today in even the freest of industrialized nations is snared within a web of command and status, with lines of control originating not only or even primarily in government, but also in such other power centers as work, family, school, and recreation. Judgment and hierarchy so permeate modern life that people literally display their ranks in the Polo markings on their clothes, in the cut of their hair, in their choice of words — even in the journals in which they publish. Atop this fibrous network of command and status, a global power structure is developing, together with a world government, a world army, global media of communication, and unparalleled mechanisms of destruction, surveillance, mood control, and indoctrination.

On the other hand, alongside the growth of power has been a corresponding and counterbalancing expansion of love. Less than two centuries

ago, human beings were traded as commodities; today, many people are willing to face grave risks to protect the life of a single individual or even a single animal or plant. Acts of charity on a huge scale are common, from humanitarian relief for starving Africans to benefit concerts for victims of AIDS. Numerous philanthropic organizations have worldwide constituencies and missions. A global spirit of charity is being born, capable of constraining tyrants and in some instances of deconstructing the most powerful nations on the planet. The contrast could not be starker between the potential for global enslavement or destruction and the possibility of a universal family of humankind.

The Trial of Jesus

In many respects, our circumstances today are similar to those that existed on a smaller scale 2,000 years ago in Roman-occupied Israel. With the invention of secular (Roman) law, power had made a huge advance, but with Moses, David, the prophets, and then Jesus, so had love. The tension between these forces was terrifying. Depending on their social location, all but the strongest people sought escape as best they could. Public officials hid behind law and procedures. Priests retreated into ritual. Philosophers sought the company of one another. Prophets went into the desert. The multitudes turned to frivolous distractions.

The disciplinary and professional creed of modern public administration is nothing new; it is the same stance taken by government officials under the Roman Empire during this period. Public administration seeks to insulate itself from responsibility both for the policies that originate “above” the practitioner, and for the societal implications of these policies once they are properly executed. The aim is to establish a realm of ethics and professionalism corresponding to the narrowly circumscribed role of a functionary within an unquestioned framework of power and status.

This was precisely the professional code displayed by Pontius Pilate at the trial of Jesus. From a Jesusian perspective, the code is the opposite of morality and ethics. It is an abdication of the duties one has simply by virtue of being a creature with will and conscience. Human beings do not need a code of conduct to recognize the difference between good and evil; they have been endowed by their Creator with (or they have been given by nature) an inner moral compass that calls on them to love and empathize with one another. In fact, humanity’s innate love and compassion are what make an artificial ethics of legalism necessary within modern public administration. Legalism and professionalism protect the conscience of the administrator; they cause responsibility to be dispersed and shared, so that evil disappears behind procedure and accident.

In the case of Jesus' crucifixion, the blame was spread between the Jewish religious court or "Sanhedrin," the Roman governor Pontius Pilate, and the multitude. The Sanhedrin accused Jesus of blasphemy and asked Pontius Pilate to have him killed (Mark 14:64, 15:1; Luke 22:7). Pilate told them to judge Jesus themselves, but, lacking the power of capital punishment, they refused and said it was Pilate's responsibility to judge Jesus, because Jesus had claimed to be king (John 18:3). Pilate interrogated Jesus, as did Herod, and neither found anything to warrant the death penalty (Luke 23:4, 23:8–1). Pilate proposed releasing Jesus in the annual program to pardon one criminal at Passover. However, when the multitude was consulted, it chose Barabas rather than Jesus (Matt. 27:15–23; Mark 15:7–16; Luke 23:16–18; John 18:39–40). At this point, Pilate ordered the crucifixion but washed his hands of responsibility (Matt. 27:24).

Who was responsible for the execution of Jesus? The priests? Pilate? Herod? The multitude? Today, we would say it was "the system." Groups, organizations, and nations, regardless of their size or complexity, become possessed by a spirit of irresponsibility, or a culture of indifference toward suffering and injustice, whenever the people in them begin to deny moral ownership of the consequences of their actions.

Jesus would say that modern public administration has adopted the ethics of Pontius Pilate. Like Pilate, the discipline seeks to wash its hands of personal obligations to humanity. Its adherence to spirituality-free government is merely an effort to avoid assessing the morality of the laws and institutions it administers.

And yet, of all people, who among humankind are most able to assess what government is doing and what effects it is having? The multitudes lack understanding. The princes are dazzled by their own glory. The priests too often judge the victims. If anyone is to transform modern power into a true servant of humanity, is it not the "professionals" who stand along the watchtowers of authority?

A New Salt of the Earth

Public administration is not imprisoned in the role of Pontius Pilate. The discipline itself has chosen this role, and it could choose to choose again, this time differently. It could take on the role advocated by Jesus.

It is impossible to define all of the characteristics of this role in detail. Jesus himself explained that the spirit of holiness, or the voice of conscience, does not speak in advance of confrontations with power. But several aspects of a Jesusian public administration can be sketched to provide a contrast with our current professional posture.

Choosing Our Kingdom

Perhaps the most basic step required to forge a spiritually centered public administration is for us to establish a vision of the social order we hope to bring about. As it stands, the discipline embraces a vacuous “professionalism” and relies on such abstractions as “honesty,” “justice,” “fairness,” “efficiency,” and “regime values” for guidance in addressing questions of conscience in individual cases and situations. If this ever produces goodness, it is only by chance, for any code of ethics must be adjusted to circumstances. Ethics are a means to an end, not an end to themselves. Clearly, Pontius Pilate was honest, fair, efficient, and loyal to Roman values, but the system he supported was evil, and he knew it, or he would not have publicly washed his hands to allay his sense of guilt. Scholars and practitioners of public administration reveal this same awareness of their systemic immorality when they search for a professional code of ethics to shield them from moral responsibility for the role they play in a framework they compose but do not want to confront.

Jesus spoke of “kingdoms” to help us focus on our highest goal. He also offered a general description of the kingdom he believed would be best. It would value mercy more than justice; its leaders would be servants rather than rulers; and it would be guided by two simple commandments. Modern public administration may favor some other ideal, but it will never know this if it continues to remain silent on the question. As it is, public administration *is* bringing about a kingdom, but the discipline and the profession are allowing this kingdom to be chosen *for them*, and the choice is being made not by flesh-and-blood human beings, but by a superstructure of power with a mind of its own.

Confronting Power

In addition to pointing us toward a morally good kingdom, Jesus gave advice about how to bring such a kingdom into being. Public administration aims to be practical, but it has not faced the question of *practical for what?* The discipline has naively equated goodness with utility. It has assumed that it is good simply to be useful to the established regime. Once public administration sets its sights higher, on a better kingdom, it must consider not how to serve the present order, but how to transform it.

During his interrogation by the high priest the night before he was taken to Pilate, Jesus presented a model for wrestling with the authority of one’s colleagues. Basically, Jesus sought to make people take responsibility for their actions even though they were acting as agents in a larger system of power. At one point, Jesus was asked by the high priest to explain his doctrine, and Jesus refused, telling the priest that he had

spoken “openly to the world” and that if the priest wanted to know his views he should “ask them which heard me” (John 18:20–21). Jesus knew that he had spoken obliquely, and that only those with “ears to hear” could have understood his teachings about the kingdom of God, so he demanded that the priest take responsibility for showing that Jesus had been blasphemous, which would have required the priest to interpret Jesus’ teachings and thereby render a personal judgment as to their meaning and acceptability. But as soon as Jesus had spoken, he was slapped by one of the officers of the court, who said, “Answerest thou the high priest so?” (John 18:22). The officer was demanding that Jesus acknowledge the power and glory of the high priest by being less assertive in his answers. Significantly, at this point Jesus did not turn the other cheek. Instead, he argued back, telling the guard, “If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?” (John 18:23). Again, Jesus insisted that those who persecuted him should show why they believed he was guilty, not just mindlessly join the collective condemnation, and he refused to bow to their status and authority.

The idea that Jesus advocated passive obedience to authority, because he said that people should turn the other cheek when they are struck, is a complete misinterpretation of his teachings. His remark about turning the other cheek was simply an example given in his Sermon on the Mount to stress the importance of becoming as perfect as possible so that law and power will not be needed to maintain order (Matt. 5:39; Luke 6:29). The remark was a call for love, not for mindless obedience to the law or to abuse. Jesus’ real attitude toward authority was revealed in his reaction to the guard and to the high priest; he stood up to them and demanded that they be accountable for their actions.

Jesus did the same thing directly to Pontius Pilate when Pilate asked him whether he claimed to be the king of the Jews. Jesus responded, “Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell thee of it?” (John 18:34). Jesus was not seeking to understand the basis of Pilate’s accusation; he knew that he was being accused of attempting to organize the Jews in rebellion. Rather, he was trying to force Pilate to take, or at least to assign, responsibility for the charges. Once again, Jesus was pushing the issue of accountability. He wanted Pilate to be specific as to who was making the charges, because he knew well that the Sanhedrin and the Roman authorities, like all worldly power, operated in exactly the opposite fashion, that is, to detach actions from individuals and thereby create larger “forces” that move along as if they were beyond any single individual’s control.

Today, the skill of forcing responsibility to be acknowledged is recognized in government, but it is not studied and taught. Anyone who has ever participated in an administrative staff meeting or a meeting of a political body knows that many of the undercurrents in such settings

center precisely around issues of responsibility and morality. People talk like Jesus did at his trial; they are seldom frontal. They ask questions: “What happened to this or that?” “What do you think?” “When was that due?” Further, they ask such questions not only or even primarily to gather information, but to link actions and consequences with individuals. The language used in the hallways of power to describe this maneuvering testifies to this. We speak of “sandbagging,” “smoking him out,” “deflecting the blame,” etc.

A Jesusian public administration would consciously decode this language in relation to the moral context of the administrator. Currently, the discipline ignores the very important phenomenon of administrative maneuvering, because public administration lacks moral perspective. Once the discipline and the profession embrace a political ideal and an awareness of the power of spirituality in history, they will be able to hear the language of administration clearly. They will learn and teach the art of the parable, the subtle question, the statement with hidden meanings.

Self-Sacrifice

This brings us to a third point. A Jesusian public administration would place value on what might be called “professional martyrdom,” and the profession would organize itself accordingly.

Jesus understood his crucifixion correctly to be potentially an explosive event in the evil system of power surrounding him. He wanted those responsible to be identified with their actions. By not physically fighting back or verbally mocking his accusers, he denied his captors the opportunity of blaming him for their decision. Through his life and death, Jesus showed the world the human face of those who were then, and are still now, allowing themselves to be swept along by the dark forces of power and glory.

Today, most public-administration scholars and practitioners are well aware that the professional public administrator is frequently caught in deep conflicts between his or her conscience and the requirements of law, custom, or political expediency. Often, public administrators find themselves faced with professional crucifixion if they stand up to elected officials or to administrative superiors. For a while, artful administrators can choose their words carefully and maneuver with skill to put responsibility where it belongs, but eventually, if they truly follow the voice of the spirit within them, they will find themselves before the equivalent of the Sanhedrin.

The discipline of public administration should prepare its students to face these challenges, and the profession should organize itself to provide support. Jesus warned his followers that they would be brought before

“governors and kings,” and he instructed them on how to behave. He also taught them to take time to strengthen their relationships with one another. They broke bread together. They washed one another’s feet. They sang and they danced.

In short, public administration should seek to become less a discipline and a profession, and more a social and political movement. The end of the world, or the “world to come,” appears to be approaching. A global system of command and status is rising above us like a great beast. The spirit of humanity, which is stirring across the globe, is calling for help. Will we have “ears to hear”?

Notes

1. R. C. Chandler, “The Problem of Moral Illiteracy in Professional Discourse: The Case of the Stated Principles of the ASPA,” *American Review of Public Administration* 16, no. 3 (1982): 369–86.
2. The discipline seems to be in agreement that professional ethics must be grounded in something more than (or other than) theology, such as in concern for human life, in commitment to honesty, or in certain “regime values.” See: B. Jennings, “Taking Ethics Seriously in Administrative Life: Constitutionalism, Ethical Reasoning, and Moral Judgment,” in *Ethical Frontiers in Public Management: Seeking New Strategies for Resolving Ethical Dilemmas*, Ed. J. S. Bowman (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991), 64–90.
3. I place Spengler in this list because he is clearly the author to whom Strauss is sometimes responding. See: O. Spengler, *Form and Actuality*, vol. 1 of *The Decline of the West*, trans. C. F. Atkinson (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1926).
4. M. Weber, *The City*, trans. Don Martindale and G. Neuwirth (New York: Free Press, 1958), 81–89.
5. M. I. Finley, *The Ancient Greeks* (New York: Penguin Books, 1963).
6. A. Erskine, *The Hellenistic Stoa: Political Thought and Action* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1990).
7. J. Pelikan, *The Excellent Empire: The Fall of Rome and the Triumph of the Church* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1987).
8. Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1963).
9. For a history of the Jesus movement and how it became Christianity, see: T. Sheehan, *The First Coming: How the Kingdom of God Became Christianity* (New York: Random House, 1986).
10. L. Strauss, *Liberalism Ancient and Modern* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989).
11. This was how Lincoln justified his opposition to slavery, even though the institution of slavery was constitutionally guaranteed. The opening lines of the Gettysburg Address refer us back to 1776, not 1789.

12. Leo Strauss, *The Rebirth of Classical Political Rationalism: An Introduction to the Thought of Leo Strauss*, Ed. T. Pangle (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989).
13. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*, trans. W. Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1966).
14. M. Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Scribner, 1958).
15. Leo Strauss, "The Mutual Influence of Theology and Philosophy," *The Independent Journal of Philosophy* 3, Vol. 3 (1979) pp. 111–118.
16. M. Jay, *The Dialectical Imagination* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1973).
17. J. Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* (Boston: MIT Press, 1990).
18. J. C. Alexander, *Fin de Siecle Social Theory* (London: Verso, 1995).
19. For a very different reading of Strauss, see: S. B. Drury, *The Political Ideas of Leo Strauss* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988). My interpretation of Strauss's view of Christianity is based not on what he says, but on his consistent silence with respect to Christianity, which was immediately relevant to his analysis of Western culture. He tells us that silence in such circumstances implies that the author holds unpopular views that cannot be safely expressed. See: L. Strauss, *Persecution and the Art of Writing* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).
20. L. deHaven-Smith, *The Hidden Teachings of Jesus: The Political Meaning of the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Phanes Press, 1994).
21. L. deHaven-Smith, "How Jesus Planned to Overthrow the Roman Empire," *Religious Studies and Theology* 16, no. 1 (1997): pp. 48–59.
22. In addition to such statements in the Gospels that have come down to the current era in the New Testament canon, writings have survived from several ancient Jewish and Persian sects that were founded specifically for the purpose of developing and transmitting the esoteric tradition. These sects came to be referred to as "gnostic," which is the Greek word for "knowing," because they believed salvation depended not on faith but on knowledge. Throughout this essay, when I cite the Gnostic gospels, the source is: J. M. Robinson, *The Nag Hammadi Library in English* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1990). Perhaps best known in this tradition, the Dead Sea scrolls and the Nag Hammadi library, both of which were exhumed in Israel in the middle of the 20th century, present an image of Jesus as having a message shrouded in secrecy. The writings from these sects, which include gospels by Thomas, Philip, and Mary Magdalene, cannot be counted as any more accurate than the texts in the New Testament canon. The influence of Greek philosophy on the Gnostic tradition is particularly evident, just as the influence of Jewish apocalyptic ideas is evident in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. But the mere existence of the Gnostic tradition points to the fact that there was more to what Jesus said than met the ear.
23. Jesus was frequently called the "son of David" and was said to be a descendent of David's (Matt. 1:1, 6, 17, 9:27, 12:3, 12:23, 15:22, 20:30–31, 21:19, 22:42; Mark 2:25, 10:47–48; Luke 1:27, 32, 2:4, 11, 3:31, 18:38–39;

- John 7:42). Jesus also compared himself to David (Matt. 12:3; Luke 6:3). Further, the story about Jesus having been born in Bethlehem, a story that must have been told by Jesus himself (if it was not fabricated later), is a direct link to David, for David, too, was born in Bethlehem (1 Sam. 20:6). Later in this chapter, I explain that Jesus had real-world political aims and ambitions, and that the “kingdom of God” was intended as a real-world empire. In this context, the link between Jesus and David is significant.
24. For detailed comparisons between Jesus, David, and Moses, see: D. C. Allison, Jr., *The New Moses: A Matthean Typology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993).
 25. This is exactly what they did with Stephen. See Acts 7.
 26. Moses Maimonides, *The Guide for the Perplexed*, trans. M. Friedlander (New York: Dover, 1956).
 27. In the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, Jesus is reported to have told his disciples, “Ye shall be brought before governors and kings.” (Matt. 10:18; Mark 13:11; Luke 12:11. In the latter, Jesus says they will bring you “unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers.”) He explained that it was precisely in this circumstance that the spirit of holiness could be activated; all the disciples had to do was to focus totally on the moment and to speak directly from their hearts rather than from their minds. “Take no thought of how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in the same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of the Father which speaketh in you” (Matt. 10:19–20; see also Mark 13:11 and Luke 12:11–12). The Holy Spirit is the attitude we possess in the face of power when we do not think ahead about consequences or punishments.
 28. John 2:18–19 quotes Jesus as saying, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” I am using the quote by Jesus’ accuser at his trial, as reported in Mark 14:58. There are at least two reasons for thinking that the latter is the more accurate quote. First, the quote in John suggests that Jesus challenged his listeners to tear down the temple themselves, but Jesus clearly saw himself as tearing down the temple or, more precisely, the temple law. Second, Stephen was tried for saying that Jesus would “destroy this place” and “change the customs which Moses delivered us” (Acts 6:14). For political reasons, the Book of John may have played down the fact that Jesus wanted to eliminate the authority of institutionalized religion.
 29. Several interpretations are obvious in the Bible. The people to whom Jesus made the remark took him literally; they thought he was saying that he could *physically* replace the temple in three days. They asked in astonishment, “Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?” (John 2:20). In contrast, at the trial when the remark was reported by witnesses, the high priest did not understand it, and he asked Jesus to explain (Matt. 26:61; Mark 14:60). Later, the people who wrote the canon Gospels interpreted the statement as a veiled reference to Jesus’ bodily resurrection; in John’s words, Jesus “spake of the temple of his body” (John 2:21). However, Stephen, the first martyr after Jesus, preached something else entirely; Stephen taught that when Jesus said, “[H]e shall destroy this place,” Jesus meant that he would “change the

customs which Moses delivered us” (Acts 6:14). In short, some of Jesus’ listeners thought he was speaking of the temple literally as a building, while others concluded that he was speaking figuratively about his own body, and still others decided that he intended the temple as a symbol for the Judaic laws.

30. A. Toynbee, *A Study of History*, vols. VII–X, abridged by D. C. Somervell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985).

Chapter 4

The Hebrew Bible and Public Administration

Ira Sharkansky

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The Hebrew Bible and Public Administration

Depending on one's view of public administration, the linkages with the Hebrew Bible¹ are either inconsequential or extensive. If we conceive

public administration as the arrangement and administration of government offices, or the implementation of public policy, the linkages are weak. There is little in the Hebrew Bible that deals directly with these issues in ways that help us to understand modern public administration. If we stretch the conception of public administration to include issues of how public institutions should function in society, then the Hebrew Bible has profound relevance. This treatment resembles that of Lance deHaven-Smith in chapter 3, "What Jesus Says to Public Administration." Insofar as I will treat Jesus as a late-biblical-era expression of themes from the Hebrew Bible, the two chapters parallel one another.

In a discussion of the Hebrew Bible and the concerns of this current book, it is appropriate to use general terms like "public administration," "governance," and "politics." It would stretch the linkages beyond credibility if we used the more specific and modern terms of "organizational theory" or "management." We shall see biblical materials that are relevant to our concerns with power and authority, plus the legitimacy of those who criticize public authorities and economic elites in the most severe terms. We also find a concern with social justice to be accorded the weak; the value accorded to pragmatic, limited responses to severe problems; and the problems of an advisor who sees that his boss's plan is foolish. The linkages between the Hebrew Bible and the modern varieties of these issues are insightful and impressive, but they are loose, general, or abstract with respect to the details. Changes over the span of as much as 3,500 years from the composition of the Hebrew Bible renders any search for specific messages about modern conditions to be the work of spiritualists rather than social scientists. The parallels found may be labeled by some as "philosophical," but this is also stretching things. As we shall see, the Hebrew Bible is anything but systematic in its use of terminology or argument.²

On the Nature of the Hebrew Bible

First, however, we must consider the nature of the Hebrew Bible. It is political as well as spiritual, insofar as it deals with the worldly experiences of a small, weak, and beleaguered people with an intense concern for their own survival among powerful others. Its setting does not differ greatly from that of modern Israel. The coping behaviors of the biblical figures seem to foretell the skills of Israeli policymakers, while the intense criticisms of the Hebrew prophets sets the tone for much of contemporary Israeli discussion.

The Hebrew Bible provides a treasure of political material, but it does not yield easily to analysis in modern terms. It comes to us in 39 books.

Most analysts conclude that they are compilations gathered from several oral and written sources. Portions of the text may have been written as early as the period of David and Solomon, several hundred years after the Israelites were said to have settled in the land. The material was added to, edited, and reedited during the next 1,000 years or so.

The diversity of politically relevant material in the Hebrew Bible says something about its composition. Some episodes seem to have been composed in order to make a regime look good by describing its ancestors in reverent terms or its actions as rooted in laws that came from the Almighty. Some biblical books express sentiments sharply at odds with those in other books. In certain cases, they reflect contrasting perspectives on controversial issues. Later books (Chronicles) represent revised versions of previous books (Samuel and Kings); they have been cleaned of elements viewed as undesirable, especially those concerned with the life of David. But the editors left for us both the original and the expurgated. How all of this came to be canonized as part of Holy Text is only one of the mysteries that the Hebrew Bible offers for modern scholars.

[T]he material contained in the Hebrew Bible has been selected and edited according to specific and ideological criteria.... This fact must be borne in mind by anyone who wishes to use it for the purpose of historical reconstruction.³

The available studies of the Bible's composition are speculative. They are not proven beyond the capacity of rival scholars to doubt the details. To call the scholarship inspiring, rich, complex, and confusing only begins the inquiry. It is little wonder that schools of commentary are no less diverse than the Bible itself, and that some biblical scholars denounce one another in terms like the prophets' condemnations of blasphemy.

Orthodox rabbinical commentators differ on numerous details. However, they tend to agree on the following: the Torah (Genesis through Deuteronomy) was provided to Moses by God; the Book of Joshua was composed largely by Joshua; the Books of Judges, Ruth, and Samuel were composed by Samuel and his students; the prophets or their students composed the books attributed to them by name; Jeremiah also composed Kings and Lamentations; Solomon composed Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs; the scribe Ezra composed the book that carries his name as well as the Book of Chronicles; and Nehemiah composed the book that carries his name.⁴

Secular scholars have struggled with detailed analysis of the text and artful hypotheses in order to identify who wrote or edited various books and passages.⁵ One critic of their work calls it an

exercise in futility ... detective ventures ... kept going only by recourse to unwarranted assumptions, ad hoc epicycling, non sequiturs, and other offenses against logic and common sense that could provide matter for a textbook on fallacies.⁶

The timing of the final edition of the biblical canon is also a subject of dispute. According to one legend, the contents of the Bible were finally decided at a conference of rabbis at Yavneh in 90 C.E.⁷ Yet the Talmud (compiled after 300 C.E.) refers to later controversies about the inclusion of various books.⁸

Quarrels about the dating of various sections of the Bible and their historical accuracy complicate any effort to assert that the Bible provides reliable descriptions of what occurred in various periods. In other words, historical Israel is not the Israel of the Hebrew Bible. Historical Israel produced biblical Israel.⁹ Among the questions derived from this is whether a scholar should use the biblical material to portray the politics of the time when it seems to have been composed or compiled, or of the earlier period being described.

Attorneys and political scientists who know the problems of discerning the intentions of the men who wrote the United States Constitution should appreciate this point about the meaning of biblical phrases. The authors of the Bible were ten or more times distant from us than the authors of the Constitution. Moreover, the identities of the biblical authors are not known for sure, and they were not inclined to articulate views about political institutions with anything like the clarity that is available in the records of the Constitutional Convention and other writings of the framers.

Political events portrayed in the Bible reveal different and shifting goals, tactics, and moral values without an explicit ordering of priorities. The biblical text jumps back and forth between episodes that are out of sequence. It mixes stories of the Israelites wandering in the wilderness between long sections that proclaim God's law. Similar provisions of the law appear in several places with differences in their formulation. Many of the laws said to be proclaimed during the Exodus seem more suited for a situation of settled agriculture.

The Bible includes descriptions of ancient social and political conditions that have been accepted as credible reports of reality as well as fantastic tales that seem no more reliable than those of Odysseus.¹⁰ There are numerous gaps and contradictions in its reports of ancient history. Few nonbiblical sources corroborate the biblical record. Serious scholars concede that they must speculate about important points. They work to reconstruct the biblical materials in order to make sense chronologically or thematically. There are many missing details. Some read into what is missing from the Bible from what is known about other ancient societies.

The text invites hypothetical extrapolations. The more complete a record that a scholar can produce with interpolations or extrapolations, the less will be its conformity with the Bible, without assuring historical accuracy.¹¹ Some commentators rely for important conclusions on what they describe as common sense.

We cannot know any of these things, but it lies within the realm of the possible ... from what we were able to piece together.¹²

This passage refers to the period of the exodus from Egypt, which is especially problematic due to the absence of sources independent of the Bible. There are more sources for later periods, but even these leave a great deal to the interpolations and interpretations of modern writers.

A modern historian writes that “the study of Israelite antiquity [is] ... a cross fire ... a cacophony of historical approaches, a scramble to make an end run around the problem of interpreting text.” The scholar quoted here makes his own heroic effort to find credibility in biblical stories. With respect to some episodes, he makes the modest claim that “Proof that the narrative is historical cannot be adduced. But evidence that it is historical can.”¹³

Nonetheless, previous assessments of the Bible as myth or the distortions of Jewish editors have been replaced by modern views that it contains much that is useful to a professional historian.

Something in us rebels ... at the notion that the materials ... are not history. The material seems too specific in factors of personality and locale ... by its concern for chronology; its interest in political and military events ... in the wielding of power and the conditions of justice; by its ... claim ... to historical witness; by the realism and sobriety of its narrative style.¹⁴

Alongside its problematic description of historical incidents, the literary character of the Hebrew Bible also stands in the way of systematic analysis. This feature troubles any who would assess the Holy Book’s treatment of God or other heroes as well as biblical equivalents of such modern political ideas as leadership, authority, regime, or justice. The Bible makes its points with a variety of episodes that show no concern for doctrinal clarity.¹⁵ H. Mark Roelofs contrasts Hebrew existentialism with Greek rationalism and Roman legalism.¹⁶ He describes a lack of what modern academics schooled in Greek- and Roman-orientations would describe as systematic discussions of abstract concepts or the institutions of political regimes.

Problems of interpreting the Bible are made even more difficult by the efforts of some ancient authors to obscure the meaning of their work in order to protect themselves and their listeners from retribution. The Book

of Daniel is said to employ a setting in Persia three or four centuries before the book's composition in order to write about contemporary conditions.¹⁷ Chapter 6 in Daniel tells about intrigues among the advisors of the king to concoct a situation in which Daniel will be killed on account of following Judaic rituals. The story ends by showing the weakness of worldly politicians against the influence of God.¹⁸

This story seems to be making a point about a foreign government like that of Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Those who created the story of Daniel might have suffered at the hands of the regime if the story had been written with contemporary details. (Commentators on the New Testament make a similar point about the parables of Jesus: that he provided his lessons by means of veiled stories to foil the efforts of Jewish or Roman authorities who might accuse him of fomenting rebellion.¹⁹)

Some stories of the Hebrew Bible are not overtly masked, but written in an ironic style. They carry a meaning that is either greater or lesser than the explicit words. They add to the literary quality of the Bible without making it easier to understand. In the story of David and Bathsheba, for example, the point is made that the king known as a brave warrior was home in the palace while Uriah and other soldiers were off in battle. It then tells that the king's beautiful neighbor was bathing on her roof in sight of the king's residence. What are we to believe about the king's bravery or the intentions of Bathsheba? In an episode set several decades later, we see a complete picture of Bathsheba's cunning when she plotted to put her son Solomon on the throne in place of his older half-brother Adonijah.²⁰

Another trait of the Bible that complicates modern understanding is its tendency to hyperbole. Perhaps the intention was to give an impression of greatness for the Lord's power, the totality of defeats suffered by his enemies, or the extent of the Israelites' losses when he punished them. Whatever the reason, a number of extreme descriptions contradict other biblical materials or fly in the face of credibility.

The reports that appear in the Book of Joshua for the total conquest of the Promised Land by the Israelites is one example. Elsewhere in Joshua and Judges it is said that the conquest was partial.²¹ At another point, the Bible describes the army of Judah as slaying 500,000 warriors from Israel, at a time when it is estimated that the total population of the northern kingdom did not exceed 800,000.²² Also to be counted as hyperbole are extreme threats or commands attributed to the Lord. The injunction to eliminate all traces of the Amalekites, to the last man, woman, child, camel, and ass²³ may be viewed as a surge of nationalist emotion by a writer who worked a millennium after the purported event instead of a serious plan of genocide. In the words of one modern commentator, this type of language no more stands in need of a political explanation than the bombast of "Onward, Christian Soldiers."²⁴

According to a Christian theologian, “The structure and style of Scripture ... [is] so unsystematic and various, and a style so figurative and indirect, that no one would presume at first sight to say what is in it and what is not.”²⁵ What is written about biblical interpretations attributed to the apostle Paul can apply to many other readings by Jews and Christians. “The ... exegesis ... have an air of freedom. We cannot be sure that if Paul had interpreted the same passage twice he would have interpreted it in the same way.”²⁶

The Book of Isaiah is an archetype of biblical obscurity. It is a collection of what may be the work of two, three, or more authors.²⁷ Different sections seem to have been written as early as the middle of the eighth century B.C.E. while Israel was under pressure from Assyria and as late as the latter part of the sixth century B.C.E. when Judean exiles had returned from Babylon. Some traditional Jewish commentators concede the multiple authorship of Isaiah, saying that an Isaiah school continued the perspective of the prophet over several generations. Others insist that the whole book was the work of the prophet himself, who forecast the Babylonian exile and the return of Judeans that was to occur more than 100 years after his death. These commentators have to deal with the Jewish perspective that the prophets spoke to their contemporaries about moral issues and were not concerned with predicting the distant future. (In the context of Isaiah, in particular, Jews who assert that the prophet predicted the distant future risk providing some legitimacy to Christians who find a prediction of Christ’s coming in that book.) Some traditional Jews try to deal with this problem by claiming that Isaiah did not reveal the latter part of his prophecy to the public but provided it to disciples who were to publicize it when it proved to be accurate.²⁸ In contrast is the irreverent style of a modern commentator who refers to the Book of Isaiah as a “garbage can of prophecy” on account of its numerous authors and themes.²⁹

Embellishing the stories of the Hebrew Bible is an ancient craft, practiced by all major religious groups that trace their heritage to it. Christians and Muslims have read their own religious messages in Jewish history and changed some of the details when they wrote their holy books. Perhaps the first Christians to misquote the Hebrew Bible were those who composed the New Testament.³⁰ Writings not clearly Jewish or Christian but considered heretical in both traditions built ever more bizarre details onto the themes of the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament. Quarreling church fathers of the second century said of one group: “Every day everyone of them invents something new, and none of them is considered perfect unless he is productive in this way.”³¹

Christian sects have published edited versions of the Psalms and Prophets that include creative translations of the original Hebrew that remove all reference to their Judaic context and add references to Jesus.³²

The Mormons have an inspired translation of the Book of Genesis as revealed to Joseph Smith that begins with a conversation between God and Moses about Jesus.³³ Muslims agree with the Jews that God revealed his word to Moses but contend that the Hebrew Bible does not record the word accurately. According to one story in the Koran, it was Ishmael (rather than Isaac) who was offered for sacrifice by Abraham. In the Muslim source, Abraham and Ishmael are said to have built the Kaaba in Mecca. This has modern political relevance with respect to Jewish claims of a biblical heritage.³⁴

The diversity of political behaviors and norms apparent in the Hebrew Bible seem appropriate to the unenviable setting in which it was produced. Its authors and compilers were preoccupied by their own survival amidst a chronic condition of invasion and foreign domination.³⁵ Their Promised Land was small and poor, had a substantial foreign population, and was desired by nearby great powers.³⁶ The Israelites aspired to rule themselves but were usually dominated by others. International relations were a constant preoccupation of Israelite leaders. Usually they paid tribute to an imperial capital. Occasionally they sought to play off one empire against another. This led to national disaster on more than one occasion. National heroes had to develop their capacity to think, express themselves, and behave flexibly. The demands of physical and cultural survival may have fostered a capacity to recognize and cope with numerous perspectives and severe threats. Simple ideas or rigid intellectual categories would not last for long as national guidance in the shifting and dangerous environment.

The composition and literary character of the Hebrew Bible complicate any clear linkages with public administration in the narrow sense of that profession concerned with the organization and management of government offices. Yet the same traits of the Hebrew Bible proclaim their relevance for public administration defined broadly as a concern for how a polity is governed. The nature of the Hebrew Bible expresses a tolerance for diversity in story telling, with nuances of meaning depending on interpretation, as well as a pragmatic concern to work in behalf of the community's survival and its image as the people of the Almighty. Viewed in these terms, the Hebrew Bible is a primer for the student and practitioner of public administration.

Themes of Relevance for Modern Public Administration

The Hebrew Bible is a primer for modern public administration, but one to view with an understanding of its limitations. It is a primer for values of political relevance, rather than details of organization and practice. It

relates to the regimes of a tiny population, much of it written 2,500 years ago. Details concerned with economics, law, social relations, gender, and politics differ greatly from those that prevail in modern Western societies. With all these appropriate reservations, however, we can find in the Bible several themes that impinge on contemporary problems of governance. Prominent is a concern for limiting the government with respect to individual and community freedom. Related to this is the value accorded to the prophets (who directed their shrill criticism at the most highly placed of national leaders), a pragmatic willingness to recognize the timeliness of assessment and action, plus a recognition of coping as likely to be more useful than heroic, but risky, actions.

Problematic Authorities

A concern to limit government appears in several features of the Hebrew Bible. There is skepticism toward the principle of monarchy, and no king of ancient Israel or Judah escaped without severe criticism. The suspicion of authority extended to the greatest of them all. Not even the Almighty was above concern.

A distinguished political scientist and my good friend, the late Daniel J. Elazar, wrote about what he called the republicanism, constitutionalism, and even federalism described in the Hebrew Bible. (See, for example, Daniel J. Elazar and Stuart A. Cohen, *The Jewish Polity: Jewish Political Organization from Biblical Times to the Present*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985; and Daniel J. Elazar, "The Book of Joshua as a political classic" *Jewish Political Studies Review*, Vol. 1, No. 1–2, 1989, pp. 93–150). I think that he exaggerated greatly in the details, but there is a truth underlying his scholarship. Even while the Hebrew Bible revered the Almighty and emphasized the power and occasionally the wisdom of kings, the Judaic polities were not as authoritarian in practice as their formal structures suggest. The Bible gives expression to a diversity of politically relevant perspectives. It also includes episodes that provide support for the values of skepticism with respect to figures of authority. It offers legitimacy of divine origin to the prophets who were severe critics of the kings and other elites. It limits and qualifies the autocracy of the Almighty and the kings. If constraint of government fits somewhere in the prerequisites of genuine constitutionalism, then ancient Judaic regimes may figure in the development of constitutionalism, even if they did not measure up to modern concepts.

"Qualified autocracy" is an appropriate label for the polities of the Hebrew Bible.³⁷ "Autocracy" refers to a regime governed by one person. By implication, the ruler's authority is not controlled by laws or other countervailing sources of power. Political scientists recognize variations

from ideal types at every point along the scale from absolute to democratic regimes.³⁸ Even despotic rulers are likely to exhibit some dependence on advisors and be unable to implement their desires without the cooperation of a professional bureaucracy that, by the nature of things, acquires a degree of independent discretion. Biblical laws and norms directed against the leaders of Judaic polities went beyond these obvious limitations of pure autocracy.

The principal autocrats of the biblical regimes were God, as the source of creation and law, and the kings, whose rule derived from God's grant of authority. The Bible describes a number of covenants between God and the people, as well as an impressive range of laws directed at officials and economic elites. There are provisions that describe qualifications for kings and limit the monarch's possessions. There are rules of judicial procedure; rights of debtors, women, widows, slaves, orphans, the poor, and foreigners; and laws dealing with killing and theft. There is an extensive scholarly literature on these laws, some of which seeks to describe the extent to which each law was actually enforced during the biblical period.³⁹

While some passages of the Bible indicate that the Israelites should have a king, numerous other passages are skeptical or outright condemning with respect to the monarchy. In chapter 17 of Deuteronomy, we read, "When thou art come unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me." However, the very same chapter warns against a king who will take too much property, too many wives, and depart from the word of the Lord.⁴⁰ The Book of First Samuel includes the prophet's warning to a people who wanted a king to rule them:

This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons.... And he will take your daughters.... And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive yards, even the best of them.... And he will take your menservants, and your maidservants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work.... And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the Lord will not hear you in that day.⁴¹

As if to assert the credibility of this warning, the first king anointed by Samuel turns out bad. There are early hints of Saul's problems. "An evil spirit from the Lord troubled him," and the king's aides sought to bring comfort by asking the young David to play the harp.⁴² More substantial signs of the king's instability appeared when the people

shouted greater praise for David than for Saul as a warrior. Saul alternately pursued David, swore he would do him no harm, and then pursued him again.⁴³ Several scenes provide comic relief, and demonstrate that leaders are no more than human. One has the king urinating within sight of the concealed David;⁴⁴ another describes David stealing some of the sleeping king's equipment in order to prove that he could have killed him.⁴⁵

It is not clear whether Saul's madness derived from shoddy treatment by the prophet Samuel, or if Samuel's treatment of him reflected the prophet's perception of the king's madness. One story begins with the Israelites in one of their usual difficult situations. In what was probably a case of biblical hyperbole, the Philistines are said to have amassed 30,000 chariots, 6,000 horsemen, and as many men as there are grains of sand at the seashore. In a wise maneuver to save themselves for a more promising battle, the Israelites scattered. Some went across the Jordan; others hid in caves, thickets, rocks, high places, and pits.⁴⁶

The story continues to a sacrifice that had to be performed by Samuel before Saul could engage the enemy. Saul waited seven days for the prophet to arrive, and the military situation continued to deteriorate. Still without Samuel, Saul performed the sacrifice himself. Then the prophet appeared, denounced the king for acting against the commandments of the Lord (i.e., performing the sacrifice himself), and proclaimed the end of his monarchy.

A simple reading of the text indicates that Samuel was late, and that Saul had to perform the sacrifice in order to go to battle and preserve his nation against a strong enemy. If Saul did violate God's commandments, it seemed to be for a good cause. For this, however, Samuel proclaimed that Saul must lose the Lord's blessing for himself and his family.⁴⁷ Another episode that is also described as the cause for Saul's loss of the monarch may be more weighty. (Characteristically, the Bible does not explain why two different episodes are described as the cause for the end of Saul's rule. Neither does it assign more importance to one or the other.) After a battle against the Amalekites, Saul did not destroy all of the enemy and their possessions as instructed, but spared the king and the best of the livestock, "everything worth keeping." When challenged by Samuel, Saul protested that he had taken the livestock to sacrifice to the Lord. This led Samuel to rage that the Lord desires not sacrifice but obedience. The prophet then renounced Saul and killed the Amalekite king with his own hands.⁴⁸

Religious commentators assert that Saul's downfall reflects the severity of his faults and his lack of suitability to be king.⁴⁹ For a believer in God's justice, the fact of Saul's severe punishment by a prophet of the Lord signifies the gravity of Saul's sin. On the face of things, however, Saul's sins were less severe than that attributed to Aaron in the story of the

golden calf, for which there appears to have been no commensurate punishment. (“They gave me their gold, I threw it into the fire, and out came this bull calf.”⁵⁰) Aaron’s creation of an idol to be worshiped would seem to violate the most prominent of the Ten Commandments (“I am the Lord thy God.... Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.”⁵¹), which supercede in Jewish tradition almost everything else in their weight. Perhaps Saul’s greatest problem was to precede David. This may be sufficient explanation for the story of Saul’s guilt. Whatever Saul did, those who finally compiled the Book of Samuel, perhaps a half millennium or more after its events are supposed to have occurred, had to justify the end of his kingdom to make way for David.⁵²

David’s story also shows the willingness of the Bible’s authors to recognize that a great national hero may have undesirable traits. David was tested and ultimately worn down by the problems of seizing power, maintaining control, managing subordinates and his children, and then passing on authority to the next generation. His immoral personal behavior was matched by flaws in his public activities.

The young David was not only a chivalrous innocent who spent his time in song, in battle with Philistines for the sake of the Israelites, and then foregoing opportunities to harm his mad king. He also gathered around him a force numbered at one point as 400, and at another as 600: “... every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and everyone that was discontented.”⁵³

One episode depicts David and his gang of desperadoes or bandits selling protection. Nabal’s wife Abigail pleaded with David not to take revenge on her husband for refusing to pay. By the end of the story, Nabal was dead and Abigail was David’s wife.⁵⁴ The item reinforces the image of Saul’s weakness, and his inability to protect the countryside from David and his ilk.

Another episode casts doubt on David’s loyalty to the Israelites. He allied himself with Achish, the son of a Philistine king, and received for his services the town of Ziklag.⁵⁵ When Achish asked David to join him in a campaign against the Israelites, David agreed.⁵⁶ Before the battle could be joined, however, other Philistine commanders refused to fight alongside an Israelite.⁵⁷ David protested his loyalty to Achish: “What have I done ... that I should not come and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?”⁵⁸ Achish listened to his Philistine colleagues and sent David back to Ziklag.⁵⁹

The mature David also had problems as a military commander and monarch. In the early details of the Bathsheba story, even before the adultery and killing, it is apparent that the once-brave warrior was at home in the palace while Joab, Uriah, and other troops were fighting

in Ammon. David's use of Joab to implement the death of Uriah depicts a dependence of the king on his military commander that repeats itself on several occasions. At times, it is difficult to tell who is superior and who subordinate.

The problematic relationship between David and Joab began with their victory over the forces of Saul's son, Ishbosheth. There was a falling out between Ishbosheth and his commander Abner, and Abner offered to bring all of Saul's realm with him to David.⁶⁰ David granted Abner safe passage, but Joab killed him in revenge for Abner having killed Joab's brother during the conflict between Ishbosheth and David. David protested his own innocence in the death of Abner, and cursed Joab. Yet the only punishment that he imposed was an order that Joab attend Abner's funeral.⁶¹

Sometime later Joab chastised his king for failing to lead his troops in battle and threatened him with an ultimatum. "You had better muster the rest of the army yourself, lay siege to the city and take it, lest I take it and name it after myself."⁶²

David's flight during the rebellion of his son Absalom also indicates less-than-heroic behavior. The king organized a defense, but acceded to the troops' call that he not endanger himself by taking part in battle.⁶³ The rebellion ended with Joab's killing of Absalom, again contrary to David's explicit order.⁶⁴ Not only did Joab escape censure, but when David mourned his son, Joab rebuked him severely and issued another ultimatum:

You have put to shame this day all your servants, who have saved you and your sons and daughters, your wives and your concubines. You love those who hate you and hate those that love you.... Now go at once and give your servants some encouragement; if you refuse, I swear by the Lord that not a man will stay with you tonight, and that would be a worse disaster than any you have suffered since your earliest days.

(II Samuel 19: 5-8)

David's weakness declined to its lowest point in his final days. According to the story in the Book of First Kings, there was both a messy transition to Solomon's reign, and a vignette that suggests that the once-virile monarch was senile and impotent. While David was still alive, his oldest surviving son Adonijah allied himself with Joab and took steps to have himself proclaimed king. A counterplot of Nathan the prophet and Bathsheba stopped Adonijah and put Bathsheba's son Solomon on the throne.⁶⁵

While this was happening, David was described as a very old man who was always cold. The solution was to employ the beautiful virgin

Abishag to keep him warm. However, the biblical text says that David “knew her not.”⁶⁶ It appears that the man who once behaved like an “oversexed bandit” could no longer function.⁶⁷

The Bible offers two versions of David’s final actions. A saintly version appears in Second Samuel, where David praises the justice, glory, and reliability of God.⁶⁸ In contrast is a settling of accounts by a bitter old man in First Kings. David is described as advising Solomon to do away with the problem of Joab: “[L]et not his hoar head go down to the grave in peace.”⁶⁹ The key to this version may be Joab’s lapse of judgment in choosing to support the monarchical aspirations of the unsuccessful Adonijah.

Even God Is Not Almighty

An episode involving God, Moses, and pharaoh with respect to the freeing of the Hebrew slaves recognizes weakness in the ultimate authority. The assignment was no less than to remove human assets of sizable proportions from the Egyptian economy. The story indicates that the pharaoh was powerful and that slaves are likely to be passive. Moses is unsure of his ability to persuade pharaoh to release them or to persuade the slaves that he could lead them to a better life.

God instructed Moses not to ask for the slaves’ freedom, but for a holiday so that they might hold a religious feast in the desert.⁷⁰ Should the request for a holiday be condemned as the kind of lie the Lord and his emissary should not tell, or should it be accepted as the dissembling appropriate to those who would free the slaves of a powerful state? God made no secret of his plans among the Israelites; he told Moses to encourage the Israelites by saying that God would release them from slavery and deliver them to the land that he promised their forefathers.⁷¹ An element that complicates the analysis is God’s concern to make the task difficult. He told Moses that he would harden the pharaoh’s heart so that he would not let the Israelites go readily. God said that he would do this in order to demonstrate his greater power for the benefit of the Egyptians.⁷² It also appears that the demonstration was meant to convince the Israelites that their God was powerful, and a fitting object of loyalty.

Several problems complicate the fit of this story with other biblical themes. If God is all powerful, why did he not simply change the pharaoh’s heart to facilitate the liberation of the slaves and lighten the damage done to the Egyptians? It is commonly explained that God limited his own power to provide humans with free will. Yet, if God was responsible for hardening the pharaoh’s heart, was not the pharaoh deprived of free will? There are no convincing answers. The Hebrew Bible is not a collection of absolutes. “Thou shalt not bear false witness

against thy neighbor”⁷³ does not mean, as this story indicates, “Never tell a lie.” This episode indicates that even the Almighty may have to demonstrate pragmatic cunning rather than outright power and truth in order to achieve an objective.

Somewhat later in the Exodus, God again reveals his willingness to cope with forces beyond his capacity to control. When the Israelites set out across the desert, he guided them in a roundabout way. He explained that the shortest route would lead the Israelites to encounter the Philistines, but “they may change their minds when they see war before them, and turn back to Egypt.”⁷⁴ God seemed to recognize that he should not or could not simply make the Israelites brave and the Philistines weak.

Sharp-Tongued Prophets

The prophets of the Hebrew Bible were not only — or even primarily — predictors of the future. They were critics of the kings and other political and economic elites. They stand as prominent indicators of the openness of the ancient political culture to dispute and the finding of fault among those of high rank.

Nathan’s censure of David’s adultery with Bathsheba and the king’s involvement in the death of her husband (“Thou art the man”)⁷⁵ included a prediction for both the private and public sides of David’s monarchy: his child would die and there would be bloodshed within the royal family.⁷⁶ Despite these curses, there was a continuing relationship between counselor and monarch that involved issues as important as Nathan’s roles in postponing the construction of the temple and choosing Solomon as David’s successor. In these cases, we see something that may be described as persuasion, as strong advice, or perhaps even the wielding of a veto by a prophet who is able to stand against the king.⁷⁷

Micaiah appears in only 20 verses of one chapter in First Kings.⁷⁸ However, his story is a gem. It is part of the Bible’s condemnation of Israelite monarchs and has wider relevance as a warning against those who would advise the powerful.

Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, was visiting Ahab, king of Israel, in order to consider a joint military expedition. The kings consult 400 prophets employed by Ahab’s court, who respond as sycophants: “Go up; for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king.”⁷⁹ Jehoshaphat was not satisfied and asked if there was another prophet they might consult. Ahab replied, “There is yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may inquire of the Lord: but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil.”⁸⁰

Micaiah was no fool. His first response to the kings was similar to that of the court prophets. But when pressed by Ahab, he offered a prophecy of disaster.

I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd: and the Lord said, "These have no master: let them return every man to his house in peace."⁸¹

Micaiah went on to say that the Lord had sent an evil spirit to deceive the other prophets who had supported the king's war plans. Ahab ordered that Micaiah be put in prison and fed on bread and water, "until I come in peace."⁸² The prophet's final words were defiant. "If thou return at all in peace, the Lord hath not spoken by me."⁸³ Ahab is killed in the battle and we read no more about Micaiah.

Jeremiah was extreme in both the style and the substance of his prophecy. He urged capitulation in the face of a foreign army, and threatened kings, priests, and competing prophets with the end of their regime, death, or great personal suffering. He was beset with intense adversaries on several occasions and hounded almost to death. Yet he also had well-placed supporters. There is no indication that he ever succeeded in changing the behaviors of those who were the targets of his prophecies. However, he persisted in his intense public criticism of political leaders over a long career. During national emergencies, his behavior surpassed what modern democracies have allowed to critics when they have been under stress.

Jeremiah was not only a prophet of the Lord. He was also a man anchored in time and space. Second Kings and Jeremiah describe in some detail, but not as a clear chronology, the problems of his nation. During Jeremiah's era, it was subject even more than usual to the actions of great powers. Egyptian and Mesopotamian regimes competed for dominance. Assyria had recently collapsed, but Judah had few advantages in the power vacuum that resulted. In the words of a modern scholar:

Assyria's crash was not to bring peace to Judah ... the Babylonians ... and the Egyptians.... Both had their eye on erstwhile Assyrian holdings west of the Euphrates. And between the upper and nether millstones of their rival ambitions Judah was caught and crushed.⁸⁴

Jeremiah condemned the Judaic regimes that wavered between adherence to Babylonian and Egyptian demands and that taxed the people heavily to pay tribute to those regimes. The prophet proclaimed that not

a single honest and just man could be found in Jerusalem, and that each generation was more evil than the last.⁸⁵ Destruction will be complete and ugly.

[Jerusalem will be] an astonishment, and a hissing; every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished and hiss because of all the plagues thereof ... [the city's residents will] eat the flesh of their sons⁸⁶ ... [the Lord] will give all Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall carry them captive to Babylon, and shall slay them with the sword.... [A]ll the treasures of the kings of Judah ... [they] shall ... carry them to Babylon.⁸⁷

Jeremiah seems to have been a chronic disputant, impelled to conflict regardless of his adversaries' postures, their motives, or the reasoning by which they reached their postures. He confronted the emissaries of foreign kings dressed in an ox's yoke to symbolize his demand that they and Judah accept the rule of Babylon. On one occasion, Jeremiah was said to be a madman posing as a prophet of the Lord.⁸⁸ There is no indication that he ever responded to the assertions of others, or that he accommodated criticism or advice. He proclaimed his own positions and cursed opponents. Perhaps his claim of being a prophet and hearing the words of the Lord saved him from the need to converse, discuss, and adjust in the manner of ordinary mortals. He expressed doubts about his capacity to carry the Lord's word and to stand up to his adversaries, but not about the substance of what he presented as the Lord's message.

Jeremiah showed little tolerance for competing prophets. His book does not mention prominent prophets whose periods overlapped with his (Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk, and Ezekiel).⁸⁹ It has no praise for Uriah, who was killed by the king for uttering prophecies similar to Jeremiah's.⁹⁰ Jeremiah grouped other prophets together with priests and scribes as liars, frauds, adulterers, and hypocrites.⁹¹

Jeremiah was in and out of trouble several times during King Zedekiah's reign. Once he was arrested as a traitor, flogged, and imprisoned when he tried to leave the city.⁹² During the final siege of Jerusalem in 587 B.C.E. he was charged with treason for urging the surrender of the soldiers and the population.⁹³ Zedekiah initially agreed that Jeremiah be executed. Then he responded to the request of another official that Jeremiah be saved. The king provided refuge to the prophet and sought his counsel. Zedekiah did not change his policy, and asked Jeremiah not to reveal the details of their conversation. The king told Jeremiah that the silence was to save the prophet, but the king may have feared for his own life against the possibility of a coup d'état.⁹⁴

The Book of Jeremiah portrays features of an ancient regime that a modern democrat might admire. Even though government was not limited by institutions familiar to us, the king allowed criticism in the most severe terms, under the most trying conditions. Jeremiah's success in getting away with direct criticism of the regime's policy in the context of war and siege compares well with the record of modern democracies toward dissidents during World Wars I and II, and the Cold War.

Job and Ecclesiastes

The Books of Job and Ecclesiastes differ from other portions of the Hebrew Bible that are politically relevant. They deal not with the Israelite people or regime, but with the plight of individuals who could be anyone, anywhere. Although not explicitly identified as such, both deal with what may be called problems of the universal person searching for meaning amidst personal chaos or disappointment. Both are classics of ambiguity. These books also show that the authors and editors of the Hebrew Bible could tolerate diverse norms that have modern political relevance. And they have other indications that something like political correctness prevailed among the same editors.

Neither Job nor Ecclesiastes escapes the dispute of commentators as to their essential messages. Both Job and Ecclesiastes can be read as deeply rooted in the biblical norm of faith in the Almighty or, conversely, as proclaiming the injustice of God and the uncertainty of reward for righteousness and punishment for sin. Neither expresses simple faith like that which appears in Isaiah:⁹⁵ "Happy the righteous man! All goes well with him, for such men enjoy the fruit of their actions.... Woe betide the wicked! with him all goes ill, for he reaps the reward that he has earned."⁹⁶ Or the 37th Psalm: "I have been young and am now grown old, and never have I seen a righteous man forsaken."⁹⁷

Both Job and Ecclesiastes are relevant to a number of political issues. The doubts they raise about the justice and reliability of God question any reliance on supreme authority. The skepticism that appears in both books must be taken into consideration by anyone who would argue that the Hebrew Bible counsels blind faith in divine or worldly authority. Ecclesiastes is explicit in expressing distrust of government. Job suggests that God himself can lack self-confidence, be deceitful, and answer a reasonable complaint with bombast that has nothing to do with the matter at issue. As will be noted below, it is possible to see ridicule of the Almighty in the Bible's description of Job's encounter with him!

Job is ostensibly set in the land of Uz, and Ecclesiastes (Kohelet in Hebrew, which can be translated as Preacher) claims to be the work of King Solomon. Neither of these assertions are taken seriously by modern

secular commentators. Both books appear to be written by Israelites (or Judeans or Jews), although some scholars question this with respect to Job. While some conclude that most of each book is the work of one writer, others find evidence of numerous editorial insertions.

Neither book presents its ideas in a straightforward, systematic manner. The essence of Job is a series of dialogues set within a story about Job's misfortunes. The speakers talk past one another. The stages of the dialogue do not clearly relate to what has preceded or will follow. Ecclesiastes is an essay that includes personal advice resembling the Book of Proverbs, as well as observations about God and human life. Both books include allusions whose objects are unclear as well as various assertions that seem to qualify or contradict one another.

The prologue of Job is important for the messages that a reader might take from the book. It establishes that Job is a blameless, upright, and God-fearing man and that he is subject to an experiment between God and Satan that tests Job's faith under conditions of severe deprivation. This setting defines the truth of Job's persistent claim that he is innocent of wrongdoing. The prologue also compromises, or ridicules, God's reputation for omnipotence and omniscience. If he enjoys those traits, why test his certainty about Job against the allegation of Satan?⁹⁸ The story also provides one of the most striking instances in the Hebrew Bible that can be cited as a case of God's injustice. God allows Job to be subject to the most extreme suffering, including the death of his children, for no reason other than to settle a dispute with Satan. In the end, Job receives compensation for his suffering, but the children remain dead. Their fate presents its own problem, even more severe than the temporary suffering of Job, that is not treated so often in the commentaries.⁹⁹

There is no less a problem toward the end of the book, in God's response to Job's pleas for explanation. For those who expect a full admission or settling of accounts, the divine performance is disappointing. There is a great wind and much noise, but the words are beside the point. God asserted his status and put man in his lower place. It is God who will ask questions, and man who will answer.¹⁰⁰ The questions attributed to God are tendentious and bombastic: Who are you to speak to me as you do? Where were you when I created the earth? Did you proclaim the rules that govern the heavens? Did you determine the laws of nature? Do you know where the darkness dwells? Do you know when the mountain goats are born? Can you pass a cord through the whale's nose? On the surface, God's speech is a forthright proclamation of his power. However, a modern reader might wonder if an author meant it to be a ridicule of the Lord, by emphasizing his loud evasion of Job's plight. The ambiguity continues in Job's response. What can the miserable man say in response to the Almighty's questions? "What can I say.... I already spoke, and will

not speak again.”¹⁰¹ Is this a statement of surrender, or is it Job’s assertion that he has said his piece and cannot penetrate God’s self-righteousness? Saadia Gaon, in his commentary of the tenth century, noted that Job’s response to God is ambiguous. Saadia wrote that Job either indicated his acquiescence in God’s power or his feeling of being overborne by a God who had the upper hand in a dispute that could not be judged by a neutral arbitrator.¹⁰² A modern scholar calls Job’s short speech a “noncommittal response.”¹⁰³

Ecclesiastes gives prominence to the values of timeliness, relativity, or a dependence of judgment on the situation as opposed to a faith in absolutes.

Everything has its season ... a time to be born and a time to die; a time to plant and a time to uproot; a time to kill and a time to heal ... a time to love and a time to hate; a time for war and a time for peace.¹⁰⁴

Wisdom is to be preferred to foolishness and is better than money or possessions. However, the pursuit of too much wisdom, or too much of anything, is like chasing the wind. One should not be overly righteous or overly wise. Why make a fool of oneself? It is best to enjoy what can be attained and to live the best life possible.¹⁰⁵

The preacher is suspicious of authority. Government is likely to be corrupt.

If you witness in some province the oppression of the poor and the denial of right and justice, do not be surprised at what goes on, for every official has a higher one set over him, and the highest keeps watch over them all.¹⁰⁶

Scholarship is unreliable. By one reading of a difficult passage, the preacher urges his readers not to use a surplus of words.¹⁰⁷ More certain are the oft-quoted lines from the concluding chapter: “the use of books is endless, and much study is wearisome.”¹⁰⁸

God is not to be denied. Those who see piety as the preacher’s major point cannot be ignored. Man has a sense of time past and future but no comprehension of God’s work from beginning to end.¹⁰⁹ The “vanity,” meaninglessness, or impermanence that the preacher describes relates most clearly to the things of human existence. Earth, the heavens, and the Lord are everlasting.¹¹⁰ It will be well with those who fear God and obey his commands.¹¹¹ God knows all our secrets and brings everything we do to judgment.¹¹² Yet God is inscrutable, and one should not be

overly righteous. Ecclesiastes repeats that death is the end of the just as well as the unjust.¹¹³

Pragmatism competes with piety in the preacher's hierarchy of values, with neither obviously more important than the other. To a position holder, he advises against resignation if a ruler expresses anger. Submission makes amends for great mistakes.¹¹⁴ The prime of life is to be enjoyed, but it will pass and seem in retrospect to be emptiness.¹¹⁵ At different points the book seems both to express the theme of Job ("there is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in his wickedness")¹¹⁶ and to repeat the argument of Job's friends ("Whoso keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing").¹¹⁷ The epilogue is not helpful to the reader who wishes to know just what are the most important values of the preacher. It says that the speaker turned over many maxims in order to teach, that he chose his words carefully in order to give pleasure, even while he taught the truth. The third verse from the end is the classic remark against too much study. The last two verses urge the reader to fear God and obey his commands. Commentators quarrel as to whether these lines were in the original Ecclesiastes, or added in order to make the book acceptable to the rabbis who assembled the canon (i.e., politically correct).

Not Democratic, but Not Simply Authoritarian

The covenants described in the Bible are important to Daniel Elazar's view of constitutionalism in ancient Israel. As he and Stuart A. Cohen wrote:

The Bible posits, describes, and develops a whole series of relationships based upon covenants.... Inevitably present within the covenant idea is the sense of a contractual partnership in which the partners must, by definition, share in the implementation of certain common tasks and at the same time are able to preserve their respective integrities while doing so.¹¹⁸

God's covenants and the assemblies convened to accept them are problematic elements in the argument that biblical polities were constitutional, as Elazar claims, or even qualified autocracies, as is claimed here. As viewed by one scholar, the covenants rule out the notion of human initiative and reject the idea of human rights.¹¹⁹

The Bible's description of assemblies convened to ratify the covenants suggests anything but opportunities for serious debate or reasoned decision by the populace. They feature a leader reading text said to be from God, with the people limited to affirming their acceptance.¹²⁰ On some

occasions, the people were humiliated by being reminded of their sins, and told that God offered them the covenant because of his concern for them, and not because they have earned it with their integrity or good behavior.¹²¹ The people were told that they must accept the covenant, with death or other severe punishment as the only alternative.¹²² The covenants did not limit God. By implication, the covenants also failed to limit the persons claiming to speak for God. It was up to God, or those who spoke for him, to decide when to forgive the peoples' transgressions, when to punish them, and how to punish them.¹²³ A religious view is that the Almighty could not be expected to bargain.¹²⁴ On other occasions, however, God did bargain: with Abraham over the destruction of Sodom, and with Moses over the destruction of the Israelites after the incident with the golden calf.

One mass assembly in the presence of the priest Ezra reads more like farce than political opportunity. The people were summoned to stand in the cold rain while Ezra condemned them for marriages to foreign wives and demanded their confessions and their separation from improper spouses and children. On account of the rain and the time involved, Ezra appointed a commission to deal with individual cases. Perhaps Ezra recognized the value of appointing someone else to deal with a problem that he could not solve.¹²⁵ The report on the commission's work suggests only partial or symbolic treatment of a widespread problem.¹²⁶ Ezra's failure to impose his will on the people may count as an occasion of rebellion against a regime that sought to penetrate the personal space of relations within families. To mix and paraphrase some often-quoted verses: there was no king in Israel;¹²⁷ each man sat under his vine and fig tree, with his own wife and children!¹²⁸

Despite the problem with the covenants, a theme that returns time and again in a number of the biblical episodes with political relevance is one or another qualification on the autocracies that ruled the Israelites. There is, to be sure, a lack of systematic political discussion in the Holy Book. The analysis to be made by moderns is one of inference from details. My quarrel with Daniel Elazar is that he reads too much modern political analysis into the regimes of the Hebrew Bible. I would not use terms like constitutionalism, republicanism, and certainly not federalism for the biblical polities or the premodern Judaic communal institutions. Yet Elazar was correct in seeing something other than simple authoritarianism. Our dispute is between the qualified autocracy that I prefer, and his use of terms like constitutionalism, republicanism, and federalism, which imply more explicit rules and greater consistency of institutional arrangements than we find in the Bible.

Elements of the qualified autocracy include the legitimacy accorded to the role of prophets as critics and details that admit the imperfections of

the rulers. The leaders were imperfect both in the morality of their actions and their success in implementing policy. Israelite rulers were not all-powerful heroes on the model of dictators who build around them a cult of personality. They were humans who often failed to achieve their goals. The literary quality of the Bible shines through its portrayal of politics. The central figures struggled against powerful adversaries, economic and technological weakness, personal desires, and feelings of inadequacy. The Bible records the coping of people whose aspirations exceeded their power. In this respect, it suggests the problems and struggles of politicians in many regimes, or at least those that care to recognize the limited skills of their rulers. God also must cope at times, and the Almighty is not above criticism. Those who composed, edited, and assembled the books of the Hebrew Bible admitted doubts as to the power, wisdom, and justice of ultimate authorities via Job and Ecclesiastes, quarrels among prophets, and several indications that even God must cope, bargain, and dissemble.

The powers assigned to God and the kings, and the passive roles assigned to the people should keep us from using any of the labels for biblical polities that have been developed for modern, institutionalized regimes with a plurality of power centers. Nonetheless, the qualifications of autocracy apparent in the Holy Book are also impressive and must be considered in finding linkages between its contents and later, more systematic writing about governance.

The Hebrew Bible, Jesus, and Public Administration

Jesus drew heavily on the Hebrew Bible for statements and actions that were politically relevant, as shown in chapter 3, “What Jesus Says to Public Administration.” Also apparent in that chapter is the problem of sorting out the real Jesus from the figure described in the New Testament. We can do no more than speculate as to how much Jesus saw himself as a Jew or as a rebel against Judaism and its leadership. Was he the source of sentiments in the Gospels that have fed anti-Semitism: that Pharisees (predecessors of the modern rabbis) are vipers,¹²⁹ blind guides,¹³⁰ and hypocrites who preach one thing and do another?¹³¹ Other sentiments in the New Testament that have served as the basis of Christian anti-Semitism more clearly derive from the followers of Jesus: that Jews demanded the death of Jesus, while the Roman official Pilate saw him as innocent of a charge that would require the death penalty;¹³² that Jewish priests bribed Roman soldiers to testify that disciples stole the body of Christ from his tomb to create the image that he had not risen from the dead;¹³³ that Jews poisoned the minds of Gentiles against Christians;¹³⁴ and that Gentile authorities acted against Christians to curry favor with the Jews.¹³⁵

There is nothing in the Sermon on the Mount or Jesus' other utterances that distinguish him from Amos, Hosea, or one or another of the Isaiahs. He may have articulated some of their ideas more forcefully and clearly than they. Perhaps it is best to view him as a continuation of the Hebrew prophets: an angry critic of the current administration. If Christianity had not set itself up as an institutional rival of Judaism and spewed hatred of the Jewish leadership, the rabbis who came to canonize the Hebrew Bible might have added the story of Jesus to what are called the prophets or the writings.

Jesus was not the first, and by no means the last, Jewish radical. Amos preceded him by several centuries, with his proclamation that ritual correctness did not satisfy the Almighty, who was concerned with justice and righteousness.

Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.¹³⁶

This sets a standard of criticism that is open-ended. Actions can be proper in a formal sense, but not good enough.

The Book of Jonah is more profound than a tale of being swallowed by a fish. It describes God's mercy even for the arch-enemy Assyria. Micaiah and Jeremiah stood against kings and their courtiers. Job questioned the justice of the Almighty. Hosea married a harlot to make a point about the culture of his day. Nehemiah demanded justice for the poor and the indebted. The preacher of Ecclesiastes expressed existential values as opposed to authoritarian rules.

New Testament expressions in behalf of the poor and the miserable ("blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh¹³⁷) follow on the provisions in the Torah to care for the poor, widows, orphans, and the foreigner, as well as the postures of Amos and Nehemiah against regimes that did not honor those provisions.

What are said to be Christian sentiments of justice ("He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone"¹³⁸) have earlier roots in the Hebrew Bible's provisions against the giving of false witness, as well as a concern that judges must seek the truth. "You shall not be led into wrongdoing by the majority, nor, when you give evidence in a lawsuit, shall you side with the majority to pervert justice."¹³⁹

The passage cited by Christians as indications of Jewish cruelty (“Eye for eye, tooth for tooth”¹⁴⁰) is seen by rabbis as limiting the extent of punishment to something fitting the crime.

The Book of Isaiah includes passages as sweepingly moral and humanitarian as anything in the New Testament: “with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth.”¹⁴¹ As a precedent for New Testament sentiments in behalf of peace (“Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God”¹⁴²) is Isaiah’s visions of peace among nations, when the wolf will dwell with the lamb, swords will be beaten into plowshares, Jerusalem will be for all peoples, and death will be no more.¹⁴³ Modern Israelis have been wont to adapt this passage to their own needs. When peace arrives, they say, they want to be the wolf rather than the lamb.

At about the time of Jesus’ life, Jewish authorities were pursuing elaborate exegesis of the biblical text to limit the extent of capital punishment. A Sanhedrin that sentenced one person to death in a period of 70 years was said to be excessively cruel. Included in the Talmud are sentiments that God created only one human at first to teach us that when we sustain even a single life, we have sustained an entire world, and when we destroy as much as one single life, we have destroyed an entire world.¹⁴⁴

The Gospels tell us little about Jesus as a boy. We do not know if he was the bane of his playmates, parents, and teachers, like precocious Jews of our time. It is not clear that he went to school or was literate. Albert Schweitzer’s doctoral dissertation was an early effort to identify the real Jesus by parsing the New Testament for what seemed likely to be historical fact as opposed to legend.¹⁴⁵ Haim Cohen, who was a justice of Israel’s Supreme Court, sought to comprehend the judicial reality amidst the traditional polemic about Jesus’ trial and execution.¹⁴⁶ Amidst all the inquiries directed at the stories of Christ are some speculative analyses concluding that he did not die on the cross, but was spirited away while still alive.¹⁴⁷

One group of Christian theologians voted about the likelihood of historical reality as opposed to the mythic quality of events and expressions attributed to Christ in the New Testament. Their scholarly consensus concluded that even some of the widely quoted passages of the Sermon on the Mount came not from Jesus, but from those who compiled the Gospels.¹⁴⁸ Serious Christian scholars view details about Jesus’ last days, including descriptions of his arrest and trial, as well as stories of the virgin birth and resurrection as mythic rather than historical.¹⁴⁹ To be sure, criticism of the New Testament’s historicity need not reflect a rejection of the spiritual messages found in it. Christians who question the accuracy of many details in the New Testament can be inspired by the images no less than religious Jews who recognize the spiritual value in what they see as mythic tales in their own sacred books.

A scholar at a papal university concludes that Jesus was not a poor boy, as told by accepted legends, but was a well-educated son of an urban craftsman who enjoyed the ancient equivalent of a middle-class lifestyle.¹⁵⁰ The claim raises the tantalizing parallel between Jesus and a pattern that has repeated itself over and over again among 19th- and 20th-century Jewish radicals. Many have been children of middle-class or wealthy homes who seem to be rebelling as much against their family as against the larger social norms that they attack.

In a career of university teaching of more than 40 years I have known numerous students and colleagues with some of the traits described for Jesus: bright, creative, provocative, abrasive, and antiestablishmentarian in siding with the downtrodden and outcasts. Quite a few of these individuals have been Jewish. While none of my acquaintances has been crucified, some have provoked animosity. Not infrequently, the Jews among the iconoclasts have brought forth anti-Semitism. The traits that seem to provoke those who cannot tolerate Jews include being different, radical, argumentative, opposed to the conventional, and prominent.¹⁵¹

The time of Jesus' life was ripe for messiahs and apocalyptic visionaries. Individuals and movements stood against the regime and local elites, claiming to have the key to a more perfect future. Josephus mentions the Essenes. Modern scholarship about the Dead Sea Scrolls finds evidence of perspectives from within that community and others that placed themselves outside the establishment of temple and priests.¹⁵² John the Baptist qualified for inclusion among the iconoclasts, as well as Josephus himself, on account of changing his loyalties from leadership of a Judean military unit against the Romans to becoming a Roman historian and polemicist. Akiba was a leading rabbi of the second century whose name has been adopted by the youth movement of the religious Zionists in modern Israel. He is said to have declared that Simon bar Kosiba (Bar Kokhba), who led the rebellion of 135 C.E., was the messiah. The heroism of that rebellion and Akiba's death by having his skin ripped off his body by Roman torturers are viewed by some modern Israelis as points of national pride, but by others as the misery visited on those who hoped for too much from their faith and politics.

We can make out Jesus to be a credible player in the morass of the first century without accepting the miracles attributed to him. His social ideas were within the normal range available from the Hebrew Bible. A messiah-sized ego could have been fed by followers, or invented by them after Jesus' death. According to the Gospels, he was willing to provoke the establishment by his flagrant behavior in the tense situation of Passover in Jerusalem, when the crowds were immense and the authorities nervous about disturbance. And he refused to recant when offered the opportunity by religious and secular authorities.¹⁵³

What turned this rule-breaking Jew into a god (or Son of God) for about one-third of the world's population who call themselves Christians? The question impinges on public administration via the influence of religious norms on governance.

The answers that are offered do not solve the mystery. Certainly they do not answer the equally provocative question of why one Jew's traits rendered him a god, while similar traits shown by countless Jews over the years have only provoked anti-Semitism.

Part of the religious mystery is why some individuals, as opposed to others, were granted status as a prophet of the Lord in the Hebrew Bible. The prophet's distinctive trait was to be accepted as speaking the words of the Lord and serving as an intermediary between the Almighty and his people. The Bible includes several stories of dispute between individuals who claimed to be prophets. Micaiah confronted 400 prophets in the court of Ahab who had given advice diametrically opposed to his own.¹⁵⁴ Amos sought to distance himself from prophets by asserting that he was neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet.¹⁵⁵ Jeremiah was characteristically uncharitable when he termed competing prophets "adulterers and hypocrites" and cursed them to suffer early and ignoble deaths.¹⁵⁶

It was risky to assert one's status as a prophet. An unconvincing claimant could be condemned to death as a false prophet or ignored as insane. Some of those described in the Hebrew Bible as prophets of the Lord were persecuted or killed by the rulers they criticized. Micaiah was last seen being put in jail because of unwanted advice to Ahab.¹⁵⁷ Amos was sent out of the kingdom of Israel on account of his prophecies.¹⁵⁸ King Jehoiakim had Uriah killed for his prophecies.¹⁵⁹ Jeremiah was in and out of trouble during the regimes of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah. There is a rabbinical tale that King Manasseh had Isaiah sawn apart because of his prophecies.¹⁶⁰ Elijah fled to the desert to avoid the fate of other prophets killed on the orders of Queen Jezebel.¹⁶¹ The test of true prophecy is never clearly specified. The compilers of the Bible accorded the status of prophet to some and denied it to others.¹⁶²

Neither do we have convincing explanations of why one or another sect emerges from the many that are created to grow and last long enough to become an established religion. We do not know why some continue to grow, like the Mormons, whereas others experience stability or decline, like Christian Science and the Shakers. For 200 years academics and publicists have proclaimed God's death. The rise of anticlericalism in 18th-century France, 20th-century Soviet Union, and elsewhere set powerful states against religion. What authoritarian governments could not do was expected to be done by the popular education of democracies.

God has not passed from the scene. Large majorities in most Western democracies claim to believe in a deity and cite the Lord in behalf of

their own political agendas. Even if the Lord exists only in human belief, active believers have shown their capacity to change the world in the name of the God they are following. Majorities in Western countries say that they believe in God, and some are intense in their faith. The Roman Catholic Church has long investigated claims of miracles and has certified some of those claimed. Mormon scholars have traveled the migratory path identified in the Book of Mormon from Jerusalem eastward to the Americas looking for physical evidence that the migration really occurred. The parallel Jewish phenomena include women who pray for fertility at Rachel's tomb and political activists who cite murky passages of the Bible to justify their claims about the land of Israel.

Religion continues as a thriving focus of popular observance and academic inquiry. Much of the research about religion by social scientists is set in the United States and is concerned with describing and explaining the continued vitality of faith. The topic is especially fascinating in the context of formal neutrality with respect to religion and the traits of technological development that would seem to push the society toward secularism.¹⁶³

Surveys find that over 90 percent of Americans profess a belief in God, that almost 80 percent say that religion is important to them, that more than 60 percent are likely to have attended a religious service within the past week, and that about the same number say that they pray daily. Between one-third and two-thirds report that they have witnessed a miracle, felt the direct presence of God, or had one of their prayers answered.¹⁶⁴ Harold Bloom used the terms, "religion-soaked," and "religion-mad" for American society.¹⁶⁵ One commentary on the run-up to the 2000 presidential election found most of the candidates emphasizing their religious feelings. Skeptics asked if they were campaigning for the post of preacher or president, and surmised that it was easier to talk about amorphous personal feelings than controversial issues of public policy.¹⁶⁶ Violence in the name of religious belief is not only something that occurs in the Middle East and Northern Ireland, but also at abortion clinics in the United States.

Jews remain a tribe that includes humanists, agnostics, and avowed atheists as well as the ultra-Orthodox, the moderately observant, and some members of non-Orthodox congregations who are fanatic in their limited convictions. The residual unity of Jews in pluralist secular democracies is as much of a mystery as other questions concerned with religion. Jews have had more than their share of iconoclasts. They appear in science, the arts, and business, as well as religion. In all of these fields, rule breakers must figure on sharp opposition. Modern establishmentarians do not crucify rule breakers in universities, culture, and business, but they may deny them tenure or career advancement.

Christian and Jewish scholars have approached one another's perspectives in recent years. It is now common for Christian scholars to conclude that the Gospels of the New Testament were written 40 to 60 years after the death of Jesus, and that they reflect problems of Christian communities at those times.¹⁶⁷ According to one Christian scholar,

[I]n those early decades, almost every possible view of the relation between the two emerged. Christianity fulfilled Judaism; or else it superseded it; or it was built upon it; or it was the true Judaism; or it was a complete novelty.... [T]here is much to be said for the view that, despite their crucially distinct beliefs, the more mainstream Christians were precisely those who stuck closest to their Jewish roots, above all in the retention, albeit reinterpreted, of the Scriptures they came to call the Old Testament.¹⁶⁸

The messiah is a powerful symbol in religious doctrines that has implications for public administration. It directs expectations outward, for someone or something else to solve our problems. It is instructive that the problems of the individual and the regime were severe during the time of Jesus. A people concerned about their distinctiveness found themselves beset by a powerful empire as well as by domestic violence.

Why the modern preoccupation with messianism during a period of relative peace and prosperity? Perhaps it says something about the skepticism directed at political institutions. We might temper our concern by noting that secular skepticism toward messianic promises prevails in Western democracies. Will the demise of Saddam Hussein bring democracy to Iraq and eventually the larger Middle East? Some policymakers and commentators say yes.

Religious Jews have not given up hope that a true Messiah will appear. Among many, however, ritualized hope seems stronger than serious expectation. Two prominent claimants in the 17th and 18th centuries who gathered enthusiastic followings ended their careers by converting to Islam (Sabbatai Zevi) or to Christianity (Jacob Frank). Perhaps Jews have learned from the disappointments. During the last years of his life, however, followers of Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, the Rebbe of the Lubavitcher movement of ultra-Orthodox Jews, were fervent in their messianism. The Lubavitcher, or Chabad, movement is centered in Brooklyn, New York, and has a following in Israel. Billboards and bumper stickers appeared across the country urging the people to prepare for the Messiah's appearance. When the rabbi died at the age of 92 without making the sought-after proclamation about his status, some spokesmen for his movement offered a traditional explanation of the Messiah's delay: the Jewish

people had not prepared themselves for the Messiah by ceasing their sins. Diehards expressed the sentiment that the rabbi would return to lead his people. Other religious Jews, and not a few secular Jews, snickered at this un-Jewish belief in an afterlife. To my knowledge, no one has reported seeing the rabbi on the streets of Brooklyn or the Holy Land.

There Can Be No Accurate Summary or Final Word about the Hebrew Bible

The vast differences between regimes of the biblical period and today render impossible any effort to draw specific lessons for modern administrators or students of administration. Moreover, the diversity of themes in the Hebrew Bible, and the lack of concern for a clearly ordered theology, hamper any effort to specify its significance for modern public administration. Nonetheless, the Hebrew Bible serves as a source of inspiration and detailed education for those with a concern for larger issues of governance and public management. Chief among these is skepticism about authority and the legitimacy assigned to severe critics of political and economic elites. We also see the value accorded to pragmatic coping in the face of difficult circumstances, a concern for social justice, and the problems of an advisor who has bad news for his superior. These themes are in contrast to the stereotypes ascribed to the Bible, such as blind reverence, harsh discipline, and certainty of purpose. To be sure, there is some basis for those stereotypes in the complexity of the biblical text. However, among the lessons for modern governance that we can find in the Hebrew Bible is the value of nuance and subtlety, along with concerns for reverence and justice. Postmodernists claim to have uncovered something about the complexity of meaning. However, literature concerned with explicating the meanings of the Hebrew Bible, including the Mishna and the Talmud, anticipated postmodernism by as much as two millennia.

Acknowledgment

My thanks to Professor Mordecai Lee for helpful comments on an earlier draft.

Notes

1. For a discussion of the suitability of the terms “Hebrew Bible” and “Old Testament,” see Robert Alter, “Introduction to the Old Testament,” in *The Literary Guide to the Bible*, by R. Alter and F. Kermodé (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987); and Burton L. Visotzky, *Reading the Book: Making the Bible a Timeless Text* (New York: Anchor Books, 1991), chap. 2.
2. My thanks to Professor Mordecai Lee for helping me clarify this point, as well as other points in this chapter. See his “Bureaucracy in the Hebrew Bible: A Neglected Source of Public Administration History,” *Public Voices* 5, no. 1-2 (2002): 79–88.
3. Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Gibeon and Israel: The Role of Gibeon and the Gibeonites in the Political and Religious History of Early Israel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 20.
4. See the introductions in the multivolume *The Bible with Commentaries* (in Hebrew) (Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1971 –).
5. Robert B. Coote and Mary P. Coote, *Power, Politics, and the Making of the Bible: An Introduction* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990); Richard Elliott Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible?* (New York: Harper and Row, 1987); Norman K. Gottwald, *The Tribes of Yahweh: A Sociology of the Religion of Liberated Israel, 1250–1050 B.C.E.* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1979); Norman K. Gottwald, *The Hebrew Bible: A Socio-Literary Introduction* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985); Aaron Wildavsky, *The Nursing Father: Moses as a Political Leader* (University of Alabama Press, 1984); and Israel Finkelstein and Neil Asher Silberman, *The Bible Unearthed: Archeology's New Vision of Ancient Israel and the Origin of Its Sacred Texts* (New York: Free Press, 2001).
6. Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 64, 67.
7. This chapter employs the Jewish notation of B.C.E. (before the common era) and C.E. (common era), equivalent to the Christian B.C. and A.D.
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42. 1 Sam. 16.
43. 1 Sam. 24–26.
44. 1 Sam. 24:4.

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54. 1 Sam. 25:2–44.
55. 1 Sam. 27:6.
56. 1 Sam. 28:1–2.
57. 1 Sam. 29:1–5.
58. 1 Sam. 29:8.
59. 1 Sam. 29:10–11.
60. 2 Sam. 3.
61. 2 Sam. 3:26–33.
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72. Exod. 7:3–6.
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80. 1 Kings 22:8.
81. 1 Kings 22:17.
82. 1 Kings 22:27.
83. 1 Kings 22:28.
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86. Jer. 19:8–9.
87. Jer. 20:4–5.
88. Jer. 29:26–27.
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90. Jer. 26:20–24.
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107. Eccles. 6:11. The Hebrew of this passage employs a word that can be rendered as "thing" or "word." The King James translation is, "Seeing there be many things that increase vanity, what is man the better?" The New English Bible translation is, "The more words one uses the greater is the emptiness of it all; and where is the advantage to a man?"
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109. Eccles. 3:11.
110. Eccles. 1:4.
111. Eccles. 8:13.
112. Eccles. 12:13–14.

113. Eccles. 7:16–17; 8:14–17; 9:2–6.
114. Eccles. 10:4.
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130. Matt. 15:14.
131. Matt. 23:1.
132. Luke 23.
133. Matt. 28:11.
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155. Amos 7:14.
156. Jer. 23:14; 28:16–17; 29:21–23.
157. 1 Kings 22:28.
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160. Ephraim E. Urbach, *The Sages: Their Concepts and Belief*, trans. Israel Abrahams (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987), 559.
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MODERNIST DEFINED



Chapter 5: The English Legacy of Public Administration

William had much thought and very deep discussion about this country — how it was occupied or with what sorts of people. Then he sent his men all over England into every shire and had them find out how many hundred hides there were in the shire, or what land and cattle the king himself had in the country, or what dues he ought to have in twelve months from the shire. Also he had a record made of how much land his archbishops had, and his bishops and his abbots and his earls, and ... what or how much everybody had who was occupying land in England, in land or cattle, and how much money it was worth. So very narrowly did he have it investigated, that there was no single hide nor a yard of land, nor indeed ... one ox nor one cow nor pig which was there left out, and not put down in his record; and all these records were brought to him afterwards.

Hinde, T., Ed., *The Domesday Book*, 11

Chapter 6: Niccolò Machiavelli: Moving through the Future as We Learn from the Past

But we now come to the case where a citizen becomes prince not through crime or intolerable violence, but by the favor of his fellow citizens, which may be called a civic principality. To attain this position depends not entirely on worth or entirely on fortune, but rather on cunning assisted by fortune. One attains it by popular favor or by the favor of the aristocracy. For in every city these two opposite parties are to be found, arising from the desire of the populace to avoid the oppression of the great, and the desire of the great to command and oppress the people.

Machiavelli, *The Prince*, Chapter IX

Chapter 7: Mercantilism and the Future: The Future Lives of an Old Philosophy

Although mercantilist doctrine is at a sharp discount among economists, mercantilist sentiment endures both among unions and businessmen whose immediate interests are threatened by foreign competition, and among public officials responsive to the complaints of their constituents.

R. Lekachman, *Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought*, 1977

Chapter 8: Jeremy Bentham: On Organization Theory and Decision Making, Public Policy Analysis, and Administrative Management

It is the greatest happiness of the greatest number that is the measure of right and wrong.

Jeremy Bentham, *A Fragment of Government*, 1776

Chapter 9: John Locke's Continuing Influence on Organization Theory and Behavior Entering the 21st Century

Every one as he is bound to preserve himself, and not to quit his Station willfully; so by like reason when his own Preservation comes not in competition, ought he, as much as he can, to preserve the rest of Mankind, and may not unless it be to do Justice on an Offender; take away, or impair the life, or what tends to the preservation of the Life, Liberty, Health, Limb or Goods of Another.

John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, 1690

Chapter 10: Invisible Hand and Visible Management

By pursuing his own interest he frequently promotes that of society more effectively than when he really intends to promote it. I have never known much good done by those who affected to trade for the publick good.

Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and the Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, 1776

Chapter 5

The English Legacy of Public Administration

Pamela Tarquinio Brannon

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Introduction

The case for attention to the distant past ... is a civilizing and liberating influence, reminding us of the profession's roots and its development, identifying the major innovations that led to much that we take for granted.¹

The development of recurring public administration themes can be traced through a variety of historical examples: ancient Rome, Napoleonic France, and Prussia under Frederick the Great, to name a few. The early history of England, through the commingling of the Anglo-Saxons and the Normans, and under the rule of the Plantagenets, provides examples of administrative concepts and traditions that are followed to this day. Examining this part of public administration's history gives us some insight as to how real people solved real problems of governance and administration.

Early administrative activity arose from the need of the kings to perform a variety of duties: provide military leadership, maintain the territories of conquest, govern the people, and run the royal household. The tasks required to maintain the royal household provided the basis for the development of a permanent administrative organization. As the kings' duties increased in number and complexity, and they were no longer able to attend to everything themselves, they began to assign tasks to their household members. These additional responsibilities were combined with related domestic functions, and they eventually evolved into governmental functions. "In the discharge of these duties lies the beginnings of administrative history."²

This chapter looks to the distant past of England to gain a more complete picture of the development of public administration processes and traditions. In the first section, Anglo-Saxon institutions are presented. Those institutions were in place at the time of the Norman Conquest. The second section focuses on William the Conqueror and provides an overview on what has been termed the "administrative kingship" period of English history.³ The third section considers the administrative "legacies" of William through the reigns of his descendants, from Henry I through

King John. Finally, the chapter examines current public administration institutions and processes in light of the historical developments and innovations discussed in the chapter. Administrative activities of the “distant past” are put into current context.

Anglo-Saxon Institutions

Although a large number of administrative traditions come from the time of the Norman Conquest and the Plantagenet era, those traditions were built upon the institutions of the Anglo-Saxon kings. Those institutions developed as the result of the gradual change in that early society from an emphasis on military conquest led by leaders of small bands, to that of stabilization and settlement with centralized leadership. The “dooms” or codes of law, the council of royal advisors, the organization of local jurisdictions and courts, the use of the writ, and the establishment of a rudimentary financial system developed from this gradual change.

Codes of Law

The Anglo-Saxon dooms were written codes of laws that recorded ancient folk customs that had developed over time regarding the interactions of society. The codes were recorded by scribes of the church, and were written in the Anglo-Saxon vernacular instead of Latin. The earlier codes were basically expressions of Germanic customs, but the later ones became legislative statements of the king. The codes were primarily concerned with criminal matters, but also included provisions relating to the status of the clergy, the rights of the church, and the transfer of land.⁴

The first dooms were those of King Aethelberht (died 866), who was the first Anglo-Saxon monarch to become a Christian. They were largely concerned with monetary penalties for specific offenses, but also provided for the protection of church property.⁵ The dooms of Alfred the Great (871–901) reflected his interpretations of the earlier codes, and he selected only those laws that he felt were just. His code is considered a landmark in English legal history because it signified the exercise of legislative powers by the king and set an example for future rulers.⁶

The Anglo-Saxon kings after Alfred continued to revise and expand the codes of law, to exercise authority over their kingdoms, and to adapt local customs to enhance their royal power. They sought an allegiance from their people that would transcend local loyalties, and thus would increase not only their power, but also the stability of their society.

The last of the dooms was issued by Cnut (Canute) (1016–1035), the Danish monarch of England. Those dealt with both ecclesiastical and

secular matters, summed up the past laws, and contained the first explicit list of royal rights that could override local claims, particularly with regard to land.⁷

The long series of dooms, although neither comprehensive in scope nor the only sources of Anglo-Saxon law, represent early efforts toward achieving a uniform legal system under the authority of a central figure.

Witan

The “witan” or “witenagemot” was an assembly or gathering of wise men, defined as “an assembly of the king with men who constituted his household and the aristocracy at large for consultation on any sort of business.”⁸ It was informal, flexible, and its composition could change from one occasion to the other.

Although it was strictly an advisory body, custom dictated that the king rule by consulting with his witan. This custom may have contributed to the notion that the king and the lords should cooperate in governing the realm; it is considered by some historians to be one of Anglo-Saxon England’s fundamental political institutions.⁹

Local Courts

The organization of the local jurisdictions and the local courts contributed to an evolving administrative structure. Local jurisdictions, with the “shire” and the “hundred” as the basic elements, were developed into a hierarchy. The shire, which may have had its origin in the early Germanic war bands, was of no fixed size and was divided into smaller units called hundreds. Hundreds were composed of 100 “hides.” A hide was originally designated as an estate sufficient to support the family of an individual warrior. It was about 120 acres, but the size was dependent on the fertility of the land. The hide evolved into an assessment unit on which military and fiscal obligations were based.

The shire emerged as a territorial district headed by an “ealdorman,” who was both a local aristocrat and a royal official appointed by the king. The delegated powers of the ealdorman entitled him to become the territorial lord and administrator of his district. When an ealdorman had authority over a group of shires, he could no longer attend to all duties and activities personally, and therefore another royal official was appointed to administer each individual territory, the “shire reeve,” who later became known as the “sheriff.”^{10,11}

Shire courts were presided over by either an ealdorman or a sheriff in the king’s name, met twice a year, and were both judicial and admin-

istrative bodies. The hundred court was originally presided over by a royal official, but eventually landholders were granted jurisdiction by royal charter to administer justice in their districts. The hundred courts normally met once a month, and therefore had more impact on the local community than did the shire court. As the Anglo-Saxon society became more complex, and the royal government grew, the development of both the shire and the hundreds courts fulfilled a need for local communities to attend to financial, judicial, and policing matters.^{12,13}

The Writ

The writing office of the royal household, the “scriptorium,” was composed of the kings’ priests, who were first motivated to establish written records of the land grants that had been made to them. The fact that they were a literate class enabled them to carry out clerical duties for the king. Local charters were among the first documents prepared; the “writ” or “writ-charter” developed later in the Anglo-Saxon reign.¹⁴

The use of the writ was a major improvement for conducting the royal business, contributed enormously to the administrative potential of the Anglo-Saxon kings, and increased the ease with which the king could communicate with his realm. The writ has been described as “a direct, economical statement of a royal command to a subject, usually written in English rather than Latin, sufficiently short and simple to serve as a highly effective instrument in the everyday business of government.”¹⁵

As the writ developed and its use increased, the duties of the scriptorium and its power within the royal household also increased. By the 11th century, the title of “chancellor” was given to the master of the office.^{16,17}

Financial Origins

The duties of the royal household “chamberlain” and the imposition of the “Danegeld” led to the beginnings of an organized financial system. The position of chamberlain evolved from the household officers who were responsible for the king’s wardrobe and bedchamber. The king’s treasure was also kept in these rooms, closely guarded and eventually managed by these trusted officers. The management of this treasure evolved into administrative functions that set the stage for the later development of a financial office.¹⁸

The Danegeld, imposed in 991 by King Ethelred to raise money from his subjects to purchase security against Viking invaders, was assessed on property or hides of land, and collected through the shires and the hundreds. It encompassed all the lands of England, and, although only

occasionally collected during this time, it “illustrates perhaps more vividly than anything else Anglo-Saxon England’s progress towards royal centralization and administrative sophistication.”¹⁹ The Domesday Inquest, which was commissioned by William the Conqueror, contains information about the geld system of Anglo-Saxon England.

Although Late Anglo-Saxon England was politically volatile, it was institutionally stable. “Beyond the mayhem at court and the bloodshed of the battlefield, churches were being built, cases were being heard in court, merchandise was being produced and marketed and a strong and copious coinage was being minted.”²⁰ The Anglo-Saxon institutions that were developed prior to 1066, although in many ways still vague and loosely structured, provided a firm foundation on which the Norman kings would build a strongly centralized and coherent administrative organization.

Administrative Kingship

William the Conqueror (1028?–1087), duke of Normandy, successfully invaded and occupied England in 1066 and ruled it for 22 years. His reign has been termed the “administrative kingship” period of English history.²¹ It is widely held that William’s skills as a leader and his personal dominance greatly contributed to the success of the conquest of England, to its subsequent rule, and to the development of its administrative processes.^{22,23,24}

An example of these skills can be seen during his preparations for the invasion of England: “[I]t is still a notable achievement that William managed to keep together a host of perhaps 10,000 men for a month.”²⁵ The men and their horses, which numbered 2,000, and the support contingent of squires, servants, armorers, and butchers had to be quartered, provisioned, kept in order, and maintained in good physical condition. This was apparently accomplished, because there are no records of incidents of disease among the camp.

As the conqueror, and then ruler, of a foreign land, William needed to maintain a strong military force, suppress rebellions, restore law and order, and ward off invasions. His success in accomplishing all this was achieved by a combination of brute force and a reliance on the Anglo-Saxon administrative structures already in place in England at the time of the Norman Conquest. Although the Normans had also collected revenues, issued written documents, and governed the people in their homeland, they found superior administrative institutions in England. “William ... regarded himself as succeeding to and inheriting the attributes of the Old English monarchy, and assumed that its institutions and methods were available to him to use and develop as circumstances and opportunities

offered.”²⁶ The Anglo-Saxon institutions that William found and revised were the codes of law, the witan, the local courts, the writ, and the processes for collecting revenue.

Codes of Law

The existing Anglo-Saxon codes of law were followed as far as possible by William, and no attempt was made to produce new codes. Chibnall²⁷ lists several reasons for this. First, the small numbers of Norman settlers had no need for new codes because they were accustomed to settling disputes in the court of their lord. Second, because William expressed a desire to allow the local people to keep their own customs, they were allowed to settle property disputes in the local shire courts. Third, William respected the traditional methods of proving ownership in the matter of those disputes: either trial by battle or “compurgation,” the practice of clearing an accused person by the oath of others who swear to their belief in his innocence.

If a dispute could not be settled in the local courts, it was heard in the court of the king. If the solution produced a general ruling that was to be followed in the local shire courts, a writ was issued by the king and sent to the local officers of the courts.

Witan/Curia Regis

The witan of the Anglo-Saxons and the ducal court of Normandy were gradually combined into the Anglo-Norman institution of the “Curia Regis,” or King’s Court.²⁸ This became the central institution of William’s government and consisted of the “Anglo-Norman aristocracy, lay and ecclesiastical, who best could help him in his work.”²⁹

As with the witan, the Curia Regis could be a large or a small gathering, depending on the business to be conducted. It did, however, meet with greater frequency than the witan, and full sessions came to be held regularly during religious holidays, including Christmas and Easter. This regular schedule of meetings is considered to be one of William’s innovations in administration.³⁰

The sessions, which were characterized by ceremony and entertainment, enabled the Norman and English rulers to maintain contact with each other, and allowed the king to become acquainted with all the areas of his kingdom through his administrators. There was no differentiation of government functions within the King’s Court during this time; specialized functions and offices developed after William’s death. “In the Conqueror’s reign, government was still viewed in a simpler way. The king ruled the

land, and his feudal vassals were called upon to assist him in his task: to offer him counsel and support his executive acts.”³¹ That the king needed the support and consent of his vassals for his decisions and actions has been documented in royal charters, writs, and decrees from this period. This has been termed the “preparliamentary” period of English history.³²

It was at the annual Christmas court in 1085 that the Domesday Inquest was initiated. That survey will be discussed later.

Local Courts

The appointment of royal officials such as the ealdorman and the sheriff contributed to the growth of an administrative organization. These officials allowed the king to exercise his delegated powers on the local level. The ealdorman was originally the king’s principal contact with the shires, and the sheriff’s position came into existence to assist the ealdorman.

In spite of the fact that the Anglo-Saxon position of sheriff had no equivalent in Norman society, sheriffs rose to the heights of their power under the reign of William.^{33,34,35} Fesler³⁶ attributes this to the fact that William converted the position “to his own use, appointing Norman barons, who were granted substantial lands in their respective shires.” Thus, he turned a nonfeudal position into one that contributed to the rise of the feudal state in England.

Under William, the sheriff became the chief officer of the shire and was responsible for royal, military, financial, and legal duties within his jurisdiction. Through him, the king was able to direct administration on the local level, and the sheriff provided the bridge between local and central government.^{37,38}

The Writ

Stenton³⁹ notes that it was the very good fortune of the Conqueror to come to a country where the writ, or writ-charter, had been established, “an instrument of government so effective in itself and so adaptable to so many purposes.” The royal writing office had, by the time of William, become an important entity in the royal household, as was the practice of placing a king’s royal seal on written documents. William and his descendants took over the sealed writs of the Anglo-Saxons and utilized them for their own purposes.

As discussed previously, William sent out writs to inform the local shire courts of general rulings that would apply to them. This was, according to Douglas,⁴⁰ in contrast to the writs of the Anglo-Saxons, which were used to record grants of land or rights. The later writs of the

Conqueror announced commands or prohibitions, and these became “the most characteristic expression of the king’s administrative will.”

The flexibility of the writ enabled William and his descendants to adapt them to the changing needs of the realm and aided in the development of a more centralized government. The royal writing office became known as the “Chancery”, with a chancellor as the chief officer. Eventually the Chancery became separated from the royal household and developed into a department of state, and the writ became one of the chief instruments of the Norman-Angevin administration.^{41,42}

Finances

William inherited Anglo-Saxon financial practices and incorporated them into his reign. Revenues were collected from a variety of sources, including dues, judicial fees, and revenues from the royal estates. Additionally, William utilized the Anglo-Saxon practice of imposing the Danegeld, or geld, as a form of taxation and a source of revenue. Although there is some disagreement about the frequency of the collection of the geld,^{43,44} there is consensus about the position of the sheriff with regard to the geld. The sheriff, considered the chief royal finance officer, was responsible for collecting the geld,⁴⁵ and the castles that had been built during the initial phases of occupation of the country became the focal point for the collections.⁴⁶ The Domesday Book, discussed later, provided the Conqueror with valuable information about the sources of geld owed to the Crown.

The term “treasurer” is found in the Domesday Survey, and the recognition of a “treasury” as a storehouse of treasure in the sense of a safe place to keep valuables was in place during William’s reign.^{47,48} In fact, before the Norman Conquest, a permanent location for the royal wealth had been established at Winchester. However, the concept of a treasury in the sense of a separate administrative department that dealt with creditors and handled financial disputes was not yet developed.

In addition to the impact that the administrative kingship of William had on Anglo-Saxon institutions, several innovations were introduced during his reign that helped to consolidate his rule and led toward more-centralized authority. These included the oath of fealty, the delegation of authority to the “justiciars,” the declaration of royal ownership of land, a feudal system, and the Domesday Inquest.

Oath of Fealty

The innovative aspect of William’s demand for an oath of allegiance was that it applied to both royal tenants and their followers or undertenants,

who were only normally required to owe fealty to their immediate lords. The speculation is that William may have felt that his position was so strong that he could demand a second oath of fealty for himself. This action led to his becoming a national leader to whom all his subjects owed their primary loyalty.^{49,50}

Justiciars

The position of “justiciar” evolved under William due to the need for responsible and competent administrators to supervise the government of England when he traveled to Normandy. Trusted subordinates were empowered to act in the king’s name, and different men held the position at various times during the Conqueror’s reign. They became chief ministers for William, and their duties added to the administrative activities that were becoming more important to the operation of government.⁵¹

Land

Further significant innovation was applied to the land of England. With the conquest, William had the opportunity to declare that all of it belonged to him, and thus he could dispose of it as he wished. This philosophy enabled him to confiscate large areas and either add them to the royal “demesne,” which was territory controlled directly by the Crown, or grant them to his military followers.^{52,53} This practice helped to both consolidate the kingdom and develop the feudal system in England.

Feudalism

While there is some debate as to the origins of feudalism in England,^{54,55} there is no doubt that during William’s reign a new order based upon military obligations and land tenure was established. This new order “was the greatest social change effected in England by King William.”⁵⁶ It has also been described as “Europe’s first venture into the terrain of government by contract.”⁵⁷ A feudal contract specified the rights and duties of both vassals and kings.

William’s loyal Norman followers became his tenants-in-chief in England, and to them he granted tracts of land, or “fiefs.” The fiefs were composed of the land in many shires and became a fundamental unit of English social life. They were organized around the chief residence, which might have been a castle. They paralleled the royal administrative structures by containing a household, a court, a set of royal officials who might have included sheriffs, and military tenants.

The fiefs were awarded on the condition that the tenants-in-chief provided a specified number of knights for royal service to the king. The number of knights required, the *servitium debitum*, was established by individual bargains between the Crown and the tenant-in-chief, and was not based on the value of landholdings.⁵⁸ This process established the Normans as the prevailing aristocracy in England and served the defensive needs of the realm. Military troops could be efficiently provided by a relatively small number of loyal followers.

Originally, the knights who provided royal military service were members of the lord's household and held no land of their own. Gradually, through a process known as "subinfeudation," these knights were granted land from the estates of their own tenants-in-chief. Smaller fiefs were created from larger ones, a process that was encouraged by the Conqueror. Knights performed their military service in return for the lands they held. The "enfeoffed" knight became a figure in English society.

A formalized feudal system began during William's reign and was established within a century of the conquest. It was based on military needs and arrangements, the oath of fealty, and the royal claim to ultimate ownership of all English land. Within this formalized system, knighthood came to be recognized as a social class that was characterized by a privileged form of land tenure.⁵⁹

Domesday Inquest

This survey, considered to be "William's greatest administrative achievement,"⁶⁰ has invited much analysis and speculation with regard to its primary purpose. Some of the purposes attributed to it include: an inquiry into the wealth of the kingdom and how it was distributed; a method to ascertain the feudal service due to the king; a means to reassess the collection of the geld; and a description of the new realm, which had grown under the Conqueror's leadership.^{61,62}

One of the accounts comes from the 1085 Christmas court at Gloucester:

William had much thought and very deep discussion about this country — how it was occupied or with what sorts of people. Then he sent his men all over England into every shire and had them find out how many hundred hides there were in the shire, or what land and cattle the king himself had in the country, or what dues he ought to have in twelve months from the shire. Also he had a record made of how much land his archbishops had, and his bishops and his abbots and his earls, and ... what or how much everybody had who was occupying land in England, in land or cattle, and how much

money it was worth. So very narrowly did he have it investigated, that there was no single hide nor a yard of land, nor indeed ... one ox nor one cow nor pig which was there left out, and not put down in his record; and all these records were brought to him afterwards.⁶³

As can be seen from this description, the Domesday Inquest contains an enormous amount of detail and numbers. Two procedures were used to gather information: collecting written accounts from tenants-in-chief that had been compiled by their stewards and contained all the minute detail required by the inquest, and sworn testimonies from juries who were summoned to the hundred courts to confirm the accuracy of the information that had been provided.^{64,65}

The country was divided into seven or eight regions, or circuits, and the king's commissioners held sessions at each court in the circuit. Sessions were attended by the sheriff, the priest, and mixed juries, which consisted of old residents, the English, and new settlers, the Normans. This comingling of the two groups followed William's policy of blending the conquered and the conquerors into a cohesive whole.⁶⁶ The jury testimonies ensured that no estates or landholdings were excluded from the survey, confirmed the written information that had been gathered, and provided the means to legitimize the survey itself.⁶⁷

By the end of 1086, the Domesday survey had been essentially completed, and the information was eventually compiled into what is known today as the Domesday Book. The survey is considered a remarkable achievement for William, the "best evidence of the iron will of the Conqueror," and "an astonishing product of the Conqueror's administration."⁶⁸ Schama dubbed William "the first data-base king" and considered the Domesday survey the finest campaign of William's reign, "the campaign for information."^{69,70}

Due to the variety of information it contains, the Domesday Book has been classified as many things: "the most remarkable statistical record ever produced in any medieval kingdom";⁷¹ "the first great step towards the bureaucratic state";⁷² "an ordered description of a national economy";⁷³ "it mirrors a society in transition";⁷⁴ and "a supreme demonstration of the efficiency of those who served the Conqueror, and of the energy with which at the end of his reign he could still enforce the execution of a great design."⁷⁵ Faced with the continual need to demand loyalty from a conquered nation, William could also use the book "to coerce, fine or confiscate, should any of his own vassals waver in their loyalty."⁷⁶

King William, with the assistance of his Norman allies — and through the necessity of directing the government, collecting revenues for opera-

tions, and keeping peace in his kingdom — developed administrative procedures that were creative solutions to practical problems.

The positive aspects of William's rule should not negate the realization that the Norman Conquest was “a ruthlessly calculated, brutally executed act of aggression”⁷⁷ and that Norman military might was responsible for settling the country. However, the Conqueror realized the value of the governmental apparatus of the Anglo-Saxons, as rudimentary as they might have been, and utilized them for his own purposes. The structures that were produced from this blending of administrative practices and cultures became foundations for public administrative activities throughout the English-speaking world. The reign of William the Conqueror left an indelible mark upon the development of administrative and governmental processes.

Administrative Legacies

The Reign of Henry I

During the reign of Henry I (1100–1135), the royal administration was further solidified, and specialized functions that grew out of the royal household began to appear.⁷⁸

The position of justiciar, which evolved under William, emerged as a powerful administrative tool under Henry. Roger, bishop of Salisbury, is the first man known to have held the position of Chief Justiciar of England. He is considered to be “one of the great architects of medieval English government”⁷⁹ and became second to the king in the royal government. He presided over the Exchequer and developed it into a separate financial department. His administrative decisions, together with other innovations of the time, gave rise to the establishment of an impersonal government; that is, government capable of functioning without direct royal supervision. This was a significant advance in the development of sophisticated governmental administration. Other advancements were made in the areas of finance, record keeping, and the judiciary.

The financial office of the Exchequer grew out of the need to manage the king's treasure and to collect and account for revenues. Household officers who traveled with Henry carried money needed for royal expenses and documents explaining the financial needs of the king in a big leather bag.⁸⁰ Repositories for the royal wealth had been established in several locations, and eventually came to be permanently held at Westminster.⁸¹ In the early years of Henry's rule, the decision was made to hold a regular accounting of revenues and funds during the curial sessions at Easter and Christmas. These accountings came to be called the meetings of the Exchequer, from the checkered board on which calculations were made.⁸²

The accountings were presided over by key household and court officers, who became known as the Barons of the Exchequer. They audited the accounts of the sheriffs, who were required to report on their receipts and expenses. An abacus was used to make calculations, and tallies, or notched sticks, were used as receipts and represented sums of money paid. These two devices “made possible the rapid development of a sophisticated system of accounting.”⁸³

The innovation of biennial sessions for accounting purposes produced two outcomes that were valuable administrative tools. First, the sessions enabled the establishment of a royal department that did not depend upon the location of the king. During the year, royal administrators staffed the Exchequer, although the title of Treasurer was not used until the end of Henry’s reign.

The second outcome was the use of the Exchequer to control the sheriffs. They had become key royal officials who sometimes abused the power of their office to enrich themselves and their families. The Exchequer audits were able to restrain the sheriffs to some degree. The audits increased the king’s knowledge of his land and served to further strengthen his rule.⁸⁴

The practice of “enrolling” records, the copying of documents onto parchment sheets that were sewn together end to end and subsequently rolled up to form a roll, was developed to record revenues due to the Exchequer.⁸⁵ The long rolls of parchment, known as “pipe rolls,” marked the beginning of systematic records under the administration of Henry I. They provided valuable information on the amounts of revenue to be collected, the sources of that revenue, and how well it was collected. They facilitated the development of financial administrative control, which was necessary for the further development and sophistication of English society as a whole. The Normans were money-conscious rulers, and the pipe rolls provided a valuable and up-to-date means to allow them to collect, record, and audit revenues.

Increased administration required more written documents, and elaborate royal records were begun under Henry I. Writs were used for routine business, and charters elaborated on important transactions. Both were refined to meet the needs of a more centralized government. The master of the writing chamber was originally the chaplain of the court and was entrusted with the custody of the royal seal to authenticate documents. This position came to be known as the Chancellor, and under Henry it was held by bishops. During this time the chancellor became a principal household officer who supervised a staff of clerks as they prepared written documents. The writing office eventually became, in the 13th century, a separate department known as the Chancery. This development allowed the king to make his will known to his subjects and to exercise his prerogatives.⁸⁶

The judicial system was further developed during this time. The establishment of the Exchequer led not only to the growth of fiscal administration, but also to an increase in judicial administration. The barons of the Exchequer determined what was due the king as part of their supervision of accounting and auditing activities. They listened to pleas of exemption from royal payments and coerced defaulters. The establishment of a systematic financial procedure “contributed to the precocious development of English law.”⁸⁷

When Henry was crowned, he issued a Coronation Charter in which he promised to put an end to the injustices of his predecessors and to rule in accordance with the established laws and principles of justice of England. Although this charter was in reality a bid for baronial support for his coronation, and Henry did not intend to fulfill his promises, it became part of the royal tradition that had its roots in Anglo-Saxon times. That tradition assumed both royal obligations and the rights of the governed. It recognized that kings undertook certain obligations to their subjects in return for obedience. The written promises in the charters became known as the Charters of Liberties and were the first written acknowledgments that kings were under the law and had to govern accordingly. These charters provided the precedent for the baronial struggle against John in the 13th century.⁸⁸

Henry’s Writ of 1108, which emphasized his right to hold special meetings of the shire courts for royal business, gave him control over the court system and the local sheriffs.⁸⁹ Originally the sheriffs were the only local representatives of royal justice, but the king appointed itinerant justices to tour the countryside and hear the cases listed under royal pleas. In those instances, the sheriffs’ functions were reduced to producing the proper people and preserving order in the courts. The tours of the justices led to the establishment of well-defined judicial circuits. As they made their rounds, justices extended the king’s contact with his people, enlarged the scope of royal justice, and gathered information about local conditions. They became a check on shrieval power and a bridge between the king and local government.⁹⁰

Henry’s reign saw the overall growth of the royal judicial system and royal administration. Specialized governmental functions began to emerge from the foundations of the Anglo-Saxons and William the Conqueror. The growth in administrative departments and the rise in impersonal government paved the way for further sophistication of royal governance in decades to come.

The Angevin Rule of Henry II

The reign of Henry Plantagenet (1154–1189), first of the Angevin kings, grandson of Henry I and great-grandson of the Conqueror, is famous for

its developments in legal and administrative functions. Henry had first to establish order out of the chaos that had been created by the civil war of Stephen (1135–1154) and Henry's mother, Matilda. Once that was completed, he turned his attention to the increasing complexities of ruling the Angevin Empire. He built upon the foundations established by his grandfather and became one of the great administrative and legal innovators in history.

Henry's claim to the throne as the "rightful heir" marked the beginning of the basis for the succession of English monarchs based on hereditary rights known as "primogeniture," the right of the eldest son to inherit the estate of his father. Hereditary rights not only affected the succession of kings, but the landholdings of royal officials and their tenants.

The principle of land ownership under the feudal system was that all land ultimately belonged to the king, and when a tenant died the land reverted back to the original grantor. "In practice, however, the desire of all men to be succeeded by their heirs prevailed against theory; and in England in the 12th century a lord granting a fief was expected to confirm it not merely to the grantee but also to his heirs."⁹¹ Royal officials such as lords and barons also wanted to consolidate and strengthen their possessions. Henry's ascension to the throne based on primogeniture, and his recognition of inheritance desires, enabled people to press for the right to hereditary succession. Civil procedures such as the "Assize of Mort d'Ancessor," discussed later, were developed during his reign. These developments contributed to the evolving view of private ownership of land.

Reforms in the military service were also accomplished during this time and enabled by two documents. The first, the Baronial Charters (*Cartae Baronum*) of 1166, was also known as the Inquest of Knight Service.⁹² It provided comprehensive information about the organization of the military service in the country, and was undertaken to determine the number of knights who had been enfeoffed by the barons or tenants-in-chief. William had established quotas for each baron, and Henry II wanted to determine the extent of enfeoffments since the time of his grandfather, Henry I. Additionally, Henry II wanted to ensure that all the knights rendered formal allegiance to him so that peace would be kept when he was out of the country. The numbers provided by the Inquest formed the basis for additional revenue for the royal administration. Barons who had enfeoffed more than their quota of knights were required to pay additional "scutage" or shield-money to the Crown.

The second document of Henry's reign that affected military organization was the Assize of Arms of 1181. This required every able-bodied freeman to provide his own weapons and serve the king at his own expense when he was summoned to do so by the sheriff. The number and type of arms that were to be supplied depended on the wealth of

the individual; those who had more wealth were obliged to outfit themselves with better equipment than those who had less wealth. All freemen were obliged to swear to fight for the defense of the realm, thus establishing a new system for national defense.⁹³ The military organization became a graded hierarchy of obligations that extended from the barons and knights down to the general population. The Assize of Arms was the beginning of an attempt to standardize a national system of military assessment.⁹⁴

Throughout his reign, Henry II continually sought ways to increase revenues for the Crown. Two of those ways were the knight's fee, and the tax on personal property.

The establishment of a knight's fee, in lieu of service to the king, had begun during the reign of Henry I and continued during the time of Henry II. The process of enfeoffment and subinfeudation, together with the movement toward primogeniture in the inheritance of lands, began to change the feudal organization and affect the obligations that had been expected under knight's service. Questions about the length of service and payment for support of the military in the field had to be answered. Difficulties arose with regard to raising the required number of men for military service and extracting the fulfillment of obligations from those that could not or would not take part in service. Payment of a knight's fee, a lump sum of money that was over and above the scutage assessment and rid the subjects of the whole burden of service, came into practice. "The decade of the 1160's was the period when royal finances definitely moved away from the hide towards the knight's fee as an acceptable basis for the assessment of a substantial part of the royal revenue."⁹⁵

The tax on personal or movable property is considered to be the chief tax innovation of the Angevins.⁹⁶ The tax was actually assessed on a percentage of the total value of property. The first tax was authorized in 1166 to raise money for the defense of the Holy Land, but it was not collected. The tax was authorized again in 1188, to be collected for the relief of Jerusalem, and was known as the Saladin tithe. It was approved by the Great Council (*Curia Regis*) and collected in every community. Individuals assessed their own wealth and made their contributions accordingly. If anyone was suspected of giving a false contribution, a jury of local men was empaneled to fix the property value to ensure a proper return. Taxes levied on this new basis continued throughout the subsequent reigns of the English kings and formed the basis for the modern system of taxation.⁹⁷

Under Henry II, administration was still centered in the king's household, but it began to be differentiated into separate departments that eventually stood on their own. The most advanced department was that of the Exchequer; others included the Chancery and the Chamber.

The Exchequer had developed into a department of public finance, concerned with the royal revenue collected through the sheriffs. Accounts, calculations, and payments for this revenue had become routine, and the work went on even when the king was not present. The Exchequer, still a part of the Curia Regis, continued to look to the king for ultimate authority, but it was developing its own practices, methods, and customs and becoming self-sufficient.⁹⁸

The Chancery, under the Angevins, developed “as the most efficient secretariat of western Europe.”⁹⁹ It is most noted for the improved organization and development of new records. Documents that were managed through this department included the charters, which were very formal, and the writs, which were less formal and were written in a terser style. New documents emerged: the “Letters Patent” and the “Letters Close.” The Letters Patent were written on open sheets of parchment and were addressed to royal officials concerning public matters that affected a number of people. The Letters Close were addressed to individuals about personal matters, and the parchment papers were closed up for privacy.

The Chamber remained a household department, evolved into the king’s personal financial bureau, and continued to travel with him. In addition to financial matters, the Chamber became involved with administrative and secretarial work. It developed its own small or “privy” seal to authenticate the documents it issued.¹⁰⁰ The clerks of the Chamber became the trusted agents of the king, and the Chamber itself began to serve as a training ground for administrators who were experts in writing and finance. Many clerks began in the Chamber and rose to prominence in higher offices.¹⁰¹

A group of professional administrators had started to evolve under the rule of Henry I, and this trend continued to grow during the reign of Henry II. The departments of the royal administration began to be staffed by clerks who were not connected to the church or its monasteries. These men had received the best education in western Europe and were widely traveled, experienced, and urbane.¹⁰² Once they entered the royal service, they worked their way up through the administration.

Henry II further advanced the growth of a professional administration through the Inquest of Sheriffs in 1170. The sheriffs, as has been previously discussed, held important positions in the royal administration throughout England and had grown very powerful over the years. The Inquest was prompted by numerous complaints about the sheriffs and their financial and administrative conduct during a four-year period when the king was away from the country. Upon his return he ordered an investigation and suspended the sheriffs while the inquiry was in progress.

After studying the results, Henry dismissed most of the sheriffs and replaced them with trusted men who had already served him in the

royal administration.¹⁰³ He continued the practice of using royal administrators as his local agents throughout his reign. There were advantages to this practice: these officials were more dependable and more closely in touch with the central government; they could be transferred from one county to another and thus eliminate the propensity to gain influence in one particular county; and they could easily be dismissed. From the time of the Inquiry, sheriffs no longer could serve as royal justices in their own jurisdictions, but they were still indispensable as local officers to the Crown.

Henry II is well known for his advances in law and criminal justice, and he is considered to be the Father of English Common Law.^{104,105,106} The expansion of the royal courts, the use of juries, and procedures to handle land disputes all came out of this innovative reign.

Two reasons are attributed to the expansion of the royal courts: to expand royal authority and therefore uphold peace throughout the country, and to increase the royal revenues from fines and court fees. The Curia Regis was the principal royal court at the start of Henry's reign; by the end of his time, a number of separate entities were hearing cases in the king's name. This expansion gave the people greater access to royal justice and helped to contribute to a body of common law throughout the land.¹⁰⁷

The Curia Regis, the Great Council, was the royal tribunal that heard the most important cases, such as the trial of Thomas Becket. "It was an extraordinary tribunal for extraordinary cases"¹⁰⁸ and was attended by all the barons. The Small Council was composed of administrative officials and household members who traveled with the king. It attended to all royal business, both judicial and administrative. Most of the cases before the king were heard here, although because it traveled with him, people had to follow it throughout England and France to have their cases heard. This court eventually became known as the King's Bench, because it met wherever the king was located. The Exchequer Court was already meeting regularly to hear cases regarding financial matters, and during Henry's reign it expanded its functions to include other judicial and administrative matters. It was separate from the Small Council, although many of the same men sat in both courts.

The increase in litigation and the inconvenience for individuals to attend the Small Council led Henry to take steps to establish a permanent judicial body at Westminster, around 1178.¹⁰⁹ A small body of legal experts, generally consisting of the chief justiciar, the treasurer, and five or more men, was authorized to hear all but the most important pleas of the realm. Although this remained an experimental body under Henry II, it developed into the Court of the Common Pleas in later years.¹¹⁰

While the permanent court helped to ease the judicial burdens of the royal administration, additional means had to be found to match "the

highly popular judicial innovations in procedure with an equally good court system and to make the royal justice readily available to all free-men.”¹¹¹ Itinerant justices were incorporated into the judicial system as a means to expand the royal courts and make them available to more people.

Although Henry I had utilized itinerant justices, the position was revitalized by Henry II. The justices were organized by counties and sent out on annual journeys or “eyres” to attend to the legal business of their circuits. They were authorized to hear civil and criminal royal pleas, but only those contained in instructions that were given to them by the king prior to their journeys. They in turn issued writs of general summons to each sheriff before the journey began to ensure that all participants would be in attendance at the county court. The use of the itinerant justices contributed to the further decline in the power of the sheriffs because the justices became the eyes and ears of the king, and the link between the Crown and the county court. Additionally, the existence of the justices led to a decreased reliance on the feudal courts of the shire and the hundred and an increase in the use of royal courts.

The use of juries dates from the time of the Normans; however, Henry II brought it out of obscurity and made it a part of the legal system. The “jury of presentment” resembled the modern grand jury and was used primarily to gather information about criminal acts. It is the generally accepted origin of the sworn inquest. The “jury of recognition” was used to settle land disputes, and it became part of civil procedures. The use of these juries extended royal jurisdiction into areas that had been traditionally regarded as the province of the feudal courts.¹¹²

The juries were composed of 12 responsible men from the community who swore an oath to give correct and true information, and who had knowledge of the particular situation or plea that was to be heard. The Assize of Clarendon, issued in 1166, clarified the position of the jury in legal procedures. It also instituted a comprehensive inquiry into criminal activity since the beginning of Henry’s reign, and it established procedures for maintaining law and order throughout the land.¹¹³

The Assize of Clarendon was issued before a general eyre and provided instructions for the justices. Juries were obliged to point out accused and suspected criminals; sheriffs were authorized to make arrests; and jails were to be constructed in every county. The accused had to submit to the ordeal of fire or water to determine their guilt or innocence, and the guilty were banished from the community. This Assize was strengthened by the Assize of Northampton in 1176, and trial by ordeal remained in effect until 1215.¹¹⁴ Gradually, under later rulers, criminal jury trials became the accepted practice in the courts and replaced the trial by ordeal.

Juries of recognition became a regular part of the process of settling land disputes. Land and inheritance disputes were addressed by “posses-

sory” assizes. These were decrees of legal action designed to address the question of forcible dispossession or disinheritance, and “their institution has rightly been regarded as among the most salutary of Henry II’s legal reforms.”¹¹⁵ Sheriffs were ordered to ascertain the truth of allegations by the use of the sworn inquisition; a jury was empanelled to give true answers to precise questions; and the plaintiff had to be in court at the same time. Two of the most important possessory assizes were the “Novel Disseisin” and the “Mort d’Ancestor.”

The Assize of Novel Disseisin, or recent dispossession, was based on the principle that no freeman could be “disseised” (dispossessed) of his land unjustly, without judgment. A person who claimed to be so disseised could purchase a writ of novel disseisin, which ordered a local sheriff to summon the jury on his behalf. In the presence of the royal justices, the jury would be asked whether the plaintiff had been disseised. If a favorable answer was given, the sheriff immediately restored the land. This process provided a fast remedy for settling contested possessions of land and established the idea that all freemen’s holdings were protected by royal justice. This assize proved to be reasonable and satisfactory and was incorporated into the Magna Carta.¹¹⁶

The Assize of Mort d’Ancestor protected an heir from being wrongfully kept from his inheritance, and was directed toward the customary practice of a lord seizing the property of a dead tenant. A jury, empanelled by the sheriff in the presence of the justices, answered questions regarding actual possession of the land on the day of the death of the tenant. If the answer was given in favor of the tenant, then his heir received the land.¹¹⁷ This assize went against local feudal customs and demonstrated Henry’s desire to support hereditary rights. The results of these assizes led to the expansion of royal jurisdiction into land and inheritance disputes, and to the further decline of local feudal courts.

The legal and administrative innovations of Henry II were not fully felt during his own reign. They were, however, solid foundations and proved to be capable of almost limitless expansion during subsequent years. “It is perhaps the greatest tribute to the work of the great Angevin and his ministers to say that their machine never broke down under the weight of the burdens which, as time went on, it had to bear. The vitality and toughness of the Angevin system was to endure indefinitely.”¹¹⁸

King John and the Magna Carta

The reign of John (1199–1216) is best known for the struggle with his barons and the signing of the Magna Carta in 1215. Under his rule, however, there were advances in administrative functions, most notably with regard to written records.

Enrollment of Chancery records was introduced during John's reign. This process served to ensure an adequate record of Chancery transactions and provided a copy of a royal document if the original was lost. Chancery enrollments were arranged chronologically and were of three types: "Charter Rolls," "Patent Rolls," and "Close Rolls."¹¹⁹

The Charter Rolls began in 1199 and contained information regarding royal liberties, possessions, immunities, and privileges granted to great persons of the realm and the church. The great seal was affixed to them, and they were witnessed by court members.

The Patent Rolls date from 1201 and were copies of Letters Patent, which dealt with public or administrative matters that affected a number of people. They were generally addressed to the royal officers who had to implement them and the people who were affected by them. They were used for grants, appointments, correspondence, treaties, diplomatic negotiations, and confirmations. These rolls were classified according to either geographic area or subject matter.

The Close Rolls began in 1204 and were copied from Letters Close, which were meant for specific individuals or specific matters. Their subject matter included payment of wages, general letters, royal mandates, and acceptances of homage.

The enrollment of records was an enormous administrative step forward for the royal government. Deliberate, permanent, and comprehensive written records, which provided information about governmental activities, could be used to check and confirm governmental decisions. These records proved to be long lasting and influential upon later administrative developments in both England and the United States. "A source of stability and efficiency had been created which never thereafter was to be lacking."¹²⁰

The reign of King John is most famously known for creation of the Magna Carta. Although opinions have varied about the original purposes of this document, it is considered to be both a feudal and a constitutional document.^{121,122,123}

It is feudal in the sense that it is a statement of feudal law and custom, it defines the obligations of a feudal society, and it helped to ensure that the barons did not lose their jurisdiction over areas in which they had traditionally presided. It is constitutional in the sense that it imposed limitations on the arbitrary power of the Crown and contained the idea that a ruler must govern under the law. Even though the barons were reacting to an autocratic ruler, their solutions to that particular problem began to move the royal government toward a constitutional monarchy and toward the recognition of certain rights for all people of all classes.

The 61 clauses of the Magna Carta addressed numerous issues. Some of those were: control of taxation and collection of scutage, payments of debts, rights of inheritance, hearings on possessory assizes and common

pleas, and the use of due process of the law. The judicial clauses of the charter were the most important, and, although they specifically addressed grievances against the reign of King John, they can be seen as reactions against a judicial system that had been developing piecemeal in response to increasing demand.

Few, if any, of the abuses dealt with in the Charter were exclusively the result of John's policy, nor were they all satisfactorily corrected in the years that followed. The slowness of justice even in the new assizes could not be easily remedied, nor could untrustworthy sheriffs and local officers easily be kept from encroaching on the royal authority in the shire court. The judicial clauses of the charter were a genuine program of reform for long-standing grievances.¹²⁴

Once the Great Charter had been signed, some sort of mechanism had to be developed to ensure that the king would live up to his concessions. A group of 25 barons was entrusted to watch over the king and his actions. These barons had a legal right, granted by the charter, to act against the king if he violated any of the clauses, and they could call on the people to join in this resistance if deemed necessary.

Although rebellion was the only form of sanction available during that time, the group of 25 established the right of the barons to become involved in the workings of government. Eventually, the knights and other officials of the shires established the House of Commons, which became the chief limitation on royal power.

The Magna Carta gained in importance during the three centuries after it was signed. It was repeatedly reissued and confirmed, and became part of the common law. Eventually it came to be regarded as a very important document that was fundamental for the protection of individual liberty. Although that was not the original intention of its writers, it speaks to the quality of their work that they were able to create something that, in time, became a standard for good government.¹²⁵

Current Context

The Anglo-Saxons, the Normans, and the Plantagenets (Angevins), through the necessity of directing their governments, collecting revenues for operations, and keeping peace in their kingdoms, developed sound administrative procedures. Those procedures were creative solutions to practical problems.

Their solutions embraced administrative concepts and traditions that are followed to this day. Examples include: rules for ownership of land, maintenance of property rolls, imposing taxes and collecting revenue, organization of city and county jurisdictions, training of administrators, developing a concept of representative government, instituting a system for national defense, and establishing the notion that those who rule should do so according to the law.

Three of the most important administrative activities to come out of this era were the keeping of systematic written records, the organization of a treasury, and the establishment of the court systems. Administrative processes today depend in large part on maintaining written records. One of the frequent complaints that is given about bureaucracy is the amount of paperwork that is required for every activity. However, as in the days of the early kings, the maintenance of a systematic written record of government and administrative activities contributes to the sophistication and stability of the governance process. Information can be checked, stored, and retrieved for a variety of purposes, whether the documents are on paper, disc, or CD.

Much of the record keeping of the early kings developed from the necessity of developing accurate financial processes. Financial records are utilized today much as they were during earlier times: to record revenue collections, sources, disbursements, and the efficiency of the process. However, today we also depend on financial records for budgeting activities, which may or may not have been an activity of the Exchequer.

Fesler writes of Exchequer activities: "it was auditing, not budgeting, and no overall summary of royal accounts was in sight."¹²⁶ There was no method of determining how much money was available to the Crown until there was no more or the geld had to be imposed for purposes of defending the country. Harriss, however, maintains that the Exchequer was able to determine the financial state of the Crown. By the 14th century it was able to provide records of income and expenses and enabled planning documents to be developed based on reviews of Exchequer receipts.¹²⁷ Whatever the correct view, it is apparent that financial records are as important today as they were then: "The capacity of a state to finance the needs of internal government and external defence is rightly taken as a measure of its strength."¹²⁸

The evolution of a separate judicial branch of government paralleled the differentiation of government functions during early English history. Our contemporary court systems reflect this differentiation at the local, state, and federal level. For example, our state and federal courts are divided into circuits and districts, although at the state level the higher entity is the district, while at the federal level the opposite is true.

Additionally, we have the position of "administrative law judge," which is contained in the executive branch, and which has the power to intervene

in the implementation of public policies and programs. Regular judges can also intervene into policy implementation.

We also have trained professionals, such as judges, lawyers, clerks, and court administrators, who work in the judicial systems. These positions reflect the specialization of administrative functions in the government process, and they developed from the periods of English history that have been discussed in this chapter.^{129,130}

The establishment of the jury system during the time of the Normans contributed greatly to the development of judicial administration. The jury system was a means of involving the people in the governmental process and prevented the judicial system from being dominated by specialized classes. This function continues today as a means to prevent domination by professional elites.

Comprehensive written, financial, and legal systems are still needed to be able to competently operate in an increasingly complex world. Additionally, professionals with training in public administration are also needed to manage and direct these systems. This need for special training in public administration has been recognized, as evidenced by the number of schools and departments throughout the country that offer both undergraduate and graduate education in this field.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a look at the administrative traditions that developed in England from the time of the earliest rulers through the Magna Carta. In particular, the development of written records, financial records and systems, and legal procedures greatly enhanced the administrative capabilities of the early governments, and contributed to their survival by increasing their efficiency, productivity, and competency. The recognition that a specially trained group of people would be a positive addition to governmental operations was also a great administrative step forward. Today's administrators still need comprehensive written, legal, and financial systems to be able to competently operate in an increasingly complex world.

It has been suggested that historical reviews and analyses have been neglected in public administration.^{131,132} This chapter has been an attempt to fill that gap and to contribute to "a strong appreciation of the development of the state and the rise of the theory and practice of public administration."¹³³

It is interesting and informative to take a look at early administrative concepts and functions, to see how they evolved over the centuries, and to speculate about their influence on current practices. One can only be

in awe of the early English rulers and their household officers for the ways in which they created solutions to the problems of managing a government. Public administration today is still grappling with some of the same problems that confronted those people so many years ago.

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Chapter 6

Niccolò Machiavelli: Moving through the Future as We Learn from the Past

Christopher Anne Easley and John W. Swain

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Introduction

As we move through a new millennium, we are witnessing the ever-increasing complexities of life and our resulting attempts to understand its paradoxes. To understand the paradoxes, we remind ourselves that the

changing dynamics of our lives is a given as well as a paradox: change is a constant.

Following the events of September 11, 2001, people throughout the world were shocked into realizing that we can no longer rely upon the constancies of our beliefs, philosophies, interpretative schemas, policies, and procedures to govern the constantly changing dynamics of life. Inherent in the concept of change lies the necessity to challenge our beliefs and interpretative schemas to accommodate emerging realities. However, if we examine history, we must ask whether the issues have really changed, or is our shock the result of our inability to learn from the philosophers that preceded us? Are the questions we raise different from questions raised in the past? What can we learn from the past that we should bring into the future and into the context of our organizational theories, our change strategies, and our interpretations of behavior that shape our policies and resulting political, administrative, and corporate systems?

In this chapter, we will begin a dialogue that suggests the need to frequently revisit past philosophers. We start the conversation by examining the world of Niccolò Machiavelli and juxtapose his experiences and thoughts against some of the questions and issues being raised by post-modern organizational theorists.

Machiavelli's World

Niccolò Machiavelli was a practicing public administrator in Renaissance Florence who became an author and founder of modernity, the modern human enterprise of serving human needs.¹ His writings and philosophies have continued to evoke criticism, praise, and blame for his Florentine and Italian patriotism, his commitment to principles, his service as a public administrator, and his perspectives on the world, many of which are considered to be contradictory arguments. However, people have continued to puzzle over his contradictions, and how he wavered in his perspectives and arguments. Yet, when you examine the contradictions in his arguments, they are easy to understand. Machiavelli was responding to the changing dynamics and complexities of his time, which was wrought with political unrest and constant challenges to underlying principles. Yet, despite his contradictory arguments, one cannot deny his influence on modern society as well as the foundational principles of modern public administration.²

Born on May 3, 1469, in Florence, Italy, Machiavelli lived and wrote during a period of history where change was a constant, the European Renaissance. Intellectuals, who were members of the social elite, defined and celebrated the potential of the human spirit, resulting in tremendous

changes in the culture and political spheres of Italy and other parts of Europe. This period, known as the Renaissance, a French term that means “rebirth,” was seen as a time when human society was emerging from the cultural and intellectual darkness of the Middle Ages after the fall of Rome. Those intellectuals saw the Renaissance, or this rebirthing period, as a time when mankind could become energized and motivated to resume civilization. The resumption of civilization was seen as an opportunity to take the positive ideas and ideals of the ancient Greeks and Romans and combine them with the newly revived human spirit. This era was when human reality was believed to be in the tangible versus the assumption that reality was in the hereafter. This also was a time when the existence of mankind and its resulting beauty was celebrated, as evidenced by the paintings and writings of some of the most acclaimed artists in history. During this period, works of art and literature were created reflecting new ideas: the religious figures in Leonardo da Vinci’s paintings, which portrayed human characteristics; Michelangelo’s sculptures, which reflected human attributes in heaven; and the writings of Petrarch and Boccaccio, which contained reflections on the role of human beings in society and their ability to find rewards in this society.

Many changes were occurring in the political relationships within and among the various Italian city-states and European nations. Naples was a kingdom, the Papal States were an elective monarchy, and despotism ruled in Milan. Florence, which had formerly been a republic, was ruled by the Medici, a rich banking family whose rule was threatened by the demands of the other influential citizens for greater participation in the governance of that state. The tribulations that resulted from the interaction of states with their varying perspectives on government had a negative impact upon the populace at large. Each of the five leading city-states was in constant competition for position with one another, forming alternating power balances to keep Venice and the Papal States in check. In 1494, Milan invited the French into Italy as an ally, which opened the way for other foreign invaders and led to later interventions by the French, Spanish, English, Germans, and Swiss. Florence generally sided with the French, whereas the Papal States found it useful to play France and Spain against one another.

The Christian Church was in the midst of this political conflict. The church served two primary roles: as the authority on religious life in most of Europe and as the primary source of learning and education. Human knowledge was viewed by Christian intellectuals as subordinate, derivative, and less important than divine revelation. Secular rulers were viewed to be subordinate to the pope. Yet, Renaissance intellectuals were successful in challenging these conventional beliefs by positing the importance of classical antiquity and suggesting an independence of human activities.

The church had significant political impacts upon Renaissance society. The church had become very powerful and rich due to its religious control of the people and ownership of property. Top positions were politically determined, often being awarded to individuals whose secular concerns overrode their Christian piety. In Italy, the church existed as a separate political power, and the pope headed the territory called the Papal States. Political relations within and among Italian city-states were not only politically divided, but were divided also into pro- and anti-papal factions that changed depending upon circumstances. Machiavelli saw the papacy as being too weak to unite Italy and too strong to allow anyone else to do so.³

While little is known of Machiavelli's early life, against this backdrop of conflict and political positioning for power, the adult Machiavelli began his career in politics when he was elected to the position of secretary of the Second Chancery, a governmental organization concerned with administering both domestic and foreign affairs. In 1512, despite generally positive reviews of his work and competence, Machiavelli was dismissed from his position when a change in politics placed the Medici back in power.

Despite Machiavelli's work being well-regarded, the Medici viewed him as a threat and loyal to the ousted government. As a result, Machiavelli was unsuccessful in obtaining another political position in Florence before his demise in 1527. During his political exile, he sought a philosophical perspective and wrote most of his significant works during this period of his life. The work for which he is most noted, titled *The Prince*, was his futile attempt to ingratiate himself back into politics and into a favored position with the Medici government. In 1520, the Medici commissioned him to write a history of Florence. Following that, he was in communication with other Medici in Florence and Rome and undertook some minor commissions for them.

The Medici did not benefit from Machiavelli's advice and efforts, and they were forced from power in Florence in 1527 in favor of a religious republic. When this change in power occurred, once again Machiavelli was seen as being positioned on the wrong side and was now viewed as someone who worked with the Medici and thus could not be trusted in the new government, which had a Savonarolan character.⁴

The Philosophical Thoughts and Views of Niccolò Machiavelli

Machiavelli's numerous works are characterized by their style, diversity in character, and expressiveness. His writings included official letters and reports on foreign countries, rulers, and particular situations. However,

his four principal works discussed politics, military affairs, and Florentine history, and when he was not discoursing on politics, military affairs, and history, he wrote two plays, a short story, a variety of poetry, and an essay on the Italian language. His writings, however, largely addressed themes and issues that focused on human conditions, with his four noted works being *The Prince*, *Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius*, *The Art of War*, and *The History of Florence*.

As the founder of modernity, Machiavelli posited that human beings were on their own and should strive to serve their own needs as they saw them, a perspective that gave rise to the fundamental perspective of modern political thought, which philosophically became more refined through the writings of Hobbes, Locke, Montesquieu, and the American founders.^{5,6} Ultimately, his perspectives provided a basis for modern public administration. He also advocated governance that placed power in the hands of the many, suggesting that when people have the opportunity to govern themselves, they evoke balance and a greater capacity to survive. Yet, he concurrently posited that human beings were acquisitive, to the point that their appetites would not be limited, thus leading to their preying upon one another; a characteristic found in the history of this period. As a result, he suggested a need for a government where the people at large would have a greater say in its administration, thus providing them with a greater capacity to act and survive.

Machiavelli rejected classical philosophy and Christianity's perspectives on human interaction and reaction, both of which suggested that reality possesses a particular order or arrangement. In contrast, he posited the concepts of chance and variability with respect to causation of events and how humans engage in making sense of those events. He also cautioned that society should be prepared for plausible occurrences of chance and chaos and suggested that people should understand their world by looking within rather than up (to God, gods, or earthly agents).⁷ His writings also reflected his immense concern with the political instabilities of his times.

Machiavelli believed that human nature could primarily be defined in terms of needs and emotions. Needs were defined in terms of the desire to obtain material requirements, a desire that cannot be satisfied because of the unlimited appetites that dwell within an uncertain future. The needs that Machiavelli identified included the need of a few people to dominate, which is associated with a desire for attention or glory; the need of most people to avoid being dominated, which can be called liberty or freedom; the need to innovate; and the need to be secure. Emotions, which were also thought to give rise to needs (e.g., hope, fear, love, and hate), were advocated to be the drivers of one's decisions and subsequent actions.⁸

Is Our World a Profoundly Machiavellian World?

Almost 500 years after Machiavelli, man is still searching for inner meaning, balance, and an equal position in governance, a position similar to where Machiavelli was in his world. Chaos, change, disruption of the status quo, and imbalances in wealth and poverty lead people to search their inner selves for answers that can resolve the cognitive dissonance that emerges with high levels of chaos and change.

As a result, we see questions being asked in the context of our organizational theories and change strategies that are very similar to the questions posed by Machiavelli and other Renaissance writers. These questions have resulted in an emerging research stream that investigates and theorizes in the areas of spirituality in the workplace, organizational justice, the development of hopeful organizations and societies, and a better understanding of what constitutes good organizational citizenship behaviors and how to bring people back into a sharing of governance, power, and decision making in both the public and private sectors through the theoretical frameworks of collaborative inquiry and appreciative inquiry. Similar to the Renaissance period, in the middle of our chaos and constant change, we are still looking for new ways to celebrate the beauty of man and the human spirit.

Current researchers posit that most organization members sincerely want to love their work and crave the restoration of hopeful work environments to provide balance to their lives. However, signs of hopelessness in our society are all around us, particularly in our work environments, as evidenced by the radical changes created by public- and private-sector acquisitions, reengineering, and breakdowns in the relations and psychological contracts between employer and employee.⁹

In the last 50 years, interpretative social and organizational science has abandoned the quest for a universal foundation for knowledge.¹⁰ Organization change theory is aiming to understand the hearts and souls of the people served by organizations and governments. There is much discussion in the field regarding a need for new hope and a reconnection to basic values and appreciation. For example, when we examine the literature on leadership and transformational change, we find it expanding to include a strong emphasis on interpersonal awareness, where questions of how to drive deep personal transformational change are examined in concert with traditional leadership theories and models.^{11,12}

In response to the growing body of “deficit vocabularies” produced by critical and deconstructive methods, scholars also call for constructive approaches to social and organizational science that hold increased potential for enhancing the human condition by recreating vocabularies of hope. Such constructive approaches could lead to a more comprehensive under-

standing of the drivers of one's decisions and subsequent actions — a concept very similar to Machiavelli's, who defined human nature in terms of needs and emotions.¹³

In one study, 35 top corporate executives described the expression and demonstration of love for members of their organization, which in turn works to encourage organizational members to love one another as key attributes for navigating the white waters of permanent change in today's work environment.¹⁴ It has also been posited that to meet human needs and emotions, which ultimately leads to transformational change, effective change agents and leaders must inspire a shared vision among their employees, enable them to act, and, equally important, encourage the hearts of the people with whom they work.¹⁵

Inherent in a call for a different vocabulary of hopefulness, and also ensconced in new leadership values and behaviors, lies a fundamental concept suggested by Machiavelli: when people have the opportunity to govern, they evoke balance and a greater capacity to survive. People want to live well. This premise basically serves as a critical component of the foundation for postmodern theory, which suggests that society must move away from focusing on our weaknesses and from our failure to understand the basic components that drive human nature. We must work to strengthen our collective capacity to imagine and build a better future. In today's world, which is not dissimilar to the world in which Machiavelli lived, we have learned to become proficient problem solvers while failing to engage in the life-giving dimensions of our organizations and employees, where we have a chance to more productively stimulate our action and thereby contribute to the growing development of human hope. This growing development of human hope has the potential to serve as the conceptual lens for understanding and discovering the forces and factors that enhance human relatedness while offering a collective sense of purpose.¹⁶

The principles of modernity were built upon Machiavelli's fundamental belief that people should be involved in their governance, which leads to balance and survival. However, in today's times, most people in public and private organizations are typically left out of the change strategies that are designed, developed, and implemented on their behalf.¹⁷ Consequently, we continue to implement new social and public-policy change programs that are contextually designed within the parameters of our newest theoretical principles — principles that utilize traditional inquiry methods to evaluate their effectiveness, the soundness of which can be epistemologically questioned — while simultaneously failing to involve the people in the design and implementation of these programs.^{18,19}

Machiavelli also cautioned about the plausible occurrences of chance and chaos while concurrently criticizing the Christian and classical views on human interaction and reaction that suggested a particular divine or natural

order. Similarly, in today's environment, researchers are suggesting that the very survival of society continues to be experienced less as a gift of fateful nature, and more and more as a social construction of interacting minds.^{20,21} Under these conditions, ideas, meaning, and systems take on a whole new life and character, where ideas are thrust center stage as the prime unit of relational exchange and reality.²² Therefore, to understand how to evoke social and public-policy change, particularly in public organizations, we have to understand the internal dialogues and interpretations that ensue within the people we are attempting to assist, thus understanding how they are looking within themselves, a position also advocated by Machiavelli.

For example, when examining issues of poverty, one of the most pervasive psychological qualities of life in the inner city is insecurity. Poverty gives rise to insecurity because individuals that live in poverty do not believe that the mainstream's vision of the future is open to them.²³ Would this position have been so different from the masses of people during Machiavelli's era who were not privy to the possessions and privileges of the ruling classes? Was Machiavelli's position a response to people living in impoverished conditions that led them to create their own vision of a future and the means to obtain that vision, thereby promoting relational exchanges that reinforced their reality? Was this a human condition that led to his observation of human beings becoming acquisitive with unlimited appetites? Do we still possess these unlimited appetites that continue to result in an imbalance of power, position, and wealth?

Very possibly, as we move through the turbulence of post-September 11, the future of democratic values, the dignity and worth of each person, the promotion of free choice and free expression, and the coupling of social responsibility to personal opportunity may depend on how we engage in understanding the social realities that people create. With that understanding, we may have a chance at evoking transformational change for our world, beginning at very personal levels — a position that Machiavelli also advocated. However, to be successful in working toward this level of understanding, we must consider frequently revisiting our past to develop a more in-depth understanding of what issues we have faced over the duration of time, issues that have been very adequately archived by philosophers and theorists. Building a better future starts with understanding both the sequencing of events that have led to the same questions being asked over time and the various answers that have emerged.

Conclusion

Understanding our history is vital to our understanding the modern-day behaviors that affect our personal lives, our organizational lives, and the

manner in which we drive change in this world. We owe much to Machiavelli and his origination of the modern enterprise of serving human needs, which laid the foundation for modern public administration, which continues to address many of the issues raised by Machiavelli. However, critics have also addressed many of his perspectives that they believe contribute to the modern spiritual crisis of meaning and large-scale oppressions in totalitarian regimes.

Yet, we cannot dismiss the fact, whether we agree with Machiavelli's perspectives or take issue with him, that the historical perspectives of writers such as Niccolò Machiavelli provide us with an in-depth understanding of our past and the underlying premises for the choices we have made in this world and may continue to make for our future. A study of philosophers and writers, such as Machiavelli, also helps frame the imagery and metaphors that have historically driven our choices. Through such study, we can develop new ways of driving change, governing societies, and involving citizenry by understanding how, historically, people have subjectively interpreted events that have shaped their lives, their responses to those events, and the systems and structures they have built to accommodate their understanding. As a result of such study, we will not need to keep addressing the same historical questions relative to the mysteries of human nature or the essence of our being and our interpretations of reality.

Therefore, when we ask whether our world is a profoundly Machiavellian world, we answer yes. However, the only way to move away from history repeating itself is to engage in revisiting the issues raised by Machiavelli as we move through our future.

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Chapter 7

Mercantilism and the Future: The Future Lives of an Old Philosophy

Paul Rich

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There are few better examples of trying to lend misleading coherence to complex matters than the way in which mercantilism has been dismissed as a spent philosophy. Current definitions emphasize its past glories rather than any contemporary relevance, as if it were almost entirely a topic for historians. It is associated with the Virgin Queen and the great trading companies, and with beaver pelts and indigo. Its influence in the lives of men like Francis Drake and Walter Raleigh is discussed, but not on the policies of George Bush or Albert Gore. There is little suggestion in the current literature that it may light future fires.

Nevertheless, the progeny (and predecessors) of state interventionism in economic affairs are mercantilism and neomercantilism,¹ which in their time enjoyed considerable respectability. (“The historian who is concerned with the doings of governments, however, needs to use the concept with a care amounting to suspicion, lest he is entrapped into explaining them as mercantilist simply by reference to ideas already called mercantilist.”²)

Mercantilism and Free Trade

The debate between mercantilism and genuine free trade is an ancient one. In fact, the seeds of free trade have been discerned in the dimmest past, long before the Elizabethans. F. A. Hayek made the case for trade as “an indispensable institution” by citing archaeological evidence of its existence in the Paleolithic Age of more than 30,000 years ago, and of obsidian shipments from the island of Melos to Greece in the 17th millennium B.C.³

Hayek observed that trade was older than the state and that “The more one learns about economic history, the more misleading then seems the belief that the achievement of a highly organised state constituted the culmination of the early development of civilisation. The role played by governments is greatly exaggerated in historical accounts because we necessarily know so much more about what organised government did than about what the spontaneous coordination of individual efforts accomplished.”⁴

He argued convincingly that “Governments have more often hindered than initiated the development of long-distance trade. Those that gave greater independence and security to individuals engaged in trading benefited from the increased information and larger population that resulted, yet, when governments became aware how dependent their people had become on the importation of certain essential foodstuffs and materials, they themselves often endeavored to secure these supplies in one way or another.”⁵ He concluded that government intervention often damaged economic improvement and brought desirable cultural evolution to an end. “What led the greatly advanced civilisation of China to fall behind Europe was its governments’ clamping down so tightly as to leave no room for new developments, while, as remarked ... Europe probably owes its extraordinary expansion in the Middle Ages to its political anarchy.”⁶

For the moment, much of the world is experiencing the consequences of the triumph of the Chicago School of Economics and the victory of free marketers, gloating in the aftermath of the Soviet Union’s collapse. Many societies are experiencing considerable pain in anticipation of access

to markets and a better economic future. How then about the future? A danger is that having given up so much and sacrificed so much in the name of free trade and getting government out of people's lives, developing countries that have embraced the new free-market ideology will be denied its benefits. A resurrection of mercantilism is not improbable.

Mercantilists (unlike merchants) have usually been associated with statist views and thus shared, as they do today, in the approbium created by perennial waves of distrust of government. They never, of course, have been merchants in the adventurous, Marco Polo entrepreneurial sense. Mercantilism to the true free marketer is like an unwelcome suitor's embrace, because it presupposes the value of paternal guidance and patriarchal direction from public administrators. Its instruments in the past were monopolies and chartered companies, official sponsorship, and control.⁷ Today the tools are more likely to be statutes and tax codes and barriers to trade agreements.

Mercantilism, then, is one of those philosophic notions that everyone believes that they understand but which few do, and one that needs far more attention and explanation from contemporary scholars than it has received: "As a category which embraces the economic thought of several nations during an epoch of social transformation, mercantilism is a term which threatens to lose all specificity in its drive for comprehensiveness."⁸

The Beginnings of Mercantilism

Mercantilism started as an elitist philosophy, in the service of royalty. It was a helpmate of absolutism, borrowed from Descartes's atomic theory of matter, and held that the state had a duty to impose its discipline on the atomic chaos of society. One foundation stone is Antoyne de Montchrétien's *Traicté de l'oëconomie politique dédié en 1615 au roy et la reyne mère du roy*, which is directly concerned with administration's effect on national economy, and which sees that administration as an extension of the administration of the royal household.⁹

As a philosophy, mercantilism long ago lost such aristocratic connotations and has just as easily been embraced by populists. Theodore Roosevelt attacked Woodrow Wilson's New Freedom platform and replied to charges that he was too interventionist:

The key to Mr. Wilson's position is found in the statement ... that "The history of liberty is a history of the limitation of governmental power, not the increase of it." This is a bit of outworn academic doctrine which was kept in the schoolroom and the professional study for a generation after it had been

abandoned by all who had experience of actual life. It is simply the laissez-faire doctrine of the English political economists three-quarters of a century ago.... To apply it now in the United States, at the beginning of the twentieth century, with its highly organized industries, with its railways, telegraphs and telephones, means literally and absolutely to refuse to make a single effort to better any one of our social or industrial conditions. Moreover, Mr. Wilson is absolutely in error in his statement, from the historical standpoint so long as governmental power existed exclusively for the king and not at all for the people, then the history of liberty was a history of the limitation of government. But now the governmental power rests in the people, and the kings who enjoy privilege are the kings of the financial and industrial world; and what they clamor for is the limitation of governmental power, and what the people sorely need is the extension of governmental power.¹⁰

Such a distinguished genealogy should itself raise suspicions about proclaiming the demise of the doctrine, no matter how many transmutations it has gone through. It benefited at the hands of David Hume and Adam Smith, who contributed to its democratization, seeing it as beneficial to the *boi polloi* as well as to patricians. The nation-state would benefit everyone by its interventionist commercial policies, but this was a proposition that, like phlogistonism, was never to be proved. What did happen was that the politician acquired a lasting philosophical *raison d'être* — or an excuse to meddle, depending on one's viewpoint.

To understand the possible future prospects of modern mercantilist theories, a reading of Chapter 23 of John Maynard Keynes's *General Theory* is essential. Although Keynesian economics were foreshadowed by the early mercantilists, Keynes provided mercantilism with a theoretical underpinning that it had lacked. "Mercantilism" Keynes writes, "is a continually developing doctrine of the role of the national state in economic and social affairs, and the term neo-mercantilism is merely a means of distinguishing between the absolutist or oligarchical form and that of a more democratic society."¹¹

Simply calling mercantilism "neomercantilism" ignores the remarkable staying power of the doctrine over the years, one reason for that vitality being nationalism. According to Golob, mercantilism and neomercantilism are intensely nationalistic: "Of itself, neomercantilism unfortunately offers many temptations to the evil that accompanies the good there is in nationalism. America should not forget the belligerent statements of Theodore Roosevelt, the invasion of Vera Cruz ordered by the internationalist Wilson, Franklin Roosevelt's love for naval construction (fortu-

nate, as it happened), and Secretary Ickes's allocation of public works funds to the building of warships until stopped by Congress (unfortunately, as it turned out).¹² Americans of all political persuasions, including those in the right wing of the Republican Party, have been quick to demand government intervention when it served economic aspirations: consular appointments, an isthmian canal, undersea cables, far-flung military forces. The Monroe Doctrine put an economic wall as well as a political wall around the Western Hemisphere. In his celebrated *Influence of Sea Power on History* (1890), Admiral Alfred T. Mahan (1840–1914) argued for a strong navy to protect commercial expansion. Hawaii was acquired in what amounted to a businessmen's coup. Theodore Roosevelt's policies were called "Dollar Diplomacy."

No matter how out of favor mercantilism might appear to be today, its future prospects are strengthened by the fact that it was accepted by the American Founding Fathers. The mercantilist spirit was in the air at the Constitutional Convention.¹³ Alexander Hamilton then and in his subsequent career was eloquently opposed to Thomas Jefferson's agrarianism partly because he thought it would keep America poor and that success was to export. He therefore embraced protective tariffs and subsidies, and he had no trepidation about that.

The present irony is that at the same time that the Right wants government as much reduced as possible, it also is tempted to use government intervention for what it perceives as nationalist goals. Indeed, an Elizabethan mercantilist would agree with Newt Gingrich (a conservative Republican and former Speaker of the House) that priority must be given to advancing one's nation rather than the world at large and that the government is the proper vehicle to accomplish such ends. However, instead of bullion, which their 16th- and 17th-century predecessors worshipped, modern mercantilists perform *puja* (a Hindu prayer ritual) to export figures.¹⁴

If free trade and the jettisoning of government enterprises such as airports, railroads, and even prisons do not provide a solution to current economic difficulties, the future may well see a return to mercantilism as a seriously considered alternative economic philosophy. That could be troublesome. Early mercantilists believed in a static cake over which contending parties fought for the largest piece, and this belief in a finite wealth can be seen in some unfolding discussions about trade today. Whether the issue is an emphasis on bullion accumulation or on favorable export figures, such policies encourage competition among states — which degenerates easily into conflict.¹⁵

Heckscher pointed out that, although apparently each other's opposites, mercantilism and *laissez-faire* produced similar behavioral results: amorality, ruthlessness, and a lack of humanitarianism.¹⁶ This was pain-

fully evident during the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) negotiations, when blatant jockeying for position and justification by avarice were the themes, rather than an overwhelming desire to help Mexican *campesinos*.

It would be naive to think that the apparent triumph of free-market economics is a guarantee against poverty and want. It may simply be a way to avoid, for the moment, the problem. Anatole France told the story of a boy who was taken by a relative to see the Chamber of Deputies in Paris. He could not follow the debate and asked what it was about when they emerged on the street. His relative said, "They were discussing the cost of the First World War." "And what did they decide?" the boy asked. "They decided that the cost was 23 trillion francs." "And what about the men and women who were killed?" "Oh, they were included."¹⁷

So the glib description of mercantilism as a spent historical force rather than a living philosophy may be challenged by future events. Indicative of its current low state are Douglas Greenwald's dismissive remarks: "Mercantilism was an economic policy pursued by almost all of the trading nations in the late sixteenth, seventeenth, and early eighteenth centuries, which aimed at increasing a nation's wealth and power by encouraging the export of goods in return for gold."¹⁸

Those recently who have noticed that mercantilism is not as antiquarian a subject as some believe have resorted to the term "neomercantilism," as if that explained the philosophy's annoying resilience as a philosophy. Others have employed such terms as "cameralism," "imperial mercantilism," "pseudomercantilism," and such counterconcepts as "antimercantilism," "fiscalism," and "semifiscalism."¹⁹ In actual fact, rehabilitation of the term is scarcely necessary, as, said Golob, "Mercantilism is a continually developing doctrine of the role of the national state in economic and social affairs, and the term neo-mercantilism is merely a means of distinguishing between the absolutist or oligarchical form and that of a more democratic society."²⁰

If mercantilism returns to favor, there is little prospect that it will solve all the present economic dilemmas. No current economic theory seems adequate for the world's problems. William Pitt surveyed his age and commented that "commerce had been made to flourish by war."²¹ While the consequences of government intervention in the economic order, ostensibly in the interests of promoting a successful trade balance, have not always been so dire as a war, the results generally have been anything but an advertisement for the policy. Yet, despite the inflationary pressures and low levels of consumption that almost inevitably follow such interventionism, it is a perennial popular panacea, the revival of which politicians in the future may find irresistible.

For the moment, the Elizabethan thinker Thomas Mun could be a presidential speech writer, and his treatise *England's Treasure by Forraign Trade, or the Ballance of our Forraign Trade in the Rule of our Treasure* (1628), with its views of the sterility of domestic economic activity in comparison with the rewards of exporting, might be by the bedside of President Bush. Trade is the flavor of the era.

But mercantilism is not antagonistic to hopes of trade, nor is it an extinct ancient cult. Its priesthood still exists, albeit exiled to the catacombs, and interventionism has not gone the way of standing stones. If a comparison is to be made and the religious analogy pressed, in ways mercantilism resembles Catholicism, wounded by reformations. To be unaware of mercantilism's possible future influence is to miss the fact that while the fortunes of political parties wax and wane, there are ideological forces that have enormous staying power.

The Future of Mercantilism

As for predicting the future, one recalls that, to some 20th-century political leaders, mercantilism seemed irrelevant to a triumphant socialism.²² Well, socialism has waned, and free trade is not working as well as was hoped. Mercantilism has been given a formal but premature burial on numerous occasions:

mercantilism. Commercial policy pursued by England, Holland and other European nations in the 16th and 17th centuries, as nations expanded the commercial sectors of their economies and a shift of emphasis towards trade and away from domestic agriculture occurred. The policy was aimed at securing an inflow of precious metals and raw materials in return for an outflow of finished goods. It went hand-in-hand with aggressive nationalism and the search for overseas colonies.... The final demise of the system came in the 19th century with the triumph of FREE trade.²³

However, another dictionary-maker at least has had the common sense to remark that

Although mercantilist doctrine is at a sharp discount among economists, mercantilist sentiment endures both among unions and businessmen whose immediate interests are threatened by foreign competition, and among public officials responsive to the complaints of their constituents.²⁴

That nationalism is so strong at the same time that globalism is growing has been much noted. Mercantilism is a principal contributor to the ethos of state-building. The decline of mercantilism as a philosophy has been a barometer reading that points to the decline of statism, and indicates that proponents of an exclusive loyalty to the nation-state and its organizations have at least temporarily yielded to an internationally minded class.

Nevertheless, increasing concern over stubborn social problems has been accompanied by a stirring of mercantilistic sentiments. Statism has been around too long to depart without a battle. Golob states: “The moderate statist ideology of neomercantilism, however, has forebears as old as the medieval parliaments that grew into our institutions of representative government. If age lends interest and dignity, therefore neomercantilism must be approached in a spirit of respectful inquiry.”²⁵

The temptation to which those who will espouse mercantilism in the future may be to use government as the “hair of the dog,” believing that corrective administration of some sort is a means to economic prosperity. This “one more for the road” is as enticing to conservatives as it is to their liberal foes. Consider the stance taken by Newt Gingrich: “In the days of Ronald Reagan and George Bush, the trade debate was split between two camps: laissez-faire vs. Interventionists. Republicans, by and large, didn’t want to interfere with the normal course of ‘free markets’. They argued that well-run companies would make their own trade alliances and that the U.S. Government had a role to play mainly as multi-national referee.”²⁶

The classical position of Mun and other 17th-century writers may return as the garnishment for a repackaged mercantilism: the continued imbalance of trade and the persistence of poverty could result in the stone being rolled away from the tomb. The objections to mercantilism — the narrowness of its focus, the way it restricts policy concerns, its failure to contribute to the construction of an adequate general economic theory — are being forgotten.

Mercantilism remains part of the ethos of state-building and thus an ever-attractive policy option. A rationale will be found for its continuance regardless of whether the Right or the Left is politically in ascendancy. Its demise seemingly threatens *la patrie*. When mercantilism is out of favor, the exclusive loyalty to the nation-state thought so desirable gives way to an internationally minded class. That is not what is on the mind of the resurgent Right in the United States, and should the Right win, there is a collision course set with such new instrumentalities as the general agreement on tariffs and trade (GATT) and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, economic models have far outstripped war games as a think-tank pursuit. The next war is seen as an

economic one, and the voters' revenge would be swift for that rash politician who would subordinate growth and employment to grand diplomatic strategy. "Economic growth is the most important social policy objective a country can have other than keeping its people physically safe," writes Gingrich. He adds, "America's future depends on economic growth. Economic growth depends on our ability to compete in the world market."²⁷

Japan is not today's Venice; Germany is not an enlarged Hanseatic League; and Microsoft is not the East India Company. All economic philosophies face a vastly more complex world than that of pirate adventurers. Much more realism about the pain that is going to accompany a genuine shift to free trade is needed. This is demonstrated by the fact that often-jejune arguments for winning the trade wars via government intervention are being made at the same time by the same people who advocate staunch individualism and demand independence from the tentacles of government organization.

Much of the current rhetoric is against interventionism. Lamar Alexander, erstwhile republican candidate for the White House and former governor of Tennessee, offers a typical invective: "That the main engine by which the American dream can be realized is not government at any level but opportunity, initiative, and personal responsibility. The surest path to the promise of American life leads through ourselves, our families, and our communities. It does not pass through distant bureaucracies, experts, or policymakers.... A revival of our spirit, character, and sense of responsibility will go hand in hand with diminished reliance on government."²⁸

Yet Paul Krugman and others³¹ have charged that an obsession with trade competitiveness has diverted policy makers from what should be the real focus of the future, domestic productivity. Of course, in the case of the United States, where only about ten percent of the U.S. output goes in exports, that argument has some merit. Administrators in such a situation would appear to get their priorities wrong when they concentrate on trade wars as opposed to domestic issues. In more heavily export-oriented countries, the concern about other countries as rivals would still seem valid.

Lester C. Thurow, professor of management at the Alfred Sloan School of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has pleaded for changing the focus of future discussion:

In the traditional theory of comparative advantage, Boskin and Krugman are correct. [Michael J. Boskin, Chairman of President Bush's Council of Economic Advisers and Senior Fellow, Hoover Institution.] Natural resource endowments and factor proportions (capital-labor ratios) determine what countries should reproduce. Governments can and should do little when it comes

to international competitiveness. With a world capital market, however, all now essentially borrow in London, New York or Tokyo regardless of where they live. There is no such thing as a capital-rich or capital-poor country. Modern technology has also pushed natural resources out of the competitive equation. Japan, with no coal or iron ore deposits, can have the best steel industry in the world.²⁹

He further remarks, “A passion for building a world-class economy that is second to none in generating a high living standard for every citizen is exactly what the United States and every other country should seek to achieve. Achieving that goal in any one country in no way stops any other country from doing likewise.”³⁰

Alas, Adam Smith’s accusation — that mercantilists were unable to differentiate between wealth and treasure, seeing gold bars as the end when the real end was consumable and usable goods — still may hold true. The chances in the future are that there is going to be a continued “yes but” effort to interfere under the table, colored by misperceptions about what really contributes to trade competitiveness. For politicians to genuinely repudiate mercantilism as a philosophic approach, sincerely abdicating the power to intervene in the market and thus letting the chips fall where they may, would be to witness the greatest collective *bara-kiri* in organizational history. Mercantilism, like the proverbial cat, has many lives. Without more concern about the large part of the world that still suffers, there is a good chance still that we are heading back to the future.

Notes

1. Dr. Johnson defined a merchant as “one who trafficks to remote countries.” See E. L. McAdam, Jr., and George Milne, *Johnson’s Dictionary: A Modern Selection* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1982), 248.
2. D. C. Coleman, introduction to *Revisions in Mercantilism*, Ed. D. C. Coleman (London: Methuen, 1969), 3.
3. F. A. Hayek, *The Fatal Conceit: The Errors of Socialism*, Ed. W. W. Bartley, III (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 39.
4. *Ibid.*, 44.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*, 45.
7. Richard Rosecrance, *The Rise of the Trading State: Commerce and Conquest in the Modern World* (New York: BasicBooks, 1986), 27.
8. David McNally, *Political Economy and the Rise of Capitalism: A Reinterpretation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 23.
9. *Ibid.*, 69.

10. Eugene O. Golob, *The "ISMS": A History and Evaluation* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954), 114–5.
11. *Ibid.*, 94.
12. *Ibid.*, 168–9.
13. *Ibid.*, 100–1.
14. “Historians are now shifting the whole debate about mercantilism into new ground by insisting on relating economic ideas to policy in its immediate executive context of particular problems of markets, costs, interest groups, fiscal necessities, and the like. This salutary exercise, to say the least, is throwing up more diversity than homogeneity compared with the older academic pursuit of placing ideas in logical sequence with their precursors and successors to form a smooth evolutionary sequence uncomplicated by the problem of trying to relate them to their ‘external’ context.” See Peter Mathias, preface to *Revisions in Mercantilism*, Ed. D. C. Coleman (London: Methuen, 1969), 3, viii.
15. Eli F. Heckscher, “Mercantilism,” in *Revisions in Mercantilism*, Ed. D. C. Coleman (London: Methuen, 1969), 25.
16. *Ibid.*, 33.
17. James Luther Adams, *The Prophecy of All Believers*, Ed. George K. Beach (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986), 253.
18. Douglas Greenwald, “Mercantilism,” in *Encyclopedia of Economics*, Ed. Douglas Greenwald (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1982), 647.
19. Coleman, introduction to *Revisions in Mercantilism*, 3.
20. Golob, *ISMS*, 94.
21. Walter L. Dorn, *Competition for Empire* (New York: Harper and Row, 1940), 70.
22. A. J. P. Taylor, with a rashness unbecoming a leading historian, told BBC listeners in 1945 that the proponents of private enterprise were “a defeated party which seems to have no more future than the Jacobites in England after 1688.” See David Marquand, “Big Ends or Little Ends,” in *After the End of History*, ed. Alan Ryan (London: Collins and Brown, 1992), 107.
23. Chris Cook, *Dictionary of Historical Terms*, 2nd ed. (New York: Peter Bedrick Books, 1991), 224–5.
24. Richard Lekachman, “Mercantilism,” in *The Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought*, Eds. Alan Bullock and Oliver Stallybrass (London: Fontana/Collins, 1977), 384.
25. Golob, *ISMS*, 69.
26. Michael Zielenziger, “Why Debate Over Trade is Political Quagmire,” *San Jose Mercury News*, 18 August 1995, 1E.
27. Newt Gingrich, *To Renew America* (New York: HarperCollins, 1995), 68.
28. Lamar Alexander, “The New Promise of American Life,” in *The New Promise of American Life*, Eds. Lamar Alexander and Chester E. Finn, Jr. (Santa Barbara, Hudson Institute, 1995), 10–1.
29. Lester C. Thurow, “Microchips, not Potato Chips,” *Foreign Affairs* 73, no.4 (July/August 1994): 189.
30. *Ibid.*, 192.
31. Krugman, P. and Smith, A., Eds. *Empirical Studies of Strategic Trade Policy*, 1994, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Chapter 8

Jeremy Bentham: On Organizational Theory and Decision Making, Public Policy Analysis, and Administrative Management

Lawrence L. Martin

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Introduction

Historians have long realized that history is written, or rewritten, by each new generation. Over a century ago, Columbia University historian William Sloan noted that “every age demands a history written from its own standpoint, with reference to its own social conditions, its thoughts [and] its beliefs” (1). Every discipline, including organizational theory and behavior, would do well to remember this admonition. Ideas, theories, and personalities dismissed as passé based on the social conditions, thoughts, and beliefs of one generation have a curious way of resurfacing with renewed vitality in subsequent generations. Testimony to this phenomenon is provided by the recent reassessments of the ideas and works of two organizational theorists: Frederick Taylor and Mary Parker Follett. The conventional wisdom that Taylor cared only about the nature of work — and not the worker — turns out to be more convention than wisdom (2). Likewise, the ideas and work of Mary Parker Follett appear to have anticipated the blending of scientific management with the human relations school long before this feat was supposedly accomplished with the advent of total quality management (3, 4).

Another historical personality that arguably warrants a new generational reassessment is Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832). If ever a historical personage lived whose ideas and work have been interpreted, reinterpreted, and misinterpreted by subsequent generations, it is Jeremy Bentham. Bentham, whose name will forever be associated with utilitarianism and the principle of the “greatest good for the greatest number” has not fared well over the generations. Because Bentham cared little for what can be called formal publishing, his two most famous works, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* and *A Fragment on Government*, were both published in incomplete forms. What is generally known today about Jeremy Bentham, or more correctly what is believed to be known, is based largely on his collected works arranged and published in 1843 by the executor of his estate, John Bowering. Bowering took considerable liberties in his role as Bentham’s editor, consistently deleting anything he thought offensive to the English establishment of the time. The end result of

Bowering's effort is a work that has been called "defective in content as well as discouraging in form" (5).

To add insult to injury, Bentham and utilitarianism have not fared well in the post-1960s era of selective social consciousness and heightened political correctness. Beginning in the 1960s and essentially continuing to the present day, Bentham and utilitarianism have been dismissed as not only passé, but as a conservative and nonegalitarian ethical system that, in the last analysis, is also hopelessly unworkable. A sample of notables who have denigrated Bentham and utilitarianism includes Joseph Schumpeter, John Rawls, and Michael Fouchet. Schumpeter derided Bentham for attempting to use utilitarianism, as he described it, to "transform human egotism into an ideal" (6). John Rawls condemned utilitarianism, which is to condemn Bentham, as a conservative nonegalitarian doctrine concerned only with distribution and not redistribution (7). Finally, Michael Fouchet chose to degrade Bentham for his ideas on prison reform and in particular his concept of the panopticon (8). Against this triumvirate of intellectual heavyweights, which is only a sampling, it is a wonder that anyone today bothers to consult the ideas and work of Jeremy Bentham.

One of the great unanswered questions about the treatment of Jeremy Bentham and utilitarianism over the generations is how a liberal, actually a revolutionary, 18th-century theory of governmental, societal, and organizational decision making was interpreted, reinterpreted, and misinterpreted to become a conservative and nonegalitarian theory in the late 20th century. Consider, for example, that at the height of the French Revolution in 1792 (hardly a conservative period in world history), Bentham was made an honorary French citizen by the national assembly. The French believed they recognized in Jeremy Bentham and utilitarianism a kindred spirit, the spirit of liberty, equality, fraternity. Also consider that an influence chain can be constructed that begins with the ideas and work of Bentham and flows to John Mill, to his more famous son John Stewart Mill, to the socialist Fabian Society and Sidney and Beatrice Webb, and finally to the Labor Party in 1945 and the foundations of the modern British welfare state (9). No less an authority than Talcott Parsons has stated that Bentham is "the intellectual father of British socialism [and] the proponent of the use of public authority as an instrumentality of social reform" (10). How an adopted son of the French Revolution and the intellectual godfather of the British welfare state came to be dismissed as a conservative and nonegalitarian creator of a passé and unworkable theory of governmental, societal, and organizational decision making may well rank as one the most unusual generational interpretations, reinterpretations, and misinterpretations of all time.

This chapter reexamines the ideas and work of Jeremy Bentham and utilitarianism. The chapter seeks to accomplish three objectives. First, the

theory of utilitarianism is reviewed with the intention of demonstrating that far from being a conservative nonegalitarian theory, its focus on the individual and the value of the individual is still as radical a doctrine today as it was when first proposed. Second, Bentham's ideas on public policy analysis are examined. The argument is made here that Bentham can be thought of as the prototype of the modern public policy analyst and that his ideas on implementation theory presage the modern concern with this aspect of public policy analysis. Third, Bentham's ideas and work in the area of administrative management are considered. This section notes that many of Bentham's ideas predate what are today considered modern management theories. Before directly addressing these three main objectives, however, a brief biographical profile of Jeremy Bentham is provided.

Jeremy Bentham: A Biographical Profile

A brief detour to ground Jeremy Bentham in historical context is appropriate to fully appreciate the man, his ideas, and his work. This survey is divided into three parts: the life and times of Jeremy Bentham, the major influences on Bentham's thinking, and his major works.

Jeremy Bentham: His Life and Times

Jeremy Bentham was born in 1748. His father was an attorney, and it was assumed that he would follow in the father's footsteps. He was a precocious child who reportedly knew the alphabet before he could talk and had read Paul de Rapin's eight-volume *History of England* by the age of three (11, 12). He received his primary education at Westminster School, where he excelled in both Greek and Latin (11). In 1760, at age 12, he entered Queen's College, Oxford, graduating in 1764 (5). He then proceeded to study law and was called to the bar in 1767 (13). Although he had a compelling interest in the law and would write voluminously on the subject, he never practiced.

Bentham came into a substantial family inheritance that provided him with an independent income and thus plenty of time and freedom for reflection and writing. In 1770, he made a brief trip to Paris. Following this trip, he anonymously published an English language translation of Voltaire's *Le Taureau Blanc*. In 1776, shortly after the American Declaration of Independence, John Lind, together with Bentham as an anonymous coauthor, published a pamphlet entitled *Answers to the Declaration of Independence of the American Congress* (14). Lind and Bentham attacked the declaration for asserting, among other things, that men have "unalien-

able rights” among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Lind and Bentham pointed out the logical problems associated with the assertion of unalienable rights (i.e., they asserted that governments must, from time to time, necessarily take life, limit liberty, and constrain the individual pursuit of happiness) (14). Despite Bentham’s aversion to the doctrine of unalienable rights, or any doctrine based on the concept of natural rights, or human rights, he nevertheless was eventually to declare that American democracy was “the best government that is or ever has been” (14).

Bentham published his first major work, *A Fragment on Government*, in 1776. The work was released anonymously in England and created considerable interest over both its content as well as its authorship (15). The book came to the attention of Lord Shelburn, who became interested in Bentham’s ideas. Through Lord Shelburn, Bentham was introduced to the French expatriate community living in England. These connections were later to assist in the circulation of Bentham’s ideas inside France. Lord Shelburn subsequently served a brief term as prime minister from 1782 to 1783. From 1785 to 1788, Bentham visited Russia. While in Russia, he wrote much of the manuscript that was eventually to be published as the *Defense of Usury*. This book was to firmly establish Bentham as an advocate of laissez-faire economics (5). In 1789, Bentham published the second of his major works, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, in which he introduced utilitarianism to the world.

In 1809, Bentham took up his pen in the service of prison reform. For several years, he lobbied diligently for his concept of a model prison, called the “panopticon.” His efforts came to naught. In his later years, Bentham became involved with revolutionary movements in Spain, Portugal, Greece, and South America. He wrote *The Constitutional Code*, the third of his major works, at the invitation of the Portuguese Cortes (parliament) (16). He corresponded with, and sent copies of *The Constitutional Code* to, the heads of state in Greece, Argentina, and Columbia. He also carried out a personal correspondence with Simon Bolivar, the president of Columbia.

Jeremy Bentham died at the age of 84. Shortly after his death, surrounded by his followers, called the “philosophical radicals,” Jeremy Bentham’s body was dissected.¹⁶ Ever the utilitarian, Bentham knew that medical schools were having difficulty acquiring bodies for anatomical study because of 18th-century superstitions. He concluded that more happiness would result with his body being studied rather than simply buried (17). After the dissection, Bentham’s body was embalmed and placed in an upright position just inside the old administration building of University College London, where it can be seen to this day.

Major Influences

The major influences on Bentham's thinking were: Bacon, Hobbes, Hume, Locke, Beccaria, Priestley, Helvetius, and D'Alembert (14–19). Bentham borrowed his empiricism from Bacon, his epistemology from Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, and his methodology — including his concern for definition, clarification, and language — partly from Locke and partly from D'Alembert (19). Bentham got his notions about sovereignty from Hobbes (13). As previously mentioned, Bentham was a firm disbeliever in the concept of “natural rights.” He believed that people have only those rights that governments give them. Because of his strong stand against “natural rights,” or any other rights based on what Bentham called an appeal to emotion rather than reason, Bentham's utilitarianism is generally considered to be “illiberal” (20).

Bentham developed his view on utilitarianism principally from Beccaria, Priestley, Hume, and Helvetius. Bentham read Beccaria's *Crimes and Punishments* (1764) and Priestley's *Essay on the First Principles of Government* (1768), both of which contained the utilitarian principle. Bentham himself was never sure from which source he first learned about the “great truth” of the utilitarian principle. He eventually came to accept Hume's identification of value with utility “as a practical philosophical base on which to found a simple but thorough program for the rationalization of law and morality” (21). Hume also taught Bentham how to apply the principle of utility to individual behavior. It was from Priestley, however, that Bentham learned how to apply the principle to the ends of government (19). From Helvetius, and in particular *de l'Esprit* (1769), Bentham came to accept the notion that “legislation arched high above all that men did” and thus provided the guidance in uniting the thoughts of Hume and Priestley (19).

Bentham's Major Works

To the extent that Jeremy Bentham is known firsthand today (rather than through the eyes of his detractors), it is usually through two of his works, *A Fragment on Government* (1776) and *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (1789). His third major work, *The Constitutional Code* is hardly ever read today, an unfortunate situation because it contains many of Bentham's ideas about public policy analysis and administrative management.

A Fragment on Government (1776) is a book on sovereignty (14). The discussion of sovereignty, however, is almost secondary to Bentham's real objectives of attacking the deplorable state of English jurisprudence and applying his utilitarian principle to the actions of government and specif-

ically to legislation. Upon beginning the study of law, Bentham found the rights and duties of the various classes of mankind, jumbled together in one immense and unsorted heap: “men ruined for not knowing what they are neither enabled nor permitted to learn: and the whole fabric of jurisprudence a labyrinth without a clew [sic]” (22). Bentham is said to have viewed the English constitution as, “a patchwork and antiquated product of casual contingencies, contradictory compromises, hasty amendments, and passing inspiration, bound with no logic and rooted in no principle” (12). Rather than contribute to what Bentham called the existing “heap,” he chose to reform the law rather than practice it.

Bentham begins his *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (1789) thusly: “Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, pain and pleasure. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do, as well as to determine what we shall do” (22). Following this metaphorical introduction, Bentham then launches into a complete presentation and defense of utility as the first principle of morals, legislation, and decision making. Juxtaposing *A Fragment on Government* and *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, the former represents Bentham’s initial attempt to apply the principle of utility to governmental, societal, and organizational decision making. In the latter, Bentham is presenting the principle of utility as a full-blown moral philosophy. *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* was intended as an introduction to a much larger work, but in true Bentham fashion, he never completed the manuscript. The work received considerable attention, albeit of a different nature, in both England and in France (12). In England, the Tories attacked the work as being “unpatriotic, un-Christian and materialistic” (read, too radical) (12). Nevertheless, the work brought utilitarianism to the forefront in England and caused it to be taken as one side of many public policy debates (17). In France, the work was well received and recognized as being in the spirit of Voltaire and the European Enlightenment.

The Constitutional Code (1830) was yet another of Bentham’s writings that was published in an incomplete state. This almost unreadable work appeared late in Bentham’s life, just two years before his death. The tortuous text undoubtedly explains why the work is seldom consulted today. Readability problems notwithstanding, *The Constitutional Code* represents the culmination of Bentham’s thinking, which had evolved considerably over the years. The work was designed as a model constitution, not a constitution for a specific country, but rather an “ideal code for an ideal republic” (23). The closest modern American equivalent to *The Constitutional Code* might well be the model city and county charters developed by the National Municipal League. Bentham’s code, however, was designed for a considerably more complex unit of government, a nation-state.

Having completed this brief detour, the discussion returns to Bentham's ideas and work on organizational theory and decision making, public policy analysis, and administrative management.

Bentham On Organizational Theory and Decision Making

From an organizational-theory and decision-making perspective, it is Bentham's ideas and work on utilitarianism that are most interesting. Bentham believed that he had discovered the only moral basis on which governmental, societal, and organizational decisions should be made. Such decisions should be based on the greatest good for the greatest number. In contemporary terminology, decisions should maximize utility.

On the first page of the preface to *A Fragment on Government*, Bentham introduces the utilitarian principle: “[I]t is the greatest happiness of the greatest number that is the measure of right and wrong” (22). Bentham's critique of the sorry state of British jurisprudence is essentially a way of showing that utilitarianism is a superior principle on which to base law and on which to make governmental, societal, and organizational decisions as compared with “particular local traditions of authority” (22). Bentham affirms in *A Fragment on Government* that governmental, societal, and organizational decision making must be based on the principle of utility. According to Bentham, application of the principle of utility to laws, regulations, public policies, and organizational decision making in general requires that the “greatest happiness” principle be the guiding light.

Criticisms of Utilitarianism

Three major criticisms are usually leveled against utilitarianism as an approach to governmental, societal, and organizational decision making. First is the charge that utilitarianism is a conservative and nonegalitarian doctrine and thus is not an appropriate basis for governmental, societal, and organizational decision making. Second is the charge that utilitarianism is unworkable because of the impossibility of determining individual utility functions. Third is the charge that utilitarianism is a teleological ethical system, where the ends justify the means.

Charge 1: Utilitarianism Is a Conservative and Nonegalitarian Doctrine

The major criticism of utilitarianism in contemporary literature is that it does not provide an “adequate account of individual rights and entitle-

ments and therefore fails to accord due respect to persons” (20). In the final analysis, it is maintained, utilitarianism is concerned only with maximizing utility, not with its distributional effects (20). Perhaps the most influential recent critique of utilitarianism is that of John Rawls in his book, *A Theory of Justice* (7). Rawls argues that a calculus based simply on total utility is inherently unfair to the least advantaged groups in a society.

In responding to the first charge, we must first remember that Bentham was a product of his age and consequently attempt to place utilitarianism in the context of that age. In the socially stratified England of the 18th century, the utilitarian principle, “the greatest good for the greatest number,” was a radical, if not revolutionary, concept. The utilitarian principle was devoid of any social class distinction in that it treated each individual the same. In the utilitarian calculus, each individual was given a value of 1 regardless of his or her social class. King and commoner alike were both valued at 1.

Jumping ahead to the modern era, the contention that treating everyone equally (assigning each person a value of 1) somehow fails to accord due respect to individuals is simply a non sequitur. How, for example, does treating each person equally fail to accord due respect to persons? Consider what happens when the reverse is the case, when all individuals are not treated as being equal (assigned a value of 1). The history of the United States can be used as an example. Consider the effects of governmental, societal, and organizational decisions on African-Americans based on their being assigned a value of .60 under the U.S. Constitution, while whites were assigned a value of 1. Consider also that American Indians were at one time essentially accorded a value of 0, first of all because of the U.S. policy of extermination and second because of their status as wards of the federal government.

The charge that utilitarianism is a conservative nonequilibrium doctrine is not based on the utilitarian calculus itself, but rather on the fact that Bentham did not subscribe to the concept of individual rights or, more commonly today, human rights. An interesting point to consider is that *if* Bentham had accepted the notion of individual rights and *if* he had used this as the basis for his utilitarian calculus, then this discussion would probably not be taking place.

Charge 2: Utilitarianism Is an Unworkable System Because of the Impossibility of Determining Individual Utility Functions

In responding to the second charge, it is useful to recall that the problems associated with operationalizing utilitarianism in actual decision-making situations have been known for some time. For example, William Whewell,

in his *Lectures on the History of Moral Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1862), points out that “determining the morality of actions by the amount of happiness [utility] which they produce, is incapable of being executed ... [because] we can not calculate all the pleasure and pain resulting from any one action” (24).

Philosophers usually distinguish between act utilitarianism and rule utilitarianism (10):

Act utilitarianism holds that each individual act should be evaluated by its consequences. Using the modern language of cost-benefit analysis — one of the more famous applications of the concept of utilitarianism — any action (or public policy) should involve a computation of both its costs and benefits (i.e., consequences). The benefits of any action or public policy must exceed its costs or the action should not be undertaken (25).

Rule utilitarianism holds that it is the application of rules of law to individual cases that must be considered, rather than the application of an individual perception or personal calculus to an individual action. The application of rule utilitarianism follows the logic that, in the case of X situation, Y is justified if experience shows that in the overwhelming number of cases, Y “tends to promote the best consequences” (10).

John Stuart Mill argued for rule utilitarianism by, naturally enough, appealing to the utilitarian principle: a rule is preferred if its consequences are better than having no rule (10). Talcott Parsons classifies Bentham as a rule utilitarian (10).

To summarize, act utilitarianism may not be possible to implement, but rule utilitarianism clearly can be.

Charge 3: Utilitarianism Is a Teleological Ethical System, Where the Ends Justify the Means

This third charge can be dealt with quickly. Modern philosophers attempting to classify ethical theories have decided upon the dichotomous categories of deontological ethical theories and teleological ethical theories. Because of its calculus, “the greatest good for the greatest number,” it is perhaps understandable why utilitarianism was classified as a teleological ethical system. Nevertheless, the utilitarian calculus presupposes that each individual is assigned a value of 1. In other words, Bentham and utilitarianism are not just concerned with the consequences of governmental, societal, and organizational decisions, but also with how they are arrived at. This fact may be insufficient to qualify utilitarianism as a deontological

ethical system, but it seems sufficient to disqualify it as a teleological ethical system. Perhaps this discussion says more about the problems of dichotomous ethical classification systems than it does about the ideas and work of Jeremy Bentham.

The argument has already been made that utilitarianism fell out of favor post-1960s because it is not based on the doctrine of natural rights or human rights. The argument can also be made that utilitarianism was further dismissed because of its absence of a “group” perspective. Since the 1960s, the group perspective has overshadowed the individual perspective. In the group perspective, individuals are less important than groups. Consider, for example, the ongoing debate over affirmative action, which is based on a group perspective, as opposed to merit, which is based on an individual perspective. For the proponents of the group perspective not to have disparaged and dismissed Bentham and utilitarianism would have been a tacit acceptance of a calculus based on the individual perspective. In the aftermath of the attack on the Twin Towers on 9/11, American society may be reassessing the primacy of the group perspective. Although this observation is anecdotal, this author has repeatedly heard people state that before 9/11 they thought of themselves as belonging to this or that group, but after 9/11 they think of themselves as simply Americans. If this phenomenon represents a true pendulum swing away from the group perspective, then Bentham, utilitarianism, and the value of 1 could become more acceptable as an approach to governmental, societal, and organizational decision making. In the final analysis, however, it may be that practice has already had the last word over theory when it comes to governmental, societal, and organizational decision making. Public choice theory, rational choice theory, game theory, cost-benefit analysis, and the decision sciences in general all have their roots in Bentham and utilitarianism.

Bentham On Public Policy Analysis

Jeremy Bentham never held public office. Yet, he is credited with influencing numerous British governmental reforms. Because he was financially independent, he was able to take up his pen in the cause of any public policy issue of the day without the fear of adverse personal economic consequences.

Bentham was an empiricist who advocated the use of quantitative methods in social observation and the development of a value-free language devoid of emotional and ambiguous terms. Bentham was fascinated by what he believed was the ability of language to obfuscate and mystify the commonplace. He was particularly critical of the law in this

regard. Bentham most assuredly understood the need for what today is called “transparency” in government. More than anything else, Bentham wanted to develop a science of human behavior based on a quantitative approach to the application of the utilitarian rule. He was perhaps overly concerned with quantification and measurement, causing John Stuart Mill to comment that the value of Bentham’s accomplishments lies “not in his opinions but in his method” (14). While Mill’s comment may overstate the case, Bentham was nevertheless dedicated to what can be called an “exhaustive analytical method,” which he believed should form the basis of public policy analysis (14).

In public policy terms, utilitarianism was Bentham’s conceptualization of the “public interest” (26), and he was willing to put the utilitarianism calculus to work on any public policy issue of the day. His voluminous writings essentially became legislative sourcebooks for his followers (17). Among the many public policy issues that Bentham studied were: a national system of public education, a national health service, the nationalization of welfare, the abolition of capital punishment, a national census, the restructuring of the London police, the conduct of annual elections, equal-size electoral districts, expansion of the suffrage, and the secret ballot. In his independency, in the scope and breadth of his public policy analysis, and in his emphasis on using analysis to make better laws, Bentham may well have a claim to being the prototype of the modern public policy think tank, albeit a one-person think tank.

That Bentham was concerned with making better public policies is true, but he was even more concerned with how policies get implemented. Consequently, Bentham not only prescribed policies, but he also went to great lengths to prescribe procedures for how the policies should be implemented. For Bentham, part of improving governmental, societal, and organizational decision making was ensuring that the resulting decisions were properly implemented. Bentham was particularly interested in what today we would call “implementation theory.” This aspect of public policy analysis is generally assumed to date from the 1970s and the seminal work of Wildavsky and Pressman (27). An example of what today we would call Bentham’s “top-down” approach to policy implementation is drawn from his ideas and writings about the administration of justice as expressed in *The Constitutional Code*. Bentham believed that justice should be swiftly administered. To ensure that it was, he advocated holding court sessions during evenings and on weekends. Moving from policy formulation to policy implementation, Bentham prescribed that judges could sleep when they were not otherwise occupied. However, a judge “is to sleep in a bed with his feet towards the entrance. On each side and at the foot of the bed rise boards across which may be slid another board equipped with paper and others materials. “To exercise his function, the

Judge has but to sit up in bed” (28). Bentham’s attention — or perhaps overattention — to detailed procedures for implementing public policies sets him apart from most other 18th-century thinkers on government. Bentham’s empiricism is probably what caused him to be so concerned with procedures; he wanted to demonstrate that his alternative policies were in fact realistic and feasible (16).

Bentham on Administrative Management

Bentham was also concerned with explicating how the various institutions of government were to actually work and with the qualifications, duties, and responsibilities of the individuals who were to staff those institutions. Nearly 80 percent of *The Constitutional Code* is actually devoted to what might be called bureaucratic concerns and administrative issues (28). Consequently, this work can also be viewed as a treatise on administrative management. Seen from this perspective, *The Constitutional Code* has been called a “coherent and fully developed theory of administration” (22). A particularly interesting aspect of Bentham’s code is that it presents organizational theories and management concepts that are generally believed to have only been formulated in the early 20th century (26).

Chapter VIII of Bentham’s *The Constitutional Code* deals with the office of the prime minister, the executive-branch head of Bentham’s ideal republic (29). In this chapter, Bentham identifies what he believes to be the functions of the executive branch of government, or what today might be called the various domains of administrative management. Some 17 separately identifiable administrative functions are identified in the code. Some of the more prominent administrative functions are: planning and directing; controlling; the personnel function; oversight (inspection, monitoring, and evaluation); procurement; archive maintenance; and the collection, reporting, and publication of national statistics and reports. In reviewing Bentham’s administrative functions, little doubt exists that he is dealing with “administrative science” (26). L. J. Hume, in his *Bentham and Bureaucracy*, juxtaposes Bentham’s list of administration functions with those of two 20th-century administrative management theorists: Henri Fayol and Luther Gulick. Hume concludes that all of Fayol’s 14 principles of management can be found in Bentham as well as all of Gulick’s POSDCORB activities (planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting, and budgeting), with the exception of coordinating (26).

In terms of personnel or human-resource issues, Bentham believed that a legal-rational approach to government administration could only be achieved by the creation of a “bureaucratic administrative staff” (26). Bentham also believed that government could only function to serve the

utilitarian principle when the twin negatives of “self-preference” and “patronage” were constrained (26). Given these concerns, he devotes considerable thought to the recruitment and selection of government personnel. The major requirements for public service, according to Bentham, were moral, intellectual, and active aptitude (28). He specifies policies and procedures governing personnel recruitment, selection, training, promotion, transfer, demotion, dismissal, etc. Selection, for example, is to be based on an open competitive examination to attract and secure the most able talent. Without actually using the modern term, Bentham is essentially describing a merit system. The objective of Bentham’s merit system is captured by his phrase “aptitude maximized, expense minimized.” Here, he is clearly talking about the doctrine of efficiency and the search for efficiency in government.

Bentham laid the foundation for what he believed was an “efficient and benevolent” government. When Bentham published *The Constitutional Code* in 1830, the British government was neither efficient nor benevolent (10). Within 20 years of the code’s publication, however, Bentham’s recommendations can be seen in the creation of national ministries for education, welfare, and health. They had come into existence with passage by Parliament of, respectively, the Education Act of 1833, the Poor Law Act of 1834, and the Health Act of 1848 (30). These acts and others — including the Factory Act of 1833, the Municipal Reform Act of 1834, and the Railway Act of 1840 — were drafted by, lobbied for, and in some instances passed into law by Bentham’s followers. In particular, the *Code* is said to have been a major influence on both The Poor Law Act of 1833 and the Municipal Reform Act of 1835 (17).

Summary and Conclusion

This chapter began with the argument that each new generation needs to reassess historical ideas, theories, and personalities that have been interpreted, reinterpreted, and misinterpreted by previous generations. A case was made for a need to reassess the ideas and work of Jeremy Bentham. Despite his being dismissed as passé by the post-1960s generation, this chapter argued that Jeremy Bentham and utilitarianism still have much to say and much to teach that is relevant today. The chapter explored Bentham’s ideas and work in three areas: organizational theory and decision making, public policy analysis, and administrative management. An attempt was made to demonstrate that utilitarianism is still a relevant approach to governmental, societal, and organizational decision making. Additionally, several of Bentham’s ideas about public policy analysis and administrative management were articulated, ideas that were thought to

have only originated in the 20th century. For these reasons and the others that are still waiting to be rediscovered, Jeremy Bentham is well worth a contemporary reassessment.

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Chapter 9

John Locke's Continuing Influence on Organization Theory and Behavior Entering the 21st Century

Mark F. Griffith

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John Locke (1632–1704), a British philosopher, profoundly influenced the founders of the United States, the principles upon which the United States was established, and the American system of administration. Many influential leaders in America today acknowledge that the government is Lockean, which is only the beginning of the continuing importance of Locke for the 21st century. Although Locke predated the formal study of organizational theory and behavior, many of his ideas directly influence those fields — particularly his ideas on education and economy. He is most noted for his concept of separation of powers and for his ideas about property as the basis for prosperity.

Locke was a key figure in modern political philosophy because he moderated the more radical teachings of Thomas Hobbes and Niccolò Machiavelli to make their ideas acceptable to democratic government. His theories generally fall between those of Hobbes and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, with all three philosophers formulating theories of politics from the concept of “a state of nature.” Locke owed much to his predecessors — Niccolò Machiavelli, Michel de Montaigne, Francis Bacon, and René Descartes — for his theories.

In addition, Locke reacts most often to Richard Hooker and Sir Robert Filmer. He often used their writings to shield his own more controversial ideas from the casual reader. In regard to organizational theory and behavior, Locke wrote about such diverse topics as education, money, democracy, and liberalism.

Locke wanted to appear less radical than he was. If read superficially, his writings appear to contain many contradictory references; however, if read carefully, these contradictions can be reconciled. Locke used great caution and complex arguments because his view of the philosophic origins of politics differed radically from the politics and culture of his times. His politics emerged from what he and others called a state of nature. Of particular importance for behaviorists, his ideas involved the modern premises about religion, virtue, morality, and the idea of what is good. All these beliefs challenged the established order. He was careful to write about these topics in couched language. He realized that his ideas could get him killed because of the appearance of atheism. In fact, his beliefs eventually did lead to a period when Locke was exiled from England.

John Locke affected the principles upon which the government of the United States was founded. This chapter seeks to show how the various aspects of Locke’s theories about human understanding, religion, economics, and politics still influence the behavior, structure, environment, and operation of public institutions.

Locke's Background and Writings

John Locke became an Oxford don (college professor) in 1656. In 1666, because of his college medical teaching, he became the personal physician to Anthony Ashley Cooper, who later became the first earl of Shaftesbury and who was a prominent Whig politician. Locke's relationship with the earl made Locke a force in the politics of his time. Through Cooper, he obtained numerous official positions and was introduced to the political, medical, and social circles of London.¹ In 1683 Shaftesbury died. Locke, believing himself to be in danger, fled to Holland, where he became embroiled in the most important controversy of his time, the English Glorious Revolution of 1688.² In 1685 James II ascended to the throne with the support of a Tory majority in Parliament. The opposition Whig party, which was overwhelmingly Protestant, feared James because of his Catholicism. In 1688 after James's death, the throne would pass apparently to his Catholic son, not to one of his Protestant daughters. These circumstances set the stage for the English Revolution. The Whigs — using the political system to interrupt the divine line of kingly succession — helped give the throne to James's daughter Mary and her husband William of Orange. In return for the loyalty of the Whigs (including Locke), William and Mary accepted a bill of rights that gave Parliament sovereign powers, including power over taxes and the military. This decision provided the modern basis for executive and legislative power, resulting in the modern parliamentary system.

Locke's *Second Treatise* in 1689 was regarded as a defense of the Glorious Revolution of 1688. The change was fundamental, as it weakened the monarchy and increased the power of parliament. Not surprisingly, the treatise was published anonymously.³

Locke's major works comprise a wide range of influential writings. Some of his important works include: *A Letter Concerning Toleration* (1689), *Two Treatises of Government* (1690), *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), *Some Considerations of the Consequences of the Lowering of Interest and Raising the Value of Money* (1692), and *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693).

Human Understanding as the Precondition to Politics and Public Organizations

Locke is the founder of British empiricism. In his epistemology, all knowledge must be based on experience. To understand Locke's writings on organizational theory and behavior, one must begin with his ideas about

empiricism. They provide the key to interpreting all of his writings. Locke's *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* was an attack on the belief that human beings began life with some preconceived ideas about first principles.⁴ Locke believed that human beings begin life with minds that are a blank slate.

For Locke, the origins of ideas are experience, sensation, and reflection; therefore, morality has a rational basis. When we consider organizational theory, this has profound implications, since all ideas that people develop come from their individual learning, experiences, and growth. This concept separates Locke's ideas from Christian and natural-law traditions, which held that some kind of underlying basis for human understanding existed — such as first principles, God, or natural order — beyond human history and experience.⁵

Locke's emphasis on experience underlies his educational theory as well. Locke's most complete presentation on education is contained in his book entitled *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, which was the first book-length work on education by a philosopher.⁶ Locke's thoughts on education were based on his own view that young men should be taught to be gentlemen. For Locke, women were relegated to the private world of the home, and he included no public role for women. In the "epistle dedicatory" to *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, Locke wrote:⁷

The well Educating of their Children is so much the Duty and Concern of Parents, and the Welfare and Prosperity of the Nation so much depends on it, that I would have every one lay it seriously to Heart; and after having well examined and distinguished what Fancy, Custom or Reason advises in the Case, set his helping hand to promote every where that Way of training up Youth, with regard to their several Conditions, which is the easiest, shortest, and likeliest to produce virtuous, useful and able Men in their distinct Callings: Though that most to be taken Care of, is the Gentleman's Calling. For if those of that Rank are by their Education once set right they will quickly bring all the rest into Order.

Locke's standards involved a classical education combined with tolerant Christian principles — a moral education, emphasizing social skills and self-control that students learn by imitating experienced teachers.

His educational theory is associated with his view of ethics, which includes two contradictory ideas: a form of hedonism and the belief that ethics can be demonstrated in human actions. Locke's hedonism relates to his belief that most human actions are linked either to pleasure or pain. So all human beings react to one or the other. Yet pain is clearly the

more important motivating factor and the one factor that for both Hobbes and Locke leads to the need for government. According to Locke, ethics is learned by example, specifically, from the examples of teachers who themselves have had extensive life experience. Some examples can be drawn from the Bible or other sources of conduct, but these sources are less important than actual experience.⁸

The most often overlooked point of Locke's writings is his belief that something akin to an educational precondition to good government exists, in addition to what we would today call political socialization. For Locke, an educated elite was necessary to promote government by consent.⁹ Locke most obviously differs from other writers by separating his educational theory, which seems conventional, from his political theory, which is actually quite radical.

Politics

Locke's most political book, *Two Treatises of Government*, presents his case for what we would call modern liberal democracy. In the preface to the book, he claims to tell the complete story of politics. Yet, he realized that during his lifetime his teaching would be controversial, even punishable by death; therefore, he did not reveal his authorship until he was near death, although many people knew he was the author.

In any comparison between the two treatises, the *First Treatise* is clearly less dramatic and contains fewer obvious insights. For Locke the *First Treatise* provides the precondition, independent thinking, that is necessary for his teaching in the *Second Treatise*. The *First Treatise* illustrates the problem of merely accepting paternal power or religious authority as the basis of knowledge.¹⁰ Furthermore, the *First Treatise* establishes the distinction between paternal power and political power. It advocates independent political thought, rather than following simple paternal or religious traditions in government.

The *Second Treatise* is the center of Locke's teaching about government and begins with a discussion of political power. For him, it is coercive and tied to law and the preservation of private property. Topics such as the coercive nature of popular government do not seem radical to us today, but they were very radical ideas for his generation. Locke believed that to understand political power, one must comprehend that politics emerges from natural law and the state of nature.

Locke next must reinvent natural law away from its historic base of Christian or Greek natural philosophy to a basis of human reason. Locke made this change because his theory of human understanding involved the denial of anything outside of human reason. In two ways, Locke

radically reoriented the basis of natural law to human beings themselves: first, by making it natural for individuals to indulge in their primary desire to comfortably preserve themselves, and second, by making it natural for individuals to care about others.

Locke's natural law dictates that individuals take care of others. This is a situation that can only be enforced by government; so Locke turns to the creation of government. By emphasizing that natural law applies to all human beings, Locke deviated from the belief in the kinds of governments created in antiquity — which were more concerned with the few, such as the king and nobles, than with everyone — and moved toward the modern nation-state idea that governments must consider all peoples.

The State of Nature

To understand Locke's writings in the *Second Treatise*, we must understand his concept of the state of nature. The state of nature involves a philosophical thought experiment that reveals how human beings made the move from the prepolitical state of nature to a system of politics. The state of nature must be viewed in light of Locke's theory on human understanding because this philosophical experiment revealed human rational thought as the real basis for understanding politics.

Locke followed Hobbes, who was one of the first to use the state of nature to investigate the origin of politics. For Hobbes, the state of nature was a violent place where people were naturally barbarous and warlike. Therefore, government was essential for preserving their lives and establishing order. Locke accepted Hobbes's view that the right to life was the first right government must preserve. Yet, Locke masked this similarity because the idea that human beings were naturally warlike was an unacceptable and even immoral thought to people of that day. He changed the common understanding of the state of nature by making it more complicated — more benign and moral — because only a more benign and moral state of nature was acceptable as the origin of government. Similarly, both Hobbes and Locke viewed the state of nature as a state that knew no common superior, where there was no one to enforce laws. Furthermore, for Hobbes and Locke, no objective good or evil existed in nature.¹¹

For Locke, human beings in the state of nature are equal and have rights — the right to all things, the right to do as they want. Therefore, the state of nature is a state of war, because a constant threat of force exists, but through government the threat of force can be regulated.¹² Locke's view of property rights assumed that in their quest for self-preservation, people need property. To claim and protect property,

people created and need government. Locke's view of property and rights exceeded Hobbes's, but both Locke and Hobbes contend that government is necessary for self-preservation. With regard to administrative theory, Locke's concept that government is essential for protecting people — for protecting the first right, the right to life — is a reminder that police power is essential. Locke's thoughts greatly influenced the new American regime.

For Locke, each individual in the state of nature has executive power. Each person is expected to carry out a fair standard of law and punishment; therefore, Locke expected people to act far more responsibly and morally than Hobbes believed they would.¹³ Locke's discussion of executive power in government is somewhat dependent on our accepting that individuals have the power to punish crimes in the state of nature, physical punishment in a Machiavellian sense. People who harmed others would incur all the fury of the wrath that a person who exhibited their animallike behavior could muster, including capital punishment if the crime was extreme.¹⁴

For Locke, peace can only be achieved through government. Government creates peace and therefore is the only vehicle to true liberty, because freedom occurs only in a state of peace. Locke believed that international politics operated in an environment without rules, in a state of war, and was an example of the state of nature. He thought that domestic politics, through government, could operate in a state of peace. His view makes a clear distinction between domestic politics and international politics.¹⁵

According to Locke, the rights that government must protect include the right to "Life, Liberty and Estate [property]."¹⁶ The right to life emerges from the necessity of self-protection, first in the state of nature and later under government. The right to liberty is related to the idea that governments are created and exist only by common agreement. Locke's emphasis on property is his unique contribution to the history of political theory. These concepts profoundly influenced Thomas Jefferson's conception that government's purpose was to protect "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." The emphasis on the pursuit of happiness is derived from Locke's *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*.¹⁷ In like manner, Jefferson's idea that government is based on the consent of the governed comes from Locke. Locke was also popular with James Madison and other influential members of the founding generation. The founders frequently referred to Locke's ideas during the Constitutional Convention of 1789.¹⁸ Everything Locke wrote, from his religious writings to his political writings, was part of the American landscape at the creation of America.

More generally, Locke is one of the founders of 18th-century liberalism, a form of liberalism concerned with rights and distrustful of government because government was powerful, and such power endangered individ-

ual rights. Eighteenth-century liberalism stands in counterdistinction to the liberalism of today, which looks toward a powerful government to protect individual and group rights.

Locke's emphasis on rights gives public administration its reason for existence. John Rohr, discussing the administrative state, writes, "By protecting individual rights on a mass scale — and despite the paradox, that's what the administrative state does — the administrative state would seem to be a faithful servant of the original covenant by which we do the bidding of Hobbes and Locke and enter civil society to secure the protection of our individual rights."¹⁹

Locke's Moderate View of Revolution

Locke's teaching about rights provides the justification for revolution when the government fails to protect rights. This view was his most threatening and controversial idea to the leaders of his time. Locke's argument has been viewed as a justification for the revolution of 1688, but it is much more than that. Interestingly, Locke's view of revolution is more conservative than those that inspired the other modern revolutions, which shocked the world with their violence, because it includes equality, rights, and private property.²⁰ Locke's teaching is the basis for the American revolution, the most successful revolution in history. The difference between America and other countries is that Hobbes and Locke influenced Americans, while the French philosophers, including Rousseau, influenced Europeans. The conservative property-rights nature of Locke's teachings may have led the Americans to a successful revolution, without the horrible mob violence of the French Revolution.

For organizational theory and behavior, Locke's theory of revolution is challenging. No administrative state can encourage revolution, so the state must provide the services that prevent revolution. More problematic, the bureaucracy must provide the means for change when the system moves away from the protection of rights, which is the basis for society. This is a serious challenge for public administration because the bureaucracy must then be proactive, not reactive. A proactive bureaucracy must protect the people and realign the system according to the original principles. Then it must convince the rest of the political system, usually through the legislature, of the correctness and need for the realignment. A proactive bureaucracy is unusual, but Locke's theories demand such action under some conditions.

With Locke, America and other governments must confront one of the basic problems that his teaching implies: how do we balance political power and individual freedom in governments that are created by consent?

This question arises because we lose some rights when we enter society, and yet society is supposed to protect other rights.

Locke's ideas on balancing power and freedom begin with his understanding of what we call modern executive power. A modern executive is a common superior, rather than each individual having executive power, that acts to provide the stability necessary for economic success. Although the executive should not have absolute power, he or she must have prerogative power: in a crisis the executive might need to assume the powers of a dictator. For Locke, the executive's powers must be particularly strong internationally, to deal with war and diplomacy, and limited nationally, so that the executive does not threaten the constitutional form of government. The constitutional structure limits the power of the executive, but at times, particularly during war, the executive must dominate.²¹

Locke's conception of the executive problem highlights the dilemma of executive power, which is the kind of problem the United States is experiencing in modern times. How can our government be effective with weakened executive powers? Locke seems to indicate that a president must have the power to deal with a civil war, the way Abraham Lincoln dealt with the American Civil War. The American system provides the president with several provisions for extraordinary powers in times of crisis, including the oath of office, the take-care clause, and the authority as commander-in-chief of the armed forces. These provisions give the president extra power, but power short of prerogative.²²

Locke did not believe that the executive should have total authority. Instead, to limit executive power, he developed the idea of separation of powers. He envisioned a division of power between the executive branch of government and the legislative branch.²³ This separation of powers has special significance for public administration as practiced in America: it creates a bureaucracy with two bosses, the executive and the legislative branches of government. Related to the problem is what can be called the mom-and-pop leadership problem. When children want something, they go first to one parent, and if they are unsuccessful, they go to the other parent, playing the parents against one another. For bureaucracies with two bosses, the mom-and-pop scenario demonstrates that the bureaucrats can play the executive branch against the legislative branch and vice versa.

Government is created to ensure the public good, an idea that runs through the *Second Treatise*. The public good involves settled laws. These laws are not natural but conventional because they are part of the consent upon which government is founded. Natural or religious laws are alien to Locke's concept of human understanding, so he moved toward a consensual basis for law, severing the classic philosophical and religious foundations for law, similar to the way he severed those foundations for

government, generally. Locke also realized the need for independent judges. These judges were powerful, but they were not part of the separation of power between the executive and the legislature. The judges functioned as mediators who settled disputes to avoid using force.

Locke was also necessarily concerned with legislative power. After 1688, Parliament became a legislative body with power, a monumental event, for before this time no such powerful legislature had existed in the world. The royalty dominated the previous Parliaments. For Locke, the separation of powers and protection of rights required a legislative branch that had power to balance out the strong executive. The legislature is the only check on executive power to prevent the executive from becoming a dictator.

Locke's government is based on consent, and consent is always government by majority rule. Unfortunately, governments created by consent have the problems commonly associated with community and majority rule: in the state of nature, not everyone will consent to give up their rights to form a government that will guarantee some rights but limit others. For Locke, it is enough that a majority wants to enter into government, and the rest of the people grant what he calls tacit consent. The majority bulk of people consent to government through simple participation. But this leaves the problem of minority rights in a majority government.²⁴

Locke's solution to the problem of minority rights involves government's role in preserving equality. Locke states that human beings in the state of nature are inherently equal. Therefore, to protect minority interests, government must sustain the equality inherent in the state of nature, a somewhat vague solution but the only one Locke provides. He implies that if government sustains equality, minority protection becomes less important because minorities will receive equal treatment under law. Furthermore, minorities will also be protected because the laws must be fair; so Locke has a kind of primitive notion of both procedural and substantive due process.

Property as the Basis of Good Government

Locke's teachings on property set him apart from Hobbes and Rousseau, the two other famous writers who begin with the state of nature. More generally, Locke's writings on property make him unique, separating him from his peers and the ancient religious and philosophic traditions. More than any other teachings, Locke's understanding of property links him uniquely to America.

Locke was most concerned in the *Second Treatise* with private property and the needs that go with it. Economics, private property, money, and

the resulting complications are at the heart of what Locke saw as the basis for politics. Locke's views are unlike the ideas of political virtue that drove so many other political philosophers.

The dominance of economic issues is a reduction in the end goals of society from the idealistic ends of the ancients. However, in many ways it made the end goals of society accessible. By making the end goals accessible, Locke stands as one of the founders of modern political economy. Locke linked economy and politics because economic success is tied to the social contract. He believed that private property was the way to stabilize human existence, because individuals who had private sources of wealth were capable of taking care of themselves. For any system to work, it had to provide individuals with a method to protect the private acquisition of property and hence some degree of wealth.²⁵

In the state of nature, according to Locke, each person is his own judge. Nevertheless, individual judgment will not work for private-property claims or for business contracts because commercial contracts cannot be enforced without a fair way of judging claims, a way that is not based on self-interest. Governments begin to remedy the problem of self-interested judgment by providing the rules under which courts may hear cases, including rules to determine whether individuals have the standing to sue when their rights are in danger and rules to enforce contracts. In addition, Locke believed that for people to acquire and protect private property, government must establish settled laws. These settled laws are the conventional laws created by society. To establish private property, consistency of the law is critical. Next, impartial judges provide the necessary fairness to decide between competing claims. Impartial judges are particularly necessary for Locke, because land disputes are the kind of problem that could bring out violent behavior in human beings.²⁶

Locke believed that private property and labor were related. Work distinguishes what is held in common from what the individual owns. When people work the land, they are building something. However, their work is personally significant only if people have title to their land, and only government can provide the means to make titles legal and permanent. These legal titles make the ownership of land and the protection of that land a government interest. If government supports the individuals, those individuals no longer must simply protect their land with brute force, as they would need to employ in the state of nature. A person's labor working the land brings a kind of consistency to existence that the state of nature did not provide.²⁷

According to Locke, money changes all human relationships. It is conventional and not natural. When economy functioned on an agricultural barter system, people could not accumulate more than they could use, because of spoilage. But money allows people to accumulate more than

they need. Accumulation of wealth is the reason Locke believed that people moved from a state of nature to government, so that government could regulate the unbridled nature of the accumulation of money.²⁸

Locke is not in favor of greed, meaning the unlimited acquisition of wealth. He believed that greed could lead to a society in which people use all the wealth for themselves individually and leave no wealth for the common good. However, he believed that the attempt to acquire unlimited wealth was limited by three things.

First, people are limited to the accumulation of property that they can work with their own labor. This limit would dramatically reduce the amount of accumulated wealth, but modern investing techniques make work one of the least profitable ways to earn money. The industrial revolution and money made unlimited accumulation possible, and so Locke's first limit is no longer relevant.²⁹

The next limit is the concept of spoilage, which Locke developed from an agricultural economy. In agriculture, if someone tries to accumulate too much produce it will rot, so there exists a natural limit restricting the quantity a person can use without waste. Locke uses the concept of spoilage as a limit to accumulation, even when money is introduced, and he implies that individuals should still accumulate only what they need. Locke's first two limits, accumulation of only as much property as people can work themselves and spoilage, no longer limit acquisition in modern times, where money, mass consumption, and built-in obsolescence exist.³⁰

Locke's third limit to the acquisition of wealth is his idea that after the accumulation of individual wealth, there must be at least as much left for the common good. This limit is in most ways no longer possible in a world that is increasingly privately owned. The implication for organizational behavior is that common spaces, parks, and other open spaces must be preserved for the public good. Furthermore, zoning and building restrictions are clearly in line with Locke's limits to accumulated wealth.³¹

Locke's discussion of the limits of accumulated wealth fits well with his conception of equality, but Locke did not favor equalizing incomes. His concept of limits to accumulated wealth made him a favorite of the American founding generation, but he would not have been as popular if the founders fully understood his ideas. The founders apparently did not comprehend that his limits on accumulated wealth did not work well in a monetary economy.

Locke believed in optimism, and he believed that the general welfare of the country is increased when private wealth is enlarged. Locke wrote, "[H]e who appropriates land to himself by his labour, does not lessen but increase the common stock of mankind."³² Locke's writings on the common good of private wealth make his limits on private wealth less meaningful,

because Locke believed that if private business was hindered, the common good would be hurt as well.

For Locke, capitalism and private property are related to work. If society discourages or prohibits private property, it destroys the incentive to work, a view proven by the events in the former Soviet Union. Socialism destroyed the work ethic in the old Soviet Union, and the Lockean-influenced capitalism of the West now dominates. Yet, Locke goes beyond the simple idea of the good of private property, to a kind of ethic of responsible capitalism. Locke's entire discussion about the limits to accumulated wealth is an argument for limiting the impact that private property has on the public good. It is clear that Locke's theory would call for an activist bureaucracy to protect the common good. Locke believed that nations that merged capitalism with some kind of common good would be successful, in contrast to Marx's belief that capitalism was a heartless system (which the early industrial revolution represented) and had corrupted society for the benefit of the few who had the wealth. While Locke himself had no teachings about the poor or about welfare, his liberal successors have had a profound influence on the creation of the modern welfare state. In addition, these Lockean regimes, more than any governments in history, have evidenced obvious concern for social issues and the environment.

Locke's Influence on Organization Theory and Behavior

Locke's influence on organizational theory and behavior relates to his extensive and wide-ranging influence on the founders of the United States and the principles upon which the country was established. Although public-administration theory and behavior have some French and German roots, these are essentially American ideas that have influenced other countries and spread worldwide. Locke created the modern emphasis on constitutionalism that defines, in part, the relationship between the political system and the bureaucracy. Locke was one of the creators of the idea of the separation of powers, which makes public bureaucracy unique, because it must balance the often-conflicting demands of the executive and legislative branches. He was an important link in the development of modern executive and legislative power. John Rohr writes that the origin of public administration can be traced to Frank Goodnow, who stated that the "inclusion of judicial authority as part of executive power finds explicit support in John Locke."³³

Locke also influenced modern educational theory, although not to the extent of someone like Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Locke's ethics and concept of hedonism have greatly influenced modernity; so many of the values

evidenced in America are an amalgam of Locke's values. Ironically, Locke and Jefferson influence both American popular culture and the critics of American popular culture, especially by their concepts of individual rights and the "pursuit of happiness."

Locke's theories are especially strong when it comes to property, money, scarcity, and prosperity. Locke makes it clear that government must protect private property and business. This protection is what public organizations do through planning and zoning. Much of the other regulatory functions of the administrative state involve a regulation of wealth that resembles a Lockean limit on acquisition or, at the least, some regulation of wealth.

The administrative state also regulates welfare, which is a natural extension of Locke's ideas about the common good. The prosperity of a broad-based middle class is directly related to Locke's ideas about private property. Locke's writings shed some light on the conflict between those who believe that economy is a zero-sum game and those who believe that the economy is able to grow its way out of problems. Clearly, Locke believes in growth. For Locke, the increase in individual wealth is something akin to the recent belief in trickle-down economics, the belief that the general increase in wealth leads to a general increase for the common good.

Locke realized the importance of maintaining order domestically. Following Locke's teachings in the arena of public administration, the maintenance of order using police power, especially because of the many competing demands in society, must be the first item on the government's agenda. The administrative state is vital to successfully maintaining peace within individual states, so security issues in public administration are important for prosperity.

The political structure that underlies the administrative state is clearly Lockean. Woodrow Wilson's classic false distinction between administration and politics is clearly an error that Locke would have seen, because the administrative state provides the support the political structure needs to ensure rights, property, and equality.⁵⁴

Finally, Locke's liberalism influenced liberalism at the founding of America; yet it is different than the modern version of liberalism, because Locke believed that government was a potentially destructive power, while modern liberalism generally views government as the solution. Therefore, modern liberalism has more influence over public administration and supports growth of the administrative state. Clearly, Locke distrusted government power, so he would not identify with today's liberals.

John Locke, one of the most influential writers in history, profoundly affected the principles upon which the government of the United States was founded. He left a legacy of theories on human understanding,

religion, economics, and politics that still influence the behavior, structure, environment, and operation of public administration today.

Notes

1. The best general biography of Locke now available is: M. Cranston, *John Locke: A Biography* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1966).
2. See, for instance, Peter Laslett's introduction in: John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, ed. Peter Laslett (1960; reprint, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 25–66.
3. Ibid.
4. John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Ed. A. D. Woolzley (New York: New American Library, 1974), 63–83.
5. Locke, *An Essay*, 89–90.
6. T. L. Pangle, "The Philosophic Understanding of Human Nature Informing the Constitution," in *Confronting the Constitution: The Challenge to Locke, Montesquieu, Jefferson, and The Federalists from Utilitarianism, Historicism, Marxism, Freudianism, Pragmatism, Existentialism*, Eds. Allan Bloom and Steven J. Kautz (Washington, D.C.: AEI Press, 1990), 56.
7. John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, Eds. John W. Yolton and Jean S. Yolton (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 80.
8. Locke, *An Essay*, 442–3.
9. Pangle, "The Philosophic Understanding of Human Nature," 56.
10. H. C. Mansfield, Jr., *Taming the Prince: The Ambivalence of Modern Executive Power* (New York: Free Press, 1989), 195.
11. Locke, *Two Treatises*, 67–92.
12. Ibid.
13. Locke, *Two Treatises*, 347, 364–74.
14. Ibid.
15. Locke, *Two Treatises*, 276.
16. Locke, *Two Treatises*, 323.
17. Locke, *An Essay*, 173–4.
18. F. McDonald, *Novus Ordo Seclorum: The Intellectual Origins of the Constitution* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1985), 7.
19. J. A. Rohr, *To Run a Constitution: The Legitimacy of the Administrative State* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1986), 161.
20. See the discussion on revolution in: Locke, *Two Treatises*, 414–7.
21. Locke, *Two Treatises*, 374–80.
22. Ibid.
23. Locke, *Two Treatises*, 117–21.
24. Locke, *Two Treatises*, 111–2.
25. Locke, *Two Treatises*, 285–302.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid.

29. Locke, *Two Treatises*, 299–301.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. Locke, *Two Treatises*, 294.
33. Rohr, *To Run a Constitution*, 88.
34. J. M. Shafritz and A. C. Hyde, Eds., *Classics of Public Administration*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: Dorsey Press, 1987), 1–28.

Chapter 10

Invisible Hand and Visible Management

David John Farmer

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Adam Smith deserves our attention. The Enron debacle — news-making material in 2002 — offers windows into many aspects of society. Not least among these windows is the insights it can bring to our own lack of understanding of the workings of the “invisible hand.” The invisible hand describes the beneficent results that are said to occur in the market from the pursuit of self-, rather than altruistic, interest. But the traditional interpretation of the notion of market has been narrow, and this narrowness of understanding is encouraged when economic theory traditionally

goes no deeper than the hero of the economic drama, the “entrepreneur.” We imagine the entrepreneur seeking her own interest in the market; one of the Enron windows opens up the prospect that — whether or not they do in fact do it — it is rational for the entrepreneur to pursue her own interest wherever she can. It is rational to interpret market to include not only the traditional marketplace, but also the political arena (trading campaign contributions for influence) and the entrails of the very corporation that the entrepreneur heads (trading position for monetary gains from within the corporation itself). I am not urging what you or I prefer, or what we consider to be ethical; I am speaking solely of the rationality of rational man. Whether we like it or not, the relevant calculus is the relative relationships of X dollars invested to the Y dollars of return expected from competing opportunities. Rational man is irrational — in his own terms — if he restricts himself to an unnecessarily narrow conception of the market. We are encouraged by such ruminations to return to Adam Smith, and to return to him for the profound insights that he can trigger in our minds about public organization and management. We can return to the text of what I wrote earlier under the heading “Adam Smith’s Legacy.”¹

Reading Adam Smith provides central insights about public organization and management; proceeding beyond Smith is also necessary. Reading Adam Smith stimulates insights about the relationship between the economy and government, between economic and political concerns. Smith sees economics and politics as dimensions of a larger philosophy of society, and he regards the economy as providing the basic framework within which governmental issues must be considered. Adam Smith’s legacy provides the conceptual space in which government and public administration are now viewed and understood. The conceptual space constitutes part of the basic assumptions, the conceptual foundation, of public-administration thinking and practice. It is more than a mere set of limitations for such thinking; it is the conditioning force that helps to mold contemporary thinking about public administration and government.

Proceeding beyond Adam Smith is essential in two respects. First, Adam Smith did not recognize the socially constituted character and the limitations of the conceptual space that his writings and his legacy have provided contemporary society. It is socially constituted because alternative understandings of this space can be developed. Contrary to what he supposed, it is not an immutable given, not simply a recognition of the facts of nature. Second, Smith’s specification of the space is questionable. Later in this chapter, it will be argued that subsequent thinking offers some better understandings of the conceptual space. These understandings show that the economic component is not as beneficent as Adam Smith suggests;

they undermine the naive faith of many of our contemporaries in the moral and providential guiding power of the market. Going beyond Adam Smith in these two respects provides public-administration thinkers and practitioners with greater control over their own conceptual space.

The central thesis of this chapter is that, by exploring Adam Smith and his legacy, public administrationists can do what they should do — examine their latent assumptions. A first challenge in such an exploration is to get Smith right. Adam Smith's ideas have been both read and misread. Unfortunately, the misreadings have become part of the excess baggage of Smith's legacy. Smith's claims about the character of the economic forces that surround and impact public-sector activity are described in the chapter section entitled "Selected Smithian Contributions." From among his views, I focus on his doctrines of the invisible hand, the division of labor, and the stages of economic growth. Parts of his political economy now abandoned, like the distinction between productive and unproductive labor, are also noted. I also make clear that Smith recognizes the limitations of the invisible hand and he fears the propensity of capitalists to subvert government.

A second challenge is to question the account Smith gives of the conceptual space, constituted by his view of economics, that underlies public administration and organizational theory. In the section entitled "Importance of the Smithian Legacy," I discuss the claim that the importance of Smith's views is that, in effect, he sets what he thinks are the parameters for modern government. This includes reflecting on the triumph of liberal democracy, the triumph of liberal capitalism, and the centrality of economic relations. In order to clarify the meaning of claiming that Smith is wrong not to recognize that the economic sphere is socially constituted, the section considers the notions of "economics as rhetoric" and of "new economics." It also explains the tension in Smith's view that the economic sphere is not only harmonious but also exploitative.

A third challenge I explore in specific terms is the potential for public administration of an understanding of Adam Smith and his legacy. The section on "Incorporating Smith in the Field of Public Administration" analyzes three ways in which the Smithian legacy is of particular significance for public-administration theory and practice. The results of the public-choice approach are discussed, including what it means to speak of necessary waste in government and the potential for greater use of the deductive approach. The centrality of efficiency in public administration and in the Smithian legacy is also explored. The limits of Adam Smith are emphasized, especially in terms of current discussion of postmodernism and the third wave. But first, in the next section, I explore the historical context of Adam Smith's thinking.

Historical Context

Adam Smith was born in 1723 and died in 1790, spending most of his life in Scotland. Reared by his mother (his father died six months before his birth) in a small and declining Scottish seaport, Smith attended the Kirkcaldy burgh school until he went to the University of Glasgow at the age of 14. From the age of 17, he was a student at Oxford University. There he read widely in ancient and modern foreign languages, and he became interested in a range of subjects including aesthetics. He pursued an intellectual life, and he is described as having been always somewhat absent-minded and as having a habit of talking to himself when he was alone. Following two further years of study (when he lived with his mother in Kirkcaldy), he became (1748 to 1751) a freelance lecturer in rhetoric and belles-lettres in Edinburgh — a job that he supposedly performed better because he spoke without a Scottish brogue. He also gave private lessons in civil law. In 1751 he was appointed a professor at Glasgow University; until 1752 he was professor of logic, and from 1752 to 1764 he was professor of moral philosophy. He played a part in university administration, and later in 1787 he was elected the university's lord rector. For two years after 1764, he was tutor to the third duke of Buccleuch, a post that included travel to France and Switzerland and an opportunity to meet a wider circle of intellectuals. With periods in London, Smith then returned to Scotland. In 1778 he was appointed commissioner of customs for Scotland, and he lived in Edinburgh until his death.

To understand the historical context of Smith's life, I comment on the Scottish Enlightenment, capitalism, the Industrial Revolution, the 18th century, and on the fact that later readers interpret Smith from the perspective of their own centuries.

Adam Smith lived and died in a remarkable time: the period of the Scottish Enlightenment. Smith was a leading figure of this Enlightenment, an outburst of critical intellectual and other activity that included the work of such philosophers as Smith's friend David Hume and Frances Hutcheson. Hume (1711–1776), an important philosopher of empiricism, was the more celebrated; Hutcheson (1694–1746) was influential with his doctrine of moral sense. Adam Smith was also familiar with Enlightenment figures from other countries. He had a special reverence, for instance, for Voltaire, Rousseau, and Montesquieu. The latter was a model for his social philosophy, as was Sir Isaac Newton. Newtonian physics had had a great influence on Montesquieu (1689–1755), and Montesquieu was influential for almost a century on intellectuals interested in sociological issues. The Scottish Enlightenment was also an outburst that influenced the parallel American Enlightenment of Thomas Jefferson and the other Founding Fathers.

Smith's name is ineluctably associated with capitalism. Capitalism has been characterized by Max Weber as the rationalistic pursuit of wealth —

and of the rational use of profit to acquire even more profit.² Capitalistic enterprise requires the existence of a rationalistic economic system supportive of “buying and selling,” which has the objective of ever-increasing wealth. Because it rationally strives for more and more wealth, capitalism must value economic efficiency. As Baechler explains, the “specific feature that belongs only to the capitalist system is the privileged position accorded the search for economic efficiency.”³ Capitalism had long been a feature in western Europe; capitalist relations of production gradually emerged in England in the 15th century. Scotland had only begun to develop economically in recent years. Long before Adam Smith’s time, capitalism had been dominated by mercantilist economic policies. Such policies, discussed in chapter 7 in this book, were thoroughly rejected by Adam Smith. It fell to Adam Smith to propose a better account of how to increase and develop the wealth of nations.

Adam Smith, who died in 1790, never lived to see more than the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. The Industrial Revolution can be described in a narrow way as the development on a massive scale of the factory system of production; more appropriately, it can be described as the economic, social, and other changes that occurred when productive processes were mechanized to the extent that there was a gigantic shift from home production to factory production. The changes were both positive and negative. On the positive side, there was the accumulation of great wealth and the development of newer and better products. On the negative side, there was the development of much squalor in the rapidly developing towns, and there was a severance between the new factory workers and their natural rural roots. Whether the workers had been better off in their cottages working from dawn to dusk or whether they were better off in the new factories is an example of a classic dispute. Dating the precise beginning of the Industrial Revolution is necessarily imprecise. Arnold Toynbee dates the beginning of the Industrial Revolution at 1760, but rapid growth in national output did not start until 1790. Important beginnings were made during the 18th century — for example in inventions, in changes in the textile industry, and in the agricultural revolution — that had made possible a more productive use of acreage. But it is widely accepted that Adam Smith did not anticipate the Industrial Revolution. Blaug explains that when *The Wealth of Nations* appears, “the typical water-driven factory held 300–400 workers, and that there were only twenty or thirty such establishments in the whole of the British Isles. This helps to account for Smith’s neglect of fixed capital and for the conviction, which he never really abandoned, that agriculture and not manufacture was the principal source of Britain’s wealth.”⁴

This serves to bring home the fact that Adam Smith’s writings should be acknowledged as what they are — writings and ideas shaped within,

and for, the 18th-century context. But the issues discussed are so hot-button and the underlying principles are of such broad scope that Smith cannot be confined to his own century. As such, the following centuries were required to come to grips with Smith, to address him from their own perspectives. Consider the American Revolution. Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*, published in 1776 (the same year as The Declaration of Independence), proposes a solution to the North America problem. Smith proposes a set of alternative solutions. Either there should be voluntary separation, or there should be a common imperial parliament for North America and Great Britain, with the location of the parliament being determined by the amount of taxes contributed. As he contemplated that North America would surpass Britain economically, Smith's second alternative contemplates the transfer of Parliament from London to New York. Clearly, this can be seen as an 18th-century issue — a bold local move. But the longer-term meaning of the parable is the injunction that political arrangements should reflect economic realities. The example of European countries and European union is a contemporary example: Smith could be expected to say that, within moral limits, national political aspirations should be subordinated to the economic forces making larger and super-national associations necessary.

The Adam Smith legacy has been developed by later additions and later perceptions. As noted earlier, the misreadings have been as important as the readings. Adam Smith's ideas have been misread by commentators on both the Left and the Right. Smith's ideas have been misread, for example, by thinkers and by practitioners, and by politicians and pundits wishing to gain support for their own agendas and ideas. Adam Smith, the father of economics and philosopher of the free market, was widely seen as a sort of icon of capitalism during the Reagan and Thatcher years, for example; nowadays he is similarly highly regarded by others like the New Right. Adam Smith, if resurrected, would reject the exaggeration of his views in the Smith legacy. Certainly Smith wanted a minimal role for government. However, a resurrected Smith would protest that it is going too far to suppose that he was simply a supporter of laissez-faire economics, holding that the one and only guide in human affairs (the new divinity) is the direction provided by the interaction of impersonal market forces.

Selected Smithian Contributions

Adam Smith has significant ideas to offer on political economy, ethics, and government; all have significance for the student of public administration. The character of the economic forces that surround and impact

public-sector activity can be described by selecting among Adam Smith's major contributions. This description focuses on his doctrines of the invisible hand, the division of labor, the stages of economic growth, and his distinction (which died essentially with the passage of the classical economists) between productive and unproductive labor. It also insists that Smith recognizes the limitations of his invisible hand and fears the propensity of capitalists to subvert government. No attempt is made here to cover all of Smith's economic (or other) ideas. Such an attempt would have to describe items like his analyses of value, wages, capital, rents, and circular flow.

Adam Smith's major works are his *The Wealth of Nations* and *A Theory of Moral Sentiments*. The best known and most influential is certainly *The Wealth of Nations*. In this chapter, *The Wealth of Nations* is designated as *WN*, and the *A Theory of Moral Sentiments* is abbreviated as *TMS*. He worked on the ideas for these books — and on revising these books — for much of his adult life. *WN* was published in 1776, the year of the Declaration of Independence. Dugald Stewart, one of Smith's students, reports that Smith gave lectures from 1750 onward that included leading principles of Smithian political economy.⁵ *TMS* had been published first, in 1759. It had been developed over eight years (as Raphael and Macfie describe it) from the final form of Smith's 1752 lecture notes on moral philosophy.

Smith's two major works are supplemented by lesser, but important, works like the student notes on his *Lectures on Jurisprudence* and Smith's *History of Astronomy*, a philosophical history. Smith's moral philosophy course at the University of Glasgow is described as having been delivered in four parts; natural theology, ethics, justice, and political arrangements based on expediency.⁶ Student notes on Smith's lectures are available on the last two of these parts for 1762–1763 and 1763–1764. Unfortunately, Smith insisted that his unpublished papers should be burnt before his death, and this serves to limit understanding of his intellectual development. Also unfortunately, Smith did not write a projected book (still promised in 1790) on his theory and history of law and government, which probably would have served to complete the project that he had of developing a full social physics. This is described as a social physics, because Smith saw himself in the role of an Isaac Newton in terms of developing (although not completing) a scientifically based study of man and society.

Adam Smith's most important contribution is to the development of a science of political economy. Popularly, he is often considered to be the father of economics. This claim has been disputed, however. Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* was not the first publication on political economy or economics. Economic analysis has been traced throughout the history

of western Europe,⁷ for example, and political economy had emerged as a separate discipline of inquiry in the 17th century. However Smith's *WN* is the first major work on economics, and his work served as an inspiration at least for the classical economists, like David Ricardo, who were to follow in the 19th century.

Smith's main purpose in writing *WN* is to examine the fundamental forces that underlie economic development. His main prescription was the system of natural liberty. This can be understood in one sense as an opposition to the mercantilist ideas, which were already petering out in influence before Smith's time. Smith was opposed to the protectionism and economic management that mercantilism implied. Mercantilism embraced such views as the ideas that a favorable balance of trade is necessary to economic development, that "wealth consists in money," that exports and cheap labor are required, and that infant industries and manufacturers should be protected. In Smith's opinion, these were all fallacies. The character of the system of natural liberty can be seen by examining a central and influential idea of *WN*, the doctrine of the invisible hand.

The invisible-hand doctrine claims that the pursuit of individual self-interest leads to a socially optimal result. One way of looking at this invisible-hand doctrine is to understand it as claiming that, when each person attempts to maximize his own individual satisfaction (to get all he can for himself, to gouge his neighbors), it is as if there were an "invisible hand" that arranges that society thereby achieves better outcomes than if each person had tried to act for the public interest. As he put it, "It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker, that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest. We address ourselves, not to their humanity but to their self-love, and never talk to them of our own necessities but of their advantages."⁸

If everyone in society tries to work for the public good, the view is that society will be worse off than if everyone worked for her own selfish interests. Another way, complementing the way just described, is to see the invisible hand as an equilibrating force. Adam Smith's version of the invisible hand can be described as "a poetic expression of the most fundamental economic balance relations, the equalization of rates of return, as enforced by the tendency of factors to move from low to high returns."⁹ It is the automatic pricing system that tends toward a final state of balance. In other words, Smith explains economic phenomena as parts of an interrelated system. Viner long ago noted that Smith is original in his "detailed and elaborate application to the wilderness of economic phenomena of the unifying concept of a co-ordinated and mutually dependent system of cause and effect relationships which philosophers and theologians had already applied to the world in general."¹⁰

Book 4 of *WN* presents a simplistic and invalid argument for the invisible-hand doctrine. If each person is left alone and if she follows her own self-interest, she will maximize her own wealth; the sum of the wealth of the community is the sum of the wealth of individuals; and, therefore, an aggregate of people in a society will maximize aggregate wealth. Smith also presents a more sophisticated argument, which amounts to saying that perfect competition will match self-interest and optimal utility. On this latter argument, the invisible hand turns out (as noted above) to be the self-operating pricing mechanism, the powerful system of the interaction of the forces of supply and demand that, under certain conditions, yields the best outcome.

The “certain conditions” we would now recognize as perfect competition, a set of conditions that is found only rarely in the real world. Smith himself recognizes that certain institutional arrangements are necessary if the invisible hand is to work effectively. For example, Smith recognizes that the invisible hand will fail whenever there is a conflict of self-interest and where self-interest leads to socially undesirable outcomes. Smith is right in his reservations. On the last point, for instance, consider a society that includes people and firms like an Al Capone, an airline company that wants to save money by short-circuiting good safety practices, and a food company that wants to make invalid claims for the beneficial contents of its products; it defies imagination to suppose that the invisible hand will work perfectly in that society.

In the same chapter where he is arguing for free trade, Smith recognizes that complete freedom of trade is a utopian idea; he approves of protecting infant industries and the navigation laws. Later in the same book, he recognizes that one duty of government is to provide for the supply of what are now called public goods, goods (like lighthouses) that possess external economies and that the entrepreneur will not supply because she cannot expect to recover her costs.

If the invisible-hand doctrine is true, it is a powerful endorsement for selfishness. If the doctrine is true, it is a powerful criticism of the public-interest motivation for public-sector employees. West points out that, as the 19th century advanced, the classical economists Nassau Senior and John Stuart Mill were among those who did not appreciate that Adam Smith recognized two invisible hands.¹¹ The first hand affects the consequences of the actions of the self-seeking individual in the marketplace; the invisible hand ensures that that individual, seeking her own interest, actually achieves the public interest. “By pursuing his own interest he frequently promotes that of society more effectively than when he really intends to promote it. I have never known much good done by those who affected to trade for the publick [*sic*] good.”¹² The second hand affects the consequences of actions of individuals seeking only the public

interest through government intervention; unintentionally, they promote private interests.

In developing his ideas of a system of natural liberty, Adam Smith emphasized the importance of the maximum division of labor. For him, it was a key to economic development. He did not emphasize, as we should now, factors like mechanization, automation, labor-force size, or labor quality. His best-known example of the division of labor within a factory is that of the manufacture of pins, which he described as “a very trifling manufacture.”¹³ He explains that there are about 18 distinct operations in pin manufacture, such as drawing the wire, straightening it, cutting it, grinding it, and whitening it. Doing all the tasks oneself, a single person could make perhaps one or twenty pins per day. With the labor divided, each person could make the equivalent of 4,800 pins per day. “Each person ... might be considered as making four thousand eight hundred pins in a day. But if they had all wrought separately and independently, and without any of them having been educated to this peculiar business, they certainly could not each of them have made twenty, perhaps not more than one pin in a day.”¹⁴

Division of labor also means, for Smith, the social division of labor. This is a system of interrelationships where each producer is specialized. Smith invites the reader to consider how a day laborer’s woolen coat is “the produce of the joint labor of a great multitude of workmen”; his examples are the “the shepherd, the sorter of the wool, the wool-comber, or carder, the dyer, the scribbler, the spinner, the weaver, the fuller, [and] the dresser.”¹⁵ Smith emphasizes that “It is the great multiplication of all the different arts, in consequence of the division of labor, which occasions, in a well-governed society, that universal opulence which extends itself to the lowest ranks of the people. Every workman has a great quantity of his own work to dispose of beyond what he himself has occasion for.”¹⁶

Important parts of Adam Smith’s economic perspective are now abandoned in contemporary mainstream economic theory. An example is the distinction, common among all the classical economists, between productive and unproductive labor. For contemporary economists, no labor is unproductive, even if it has negligible social value (like producing a pet rock) or even if it has negative social value (like manufacturing contaminated street drugs). Smith distinguished between productive and unproductive labor. Examples of the latter include entertainers, professional people, civil servants, and menial servants; unproductive labor includes occupations that set limits on the potential for the division of labor. The ratio between productive and unproductive labor set these limits because, in Smith’s view, it affects the size of the market. Thus, Smith considered the ratio to be a determinant of a nation’s wealth. Buchanan (a founder of public-choice economics) argues that it is the neoclassical economists

— not Smith and the classical economists — who are in error. He has attempted to show that, under certain conditions, the revealed preferences of people may be more fully satisfied where personal services are not purchased through the mechanism of employing menial servants.¹⁷

The economic perspective in *WN* has clearly “evolved” in subsequent years. Ideas in *WN* have been developed, improved, and added. The poetic formulation of the invisible-hand doctrine in Adam Smith is an example of a developing economic idea, a point in the development of such an idea that began before Adam Smith and that finds expression in the mathematicization in the long history of the general economic equilibrium theory. The list is long of economists who have contributed to general equilibrium theory, beginning from Adam Smith contemporaries through Leon Walras to the present day. Ingrao and Israel argue that, throughout this history, general economic equilibrium theory has had an invariant paradigmatic core relating to the equilibrium’s existence, uniqueness, and stability.¹⁸ Existence means that a state of compatibility can exist between all agents; uniqueness indicates that only one state is possible; and stability means that market forces will lead to this state. There have been various approaches. For example, Ingrao and Israel distinguish between the mechanistic approach of Leon Walras and Vilfredo Pareto, the model theory of John von Neumann and Paul Samuelson, and the axiomatic treatment of Gerard Debreu.¹⁹

Monetary theory is another example of an area that has been improved. Some have argued, for example, that monetary theory owes little to *WN*.²⁰ There is progression in economic thinking — whether from development, improvement, or additions — throughout the classical period (the period that ran roughly from Adam Smith through Thomas Malthus, David Ricardo, Nassau Senior, and John Stuart Mill); Ricardo and Mill, for instance, specifically tried to improve on Smith. Significant changes, like of marginal analysis (consideration of the forces acting on the unit at the margin of, say, production or consumption), came with the advent of neoclassical economists; and this phase, reaching a culmination with Alfred Marshall, can be dated very roughly from the middle of the 19th century. The Keynesian revolution, inaugurated by the publication in 1936 of John Maynard Keynes’s *General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money*, clearly added important macroeconomic chapters. Myriads of examples could be added.

The “Adam Smith problem” is the clash that has been noted between human benevolent motivation in *TMS* and human self-interest motivation that dominates *WN*. In fact, the problem is a nonproblem. Raphael and Macfie, for example, write, “The so-called ‘Adam Smith problem’ was a pseudo-problem based on ignorance and misunderstanding.”²¹ They point out that comparing an earlier edition of *TMS* with edition six of the same

book makes it clear that Smith did not change his view about the nature of human conduct. Adam Smith saw *WN* as a logical continuation of *TMS*. It is incorrect to think that *TMS* ascribes human actions to sympathy and *WN* ascribes them to selfishness. As Raphael and Macfie explain, sympathy is at the heart of Adam Smith's explanation of moral judgment. Motive is a different matter, and there is a range of motives. *WN* simply chooses to focus on self-love or self-interest. *WN* and *TMS* are dealing with different aspects of humans. Sympathy operates especially well at close quarters. But the normal relationships in a commercial situation are too distant to permit the same scope to the operation of sympathy. It makes sense, consistent with *TMS*, for *WN* to focus on regard for self, a proper part of virtue in Smith's view.

The bulk of *TMS* is concerned with moral psychology; the last seventh of the book deals with moral philosophy. *TMS* can be seen as a discussion of how human beings, self-serving as they are, are able to create natural impediments against the inclinations of their own passions. Sympathy, a fellow feeling for the feelings of the other person "at the thought of his situation," is at the heart of Smith's moral psychology. Sympathy is the basis of our judgments about the propriety and merit of the conduct of others. Looking at one's own behavior as if one were another person allows one to evaluate one's own conduct. We can identify the general rules that govern conduct that gives rise to our sympathy. Smith's moral philosophy discussed the nature and basis of virtue. For Smith, there is no single criterion of virtue; it gives scope to propriety, prudence, and benevolence. Neither prudence (seeking self-interest) nor benevolence (seeking others' interests) is enough by itself. In this circumstance, the standard of what is appropriate behavior is given in considering the sympathetic feelings of the impartial spectator. Sympathy is the test of morality, the sympathy of the impartial and well-informed spectator. In commercial society, especially worthy are prudence and justice.

For the 18th century and for Adam Smith, jurisprudence concerned justice, police, revenue, and arms — with police used in its 18th-century sense, which Smith understood as including the cheapness of commodities, public security, cleanliness, and the opulence of the state. In *Lectures on Jurisprudence*, Smith first considers themes that include justice, the foundation of government and obedience, and his stages of development. Smith held that justice is the principal and chief objective of every system of government. Justice, for him, is a matter of abstaining from doing harm to another's person, property, or reputation. The objective of justice is to secure people from injury; it is not a question of allocation. Smith rejects the contractual notion of the origin of government and obedience. People constitute societies for the purposes of survival and reproduction, and they gradually form habits of obedience. He discussed obedience in terms

of utility and authority, with the latter dependent on personal qualifications, age, wealth, and family status. The amount of obedience, which is strengthened by interest, depends on the stage of historical development. Smith identifies (also see *WN*) four stages of societal development — the hunter, the shepherd, the agricultural (containing three substages), and the present commercial stages. The stages do depend on the method of subsistence, and the latter does shape understandings of justice, property, and government. However, Smith's system need not be read as contemplating economic determinism, with the stages developing automatically.

Reading *WN* by itself does tend to lead to misreading of Adam Smith. It is correct that Smith wants government to ensure individual freedom and, within the market mechanism, to facilitate the working of the economic system. It is correct that Smith wants governmental institutions to be continually and systematically adjusted to society's commercial demands. In his day, he wanted the economic realities to be appreciated when considering the political arrangements with the American colonies.

Smith wants the market to operate freely; he opposes the restrictions of the mercantilists, for example. He applauds "the progress of opulence" and sees the free market as the means to "universal opulence."²² Smith endorses commercial values. This is in spite of the fact that he considers the interests of capitalists opposed to the interests of the whole of society, because the rate of profit declines (in his view) as society's wealth increases. He holds that inequality stabilizes sentiments of justice, even though he holds that admiring the rich and despising the poor is "the great and most universal cause of corruption of our moral sentiments."²³ He holds that, even with inequality, the poor have the necessities for life. He claims that wealth increases the capacity for benevolence, even though commercial people can lead a life of propriety but not of complete virtue. Smith would limit the functions of government, and thus he would exclude any redistributive measures. He does hold that governmental bureaucracy is unproductive.

Smith does not understand economics to be an autonomous moral entity, however. In terms of study, Smith is a philosopher of society rather than an economist. He sees moral philosophy as encompassing morality, justice, and police, the latter term being used in the sense noted earlier. The founder of political economy sees politics and economics as dimensions of a larger philosophy. For Smith, a value-free economics is only part of the story; he wanted to write a trilogy that would include his works on ethics, economics (or police), and government (or justice). As Winch comments, Smith would not have considered it worthwhile to have written a *WN* confined entirely to positivist propositions.²⁴

In terms of practice, Adam Smith wants a government that is capable of coping with the capitalists' ability to subvert government to private

interests. He recognizes the necessity of government. Smith makes suggestions for the administration of justice; for example, he supports the separation of powers and he approves of fees for court services. He recognizes that the commercial stage of development made a standing army desirable. He favors the governmental provision of public goods, like bridges and canals.

Smith favors governmental action not only in situations of market failure, but also for specific policy purposes. He wants tax measures to reduce the number of alehouses, for example. He wants universal military training in order to encourage laborers (disenfranchised in that society) to play a part in the country's life. He wants other governmental intrusions in the public provision of elementary education and in ensuring that army officers are competent. He wants government to encourage membership in religious sects in order to offset the deterioration in morals that the poor experience in commercial society. Smith noted that "the poor person, coming from his village to the obscurity and darkness of the larger towns, would tend to abandon himself to every sort of low profligacy and vice."²⁵ He wants government institutions that are accountable to society, and not merely to special commercial interests. Viner does agree that there is a presumption against government throughout *WN*; nevertheless, he claims that Smith "saw a wide and elastic range of activity for government."²⁶

Adam Smith does hold an invisible-hand doctrine, but he is conscious of the limited functioning of the hand. Notice the qualifiers in Adam Smith's discussion in *WN* of the operation of the invisible hand. "Nor is it always the worse for society that it was no part of (his intention). By pursuing his own interest he frequently promotes that of the society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it."²⁷

Adam Smith recognizes that the invisible hand does not always work. Similarly he recognizes in *TMS* that sympathy does not always work, especially where relationships occur at a distance. He recognizes that neither the invisible hand nor sympathy work perfectly well. To a large extent, Smith did expect welfare to be maximized and harm to be minimized automatically. However, he certainly recognized the potential for the pursuit of self-interest — insufficiently controlled — to inflict unacceptable harm on others. Natural justice was not enough; government, though government is limited, is needed.

The ancestry of Adam Smith in creating the conceptual space for thinking about social issues (like public administration) is undeniable. He is a symbol of the free market, of the unfettered "propensity to truck, barter, exchange."²⁸ This is in spite of the fact that Smith recognized that there are institutional limitations to the working out of the beneficial effects of the invisible hand. There is a division of opinion as to whether neoclassical perfect competition can be found in Smith's economics.²⁹ As

West puts it in summarizing Anderson and Tollison, Smithian competition “was compatible with any number (of competitors) as long as entry into the industry was free. Competition was essentially a rivalrous process in a sense of rivalry in a race. The case of a market-generated monopoly would be an instance of one competitor temporarily winning the race.”³⁰

Contemporary mainstream economic theory serves to underscore Smith’s concern about the limitations of the operation of the invisible hand. These limitations relate to an economy’s efficiency, equity, and growth. Concerning efficiency, for example, contemporary microeconomic theory makes clear that optimal results cannot be expected from an economy where either monopolistic (one supplier) and oligopolistic (few suppliers) competition obtains. Monopolists and oligopolists, contemporary mainstream theory makes clear, are not price takers subject to the price setting of the market. Rather, they are price setters, and in their own rational self-interest they will tend to restrict supply to secure excess profits. In such circumstances, the invisible hand fails. However, the structure of the economy in Smith’s time was less concentrated. For example, agriculture had a larger role, and agriculture is often nowadays given as an example of an economic activity where the producers are price takers. On this ground, Adam Smith had more reason to subscribe to his invisible-hand doctrine than we do.

None of this should conceal Adam Smith’s skepticism and opposition toward positive government, especially in economic matters. Government, for Smith, does not have an active or innovative role. Winch goes on to explain that, for Smith, the legislator’s main task is “to accommodate laws to the habits of men and their existing social condition.”³¹ In doing this, the legislator must be governed by a sense of justice. Recall Smith’s disparagement of the “man of system,” the legislator who does not recognize the critical limitation on political behavior of factors like opinion (of which emotion and ignorance are dimensions). “The man of system ... is apt to be very wise in his own conceit; and is often so enamored with the supposed beauty of his own ideal plan of government, that he cannot suffer the smallest deviation from any part of it. He goes on to establish it completely and in all its parts, without any regard either to the great interests, or to the strong prejudices that may oppose it.”³²

Smith recognizes the power of economic forces that surround governmental activity. He drew attention to the impact on government, for example, of the relative power of corporations and employers. “Whenever the legislature attempts to regulate the differences between masters and their workmen, its counsellors are always the masters.”³³ Such reasons, Smith acknowledged, would frustrate the complete achievement of his system of natural liberty. Smith’s recognition of the power of economic forces and special interests resonates today as the United States’s executive

and legislature are so thoroughly dominated by the power of such forces and interests.³⁴ This leads naturally to a comment on public choice.

Importance of the Smithian Legacy

Adam Smith's legacy, the conceptual attitudes that can be associated with Smith, is a central feature of the contemporary world outlook. It forms part of the conceptual space for such specialties as the study of public administration and of organization. In fact, it is barely possible to practice public administration without working within the constraints of this conceptual space. This section notes the support given to the Smithian legacy by the triumphs of liberal democracy and liberal capitalism, and it comments on the legacy's encouragement of the centrality of economic relations. The importance of understanding the legacy is increased if it is recognized that it is socially constituted; it can be changed. In order to clarify the claim that Smith is wrong not to recognize that the economic sphere is socially constituted, this section considers the notions of "economics as rhetoric" and of "new economics." The importance of reconsidering the legacy is also underscored by considering the tension in Smith's view that the economic sphere is not only harmonious but also exploitative.

The Smithian legacy is currently supported by the twin triumph throughout much of the world of liberal democracy and liberal capitalism. The triumph is twin because each is considered to reinforce the other. The liberal democratic state, according to some thinkers, is now the dominant and triumphant vehicle of government. Fukuyama, for instance, has written of the end of history in the sense that the liberal democratic state now has no rivals, no alternatives.³⁵ With the triumph of the West against communism, democracy — despite its difficulties — is now the ascendant force. Perhaps because of the long contest against communism, liberal capitalism (democracy's companion condition) is also dominant. Arguably, capitalism of sorts is widely seen as part of "the American way of life," and now former communist states work toward developing market economies. Smith is an intellectual ancestor of this "triumph." Recall that *WV* has been described as focusing on the interrelationship of commerce and liberty.³⁶ Smith was interested not only in the benefits of economic liberty for economic development, but also in the benefits of commerce for liberty.

Economic relations have long been regarded as central for an understanding of political and social issues, by many who oppose capitalism and by many who celebrate capitalism. Smith is an important figure in moving toward this position. West notes the increasing incorporation of

an economic perspective in liberal political theory from John Locke to Jeremy Bentham and to James Mill.³⁷ Recognition of the increasing centrality of economic relations, the priority of the economic over the political sphere, is part of the legacy to which Adam Smith made an outstanding contribution. Recall that Smith would settle the problem of the American colonies in the light of the economic realities.

The important point is that a return to the words of Adam Smith reminds us of what Smith did not recognize: economic space is socially constructed. Adam Smith thought that he was identifying, in a Newtonian fashion, the underlying forces of society. For him, the equilibrating mechanism of the invisible hand explains and governs the myriad of economic phenomena that we observe in the socioeconomic universe. He thought that he was dealing with givens and doing social physics. Newtonian physics dominated 18th-century thought, and its fundamental importance in the Enlightenment is widely recognized. Consider the views of thinkers like D'Alembert, Voltaire, and Montesquieu. Newtonian science permeated the environment. During the French Enlightenment, Newtonian physics became the norm of scientific thinking. As Cassirer points out, the 18th century took the methodological paradigm of Newtonian physics as a starting point and added a universal twist. It saw this paradigm as necessary for thought in general.³⁸

Mainstream economic theory, the theory that acknowledges Smith as its founder, has developed as a mathematicophysical enterprise. There is little mathematics in Smith's *WN*, just as there are few mathematical formulae in one of the other of the most important books in the history of economic theory — in John Maynard Keynes's major publication.³⁹ However, the 19th century saw the increasing mathematicization of economic theory. Throughout its history, mainstream economic theory has been generally viewed as a positivist activity, as opposed to a hermeneutic (or interpretive) enterprise.⁴⁰ For one distinction, positivist science is concerned with determining causality, as contrasted with hermeneutics, which is concerned with such purposes as interpreting meaning.

An alternative is to understand economic theory as rhetoric, as a constructivist activity. The point is that the conceptual space established for public administration by mainstream economic theory can be so understood, providing more leeway for the public-administration theorist and practitioner. McClosky has attracted considerable attention with his view of economic theory as rhetoric.⁴¹ Such a view would deny that the propositions of economic science can be established in such a way that the propositions have a privileged epistemological status, the sort of privileged status that is invoked when one declares, "That is a scientific fact." In the latter case, the fact is being contrasted with a fact (such as

a poetic fact or a fact of everyday life) established by a method that is not regarded as scientific.

McCloskey's point amounts to claiming that economic theory should be better understood as an interpretation. As Nelson writes, "The idea that economics is socially constructed should not ... be novel to anyone with an interest in methodology or the philosophy of science or who ever heard of Thomas Kuhn (1962)."⁴² She contrasts this with the view, which she rejects, of those economists who understand themselves as striving to come closer and closer to truth with a big T.

Consider the social construction of the concept of gross national product (GNP) and compare it with the "GNP" that ecologists would favor. GNP is an indicator that affects behavior and that governments worry about; for example, it will be recalled that the growth in GNP, no less than the supposed missile gap, was a critical issue in President John F. Kennedy's election campaign. GNP is the total value of the final goods and services produced by an economy during one year. It can be measured in two broad ways: by summing the amounts of all incomes to the various factors of production, or by summing all the sales of final goods and services.

GNP, as now socially constituted, measures production without consideration of the "benefit" of the product to society. For example, \$2 million spent on pet rocks (or on unneeded house repairs, fraudulently contracted between dishonest repair firms and senile home owners) is counted the same as \$2 million on basic food or life-saving medicine for the needy. (As an aside, it will be noted that we have passed over the celebrated paradox of value — "valuable water that costs so little" and "valueless diamonds which cost so much" — discussed by Smith and his predecessors and resolved by the neoclassical economists.) GNP, as now socially constituted, measures production without considering the wear and tear on the ecological assets of the country. For example, air pollution and water pollution are not considered costs of production. In terms of GNP, it is irrelevant if a company produces refrigerators so designed (say, using hydrofluorocarbons) that they inadvertently widen (if they do) the hole in our world's ozone layer.

Many ecologists would favor the social construction of a new concept in place of GNP (the new concept sometimes called the adjusted national product, or ANP). They want a new economics based upon a different interpretation or construction of reality. A main argument of the new economics is that, faced with finite and nonrenewable resources, growth cannot continue indefinitely, and technology can do no more than postpone such problems. Many ecologists want a radical change in the conception of the economic sphere. Vincent explains that they want the growth-oriented economic order to be replaced by a sustainable economic order.⁴³

Smith's legacy is powerful. Of major contemporary importance in Smith and his legacy is the sense of legitimacy and priority which he has given to the market. Smith's tradition provides many public administrationists with a sense that their theorizing should be conducted within the framework of the market. The view that the market is legitimate and primary (say, over the political) is facilitated by the opinion that the market is beneficent, that it contributes toward social harmony. If the market were recognized as being significantly inefficient and unfair, it would be harder to maintain that the marketplace should mold human society. (Of course, among the other issues impacting on this matter is one's estimate of the legitimacy of the political sphere.) Shapiro points out that there are two poles in treating the social, emphasizing harmony and emphasizing disharmony.⁴⁴ Smith is in the first category. Shapiro claims that Smith's language assumes the existence of God as the universe's author — but an author who has retired and left behind mechanisms guaranteeing that the self and the other are always congruent. Shapiro believes that this congruence is not a characteristic of the world but rather a metaphor, a trope, in the organization of Smith's writing.

Smith's own reservations about the invisible hand are typically unnoticed by believers in the Adam Smith legacy, a legacy that has acquired a life of its own. Consider Smith's view that civil society is essentially exploitative, for example. *WN* notes that "Civil government, so far as it is instituted for the security of property, is in reality instituted for the defence of the rich against the poor, or of those who have some property against those who have none at all."⁴⁵

Some focus on understandings of the invisible hand that sustain the Adam Smith legacy. Buchanan and Tullock, for example, assert that the "great contribution" of Adam Smith lies in popularizing the notion that in normal trade all parties gain. Smith is the founder of a tradition that provides many with a sense of legitimacy about following the dictates of impersonal market forces. Those in public administration and others need to return to Smith and his legacy in order to make their own evaluations of these ideas. Unexamined, the ideas will continue to constrain action in noneconomic matters. Alternatives are possible because any such conceptual space is socially constituted.

Incorporating Smith into the Field of Public Administration

The Adam Smith legacy has penetrated public-organization theory and practice, no less than political theory. First, significant elements of public-choice economics have shed important insights on public-organization

theory and practice. Second, the general impact of economic concepts on the character of public-organization theory and practice has been profound. This can be explored by examining the centrality of efficiency (a thoroughly Smithian concept) to public-administration theory and practice. The dominance of the efficiency concept, it is suggested, is an example of how the economic ethos infuses traditional public-administration theory. This dominance is essential in capitalism, just as it is necessary in economic theory developed to predict, explain, and control activities in a capitalist context. Third, contemporary economic and other theories also suggest ways in which the Smithian legacy should be interpreted. Adam Smith does more than set the conceptual space for public administration.

This section discusses, then, these three ways in which the Smithian legacy is of particular significance for public administration theory and practice. These understandings can be best recognized and applied, in my view, within the context of establishing post-traditional governance and bureaucracy. This I have described in terms of thinking as play, justice as seeking, and practice as art.⁴⁶

Public-Choice Economics

Adam Smith is the spiritual ancestor of the use of public-choice economics in analyzing government. Recall that Adam Smith held that governmental institutions should be evaluated by, and should be subject to, economic standards. For example, he advocated the application of economic principles to the organization of defense and justice. He urged the use of user fees to pay for public works. Public works services should be administered in such a manner as to make effectiveness in the self-interest of administrators. Skinner also points out that, for Smith, politics is like economics in being competitive. He adds that “To this extent Smith would have been surprised to find Professor Tullock (cofounder of public-choice economics) referring to a *newly* established ‘economics of politics’ which assumes that ‘all the individuals in government aim at raising their own utility.’”⁴⁷ On the other hand, Smith has been criticized by Stigler for failing to create a “thorough-going economic theory of political behavior.” Winch represents Stigler as regretting Smith’s unwillingness to apply “the organon of self-interest to political behavior.”⁴⁸

Vincent Ostrom pioneered the application of public-choice economics to problems of public-administration theory and practice. He advocated the establishment, in the tradition of the Adam Smith legacy, of “a new theory of democratic administration.” Ostrom points to the theory of public goods as the central organizing concept used by political economists in studying public administration and collective action.⁴⁹ Ostrom’s book does not mention Adam Smith’s name any more than it mentions other great

economists like Ricardo, Marshall, or Keynes. Instead Ostrom writes of fashioning the theory of democratic administration from “the works of Hamilton, Madison, Tocqueville, Dewey, Lindblom, Buchanan, Tullock, Olson, Niskanen, and many others.”⁵⁰ As Ostrom would agree, Buchanan and Tullock — when they founded public-choice economics in the 1960s — were attempting to apply economic concepts to the political situation. As the journal *Public Choice* notes in each issue, public choice is concerned with “the intersection between economics and political science.” It involves, as the journal indicates, the application of essentially economic methods to political problems.

The principal impact that public choice has had on public administration is that it has underscored the existence of waste in public-sector activity. The outcry against governmental waste has now become so commonplace that there is an understandable reaction against the outcry among those valuing public-sector activity. Against these outcries, it needs to be asserted that not all governmental activity is wasteful (obviously, it is not) and that there is waste in private enterprise as well as in public enterprise. The underscoring of what has been long recognized, however, has been significant in that it has added substance to the weight of the outcry.

Perhaps such an outcry was inevitable in a situation (even if there were no direct correlation between waste and size) where the size of governmental administration in all the advanced countries has grown during the past two centuries, especially since World War II. The statistics are undeniable. Total governmental expenditure in the United States as a percentage of gross national product jumped from 10 percent in 1929 to 34.8 percent in 1987, for example.⁵¹ All advanced countries show substantial increases.

Many are concerned about governmental growth today. However, this concern is confined neither to this century nor to this country. At the 1876 centennial celebration of *WN* in London, Prime Minister Gladstone complained that:

The full development of the principles of Adam Smith has been in no small danger for some time past; and one of the great dangers that now hangs over the country is that the wholesome, spontaneous operation of human interests and human desires seems to be in course of rapid supersession by the erection of one government department after another, by the setting up of one set of inspectors after another, and by the whole time of parliament being taken up in attempting to do for the nation those very things which, if the teaching of the man whose name we are celebrating today is to bear any fruit at all, the nation can do much better for itself.⁵²

Public choice underscores the existence of government waste by arguing that the waste is a necessary (an essential) — not an accidental — part of governmental activity. The claim is that there can be no governmental activity without waste. Waste is an inevitable outcome of rational bureaucratic activity. This has been discussed elsewhere.⁵³ When acting in a rational manner, suppliers of governmental output will choose to supply a nonoptimal amount. On the supply side, Niskanen's model of the budget-maximizing bureaucrat shows the government bureau supplying twice the optimal (the most desirable) amount.⁵⁴ Niskanen's model has been modified with alternative institutional and behavioral assumptions; Migué and Bélanger's model is an example.⁵⁵

The picture of the rationality of supply-side waste remains. This should occasion no surprise to the economist, because of the standard view in microeconomic theory of the supply and pricing behavior of the monopolist (one supplier) and the oligopolist (few suppliers). Unlike the supplier who is a price taker in conditions of perfect competition, mainstream microeconomic theory paints a picture of the rational monopolist who chooses to restrict supply in order to obtain excess profits. Governmental agencies, clearly, have monopolistic and oligopolistic characteristics.

A difference between the public enterprise and the private enterprise situation is that public officials lack the discipline of a suitable effective demand constraint. Demand signals in the private sector, while they can be criticized in terms of efficiency and equity considerations, transmit the market wishes of consumers relatively effectively. Public-choice analyses present a different picture of the demand for public-sector goods and services. Public-choice analyses of alternative voting mechanisms make clear the difficulty of ascertaining what the public demands.⁵⁶ This is quite apart from the matter of sorting out the demand for aggregates of multiple issues, often where individuals give contradictory answers (e.g., cut the expenditure but do not cut programs). Contradictory readings of public demand can be obtained by using alternative aggregation protocols (or voting mechanisms). For example, a Borda (or other) protocol may or may not give a different reading than a Cordocet (or other) protocol of the same set of preferences expressed by the same set of people. Kenneth Arrow's Possibility Theorem shows that it is impossible to specify a protocol for aggregating individual preferences (i.e., to specify what public-choice economists call an axiomatic social-welfare function) that can be guaranteed to satisfy even certain very minimal and basic technical conditions.⁵⁷ Recall that the conditions in question are not complex items like justice or fairness. Rather, they are narrow items, like transitivity, which is the condition that if A is preferred to B and if B is preferred to C, then A is preferred to C.

Economic tools, part of the Adam Smith tradition, are useful in analyzing possible coping strategies, such as privatization, agency size reduction, and budgetary squeezing. Adam Smith's own suggestions about governmental efficiency included not only keeping government out of certain functional areas, but also subjecting bureaucracies (like public roads and court services) to the winds of the marketplace. Clearly, economic tools are part and parcel of competent public-sector policy analysis. However, a word should be added about the importance of being clear about the nature of the problem. The public-choice analysis makes clear that eliminating programs (or parts of programs) is not equivalent to eliminating waste. Obviously, if an entire agency is eliminated, waste will not occur in that agency, but neither will there be benefits. (There may still be waste if the activity is completely privatized.) The point that emerges from the public-choice analysis is that every single agency, to the extent that it is a bureaucratic agency, involves waste. Not even starving an agency of funds is likely to be completely successful, as waste is necessary even in an impoverished bureaucracy. This presents a no-win challenge for public-administration theory; new theoretical approaches toward public organization are required.

Public choice can point a way for contemporary public-administration theory, I once thought. The traditional method of public administration has tended to be inductive, starting from individual observations and then proceeding to generalizations. Of course, the inductive approach is valuable and it needs to be retained. However, the inductive approach needs supplementation by a deductive approach that proceeds from the general to the particular. Such a method is well-developed in public-choice and in economic theorizing.

Economics utilizes both approaches, with the deductive being at the center of contemporary economic theory. Adam Smith tended to favor the observational, while later theorists (some, like Leon Walras, more than others) favored the rational deductive approach. Each method, by itself, has weaknesses. The inductive method, by itself, tends to encourage retention of the status quo, privileging whatever exists. It was the inductive approach that Aristotle followed in his political analysis that encouraged him to justify his comments on slavery and on women. If slavery is general, the inductive approach does encourage the researcher to find a generalization that will explain (and often "justify") it. For example, if all swans are white, there must be a reason for swans being white, and a clever researcher will find or concoct a reason.

Being more inclined to the deductive in his political analysis, Plato, in contrast, was able to be more radical. When faced with objections to his ideal city, he could brush aside criticism appealing to the difficulty of ready implementation of his proposals.⁵⁸ Some might argue that much of

public-administration theory exhibits a weakness of being too attached to the status quo.

General Impact of Economics

The extent to which the Adam Smith legacy has permeated public-administration theory and practice can be recognized by considering the central role accorded to efficiency. Despite a relative decline since World War II,⁵⁹ the efficiency concept remains an important goal in contemporary public-administration practice. This decline has been encouraged by writers like the Dimocks and Waldo, who have distinguished normative and descriptive senses of the efficiency concept. The Dimocks and Waldo agree that efficiency should not be an end in itself, for instance.⁶⁰ The continuing importance of the efficiency concept in practice is reflected in its explicit specification as a governmental goal in Vice-President Albert Gore's National Productivity Review Report; for example, the preface explains that the report's twin missions are "to make government work better and cost less."⁶¹ Efficiency is a concept that also figures in much public-administration theory. Ostrom opposes his new theory of democratic administration against the Wilsonian paradigm, for example, and he recognizes the role of efficiency in the latter. He characterizes the Wilsonian paradigm as aiming for efficiency in the "perfection in the hierarchical ordering of a professionally trained public service."⁶² Ostrom explains that Wilson conceptualizes efficiency in economic terms.

The claim is not that the accent on efficiency originated in economics and then infected public administration. Rather, efficiency is a modernist concept that manifested itself in a variety of ways, one of the most important being in Smithian and economic analysis. The priority given to the economic sphere in major political ideologies (liberal, conservative, and socialist ideologies, for example) contributes to the efficiency concept remaining important in disciplines like public administration. Among the other factors accounting for the influence of economics on public administration, as well as on other disciplines engaged with social concerns, is the wide acceptance of the relative boldness, coherence, and mathematical elegance of economic theory. For such reasons, public-administration thinkers need to come closer to the roots of the pressure to celebrate efficiency, understanding the pressure stemming from Smithian economics.

Baechler notes that capitalism is unique in according such a privileged position to efficiency, as was mentioned earlier. Baechler advances a set of interconnected propositions on the development of capitalism, emphasizing the privileged position of efficiency in modern capitalism.⁶³ Another proposition is that a primary condition "for the maximization of economic efficiency is the liberation of civil society with respect to the State."⁶⁴

Baechler argues that this condition can be met by the creation of a number of sovereign political units in a cultural area. It is “necessary that the value-system be modified to the detriment of religious, military and political values, and that demand be liberated.”⁶⁵ Baechler holds that such conditions have only been realized in the modern West.

Waldo is a public administrationist who has made the point about efficiency being a modernist concept. Appropriately, he has associated the rise and influence of the concept with such modernist characteristics as the worldview “popularized by Descartes and Newton,” the emergence of capitalism, the development of Weberian bureaucracy, the advent of the Industrial Revolution, the growth of science and technology, the dominance of the power-driven machine, the development of the business ethos, and (note) the emergence of economics.⁶⁶

Certainly, the genesis and triumph of efficiency are era-wide and complex phenomena. Consider the structure of capitalism, for instance. The need for control is much greater in the modernist period, where a central feature of the capitalist economic system is its free-wheeling and decentralized structure. There is a need in such decentralized and fast-moving circumstances to direct, coordinate, and control subordinates and associates, often at a distance.

Smith’s analysis speaks to the issue of distance in particular, especially in the context of the matter of social cohesion. At close proximity, the sympathy that is described in *TMS* is able to check an individual’s self-love. At a distance, there is a greater problem, met in large part by the beneficent operation of the invisible hand and also by the governmental imposition of justice requirements. This distance in the modern world is increasing in several senses. It is not merely that business is becoming more global but also that the size of populations (and thus the number of interactions) is galloping at an accelerating rate. The Smithian legacy must be considered when reflecting on the pressure to celebrate efficiency in public administration. Note that five of the items in the above list from Waldo are essentially economic in character.

Reflection on the Smithian and other roots of efficiency in public-administration theory and practice highlights the matter of eras, and must be considered. Concepts like efficiency are culture-embedded and reflect a value bias.⁶⁷ The efficiency concept is not a given, and supposing the efficiency concept to be a feature of all possible worlds is false. Efficiency as a concept does latently control meaning, using an unconscious dynamic.

Selected Social and Contemporary Economic Theories

The limits of Adam Smith’s legacy should be recognized, especially if a postmodern epistemological framework is preferred. Adam Smith, an

Enlightenment figure, was engaged in a modernist project. It is a modernist project in that, reflecting no skepticism about the power of human reasoning, Smith sought to extend the searchlight of reason more effectively into yet another corner of human activity. The conceptual space surrounding public administration is different if it is not only socially constructed but also if it is correct that we should use a postmodern epistemological framework. Properly understood, postmodernism is profound skepticism about the human capacity to know. Postmodernity can be described as the establishment of communication and other conditions that effectively impede capability to distinguish between images and their supposed underlying realities. A socially constructed concept in the modernist context refers to an underlying reality, perhaps touching this aspect (like mainstream GNP) or another aspect (like the ecologist's ANP) of the underlying referent.

Postmodern economics would be reformulated in terms of corresponding insights. For example, some postmodernists explain that hyperreality, the idea without referent, is indistinguishable from the real.⁶⁹ There is a literature discussing the application of postmodernism ideas to public administration,⁷⁰ and there is no need to repeat the points here. The point is that, in the postmodern situation, the conceptual framework of public administration changes not only because the barriers between disciplines implode, but also because economics (part of that imploded framework) changes. Public administration encounters economic theory where, in the postmodern context, economic judgments recognize the inseparability of the observer and the observed. This would be astonishing talk to Adam Smith. Through and through, Smith was an Enlightenment figure, a modernist to the core.

Others would approach this differently, with a more optimistic epistemological (essentially a modernist) outlook. The historical limitations of Adam Smith are referenced by Raymond in this way: "Adam Smith said that the overall best interests of first wave society resulted from each individual entrepreneur seeking his or her own best interest, but Smith could not foresee the long-term consequences of second wave technology, and the social, environmental and institutional characteristics of corporations."⁷¹ This relies on Alvin Toffler's notion of waves.⁷² The first nature-dependent wave, coming to an end in the United States around 1870, is described as the agricultural revolution of about 10,000 years ago. The second wave, beginning to decline about 1970, is the nature-dominant Industrial Revolution. The third is described as more than increasing reliance on information and technology. It is "new forms of relating among people and between people and nature, new meanings, new forms of organization, new forms of management, a new society, and a new economy."⁷³ Certainly, Adam Smith did think that agriculture is more

important than manufacturing. If there is a third wave, he is two waves out of reach.

Public administrationists must be conscious of the forces, like the Smithian legacy, that shape the epistemological framework through which they describe problems and prescribe solutions. There is a need to guard against projecting latent assumptions into our conclusions. The Adam Smith legacy shapes the public administrationist's lens; it deserves attention as it helps us understand many of our current habits and dispositions.

Consider now the Smithian legacy in terms of contemporary economic theory. Each age now must come to grips with the rose-colored story which Adam Smith tells and which forms part of the Adam Smith legacy. Smith would have us believe that, underlying the mass of diverse economic phenomena, there is a force which is not only unifying but also beneficent. This is the invisible hand that ensures (on one account) that, when each of us acts in our own self-interest, the public interest is served better than if we had acted in the public interest.

There is some truth in the rose-colored contention. The market does function as a system; it does guide and it does have, as it were, a life of its own. The market, wherein individuals look out for themselves, can have unintended benefits for others. Consider any business transaction; both buyer and seller can be winners, and there does not have to be a loser. Compare the experience of buying shoes in GUM's Department Store in the former Soviet Union's Moscow with a similar experience in Bloomingdale's in New York City. Certainly, we obtain better service and better products in Bloomingdale's, and a good supposition is that the reason is that Bloomingdale's was working for its own self-interest. Beyond such nuggets of truth, the invisible-hand doctrine is a cultural fairy tale. The beneficence is grossly oversold. Paul Samuelson states, "After two centuries of experience and thought, however, we now recognize the scope and realistic limitations of this doctrine. We know that the market sometimes lets us down, that there are 'market failures,' and that markets do not always lead to the most efficient outcome."⁷⁴ He makes this statement in his standard introductory textbook, and this source is chosen to emphasize the mainstream character of the comment.

To make the mainstream point clearer, the sources of market failure, where the market will not operate to yield a satisfactory result and where governmental intervention is deemed necessary, are as follows: First, there are the failures of competition due to the existence of monopoly and oligopoly pricing. Second, there is the existence of public goods, goods that will not be supplied in sufficient quantity or at all (e.g., national defense); pure public goods have zero marginal cost for an additional consumer. Third, there are externalities, where one firm's actions result in either a benefit or a cost to others (e.g., pollution). Fourth, there are

information failures, where private enterprise does not provide enough information. Fifth, there are incomplete markets, where individual firms do not provide a product even though the cost is less than that which individuals are prepared to pay. Sixth, there are the ravages of unemployment and inflation.

Samuelson prescribes what he thinks are three legitimate roles in coping with the failure of the invisible hand.⁷⁵ He is concerned with the inefficiencies accruing from the existence of monopoly, externalities, and public good, for example. This leads to governmental intervention (in such forms as the Sherman Antitrust laws and speed limits) and to subsidies for purposes like the weather service.

Another Samuelson category of invisible-hand failure is instability represented by the ups and downs of the business cycles and by problems of poor economic growth. The government might intervene here through macroeconomic steps such as monetary and fiscal policies. Beyond this, there are the issues of redistribution and merit goods. The distribution of income in an economy may be unsatisfactory, as unattended economies do tend to lead to inordinate disparities of wealth. Gross inequalities is yet another of Samuelson's list of categories where the invisible hand fails. This leads to redistributive governmental intervention in such areas as progressive taxation and shelter and food for abandoned children. The concept of merit goods recognizes that individuals can well make decisions that are not in their fundamental best interest. For example, there are some items (like elementary education) that consumers should be compelled to consume.

In summary, each public-administration thinker must come to terms with Adam Smith. Smith was a writer so strong that he changed the way in which it is possible for public administrationists and others to look at the world. Our first challenge is to get Smith right, because he has been widely misread. That the success of *WN* obscured the total message can be understood by reading both *WN* and *TMS*. His message was also obscured because he failed to complete the third book of his trilogy. Our second challenge is to question the account he gives of the conceptual space, constituted by his view of economics, that underlies public-administration and organizational theory. In particular, is the economic prior to the political? Is the economic a beneficial sphere? Are attempts aimed at the public interest doomed to encourage private gains? How adequate is the market for human needs? Our third challenge is to explore in specific terms the potential for public administration of an understanding of Adam Smith and his legacy. Does economics have an appropriate influence on public organizational thinking? For example, is public-choice economics a useful tool? Are we unduly constrained by economic concepts, like efficiency? The central claim of this chapter is that, by approaching Adam

Smith and his legacy, public administrationists can assist themselves to do what they should do: examine their latent assumptions.

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EARLY LOYAL OPPOSITION TO THE MODERNIST



Chapter 11: The Legacy of David Hume for American Public Administration: Empiricism, Skepticism, and Constitutionalism

In contriving any system of government, and fixing the several checks and controuls of the constitution, every man ought to be supposed a knave, and to have no other end, in all his actions, than private interest.

David Hume, Treatise of Human Nature, 1739

Chapter 12: Moral Conscience in Burkean Thought: Implications of Diversity and Tolerance in Public Administration

Whilst men are linked together, they easily and speedily communicate the alarm of any evil design. They are enabled to fathom it with common counsel, and to oppose it with unified

strength. Whereas, when they lie dispersed, without concern, order, or discipline, communication is uncertain, counsel difficult, and resistance impracticable.... When bad men combine, the good must associate, else they will fall, one by one, an unpitied sacrifice in a contemptible struggle.

Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, 1790

Chapter 11

The Legacy of David Hume for American Public Administration: Empiricism, Skepticism, and Constitutionalism

Michael W. Spicer

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While David Hume is not widely cited in the public administration literature, an understanding and appreciation of his ideas are important to both the study and practice of American public administration. This is, in part, because his ideas about the character and limits of human knowledge and understanding have indirectly had important effects on public administration thought. Hume's ideas on knowledge are a creative mix of empiricism, a belief that all knowledge derives from our experience rather than our reason, and skepticism, a questioning of the reliability of our knowledge even when it is derived from experience. What I shall argue here is that while his empiricism has indirectly, through its influence on modern philosophy, significantly contributed to empiricist ways of thinking within public administration, his skepticism has also contributed to critiques of these ways of thinking. However, Hume's contributions to American public administration go far beyond his ideas about the nature of knowledge. As I shall also suggest here, Hume's political writings on constitutionalism may well have been crucial in helping shape our constitutional framework for governance and administration. Finally, I shall examine the continuing relevance of Hume's ideas for public administrators as they seek to deal with the high degree of political fragmentation and conflict that seems likely to characterize American society for the foreseeable future.

Hume's Life and Times

To better explicate Hume's ideas, I begin with a brief review of his life and times. Hume engaged in a variety of occupations during his life, including being a tutor, a judge advocate, a military aide-de-camp, a librarian, a diplomat in France, and a senior civil servant. However, Hume, by his own account, "spent almost all" his life "in literary pursuits and occupations."¹ Born in 1711 to what he termed a "good" but "not rich" Scottish family, he was "seized very early with a passion for literature," which was to become "the ruling passion" of his life and "the great source" of his "enjoyments."² Following a university education at Edinburgh and short career in law, Hume soon "found an insurmountable aversion to everything but the pursuits of philosophy and general learning."³ Scholarly writing, and in particular philosophical writing, was the driving force through much of Hume's life.

In his mid-twenties, Hume wrote what is now regarded as his major philosophical work, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, which he subtitled "An Attempt to Introduce the Method of Experimental Reasoning into Moral Subjects." In this work, Hume admitted to "an ambition" to contribute to "the instruction of mankind" and to acquire "a name" by his "inventions

and discoveries.⁷⁴ His philosophical work, however, was not highly regarded at the time by his contemporaries. Despite his attempts to advertise it by means of an anonymous abstract, this first work was ignored. It fell, as Hume termed it, “dead-born from the press.”⁷⁵ Later it was sharply criticized both by philosophers and the clergy of the time for what was seen as its extreme skepticism regarding human understanding, morals, and religion. Hume attempted to recast and clarify much of his arguments in his two enquiries, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* and *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*. However, his philosophical ideas continued to provoke controversy during his lifetime. Hume’s ideas never received the academic respect to which he felt they were entitled. Indeed, he was rebuffed twice in his attempts to seek a university professorship, firstly by Edinburgh University and then by Glasgow University.

While his academic colleagues were generally less than receptive to his philosophical work, Hume nonetheless earned a considerable worldwide reputation and celebrity as a writer, particularly in France. He also earned some measure of financial success from his many popular essays on political, moral, literary, and economic topics and from his *History of England*. In this regard, Hume was perhaps the first man of letters to write consciously for a popular audience, as he benefited from the rising literacy of his age. His desire to write for a popular audience perhaps reflected his belief that philosophy was important to human affairs. He argued that “though a philosopher may live remote from business, the genius of philosophy, if carefully cultivated by several, must gradually diffuse itself throughout the whole society.”⁷⁶ His works also undoubtedly reflected his own self-confessed “ruling passion,” a “love of literary fame.”⁷⁷

Hume was very much a product of his times. Firstly, he was a child of the Age of Enlightenment. This was a time of great energy and optimism regarding humanity and its capacity to use reason and science to improve the human condition. Hume was exposed at university to the “new philosophy” of Sir Isaac Newton and John Locke. He clearly saw himself as a Newton of the moral sciences when he asked, “But may we not hope, that philosophy, if cultivated with care, and encouraged by the attention of the public, may carry its researches still farther, and discover, at least in some degree, the secret springs and principles, by which the human mind is actuated in its operations?”⁷⁸

Secondly, although Hume wrote sometimes in the style and with the enthusiasm of a philosopher of the Enlightenment, he was at the same time, like Locke and George Berkeley, an empiricist. He rejected the belief of continental rationalist philosophers that a priori reasoning could be used to discover truths about the world. According to Hume, “the only solid foundation we can give” to the “science of man” is that of “experience

and observation.”⁹ Hume argued that “we cannot go beyond experience” and that we should reject “as presumptuous and chimerical” any hypothesis “that pretends to discover the ultimate original qualities of human nature.”¹⁰ He saw himself as carrying forward the empiricist tradition of “my Lord Bacon” and acknowledged the influences of “Mr. Locke, my Lord Shaftesbury, Dr. Mandeville, Mr. Hutchison, Dr. Butler, who, tho’ they differ on many points among themselves, seem all to agree in founding their accurate dispositions of human nature intirely upon experience.”¹¹

Thirdly, while rejecting Continental rationalism, Hume does seem to have been influenced by the philosophical skepticism of French thinkers, particularly Pierre Bayle. Hume argued that a degree of skepticism was “a necessary preparative to the study of philosophy, by preserving a proper impartiality in our judgements, and weaning our mind from all those prejudices, which we may have imbibed from education or rash opinion.”¹² Hume clearly rejected what he termed “excessive scepticism,” but he did believe that a “mitigated scepticism” was useful in encouraging “a degree of doubt, and caution, and modesty ... in all kinds of scrutiny and decision” and in the “limitation of our enquiries to such subjects as are best adapted to the narrow capacity of human understanding.”¹³

Hume’s Empiricism

Perhaps the most important aspect of Hume’s thought for modern philosophy is his empiricism. As already noted, empiricism is a belief that all our knowledge derives from experience or, as our contemporary philosophers might put it, from our sense-data. Hume’s empiricism is captured most clearly in his distinction between our impressions, our “lively perceptions, when we hear, or see, or feel, or love, or hate, or desire, or will,” and our ideas, “our less lively perceptions, of which we are conscious” when we reflect on our impressions.¹⁴ Hume argued that all our meaningful ideas about the world can only arise as a result of our impressions of it. For Hume, all ideas are derived from our impressions. In other words, what we understand or know of the world can only be based on the experience of our senses. As he noted, “we can never think of anything which we have not seen without us, or felt in our own minds.”¹⁵

Since all our ideas must be derived from our impressions, Hume argued we cannot gain any knowledge of our world on the basis of a priori reasoning. For Hume, such reasoning can certainly be used to inquire into the relationship between ideas but not into that between facts, since facts must be based in experience. The only meaningful propositions that can be derived on the basis of a priori reasoning are those of “Geometry,

Algebra, and Arithmetic.”¹⁶ A priori reasoning cannot demonstrate any matter of fact, since “whatever is may not be” and “no negation of a fact can involve a contradiction.”¹⁷ In other words, since nothing that is possible in fact is contrary to logic, logic alone cannot provide us with knowledge of our world.

Hume’s insistence here that our knowledge of the world can only be founded in our experience was central to his most important argument regarding cause and effect. Hume argued here that “all reasonings concerning matter of fact” are based on “the relation of Cause and Effect.”¹⁸ Thus our judgements about facts inevitably involve cause-and-effect reasoning. “By means of that relation alone,” according to Hume, “we can go beyond the evidence of our memory and senses.”¹⁹ Such knowledge of cause-and-effect relationships can never be based on a priori reasoning. “The mind can always conceive of any effect to follow from any cause, and indeed any event to follow upon another.”²⁰ In other words, logic cannot dictate facts. Rather, our knowledge of cause and effect “arises entirely from experience, when we find that any particular objects are constantly conjoined with each other.”²¹ Our knowledge of cause and effect arises, in other words, simply as a result of our past experience of one event being followed by another.

Hume argued also that there is no reason, on the basis of logic or experience, to believe that our past experience of particular cause-and-effect relations between events will necessarily provide any guide to the future. As Hume observed, “it implies no contradiction that the course of nature may change, and that an object, seemingly like those which we have experienced, may be attended with different or contrary effects.”²² Furthermore, “arguments from experience” cannot prove the “resemblance of the past to the future; since all these arguments are founded on the supposition of that resemblance.”²³ Our reasonings concerning cause and effect are based, therefore, on no more than a simple inference that the past will repeat itself. For Hume, “We have no other notion of cause and effect, but that of certain objects, which have been always cojoin’d together, and which in all past instances have been found inseparable.”²⁴

Hume further argued that, since our knowledge of cause and effect can only rest on past conjunctions of events, we cannot establish, either on the basis of logic or experience, the existence of any sort of “power, force, energy, or necessary connexion” between those objects.²⁵ According to Hume, “When we look about us towards external objects, and consider the operation of causes, we are never able, in a single instance, to discover any power or necessary connexion; any quality, which binds the effect to the cause, and renders the one an infallible consequence of the other.”²⁶ “One event follows another; but we never can observe any tie between them.”²⁷

The Impact of Hume's Empiricism

By basing our knowledge of cause and effect on what we experience rather than on logic, Hume is advancing an argument for an empiricist view of knowledge and, indeed, this is one reason why interest in Hume among philosophers arose in the earlier part of the last century. The influence of his empiricism is especially apparent with respect to modern analytic philosophy. These philosophers, who have included logical positivists and linguistic analysts, rejected Hume's psychological and atomistic approach to knowledge. They preferred instead to examine the meaningfulness of different types of propositions or statements. However, interestingly, their views on what we can and cannot know clearly draw on Hume's empiricism. In their eyes, Hume's argument that ideas can only be derived from impressions becomes equivalent to an argument that all meaningful statements about the world must be reducible to terms that refer to our experience.

Alfred Jules Ayer, for example, made clear that his logical positivist views "derive from the doctrines of Bertrand Russell and Wittgenstein, which are themselves the logical outcome of the empiricism of Berkeley and David Hume."²⁸ For Ayer, like Hume, the only meaningful propositions consist of the "a priori propositions of logic and pure mathematics" and "propositions concerning empirical matters of fact."²⁹ According to Ayer, following Hume, such propositions "cannot be confuted (that is, proven wrong) in experience" because "they do not make any assertion about the empirical world."³⁰ Rather, for a proposition to express "a genuine empirical hypothesis," it is required that "some possible sense-experience be relevant to the determination of its truth or falsehood."³¹ Furthermore, Ayer argues, "As Hume conclusively showed, no one event intrinsically points to any other,"³² or, in other words, "no general proposition referring to a matter of fact can ever be shown to be necessarily and universally true."³³

Hume's ideas have, therefore, clearly influenced and encouraged modern empiricists. This being the case, not surprisingly, Humean ideas have also had an impact on public administration writing. Particularly important here is the work of Herbert Simon because of his role in advancing logical positivism in public administration and in the social sciences in general. Simon strongly embraced the positivist idea that the only meaningful scientific statements about the world are "statements about the observable world and the way in which it operates."³⁴ Such statements "may be tested to determine whether they are true or false."³⁵ For Simon, "To determine whether a proposition is correct, it must be directly compared with experience — with the facts — or it must lead by logical reasoning to other propositions that can be compared with

experience.”³⁶ This was why he was critical of the so-called “principles of administration,” terming them merely “proverbs.” Simon echoes here in many ways Hume’s critique of rationalism when he argues that “because ... studies of administration have been carried out without benefit of control or objective measurements of results, they have had to depend for their recommendations and conclusions upon a priori reasoning proceeding from ‘principles of administration.’”³⁷

Drawing on logical positivism, Simon and others strengthened the belief among many that public administration could and would become a true science by following empiricist principles. This belief has manifested itself in a variety of ways, including an emphasis on behavioralist social science in the 1950s and 1960s, and an emphasis on policy analysis, cost-benefit analysis, management science, and systems analysis in the 1960s and 1970s. While this faith in the development of an empirical science of public administration is perhaps somewhat diminished nowadays, it remains an important element in the thinking of mainstream public administration.

As Dwight Waldo has observed, in public administration, “the belief that principles, in the sense of lawful regularities, can be discovered by scientific enquiry remains strong.”³⁸ This is evidenced in the field by repeated calls over the past two decades or so for more rigorous empirical and quantitative research in public administration. For instance, in a study of public administration journal publications, David Houston and Sybil Delevan argue that “the more rigorous use of the quantitative methods advocated by mainstream social science may well be more useful in public administration than their current use suggests.”³⁹ Laurence Lynn similarly has criticized much of public administration scholarship for its failure “to engage in empirical validation in any scientific sense” and has argued that “engaging in empirical validation of predictions, conjectures, and statements is central to any scholarly activity directed at professional performance.”⁴⁰ Although all of this empiricist enthusiasm cannot obviously be laid at the door of David Hume, a reasonable argument can be made that his ideas indirectly helped encourage a rigorous and tough-minded empiricism that is still an important part of modern public administration.

At the same time, there are important differences between Hume’s empiricism and that of modern public administration writers. For one thing, the latter writers rarely if ever employ the historical approach that was so central to Hume’s political analysis. Hume wrote that “history is not only a valuable part of knowledge, but opens the door to many other parts, and affords materials to most of the sciences.”⁴¹ Furthermore, modern writers’ faith in empirical reasoning seems often much more pronounced than that of Hume. Would Hume, for example, have really endorsed the ambitious scientific agenda of modern writers, inspired by Simon, who

seek “to design and evaluate institutions, mechanisms, and processes that convert collective will and public resources into social profit”?⁴² Hume, after all, observed that “To balance a state or society ... is a work of so great difficulty, that no human genius, however comprehensive, is able, by the mere dint of reason and reflection, to effect it.”⁴³ Also, despite his claim that politics could be “reduced to a science,”⁴⁴ Hume believed that “all political questions are infinitely complicated” and that “mixed and varied” and “unforeseen” consequences flow from “every measure.”⁴⁵ While Hume was an empiricist, he was also keenly aware of the limits of empiricism and was, in this regard, a skeptic. It is to this skepticism that we now turn.

Hume’s Skepticism

Even as he advanced his empiricist ideas, Hume displayed his skepticism. He established, as noted previously, there is no basis either in logic or experience for assuming either that past causal relations will be repeated in the future or that there is any type of necessary causal connection between events. According to Hume, the only basis, therefore, for our belief in causation is that of custom or habit. In Hume’s view, it is custom alone “which renders our experience useful to us, and makes us expect, for the future, a similar train of events with those which have appeared in the past.”⁴⁶ As Hume noted, “having found, in many instances, that any two kinds of objects, flame and heat, snow and cold, have always been conjoined together: if flame or snow be presented anew to the senses, the mind is carried by custom to expect heat or cold, and to believe that such a quality does exist, and will discover itself upon a nearer approach.”⁴⁷ Furthermore, any connection, “which we feel in our minds” between a cause and an effect arises not from any impression of a force connecting events, but simply because, “after a repetition of similar instances, the mind is carried by habit, upon the appearance of one event to expect its usual attendant.”⁴⁸

For Hume, custom or habit was “the great guide of human life.”⁴⁹ Hume emphasized our belief that like effects will follow from like causes cannot be defended either on the basis of our reason or experience. Instead, this belief is simply a “sentiment or feeling ... excited by nature.”⁵⁰ Such a belief is distinct from “the loose reveries of the fancy” or the imagination alone only in that it is “a more vivid, lively, forcible, firm, steady conception of an object.”⁵¹ It is “something felt by the mind, which distinguishes the ideas of the judgement from the fictions of the imagination.”⁵² It “gives them more weight and influence; makes them appear of greater importance; enforces them in the mind; and renders them the governing principle of our actions.”⁵³

Hume's skeptical conclusion here is that our common belief in a world of causal relationships is nothing more than a matter of custom or habit rooted in sentiment or feeling. Our belief in facts or causal relationships is "more properly an act of the sensitive, than of the cogitative part of our natures."⁵⁴ Hume's skepticism is even more striking in his account of our ideas about the existence of physical objects. He noted that neither our senses nor our reason can justify our belief in such objects when we no longer perceive them. According to Hume, our senses "are incapable of giving rise to the notion of the continu'd existence of their objects, after they no longer appear to the senses."⁵⁵ Our reason cannot "give us an assurance of the continu'd and distinct existence of body."⁵⁶ He observed that we believe in the reality of such objects only because "we have a propensity to feign the continu'd existence of all sensible objects" which "arises from some lively impression of the memory" and "bestows a vivacity on that fiction."⁵⁷

Furthermore, according to Hume, since our knowledge is limited to our perceptions, we cannot justify our beliefs in the existence of physical matter, the existence of a human soul, or even that of the self on the basis of either our senses or reasoning. In regard to the self, he noted that "when I enter most intimately into what I call myself, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure" and "never can catch myself at any time without a perception."⁵⁸ For Hume, what we think of as self or mind is "nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions"⁵⁹ and "the identity, which we ascribe to the mind of man, is only a fictitious one."⁶⁰

Although discussed separately, Hume's skepticism is also apparent in his treatment of passions and morality. Hume argued that our "morals ... cannot be deriv'd from reason."⁶¹ Neither logic nor facts can determine what is vice or what is virtue. Reason, based as it is in either logic or facts, "is not alone sufficient to produce any moral blame or approbation."⁶² For Hume, "Reason is, and ought only to be the slave of the passions."⁶³ In this regard, therefore, "'tis not contrary to reason to prefer the destruction of the whole world to the scratching of my finger."⁶⁴ Morals affect actions because they "excite passions."⁶⁵ "Reason of itself is utterly impotent in this particular."⁶⁶ For Hume, morals "are not so properly objects of the understanding as of taste and sentiment."⁶⁷

Hume, in short, argues we cannot justify on the basis of either logic or experience everything that we take for granted in our ordinary life, including cause-and-effect relations, the existence of a physical world and matter, the existence of self, and the rules of morality. All of these are based on no more than sentiments or feelings. What Hume was really saying here and also what he really proved is a matter of some dispute among modern writers on Hume.⁶⁸ Some philosophers do not see any

problem in Hume's argument that there is no necessary connection between cause and effect. They see this argument simply as an observation that no empirical proposition can ever be logically certain. Others, however, have seen a more profound problem. According to Kant, Hume's refutation of any a priori basis for causation "interrupted" his "dogmatic slumber" and gave "his research ... quite a different direction."⁶⁹ Indeed, Kant's idealism was an attempt to reconcile Hume's empiricism with rationalist principles in the form of mental categories.

Hume himself certainly understood the destructive implications of his skepticism. He observed, "The intense view of these manifold contradictions and imperfections in human reason has so wrought upon me, and heated my brain, that I am ready to reject all belief and reasoning, and can look upon no opinion even as more probable or likely than another."⁷⁰ However, he believed that we neither could nor should embrace such extreme skepticism. He argued that, in the final analysis, our own nature will not let us embrace it but rather compels us to accept and to believe what we can never prove. According to Hume, "Nature, by an absolute and uncontrollable necessity has determin'd us to judge as well as to breathe and feel."⁷¹ Despite his philosophical skepticism and because of nature, Hume finds himself "absolutely and necessarily determin'd to live and talk, and act like other people in the common affairs of life."⁷² Furthermore, extreme skepticism is not acceptable for Hume. If men allowed themselves to be ruled by it, "all discourse, all actions would immediately cease; and men remain in a total lethargy, till the necessities of nature, unsatisfied, put an end to their miserable existence."⁷³ Thus Hume embraced a mitigated rather than an extreme skepticism. He argued that such a mitigated skepticism was useful as a check on intellectual dogmatism, obstinacy, and pride. As Hume observed, since "the greater part of mankind are naturally apt to be affirmative and dogmatical in their opinions," a "mitigated scepticism" can serve to "inspire them with more modesty and reserve, and diminish their fond opinion of themselves, and their prejudice against antagonists" by reminding them of "the strange infirmities of human understanding."⁷⁴ It can "abate their pride" by showing them that whatever "few advantages" they may possess over others in terms of "study and reflection" are "but inconsiderable, if compared to the universal perplexity and confusion, which is inherent in human nature."⁷⁵

The Impact of Hume's Skepticism

Whatever Hume's own particular brand of skepticism may have meant to him, others have seen it as radically undermining any type of objective

claims to knowledge. Bertrand Russell, for example, saw it as inevitable that Hume's "self-refutation of rationality should be followed by a great outburst of irrational faith."⁷⁶ Russell felt that "the growth of unreason throughout the nineteenth century and what has passed of the twentieth is a natural sequel to Hume's destruction of empiricism."⁷⁷ Consistent with this notion, Isaiah Berlin has argued that Hume's views had an important influence on 18th century German romantic philosophers, most notably Johann Georg Hamann and Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi. These philosophers saw, in Hume's refutation of objective reason, an opportunity for a reaffirmation of religious faith.⁷⁸

If this is correct, then Hume perhaps can be seen as clearing a path for later philosophers. These include existentialists and phenomenologists, who, rejecting both rationalism and our immediate sensory experience as the route to knowledge of the world, have sought other paths. Several writers have discussed the influence of Hume's skepticism on the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl.⁷⁹ Husserl saw in Hume's skepticism an affirmation of the radical subjectivity of human experience: an affirmation of the role of the human mind in giving meaning to our experience of the world. For Husserl, Hume demonstrated "the enigma of a world whose being is being through subjective accomplishment."⁸⁰ The path to universal knowledge, according to Husserl, therefore, could be found not by direct empirical observation, but by suspending those beliefs or predispositions that we bring to our observations of the world. In this way, we might arrive at a more genuine and intuitive experience of ourselves in relation to our world. We might come to better understand our shared "pre-given world" or "life-world."

The forgoing is significant because it suggests that Hume's ideas may have, at least indirectly, contributed to critiques of empiricist thinking in public administration. In this respect, the writings of contemporary radical critics of mainstream public administration, who draw on phenomenology and associated philosophies to formulate critiques of empiricist science and dominating hierarchical bureaucracies, may be seen as indirectly influenced by the skepticism of Hume. These writers urge us to suspend or put aside our preconceived ideas about bureaucracy and science. In doing so, they hope to show us their true character. Empiricist science, by focusing on preconceived cultural and political categories of experience, is seen as a barrier to authentic or genuine knowledge.

Ralph Hummel, for example, argues that phenomenology, by suspending what is "accidental and unessential" in our experience, can be used to determine what "fundamentally makes up the bureaucratic experience."⁸¹ He accuses conventional empiricist social science of being "bureaucratic and therefore control oriented," of fragmenting organizational reality by fitting it into "preconceived categories," and of refusing

“to accept the unity of experience as it is presented by living people themselves.”⁸² Similarly, Robert Denhart argues that the “phenomenological approach urges a radical openness to experience, a willingness to entertain all phenomena regardless of their scientific or hierarchical justifications.”⁸³ Charles Fox and Hugh Miller, blending both phenomenologist and post-modernist ideas, likewise urge us, in considering questions of public policy and administration, “to go beyond, behind, and below the reified abstractions of our thought to our shared and indubitable experience of life.”⁸⁴ They wish to move away “from the idea that there is a reality ‘out there’ that a value-free researcher can account for by formulating law-like generalizations whose veracity is observable, testable, and cumulative.”⁸⁵

Writers of this type emphasize the essential subjectivity of organizational and social experience. They emphasize the role of men and women in giving meaning to that experience. In doing so, they draw unconsciously on Hume’s skepticism in regard to the limits of the knowledge that we derive from our immediate empirical observations of the world. However, I doubt whether Hume, if alive today, would accept that we either can or should, as some phenomenologist writers would appear to suggest, suspend the presuppositions or preconceptions that we bring to our experience of the world. He would probably be skeptical of the idea that, by suspending these presuppositions, we can arrive at any sort of shared and real intuitive experience of ourselves and the world. Indeed, he would likely ask from what impression could we ever obtain such an idea. Hume would further see our presuppositions or beliefs in the form of our customs and traditions not as habits of perception to be suspended, but rather as crucial guides to our actions. As noted already, Hume saw custom as the great guide of human life. “Without the influence of custom,” he argued, “we should be entirely ignorant of every matter of fact beyond what is immediately present to the memory and senses” and “there would be an end at once of all action, as well as of the chief part of speculation.”⁸⁶ The point of Hume’s skepticism is not to help us transcend our customs, habits, and traditions, as phenomenologists seem to urge. Rather, Hume argues that we should simply accept them as inevitably shaping our experience of the world. Hume was, as Norman Kemp Smith has argued, a “naturalist” rather than a radical skeptic.⁸⁷

Hume’s Constitutionalism

Hume’s philosophy has indirectly contributed then to two quite different views of public administration. One is rooted in a strong faith in empirical methods of science. The other is rooted in a radical skepticism regarding reason and observation. However, this analysis so far overlooks what is

arguably Hume's most important contribution to public administration, particularly at the federal level, namely his writings on constitutionalism.

By constitutionalism, I mean the use of different institutional mechanisms to check the abuse of discretionary power by government officials. Hume articulated this idea when he suggested that, without constitutional checks and controls on power, "we shall in vain boast of the advantages of any constitution and shall find, in the end, that we have no security for our liberties or possessions."⁸⁸ Hume argued that if "separate interest be not checked, and be directed to the public, we ought to look for nothing but faction, disorder, and tyranny from such a government."⁸⁹ According to Hume, "if one order of men, by pursuing its interest, can usurp upon every other order, it will certainly do so, and render itself, as far as possible, absolute and uncontrollable."⁹⁰ He argued that "a republican and free government would be an obvious absurdity, if the particular checks and controuls, provided by the constitution, had really no influence, and made it not the interest, even of bad men, to act for the public good."⁹¹ "A constitution" for Hume "is only so far good, as it provides a remedy against mal-administration."⁹²

Hume's constitutionalism is also evident in his legal philosophy discussed in the *Treatise*. Hume argued strongly for the idea that the administration of laws must be equal and impartial. It should not take account of the merits or defects of parties in particular cases. He noted that the "avidity and partiality of men wou'd quickly bring disorder into the world, if not restrain'd by some general and inflexible principles" and that, as a result, "men have establish'd those principles, and have agreed to restrain themselves by general rules, which are unchangeable by spite and favor, and by particular views of private or public interest."⁹³ Hume, in his essays, saw the impartial application of general laws as an essential part of the constitutional checking of power, arguing that a government that "receives the appellation of free ... must act by general and equal laws."⁹⁴ Hume's emphasis here on the necessity of checking political power was consistent with his skepticism and particularly with his argument that reason must serve the passions. Especially important are Hume's observations on the power of self-love as a passion. Hume was critical of philosophers such as Bernard Mandeville who sought to explain all human sentiments and action in terms of self-love, regarding such philosophies "more like a satyr than a true delineation or description of human nature."⁹⁵ Nonetheless, Hume saw self-love as a powerful force. He noted "that men are, in a great measure, govern'd by interest, and that even when they extend their concern beyond themselves, 'tis not to any great distance; nor is it usual for them, in common life, to look farther than their nearest friends and acquaintances."⁹⁶ Indeed, it is for this reason, according to Hume, that rules of justice and government are required in a social order. As Hume

observed, it “may be regarded as certain, that ‘tis only from the selfishness and confin’d generosity of men, along with the scanty provision that nature has made for his wants, that justice derives its origin.”⁹⁷ Hume saw the role of self-interest as particularly important in government, where he believed that it is “true in politics” that “in contriving any system of government, and fixing the several checks and controuls of the constitution, every man ought to be supposed a knave, and to have no other end, in all his actions, than private interest.”⁹⁸

Hume’s constitutionalism was also consistent with his emphasis on custom and tradition as a guide to action. While he went to some pains to demonstrate the logic of his constitutional principles, he saw them more importantly as part of a valued British political tradition. For Hume, “to tamper” with “an established government” or “to try experiments merely upon the credit of supposed argument and philosophy, can never be the part of a wise magistrate, who ... though he may attempt some improvements for the public good, yet will he adjust his innovations, as much as possible, to the ancient fabric, and preserve entire the chief pillars and supports of the constitution.”⁹⁹

Furthermore, Hume’s constitutionalism reflected his view that, because of the limits of reason, the role of government in society should also be similarly limited. While by no means a *laissez-faire* libertarian, Hume, as Shirley Robin Letwin observed, sought to “confine government to profane tasks.”¹⁰⁰ He did not see the task of government as one of tutoring or enlightening people or making them more godly, virtuous, or psychologically or socially better adjusted. Rather, Hume believed that the appropriate role of government was simply, in Letwin’s words, “to mediate collisions of interest, to enforce and sometimes impose agreements between parties, either to keep out of each other’s way or to engage in some common endeavour, and generally to protect members of society while they engage in private activities.”¹⁰¹ As Hume himself put it, government had “ultimately no other object or purpose but the distribution of justice,” without which “there can be no peace among [persons], nor safety, nor mutual intercourse.”¹⁰² He was highly critical of both religious and secular theorists and groups who looked to government for some sort of radical moral transformation of society. For Hume, the skeptic, the role of the government was not to seek “a miraculous transformation of mankind, as would endow them with every species of virtue, and free them from every species of vice.”¹⁰³ Such hopes could only breed a dangerous extremism or fanaticism in governance. As he observed,

Fanatics may suppose, that dominion is founded on grace, and that saints alone inherit the earth; but the civil magistrate very justly puts these sublime theorists on the same footing with

common robbers, and teaches them by the severest discipline, that a rule, which, in speculation, may seem the most advantageous to society, may yet be found, in practice, totally pernicious and destructive.¹⁰⁴

The Impact of Hume's Constitutionalism

Hume's constitutional ideas have undoubtedly had a significant impact on the practice of public administration, particularly at the federal level, because of their influence on the Founders. Douglass Adair showed how James Madison drew specifically from a number of Hume's political essays to develop his arguments for an extended federal republic in the Tenth *Federalist*.¹⁰⁵ Adair emphasized particularly Hume's essay, "Idea of a Perfect Commonwealth," in which Hume argued that in "a large government, which is modelled with masterly skill, ... the parts are so distant and remote, that it is very difficult, either by intrigue, prejudice, or passion, to hurry them into any measures against the public interest."¹⁰⁶ Morton White goes even further and argues that Hume "not only influenced the political technology, and political science of *The Federalist* but also seems to have provided the authors with methodological or epistemological views concerning both of these experimental disciplines."¹⁰⁷

Obviously, Hume was not the sole influence on the Founders, and others such as Locke and Montesquieu also played an important role. Furthermore, as Hume himself would have appreciated, the Constitution drew heavily from the British custom and law that formed the British Constitution and that also shaped colonial political institutions. Nonetheless, Hume must deserve considerable credit for at least reminding the Founders of some important elements of this custom and tradition and may well have inspired some of the modifications to these institutions that the Founders made.

Hume's constitutional ideas, rather than his more abstract philosophical ideas, were perhaps his most significant contribution to modern American public administration. David Rosenbloom,¹⁰⁸ James Q. Wilson,¹⁰⁹ and others have clearly noted the importance of the Constitution to the ongoing practice of American public administration. Given the increasing pervasiveness of constitutional questions in the actions of modern public administration, it would seem clear that Hume's constitutional ideas continue to exert a significant indirect impact on such practice.

At the same time, perhaps paradoxically, public administration scholarship has itself remained remarkably free of the influence of Hume's constitutional ideas. This is because public administration writers, since Woodrow Wilson and Frank Goodnow, have tended either to ignore or to be quite critical of

American constitutionalism. They see the Constitution, with its many checks on power, as an impediment to effective political and administrative action. Richard Stillman, for example, argues that the Constitution, with its emphasis on checking power, promotes a “stateless” polity that not only “creates problems for building effective public administration institutions in the United States but imposes serious blinders on our capacity to think realistically about contemporary public administration theory.”¹¹⁰ Kenneth Meier, in a similar vein, has argued that our “elaborate system of checks and balances ... prevent the resolution of political conflicts and the adoption of good public policy,” and he urges us to “examine the more unified political structures and the corporatist processes of many European countries.”¹¹¹

Admittedly, in recent years, interest has been growing in the relationship between constitutional theory and public administration. Various authors have sought constitutional legitimacy for modern public administration in the expressed views of the Founders. They argue that a strong and energetic administrative state can be justified on the basis of the Founders’ writings. The administrative state for John Rohr, the most prominent of these authors, is “a plausible expression of the constitutional order envisioned in the great public argument at the time of the founding of the Republic.”¹¹² At the same time, however, most of these writers do not give much emphasis to Hume’s and the Founders’ idea that political power must be checked. Rohr, for example, argues that we must “neutralize” this aspect of the Founders’ argument if “we are to legitimate the administrative state.”¹¹³ In this sense, Rohr and others seek to downplay what Hume, Madison, and others would have regarded as a central aspect of constitutionalism. Moreover, some writers have gone even further and have used our constitutional traditions to justify a role for public administrators that would seem quite at odds with Hume’s constitutional ideas. Dale Wright and David Hart, for example, draw from these traditions the remarkable idea that it is the obligation of public administrators “to educate all citizens in the nature of civic virtue and then to persuade them to make that virtue the center of their personal character.”¹¹⁴ According to these authors, the “primary purpose [of government] is to facilitate the fully human life” that is “attainable only through living a life of virtue.”¹¹⁵ Given Hume’s views on the limited role of government, noted earlier, this expansive notion of the public administrator as a teacher of virtue might well have struck him as absurd, if not actually dangerous.

The Continuing Relevance of Hume’s Ideas

Therefore, while Hume is not cited frequently in the public administration literature, his ideas have had a substantial influence on public adminis-

tration. They have indirectly, via their impact on modern philosophy, encouraged both support for and criticism of empiricist approaches in public administration. They have done so in ways Hume would not necessarily have always approved. Also, Hume's ideas on constitutionalism, because of their influence on the Founders' writings and design, provide an important legacy for the practice of public administration. Hume's ideas are relevant, not only to the past development of public administration, but also to its future. In particular, Hume's advocacy of an attitude of mitigated skepticism, as well as his constitutional ideas, would seem quite germane to the study and practice of public administration at a time when our political culture is deeply fragmented and characterized by intense political and moral conflict.

This fragmentation of our political culture appears in the emergence of various forms of identity politics, based on race, gender, disability, sexual preference, and lifestyle, and also in pressures for multicultural perspectives in school and university curricula. It is further evidenced in the increasing visibility and power of various religious groups in politics, in the increasing polarization of political discourse between different political parties and groups, and even on occasion in such outbreaks of violent action as the bombing of a federal building in Oklahoma, the violence of Ruby Ridge and Waco, and the bombing of abortion clinics. What is characteristic of this fragmentation of political culture is that much of it is based in conflicts between different systems of values or morality. As James Davison Hunter has observed, for example, in his account of what he terms "culture wars" within the United States, political conflict is nowadays often rooted not in class, but "in different systems of moral understanding" — different bases "by which people determine what is good or bad, right or wrong, acceptable or unacceptable."¹¹⁶

Given such cultural fragmentation and conflict, a mitigated skepticism on the part of public administrators can be helpful here in acting as a check on administrative arrogance and hubris by fostering, as noted earlier in Hume's words, "more modesty and reserve" and less "prejudice against antagonists." It can introduce an appropriate degree of what David Farmer terms "tentativeness" into the words and actions of administrators that can serve as useful counterpoint to their natural inclination for "taking charge."¹¹⁷ In doing so, a mitigated skepticism can help public administrators become more open or receptive to the diversity in values and perspectives that exists among citizens and can induce administrators to talk and act in ways that moderate, rather than attenuate, the intense conflict over values that characterizes our fragmented political culture. Furthermore, a mitigated skepticism among public administrators can serve to reduce the danger of repressive acts on the part of administrators by tempering excessive administrative zeal. It can encourage public

administrators to stop and think before they trample upon values, seen as important by particular groups in society, in the overly zealous pursuit of whatever set of policy ends or objectives that government deems to be important.

Hume's constitutionalism would also seem useful for public administrators dealing with cultural fragmentation and conflict. In particular, Hume's idea, reflected in Madison's writings, that we should check the exercise of political power becomes especially important within a deeply fragmented political culture. This is because multiple checks on power, such as exist within our constitutional system, provide a useful means of limiting the ability of particular political groups or subcultures to monopolize political and administrative discourse and thereby to impose their values on others. By forcing political groups, as they seek to advance their own values, to accommodate themselves to others seeking different values, these checks on power encourage the consideration of a broader range of values in discourse and make it less likely that values held by any particular group will be overlooked in shaping policy actions. In doing so, they place some limits on the harm that these groups can do to each other. Hume's idea of equal and impartial application of laws, which is reflected in our own practices of governance and administration, is also important here in setting limits on the ability of government and public administration to discriminate in favor of certain political groups at the expense of others and in encouraging a greater degree of impartiality in government actions with respect to the ends and values sought by these groups.

Finally, Hume's view of the limited role of government in society is especially relevant for the study and practice of public administration in our fragmented political culture. When individuals and groups are deeply divided on moral and political questions, the last thing that they need is a government and administration that is passionately committed to any particular moral vision of human and social development and is intent upon forcing this vision on others. Such deep divisions render all the more relevant Hume's profound suspicion of religious and moral zealotry and caution us that an intensely moralistic vision of the role of government is likely to lead to a style of governance and administration that is at best ineffectual, and, at worst, potentially dangerous to the diversity of values that different individuals and groups hold in a highly pluralistic society. In this respect, Hume's vision of government as an arbitrator or umpire, who seeks to resolve the collisions that a diversity of beliefs and values inevitably engenders, rather than as the leader of some sort of moral crusade, would seem to fit well with the condition in which we find ourselves.

In summary, there is much in Hume's thought that remains relevant to American public administration thought and practice. Hume's mitigated skepticism and his constitutionalism obviously cannot provide a rule book for the practice of public administration. However, they can help writers and practitioners think about conceptual approaches to administration that are responsive to and helpful in coping with the fragmentation of our political culture and the conflicts in values associated with it. Given this fact and the influence of Hume's ideas on our thought and practice in the past, American writers on governance and administration would profit by continued study and appreciation of his ideas and their implications for public administration. Hume, a supporter of American independence and a self-confessed American in his principles, would likely have been pleased and encouraged by such efforts.

Notes

1. David Hume, *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary* (Indianapolis, Ind.: Liberty Press, 1987), xxxi.
2. *Ibid.*, xxxii–xxxiii.
3. *Ibid.*, xxxiii.
4. David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, 2nd ed., Ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 271.
5. Hume, *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*, xxxiv.
6. David Hume, *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals*, 2nd ed., Ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), 10.
7. Hume, *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*, xl.
8. Hume, *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding*, 14.
9. Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, xvi.
10. *Ibid.*, xvii.
11. *Ibid.*, 646.
12. Hume, *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding*, 150.
13. *Ibid.*, 161–2.
14. *Ibid.*, 18.
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Chapter 12

Moral Conscience in Burkean Thought: Implication of Diversity and Tolerance in Public Administration

Akhlaque Haque

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Religious freedom has always given rise to religious diversity, and never has our diversity been more dramatic than it is today. The percentage of foreign-born Americans has by far surpassed the peak of immigration 100 years ago. According to the U.S. Census 2000, between 1990 and 1999, the Asian population grew 43 percent nationwide to some 10.4 million, and the Hispanic population grew 38.8 percent to 35.3 million, soon to surpass the Black population of 36.4 million in a few years.¹ Multiculturalism is now a social reality in America, with 14 percent of the population speaking languages other than English, almost half of whom cannot speak English “very well.”² Given such dramatic changes in the diversity of culture and language, it should be hardly surprising that this diversity also extends to religious belief. For example, Los Angeles is the most diverse Buddhist city in the world, and Muslims outnumber the mainline Protestants,³ Episcopalians, or followers of the Presbyterian Church in the United States.⁴ A nation of immigrants has now become the “most religiously diverse nation on earth.”⁵

Given that the U.S. political foundation is built upon the concept of separation of church and state, the implication of religious diversity is far-reaching. Especially after the September 11 event, religious tolerance has received renewed interest for the majority of Americans. The unfortunate incident has brought to the forefront the challenges of protecting the constitutional rights of a religious minority (in this case, Muslims) and controlling the majority’s passion and fear about a foreign religion and culture. Immediate fears stemming from 9/11 include the irrational proposition that all Muslims are religious fanatics and terrorists-in-waiting. More-rational concerns center on how this rapidly growing religion might be accommodated in a nation that upholds the principle of religious tolerance and democratic constitutionalism. Especially at times of national crisis such as 9/11, when the majority is uncomfortable to embrace a particular ethnic group or a religious minority into the mainstream, the issue of tolerance becomes fundamental. In a society that values constitutionalism and embraces diversity, tolerance can become a virtue that upholds the constitutional values and the integrity of the public-service profession.

Diversity has received more attention in public administration, but only recently has religion become the focus.^{6,7} Although Edmund Burke’s worldview has greatly influenced the scholars in public administration,^{8–14} his views about moral governance and its implications for contemporary public-service professionals have not been explored. Using Burke’s views about morality and religious tolerance, this chapter argues how ethical guidelines of public administrators ought to be guided by a universal moral law derived from natural principles and the constitutional values of the regime. The argument focuses on Burkean prudence as a practical application of moral law and a guide for public administrators in a diverse

global environment. Furthermore, it argues civil law to be inadequate in situations where the majority favors a particular opinion against a minority population. By acknowledging a universal moral law, public administrators can play a dual role as individuals building human relations in a diverse culture, and as public servants upholding constitutional values to preserve the integrity of public institutions.

This chapter has been divided into three sections. The first section is devoted to Burke's views on morality and how he brings the argument of moral governance in building human relationships under a global platform. Second, I discuss the concept of Burkean prudence as a guide to action in public affairs. The implication of Burke's thought in contemporary public administration is discussed in the final section.

Moral Governance in Burke's Worldview

A nation is a "moral essence," Burke declared, and it is "not a geographical arrangement, or a denomination of the nomenclature."¹⁵ Burke believed that without a moral basis it is impossible to think about a pluralistic society in harmony. Burke was influenced by the events of his time, when the people of Ireland were considered much different than those living in England, and they were treated not only as separate nations, but also as a separate species. The greater part of the people of Ireland lived in extreme poverty, often without even the basic necessities of life. Burke realized, however, that the ultimate grounds for the persecution of the Irish people were religious. He defended the religious rights of Ireland's Catholics on the same grounds that he defended the Protestant Dissenters' claims of conscience in the Relief Bill of 1773. In that speech, referring to Aristotle, Burke applied the Greek philosopher's distinction between power and moral rights: "Yes ... you have the power; but you have not the right" because "this bill is contrary to the eternal laws of right and wrong — laws that ought to bind all men, and above all men legislative assemblies."¹⁶

Burke used the concept of a divine standard or natural law as the moral standard in all human contracts. Burke believed that "a conservation and secure enjoyment of our natural rights is the great and ultimate purpose of civil society"¹⁷ and that "all governments are only good as they are subservient to that purpose to which they are entirely subordinate."¹⁸ Burke confessed that among the first thoughts that crossed his mind upon being elected to Parliament in 1765 was the hope that he might achieve some measure of justice for his native land. His appeal to protect India and the United States from being unjustly taxed is exemplified in his deep conviction to a higher moral order. According to Peter Stanlis,

Burke understood the natural law as “an eternal, unchangeable, and universal ethical norm or standard, whose validity was independent of man’s will; therefore, at all times, in all circumstances and everywhere it bounds all individuals, races, nations and governments.”¹⁹

Burke’s concept of moral governance can be deduced from the following passage that he wrote at a very young age:²⁰

If there be a God such as we conceive, He must be our Maker.
If he is our Maker, there is a relation between us.
This is the foundation of Religion.
We have a relation to other Men.
We want many things compassable only by the help of other beings
like ourselves....
We love these things and have a sympathy with them.
This is the foundation of Morality.
Morality does not necessarily include Religion, since it concerns
only our Relation with Men.
But Religion necessarily includes Morality, because the Relation of
God as a Creator is the same to other Men as to us.
If God has placed us in a Relation attended with Duties, it must
be agreeable to him that we perform those Duties.
Hence moral Duties are included in Religion, and enforced by it.

For Burke, the natural foundation of society is the moral relation between individuals. This moral relation is translated in social and political terms by the civil constitution of rules and institutions. Our rules and institutions are expressions of the moral value. Therefore, political society to Burke is a “moral essence.” Moral arguments are beyond our limited rationalistic thinking, and therefore reason cannot be used to perfect moral behavior. As Burke notes,²¹

Aristotle, the great master of reasoning, cautions us, and with great weight and propriety, against this species of delusive geometrical accuracy in moral arguments, as the most fallacious of all sophistry.

By grounding morality to human relationship, Burke appealed to the universality of moral laws. It is quite clear that his conception of morality extended beyond any narrow view of the world, including any particular religious views. According to Burke, “it is not morally true that we are bound to establish in every country that form of religion which in our minds is most agreeable to truth, and conduces most to the eternal happiness of mankind.”²² With our habits, customs, and prejudices, we

develop our favorable institutions. These are likely to differ from one society to another. But the essential moral obligation that defines the relationship between individuals remains unchanged. Burke expressed:²³

This geographical morality we do protest.... We think it necessary, in justification of ourselves, to declare that the laws of morality are the same everywhere, and there is no action which would pass for an act of extortion, of peculation, of bribery, and oppression in Europe, Asia, Africa, and all the world over. This I contend not in the technical forms of it, but I contend for it in the substance.

Burke believed that when we customize the theory of morality to fit any civil constitution, we give way to arbitrary power. Burke set the traditional conception of natural law and, like other predecessors going back to Aristotle, he insisted that it is imperative that ethical norms are universally valid.

Tolerance as a Moral Virtue

By appealing to the universal moral law, Burke exemplified a deep faith in religious tolerance. Burke believed that religious tolerance celebrates the inherent worth and dignity of all people and encourages individuals to look outside of themselves for meaning in life. He noted:²⁴

I would give a full civil protection, in which I include an immunity from all disturbance of their public religious worship, and a power of teaching in schools as well as temples, to Jews, Mahometans [*sic*], and even Pagans; especially if they are already possessed of those advantages by long and prescriptive usage, which is as sacred in this exercise of rights, as any other.... This is my opinion, and my conduct has been conformable to it.

Burke believed that religious tolerance fosters respect and appreciation of the differences between people, which may separate us at times but ultimately bind us together as a unique collaboration of human beings. Therefore, to Burke, deep faith in one's religion is beneficial to society, as it teaches tolerance and appreciation of diversity. He proclaimed, "[my] general affection to religion will never introduce indifference [to other religion], but will rather increase real zeal, Christian fervour, and pious emulation."²⁵ It is quite notable that at times when Christianity was part and parcel of the British society, unlike traditional politicians, Burke

showed his reverence for other religions, even at the cost of his getting reelected. During the impeachment of Warren Hastings he appealed to the assembly, stating that “Mr. Hastings finds no authority for his practice, either in the Koran or in the Gentoo law ... I would as soon have him tried on the Koran, or any other eastern code of laws, as on the common law of this kingdom.”²⁶

Burkean Prudence

Burke’s conception of moral governance in human affairs builds the foundation of his views about prudence. To Burke, any prudent action must abide by the general moral laws of nature. Whereas morality is a general “inner feeling” about humankind, prudence is “practical wisdom” that differs depending on circumstances, but is not contrary to moral action. “Prudence,” Burke declares, “is not only the first in rank of the virtues, political and moral, but she is the director, the regulator, the standard of them all.”²⁷ Burke never formally defined the word “prudence,” but like Aristotle, Burke used the word to describe a “feeling” or “intuition” or “judgment” that directs human action with a controlled passion. Prudence is a form of virtue because it controls or suppresses human passion to an extent that it allows reason to be grounded in objective reality. As an Aristotelian in his philosophy, he perceived transcendent normative moral principles as inherent in the temporal affairs of humankind.

Burke’s concept of history is essential to an understanding of his principle of prudence. He summarizes the relationship between history, prudence, and politics as follows:²⁸

My principles enable me to form my judgement upon men and actions in history, just as they do in common life, and are not formed out of events and characters, either present or past. History is a preceptor of prudence, not of principles. The principles of true politics are those of morality enlarged; and I neither now do, nor ever will, admit of any other.”

Moral laws do not exist only in general laws, abstracted from individuals in civil society; the principles of morality and law are embodied in practice in systems of religion and law, and therefore they are perceived in the great patterns of historical change and continuity. Through its specific examples, history teaches the principles of moral prudence, of temperance and restraint, as political virtues. Prudence was, for Burke, the first of political virtues because it was the link between politics and ethics,

between the specific actions of individuals in history and the general laws of ethics and the law. However, as noted by Burke, he did not derive new principles out of particular events. He trusted historical continuity more than events, since events are temporary but historical traditions reveal the true nature of the study in question. This led Burke to be a lifelong supporter of incrementalism — cautioning us from making any drastic reform in the heat of the moment. As he so eloquently notes in his *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, “Rage and frenzy will pull down more in half an hour than prudence, deliberation, and foresight can build in a hundred years.”²⁹

Burke believed that “toleration” is “a part of moral and political prudence,” and argued that “a good commonwealth” is the one that learns to tolerate “ill-grounded doctrines” and “many things that are positively vices.”³⁰ Clearly, the concept of Burkean prudence is well-grounded in the concept of justice. The interweaving of prudence and morality make justice an explicit part of a person’s prudent action. Burke’s opposition to the injustices in slave trade, and colonial policing in India and Ireland, showed that a prudent action is contrary to social or political injustices. Therefore, the operationalization of a moral law is exemplified in the prudent action. In a Burkean world, prudence is a synthesis of moral action and a practical guide for controlling the inner passions to ensure universal justice.

Civil Law and Moral Arguments

Burke’s trust in moral law had a direct impact on how he perceived civil law and the common law. Given human self-interest and fallibility, Burke observed that we must all be under the rule of law, both civil and the common law. However, he believed “all human laws are properly speaking, only declaratory; they may alter the mode and application, but they have no power over the substance of original justice.”³¹ He argued that the source of all laws is the eternal moral law, to which all human beings must conform in order to become a part of the society.

Despite such respect for moral law, for all practicality Burke saw that moral law is insufficient to protect and guarantee the rights of individuals. “The source of all evil,” to Burke, is “avarice”³² and that “all power will infallibly draw wealth by itself by some means or the other.”³³ Therefore Burke relied on checks, in the form of civil constitutions derived from conventions, habits (common law), and from practical necessity (civil law) of running a balanced social order. He believed that the “great use of government is as a restraint”³⁴ and that “all good constitutions have established certain fixed rules for the exercise of their functions ... [which]

form the security against the worst evils, the government of will and force instead of wisdom and justice.³⁵

Burke summarized three concepts of law in his speech on the impeachment of Warren Hastings as follows: First, he calls the “moral obligation,” which is “inherent in the duty of [public administrators] office”; next, “the positive injunctions of the legislature of the country; and lastly, a “man’s own private, particular, voluntary act and covenant” [that is the institutional convention or covenantal rules].³⁶ Without such binding laws that are mutually supporting and supported, Burke saw individual force taking opportunity to benefit from them, ensuing harm on others.

Covenantal Representation Controlled by Law

Burke used his moral reasoning to argue in favor of a covenantal institution in public administration. Burke believed that public representatives are trustees; they have been conferred a trust that must be conserved and not used to serve petty interests. The Affairs of the East India Company were the cause for Burke to develop his idea of covenantal representation. He saw the public servants in the East India Company as a “deputation of individuals who are servants of the company and are obliged to engage in a specific covenant with their masters [British authority] to perform all the duties described in that covenant.”³⁷ Burke believed that the trust conferred on the representatives is “recognized by the body of the people,” not because of their expertise or “ability,” but because of “fidelity in representation.”³⁸ Furthermore, to Burke, “it is a moral and virtuous discretion, and not any abstract theory of right, which keeps governments faithful to their ends.”³⁹

Philip Selznick supported Burke’s contention, arguing that “the theory of covenant is a theory of moral ordering; at the same time, it speaks to the nature of consent and the limits of political authority.”⁴⁰ He noted that “faith based on covenant might be called a constitutional faith.”⁴¹ To be in the covenant would mean to be bounded in a moral ordering, a sense of personal responsibility, an awareness of human frailty, and the aspiration to belong to a group governed by moral ideals. Covenant, therefore, is not merely a contract. On the contrary, it suggests “an indefeasible commitment and a continuing relationship.”⁴² The obligations in a covenantal binding are implicit, since they are not formally known but derived from the nature and history of the relationship. According to Selznick, institutions that are built on covenantal relationship are “living communities” because they “reaffirm” three basic features of morality: (1) “deference to a source of judgment beyond autonomous will,” (2) “constructive self-regard,” and (3) “concern for the well being of others.”⁴³

Implications of Burke's Moral Arguments for Public Administration

The initial impact of modernization on public administration was the attempt to separate politics from administration in order to develop a science of administration for more efficient delivery of public services. Now the 21st century presents us with the problem of how public administrators can become managers of diverse public interests. This necessity has grown out of the larger goals of public administrators in a constitutional democracy^{44,45,46} and the recognition that differences in values poses a threat to a general ethical guidance for public administrators.^{47,48} However, few have touched upon Burke's call to a higher moral order as a supporting beacon to a universal code of conduct. Especially in a diverse society, if substantive policy contents are to be determined by larger pluralistic interests, then public managers' exercise of Burkean prudence is critical in protecting minority values. Indeed, Burke's views on moral governance presented here have important implications for public administration in the 21st century.

What we used to know as foreign religion and culture in the United States is now becoming dominant. In the scholarly world of public administration, the uneasiness with a worldview that includes religion and culture is well understood. This uneasiness is due more to the lack of understanding of the universal values common to all major religious belief than it is to faith in scientific rationalism, as some might perceive even if they share the Burkean worldview. The First Amendment prohibits Congress and the states both from establishing religion and from limiting its free exercise. This twofold guarantee is essentially the reason why a universal moral code may be applicable and compatible in a diverse religious culture. In fact, the worldview of the Founders is not at all incompatible with the Burkean view of universal moral principle in human affairs. James Madison argued that when unanimity among parties is not present, then the principle on which all must agree is "the transcendent law of nature and of nature's God, which declares that the safety and happiness of society are the objects at which all political institutions aim, and to which all such institutions must be sacrificed."⁴⁹ He further noted that "the rights of humanity must in all cases be duly and mutually respected," and while we exercise our discretion in fulfilling common interest, we must "not urge in vain *moderation* on one side, and *prudence* on the other."⁵⁰

As shown by Burke, a universal moral code does not necessarily originate from religion, nor does anyone have to be religious to be protected by such universal principles. On the contrary, in the heat of the moment when the national sentiments are running high, upholding

the constitutional values becomes more critical and also more difficult as public servants struggle with aspects of their own personal values and cultural norms when exercising their discretion. When knowledge of different religious practices is limited, personal inclinations may take precedence over constitutional principle. The end result is the public administrator adversely affecting the constitutional life of a minority and, thereby, failing to preserve the institutional integrity that they are entrusted to uphold. An administrator who uses the Burkean prudence will have the foresight to use lawful discretion to protect unpopular minority values. In a Burkean world, prudence is a synthesis of moral action and a practical guide for controlling the inner passions to ensure universal justice. Terry Cooper was not far off this view when he argues that, for a responsible administrator, “moral imagination is the requisite skill and ethical autonomy is the quality of character necessary for public stewardship.”⁵¹

Burke’s discussion of public administrators in a covenantal relationship bears important implications for public administration. In a covenantal relationship, the sharing of values among peers and citizens becomes fundamental. Public managers whose agencies are part of a covenant are expected to be responsible, executing their duties nonarbitrarily, and open to diverse interests and values. Burke argued that history has proven that an ignorant society is less tolerant to dissimilar views. In a pluralistic society, where tolerance is a moral virtue, operationalizing a universal moral code will be difficult (if not thwarted) when it is left to individuals. To create an environment of public administration where universal moral principles are encouraged and nurtured, covenantal relationships among administrative peers is critical. Burke’s tolerance to other religions and culture was built upon his extensive reading and knowledge of “others.” As more organizations in today’s society operate in a closed system, interest and knowledge of others, even among fellow administrators, becomes a rarity. Conflicts among fellow workers and citizens leading to litigation will become more common in this diverse society unless we acknowledge our differences and build a bridge for mutual understanding using a common universal moral code. Diversity training, which is becoming popular in the private sector, should become less of an issue in public organizations that focus on covenantal organizations.

Furthermore, such a relationship gives power and support to public administrators for making the most informed decisions. Indeed, “while men are linked together, they easily and speedily communicate the alarm of any evil design,” and “when bad men combine, the good must associate; else they will fall, one by one, an unpitied sacrifice in a contemptible struggle.”⁵²

According to Rohr, “any serious consideration by a bureaucrat of how he or she might further the regime’s values will continually invite higher

questions of moral authenticity of these values.”⁵³ Values that evolve out of a covenantal framework give further credence to the “regime values” that result in the creation of institutional standards of excellence and the exercise of prudent discretion by individual administrators.

Conclusion

The mere fact that Burke had to resort to a higher moral order for the renunciation of slavery and to protect the rights of the Indian and the American people shows that a civil constitution is not sufficient to protect individual rights when the environment is hostile to such “righteous” action because of circumstances and national interest. Moral reasoning gives all the force and power to do what is right and establishes an unconditional obligation to protect human rights. Ethics is neither a dogma nor a tactic. Neither the law (legalistic ethics) nor the situation (situational ethics) should dominate in the ethical paradigm of public administration. A higher moral order as emphasized by Burke becomes a necessary condition for a balanced social order in the 21st century.

The fact that whistle-blowing is recognized as a lawful act in the federal government is an indication that civil laws cannot guarantee what the higher moral code of conduct does. Indeed, the civil laws become impotent when individuals do not abide by a higher moral law. In other words, public administrators ought to go beyond the call of duty to preserve the integrity of public institutions, which the civil laws (written rules) expect but in no way can enforce, in individual administrators. To ensure a trustworthy administration, we ought to invest more on building environments and institutions that foster universal moral principles. A trustworthy administration cannot depend on the moral indignation of universal moral principles. This alone makes Burke’s cause worth undertaking.

Acknowledgments

I am grateful to the following colleagues for supporting my work and offering comments on an earlier draft of this manuscript: Lorraine Smith, University of Alabama at Birmingham; Professor Michael W. Spicer, Cleveland State University; Professor James D. Slack, University of Alabama at Birmingham; and, Professor Larry D. Terry, University of Texas at Dallas.

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23. Burke, *Writings and Speeches*, vol. IX, 447.
24. Edmund Burke, *Correspondence of the Right Honourable Edmund Burke*, vol. II, Eds. C. William, E. Fitzwilliam, and R. Bourke (London: Francis & John Rivington, 1844), 18.
25. *Ibid.*, 18.
26. Burke, *Correspondence of the Right Honourable Edmund Burke*, vol. IV, 366–7. To disprove Hastings' contention that morality varied in time and place, Burke read widely in Oriental jurisprudence, including the *Qur'an*, the *Shasta*, and the *Heyada*, and he quoted Tamerlane's *Institutes*. This led him to conclude that "there is no book in the world, I believe, which contains nobler, more just, more manly, more pious principles of government than this book, *the Institutions of Tamerlane*" (Burke, *Writings and Speeches*, vol. IX, 467). Burke, *Writings and Speeches*, vol. IV, 81.
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33. Burke, *Writings and Speeches*, vol. IX, 461.
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35. Burke, *Writings and Speeches*, vol. X, 13.
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49. Hamilton, Madison, and Jay, *Federalist Papers*, 280.

50. Cooper, *Responsible Administrator*, 44.
51. Burke, *Writings and Speeches*, vol. I, 525–6. Burke specifically made these comments in his speech to the public servants in the East India Company.
52. Rohr, *To Run a Constitution*, 70.

AMERICAN MODERNIST INFLUENCE

IV

Chapter 13: Classical Pragmatism, the American Experiment, and Public Administration

But a man torments himself and is oftentimes most distressed at finding himself believing propositions which he has been brought up to regard with aversion.

Charles Peirce, 1887, CP5.386

Chapter 14: Making Democracy Safe for the World: Public Administration in the Political Thought of Woodrow Wilson

Unquestionably, the pressing problems of the present moment regard the regulation of our vast systems of commerce and manufacture, the control of giant corporations, the restraint of monopolies, the perfection of fiscal arrangements, the facilitating of economic exchanges, and many other like national

concerns... It becomes a matter of the utmost importance, therefore ... to examine critically the government upon which this new weight of responsibility and power seems likely to be case, in order that its capacity both for the work it now does and for that which it may be called upon to do may be definitely estimated.

Woodrow Wilson, *Congressional Government*, 1885

Chapter 15: Enduring Narratives from Progressivism

The scholars of this generation were republicans, and reformers — middle class and middle-of-the-road. For the most part, they did not shed the American sense of freedom, and valued cooperative self-help and “social ethics,” not socialism... And they still believed that policy judgments could be just as scientific as any other judgments.

P. T. Manicas, *A History and Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 1987

Chapter 16: The Bureau Movement: Seedbed of Modern Public Administration

The efficiency movement in cities ... began ... in an effort to capture the great forces of city government for harnessing the work of social betterment. It was not a tax saving incentive nor desire for economy that inspired this first effort ... but the conviction that only through efficient government could progressive social welfare be achieved.

H. Bruere, “Efficiency in City Government,” 1912

Chapter 17: Positively No Proverbs Need Apply: Revisiting the Legacy of Herbert A. Simon

Administrative description suffers from superficiality, over-simplification, lack of realism. It has confined itself too closely to

the mechanism of authority and has failed to bring within its orbit the other, equally important modes of influence on organizational behavior. It has been satisfied to speak of “authority,” “centralization,” “span of control,” “function,” without seeking operational definitions of those terms.

Herbert Simon, *A Study of Decision Making Processes*, 1947

Chapter 18: Mary Parker Follett: Lost and Found — Again, and Again, and Again

Community is a creative process of integration, where people decide some course of action that is a result of the interweaving of ideas, personalities, and the situation. Community in this sense creates personality, power, freedom, and purpose, and the greatest contribution a citizen can make to the state is to learn creative thinking.

Mary Parker Follett, “Community Is a Process,” 1919.

Chapter 19: Administrative Statesman, Philosopher, Explorer: The Life, Landscape, and Legacy of Dwight Waldo

It’s sort of like Elvis dying. The King is dead, and there’ll never be anyone else like him.

R. O’Leary, cited in *Maxwell Perspective*, 2001.

Chapter 13

Classical Pragmatism, the American Experiment, and Public Administration

Robert Brom and Patricia M. Shields

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Policies imply theories.

Pressman and Wildavsky (1979)

The efficacy of these theories is tested in the messy laboratory of the bureaucracy by public administrators.

Shields (1996)

Pragmatic Soul

... but a man torments himself and is oftentimes most distressed at finding himself believing propositions which he has been brought up to regard with aversion.

Peirce (1887), CP5.386¹

American Flavor

Classical pragmatism² is “a method or tendency in philosophy, started by C. S. Peirce and William James, that determines the meaning and truth of all concepts and tests their validity by their practical results.”³ To this truncated definition could arguably be added the names of public philosopher-educator John Dewey and humanitarian Jane Addams.⁴ And inarguably could be added a whole skin of moral texture to encase each of the words “meaning,” “truth,” and “results.” The definition would also have gained a subtle relevant nuance by acknowledging the common nationality of the mentioned players.

Classical pragmatism is generally considered to be the only truly original philosophical school and tradition to have emerged in America. It is also considered to have a recognizably “American” flavor, in that it incorporates the no-nonsense, practical attitude of the Yankee settler concerned with survival, along with the optimistic idealism that may have inspired him into his predicament in the first place, an idealism that this same frontiersman perhaps drew from the lofty proclamations that accompanied the launching of his young nation. Thus the ground fertile for the rise of classical pragmatism was this fresh, broadly held, melioristic brand of optimism that life is getting nothing but better, contingent upon the hard-bitten assumption that folks aren’t going to be standing around just waiting for it to happen.

The grip that the founding ideals held on the imagination and machinations of the countrymen is not to be underestimated, especially in the nationalistic⁵ latter-19th century — the era in which the American undercurrents of pragmatism were first formally articulated. Jane Addams, arguably the first consciously practicing pragmatist, and a daughter of the frontier, herself drew upon these proclamations as inspiration in her efforts down in the trenches toward “socializing democracy” (Addams 1910, 92), in particular, from the trenches of the original Hull House settlement, the grand archetype of democratic settlement homes that she had founded.

This was an archetype that she was careful (and proud) to differentiate from what she ultimately considered patronizingly philanthropic charities, such as Toynbee Hall, which she had explored with intense interest in Great Britain. She quickly spotted, and was eventually somewhat put off by, the *noblesse oblige* nature of those operations. Not to say that an observer could easily escape making liberal use of the word “charitable” in describing the Hull House settlement, but pragmatism’s phrase “socializing democracy” is a more appropriately overarching mission statement for this ambitious and many-faceted project. The issue at hand was the teeming multitudes who made their way to Chicago, too many of whom were scarcely equipped for life in their own lands of southern and eastern Europe, much less the new land. Nevertheless, Jane Addams the pragmatist rotated the problem 90 degrees and sensed a value of possibility from the chaos of this very diversity.⁶ With a classic pragmatist’s combination of relentless common sense and elastic vision, she saw and took the opportunity to forge something broader and more durable than the obligatory servicing of the immediate, though paramount, need.

Her evolving method of acclimating the new Americans eventually included their immersion in a community rich in a spirit of mutual assistance, democratic cooperation, political and philosophical debate, participatory learning, artistic expression, self-improvement, personal independence, community activism, and other characteristics of an ideal free and thinking society. She accomplished much of this vision by motivating a good mix of established citizens from many walks of American life to participate in (even to boarding at) the settlement. These citizens were at once students and mentors. She allowed this community to evolve with the mutual guidance of both the immigrants and the “benefactors” and did not consider the benefit of the experience to be limited to either.⁷ In some sense, with this raw foreign material, she sought, consciously or not, to realize an environment more American than America.

Addams wrote that her work was motivated at least in part by an obligation to not let down the architects of the “tremendous experiment” in which the American manifestation of democratic government “still remains the most valuable contribution America has made to the moral

life of the world” (Addams 1910, 45). She viewed the settlement (in all its complexity of purpose) as a “tangible expression of the democratic ideal” (Addams 1910, 116). As she stated upon contemplation of Lincoln and his contemporaries: “they too had realized that if this *last tremendous experiment in self-government* failed here, it would be the disappointment of the centuries and that upon their ability to organize self-government in state, county, and town depended the verdict of history” (italics added) (Addams 1910, 40).

Thus, classical pragmatism as developed by the American philosophers and practitioners is more than an art of expediency and compromise, as common usage of the term connotes, but is a philosophy consciously mindful of altruistic consequence. As though to supremely underline this point, Jane Addams submits a novel case for Jesus Christ⁸ as an exemplary practicing pragmatist (Addams 1910, 95). The philosophy takes measure of an idea not only for its usefulness, though that is certainly requisite, but for its usefulness in the quest for achievement of a state of continuous learning and self-improvement in the human condition.

Intelligent Community

This quest is often referred to in the literature of the early pragmatists as the pursuit to create an “intelligent” community. Dewey referred to this state as the “Great Community” that has the ability and will to change not only its tactics, but also its goals if the evidence and situation warrants. An intelligent community is one comfortable with a state of continuous inquiry, and one always willing to reevaluate its assumptions. It is a community that is well situated to meet problematic situations “with imagination and vision” (Evans 2000, 317) and from which to launch efforts at overall improvement. A community intelligent enough to question its own direction as a matter of course, and to admit when it is wrong, is by nature also a courageous one.

Thus, the idealism embedded in classical pragmatism lies more with a faith in the possibility of achieving a sustainable, fruitful process rather than with any particular utopian outcome. William James goes so far as to state that pragmatism “does not stand for any special results. It is a method⁹ only” (James 1906, 2). In this way, pragmatism reflects another aspect of the early American mind, as it formalizes what the community of creators of the American Constitution knew instinctively: that the power lies in the process. Indeed, even today it has been remarked, with only slight whimsy, that the only national culture the American has is “a loyalty to on-going debates on our guiding political ideals” (Callaway 1999, 2). The process is the result; the means are the ends. The founding statesmen of America managed (despite all the distraction of immediate politics) to

implement a process that would allow (and perhaps even encourage) the American “civilization ... [to] ... establish and nourish institutions that will promote the liberation of the talents and potentialities of all its citizens” (Dewey 1928, 134).

The idealism of the American founders is found in their faith that the populace could actually be entrusted to use that process toward worthy ends. Other than that, in the main, the specifics of the mechanism they set in motion are fairly practical and mundane. This focus by the American political experiment on process rather than, say, declaring a utopia by fiat, has been the most likely source of its thus far relatively astonishing successes. Yet ironically, the focus on process has also been the source of its dismissal as not being on par with the grander manifesto-oriented revolutions such as the French and the Marxist.

Similarly, the deceptively understated philosophy of classical pragmatism is dismissed by related quarters as barely a philosophy at all, as its discourse is similarly grounded in process rather than with the superficially more exciting grand themes and fixed ideals of the metaphysical philosophies. Nevertheless, along with the earnestly pragmatic American political experiment, it has endured and revealed real depth and power over time as loftier (and more trendy) schools of thought have proven as ephemeral as the political products of Robespierre and Marx.

Breaking Beliefs

The dearth of fixed and empyreal visions is not merely an ancillary feature of pragmatism; pragmatism’s emphasis on continuous breakdown, and subsequent evolution, of fixed beliefs through the process of continuous and intelligent inquiry is the key to its basic strength. Charles Sanders Peirce, with his 1877 article “The Fixation of Belief,” initiates pragmatism as a formal philosophy with a contemplation of this thought. Jane Addams urged continuous challenge to fixed belief because, she warns, “fanaticism is engendered only when men, finding no contradiction to their theories, at last believe that the very universe lends itself as an exemplification of one point of view” (Addams 1910, 134). She also speaks of the vigorous and “dogmatic ... radical of the sort that could not resign himself to the slow march of human improvement; of the type who knew exactly ‘in what part of the world Utopia standeth.’”

Of the early pragmatists, William James carried this stance the furthest. He not only rejected the notion of absolute truths and ideals existing to guide humanity, but asserted that “Truth happens to an idea” and helped to popularize the now-common concept that more than one vision (and version) of reality can be considered true (Zanetti and Carr 2000, 346). This fairly irreverent attitude toward the idea of beliefs was intimately tied

with pragmatism's emphasis on the quality of inquiry. John Dewey's view that "ideas are properly viewed as hypothesis, rather than as representations of immutable truths or ends" leads inexorably to the conclusion that those who think otherwise will tend to engage in futile arguments over which truth is correct (Snider 2000, 333). That is, they ask the wrong questions and are doomed to have no particular place to go.

But rejection of absolute and fixed ideals is not rejection of the notion of ideals. And the pragmatist's skepticism of monolithic truth is certainly not the strong relativist's rejection of the idea of truth itself. Indeed, in Peirce's original presentation of pragmatism as a method for weighing meaning, the purpose of breaking beliefs was to enable fixing them again at ever more "meaningful" levels.

Fortified with Essential Theory

Nor does the pragmatist reject the goals borne of ideals. One idealistic goal borne of classical pragmatism for public administration has long been its tantalizing promise as a method for integrating practice and theory. This schism was set from the start, and the tensions underlying this history have been discussed for almost as long (as have its ramifications). For example, the source for these tensions has been aptly described as being the difficulty of the practitioners "to see the value of theory" as it "seldom mirrors experience or reality," along with the discomfort of academics with "the lack of core explanatory, verifiable theory" and "the ad hoc nature of PA theory" (Shields 1996). Exacerbating these tensions, perhaps, is the unspoken resentment by the political masters toward any overt expression from public administration that it should have any identity, meaning independent will, of its own.

Constructing Public Administration

This deficiency of rebar in the foundation of public administration is, as with any structure, only obvious when that structure is under duress. Commentators in the field and in academia have expressed that the turn of the millennium is one of those times, due to an acceleration of certain disjunctive sociological and technological trends. This trend (which gained critical mass sometime between the dawn of the postmodern age of the late 1950s and now) has turned a latent deconstructivist tendency of American society into overt habit.¹⁰ The simplest explanation for this trend is the accumulated effect over the most recent generations by the deluge of culturally unfiltered information — the ancient filters guarded by family, village, and church to provide context and continuity proved to be soluble

Maginot Lines before the very same Great Flood. For better and sometimes worse, the result has been the quiet fall of taboos against rethinking, rearranging, and redefining even the most established patterns of societal life when doing so seems practical or advantageous: career, shopping, faith, even the concept of family. The American mind is more open than ever before to creating new patterns from those parts.

The technological trends have been even more obvious. Information technology, which in the modern era seemed handmaiden to society on an inexorable march toward centralization and uniformity, has since literally burst into a brilliant panoply of decentralized permutations and personally empowering possibilities. Humans rarely fail to be surprised by the dynamics of an exponential curve, and even professional prognosticators were nearly blindsided as power and control shot from the center to the extremities.¹¹ Infinitely configurable, voluntarily related networks of small and malleable components replaced the model of centrally orchestrated control and planning.

Together, these two trends free up the public imagination to reshape reality and provide the means to do it. Moreover, they feed the will to do it. In its endeavors, the population is less fixed in its beliefs in how things must be done and what can be done; less attached to preserving old orders. “Why not?” is the operating phrase both by customers in their demands and by those who compete to meet these demands. The visionaries who thrive amidst this uncertainty do not just push the boundaries; they are willing to rearrange the landscape.¹² In the private sector, many of the effects of this experimental, irreverent attitude involve the themes of personal empowerment and threat to existing institutions. Of more concern to the public administrator is that these millennial themes impact nearly as hard upon his or her own domains. The millennial American citizen does not confine her raised expectations to the private marketplace. Their demands for speedy, responsive, and customized service and their appetite for new and unusual solutions are felt both directly and via the ballot box.

Ironically, it is not only the heightened expectations, but also the plethora of choices that administrators, their agencies, and their political policy makers now have at their disposal to meet these challenges that constitute a source of stress to public administration. Without denying their motivation to serve citizens and their political taskmasters in the best way possible, it nonetheless can be argued that public agencies inherently tend toward the most conservative approach available. This aversion to risk is not due to a moral weakness of the citizens who are attracted to the roles of operating them, but simply because people rationally take risks that are commensurate with the potential payout. There is no limit to the potential reward to a successful venture by an entrepreneur, and

in the worst case he and any backer may yet have the opportunity to try again. On the other hand, a civil servant can suffer from the failure of a gambit, but both he and his agency are severely limited, by statute if nothing else, in the reward that can be reaped by a success.

But the difference now is that the conservative approach is not always available. The very programs the official is charged with administering increasingly involve desecration of cows once sacred to the body politic. "Third rails" are losing their juice. "Reinventing government" continues apace even when it involves outsourcing functions once only entrusted to fully accountable public employees. Solutions and innovations are not always ruled out from serious consideration just for seeming too experimental, merely because they may entail downsizing, reorganization, and outright fracturing of the institution. The chiefs of even musty old agencies may be compelled to pass this creatively destructive impulse on down the line.

New demands beyond those of competence are made of the entire staff. Psychological agility is one. Consider, to take an example from millennial issues, a seemingly subtle shift in mission from, say, providing a public education to that of ensuring access to a quality education. The first is an alderman's task of maintaining, perhaps fine-tuning, a time-tested and well-regulated public school system. It is administrator as service provider. The second could be a far more challenging task of making sense of a dynamic constellation of public schools, voucher-supported private schools, home schools, magnet schools, antimagnet schools, etc. while, at the same time, attending to the usual public mandates of fairness, equal opportunity, funding, measurement, accountability, regulation, redress of grievances, and so on. Welfare reform provides a perhaps better example, since it applies to the entire country, of the unnerving, disruptive effect on a mature, complex¹³ administrative system when that system is called on by its public to change its focus from service delivery to result. Entitlement did not veto experiment.¹⁴ But the first flush of success, by all measures, did not alleviate the stress borne by the public administrators who carried out the initiative not of their making.

The broader the new mission, the less likely that the administrator will find prescriptive aid in the detail of the lawmaker's writ. With a few august statements, the lawmakers of democracy simply delegate the concerns of democracy to the public administrator. If this quintessential officer is less than enthusiastic over the honor, the reason, again, is the dubiety of the foundation upon which she stands while accepting the load. A poverty of theory from which to draw strength and resolve leaves reaction as the default mode of operation. Reaction translates downhill as management by fear, the very weakest emotion with which to greet the opportunity of democracy.

For democracy, an intelligent Deweyan democracy, is the challenge that public administration finds difficult to overtly accept. The most difficult attribute of a Deweyan democracy for public agencies to sincerely accommodate is also the one to which they devote the most promiscuous lip service, that of democratic inclusion. But remedial accommodation is underway from necessity at least, even if not from recognition of the opportunity in the turmoil. In a recent *Public Administration Times* article on the subject of municipal administration, Sylvester Murray illustrates the nature of this reform (and unknowingly describes its Deweyan setting) by contrasting it with the better-known “good government” reforms of the early 20th century. “Accountability for the early reformers meant structuring local government so that it could be effective, efficient and corruption proof.... Colleges and universities ... taught managers how to conduct themselves and accomplish their goals without being a part of the political system” (Murray 2000, 4). On the other hand, Murray continues: “Reform in the 1990’s was not elimination of corruption.... Reform in the 1990’s is accountability and community involvement in decision-making.” In addition, this theme is echoed in King and Stivers’s (1998) influential *Government Is Us*. The key task facing local public administrators is building community and enabling a kind of participatory democratic exchange with citizens.

Thus with this slight rotation, the crisis of disjuncture can be perceived as opportunity — an opportunity, at least according to Shields (1996), to dust off and take another look at the one body of theory that seems made fit to order to these Deweyan conditions. The human trait of intelligence evolved solely as a means to deal with rapidly changing conditions, and the intelligent community of classical pragmatism may be Darwin’s best offering for thriving in the current disorder. If the time is indeed ripe for this arrival, then the issue becomes one of deciding to actively cultivate classical pragmatism as a basis of theoretical identity for public administration.

The alternative to identity is ennui. Once the current identity of the public administrator as technocratic, amoral service provider in a stable, clearly bounded, dispassionate environment is deconstructed, do the resulting pieces then bob about before the gathering winds? Does it drift about in reaction to practices and policies that can change as quickly as political administrations? Or does it coalesce into a prouder, more self-assured identity that can surf the white caps and aid the political bodies and the body politic in their own efforts to make sense of the situation. Classical pragmatism offers a way for public administration to overcome the fear of making an imprint without unleashing an attack of random graffiti. An environment deconstructed by postmodern forces may provide an invitation to a second courtship of classical pragmatism by public administration. Nevertheless, pragmatism demands from the relationship

a good-faith effort at reconstruction, with all the premodern tools of experience and history available for the job.

The initial, and probably best, opportunity for pragmatism to thus inform public administration was during its years as an emerging field. Keith F. Snider presents a thorough case on why this did not occur, either then or later (Snider 2000). In short, the case is made that early public-administration thinkers reduced pragmatism to its most utilitarian component to justify a technocratic vision of public administration. This emphasis on expertise was at the expense of classical pragmatism's promise as a source of experimentation and creativity. Because pragmatism and public administration were never properly wed, PA was deprived of a nourishing theoretical base.

Although there is renewed interest in applying pragmatism to public administration, few have examined the rich pragmatism of humanist icon Jane Addams. This is perhaps because Jane Addams has only recently received recognition in philosophy (Seigfried 1996; Luizzi and McKinney 2001).

Public Pragministrators

It has been observed (Shields 1998) that the founders and initial practitioners of the philosophy of pragmatism have firm roots in the working public sector. That this philosophy flowed from "the real world" to academia is in marked contrast to the normal pattern. Indeed, in a poignant bit of irony that highlights this state of affairs, the father of classical pragmatism, Charles Sanders Peirce, eventually grew bitter and resentful in his later years over not being able to gain the meaningful academic employment he long desired. He spent most of his career as a public employee of the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey.

Jane Addams,¹⁵ of course, was firmly grounded in the public sector, in a broader sense. Her grand altruistic and social experiments broke the ground for what would evolve into the modern "nonprofit" sector. This entire model of mixed-source funding and adaptable problem response (some smaller nonprofits today completely reinvent themselves with every new grant) was in itself a pragmatic solution to the inherent limitations of church and government. While thus casually inventing new realms for the public sector, Addams also held more mundanely traditional public sector posts such as Cook County ward garbage inspector (though in her hands, the job got her quickly identified as a potentially troublesome revolutionary by the local power brokers). Her work greatly influenced her more academic friend, that most prolific classical pragmatist, the philosopher John Dewey (Westbrook 1991; Seigfried 1996).

Nonetheless, also noted has been the surprisingly sparse history of formal application of the principles of pragmatism by public administrators. Reducing the whole of pragmatism to a set of useful functions would be a bit of insult, but it is sensible to assert that directly useful tools, methods, and principles should be refined from a field so rich in raw mineral. After an inspirational (and prototypical) example set by Jane Addams with the Hull House settlement, the possibilities of mining this rich philosophy for pertinent ideas and applications has been sadly neglected by mainstream public administrative thought.¹⁶ Also, more ironic than sad, recognizably pragmatic methodologies have reappeared in the public administrator's tool kit, presented as gifts from the private sector.

Total quality management (TQM), for example, is founded on the pragmatic principles of continuous improvement and useful breakdown of fixed belief, mainly as a strategy for adapting to changing circumstances. Its most overt exhortation is to “build processes which encourage a change into a ‘learning organisation’”¹⁷ (Senge 1990), which is as blatant a reference to Dewey's great “intelligent community” as can be constructed short of paying royalties. This “learning organization” is defined commonly as an “organization where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together” (Senge 1990). Again ironically, the public administrator has taken the TQM, which seems clearly designed for the private sector, and attempted to graft it nearly whole (after cutting out its *statistical measurement* heart) into public administration, and then is surprised upon its imperfect fit.

The general alternative suggested here is for the community of public administrators to confidently turn to its own traditions to seek inspiration and innovation, to forge tools of a more natural fit to aid them in fulfilling their specific missions — along with the shared mission of all public administrators to “socialize democracy.”

At First Glance

The most casual reading of pragmatist literature by a working public administrator is likely to elicit two reactions. One is the shock of easy recognition. Philosophical writings often require the reader to re-create the mental model by which the particular philosopher views the world, and then to attempt to saddle into that philosopher's head, snugly behind the eyeballs, so the model can be sensibly manipulated in order to navigate that world view. A promise of useful reward for success in this heroic endeavor often is not even made.

In contrast, one look at the adaptable, action-oriented, and ever-fluctuating environment described by classical pragmatism, and the public administrator knows that this is his world. It is a complex world not amenable to understanding, much less conquest, by any one formula or singular approach; but, rather, it is a world where old arsenals quickly rust and a blind eye dare not be turned toward new ones from unanticipated sources. In this world the most consistent successes arise from the application of robust beliefs and techniques inaugurated at the three-way intersection of equally valued experience, common sense, and hard-nosed science.

The second reaction is a roar of synapses crackling as the administrator's mind involuntarily erupts in a storm of ideas and revelations — connections between what he is reading and the job that he performs. Synaptic connections are formed not only to give rise to new ideas, but to form fresh views of existing practices. These involuntary epiphanies occur because the philosophy speaks so directly to the practice and art of public administration. The basis for this bold assertion is largely intuition arising from experience. This is not enough to form a belief, but enough to meet the pragmatic threshold for initiating an exploratory inquiry.

Organizing Principle

So, if pragmatism is not a discrete set of functionalist prescriptions, how does it speak to public administration? And is there now another opportunity for classical pragmatism to address the problems of drift in the practicing field caused by the ongoing lack of a theoretical compass? These questions have been most directly addressed by Shields (1996). The thesis of the article is that pragmatism serves one of its most direct uses to public administration in the role of *organizing principle*, in particular one that helps the public administrator make sense of the inevitable imprint on the policies that he administers. A philosophy that is so firmly planted in the nexus of theory and practice is a natural resource for the public administrator who has an office at that nexus.

The public administrator is in the business of harnessing practices (and processes) to implement and manage policies while minding the public interest at every step of the way. Since practices imply theories (and since policies to be implemented are often only slightly less nebulous than theories themselves), there is much to be organized. As public organizations rely on the ever-changing polis and democratic structures for guidance and incorporate the ethics of public service, it is also useful that the organizing principle for navigating these rapids has public ethical values and democratic ideals and assumptions inextricably imbedded within it.

Those administrators who accept that their role is to leave no imprint while implementing clear, consistent, and stable directives of policy makers are administrators who are likely to be not only unsuccessful, but permanently frustrated.

Classical pragmatism offers the administrator a “method,” sweeping enough to be called a mind-set, for navigating these waters. Since the administrator does not have the luxury to be eternally distracted, pragmatism offers her a defensible rationale to recognize and focus on those things that are useful and that work. Since the administrator cannot be paralyzed while waiting for absolute certainty before deciding and proceeding, pragmatism offers her a justification for reaching a reasonable belief and acting on it.¹⁸ Essential to all of this is for the administrator to consciously cultivate her natural instinct¹⁹ for detecting those things that are likely enough to work to be worth investigating. Proficiency at this “pragmatic inquiry” by the administrator is increased along with the honing of sensitivity toward the “irritation of doubt” wherever it may lie. Incidentally, the moral component of classical pragmatism is found implied (so obtusely as to have nearly vanished) in the word “meaning” in the primary definition quoted from Webster’s. The “meaning” of an idea resulting from pragmatic inquiry is understood as being determined by the consequence of the effects of this application on human conduct (Peirce 1878).

The value of classical pragmatism as an organizing principle can be sensed from the picture of a public administrator working without it. Without some operating principle, the job itself would be a bit horrific; the administrator dropped into the job would have no sense of professional ballast or bearing. The job would truly consist of what it appears to be to the naive anyway: a job of reacting to demands and pressures from all directions and dimensions, and guided overall by the in-box and the voice-mail. And, it is a job dangerously fertile for the growth of reactionism as a *modus operandi*.

Any professional performance can degenerate into such a series of discontinuous skits aimed at mere daily survival. But as articulated in Shields (1996), when professional focus and perspective is threatened by discord, the businessman can step back and make sense of it by recalling that his organizing principle is to “make a profit.” Recalling the bottom line can clear the air like shaking off a dream from an inopportune siesta. The organizing principle of “power” may work the same effect for the politician. Though the individual statesman may protest at that description, the pursuit and maintenance of power is probably the most constant factor across that profession for making decisions, focusing the mind, and providing cohesion of purpose among otherwise disparate political players. Likewise, perhaps, “efficiency” is the ballast for the economist and “warrior spirit” for the soldier (Shields 1996). The medical doctor may find

similar solace from the forces of confusion in the Hippocratic oath. In the worst case, the honest public administrator with no chosen organizing principle may default to something ignobly along the lines of “staying out of trouble.”²⁰

Pragmatism as an organizing principle for the public administrator is likely a necessity. Because it does operate close enough to principles of “common sense,” the public administrator does not have to formally recognize and understand the philosophy in order to be a pragmatist. So classical pragmatism serves to describe a phenomenon that perhaps arises naturally. But it is also one that likely *can* be captured in a bottle and transferred to others, at least to a greater extent than has so far been attempted. To be transferable, that is to be teachable and learnable, it does need to be identified and recognized. The value of this to the novice public administrator, arriving in the maelstrom, is to train her to not only spot and avoid the random flotsam, but also to salvage the useful jetsam — by latching on to a stabilizing ballast common to the profession. Reliance instead only on assumed “common sense” as an organizing principle is perhaps as wrought with folly as relying on charisma.

If common sense proved inherent among those who find themselves in the role of public administrator, that does not imply that common sense is a sufficient source of professional fortitude against ethical challenges and other forces that may be at cross-purposes to the mission. Public administrators married to their mission may derive the focus and motivation, like Mother Theresa, from the mission itself. Natural-born charismatic leaders may also have less need of a professional organizing principle. But both of these statements can be truly said of any profession, including the entrepreneur whose fervor for sharing his product only incidentally generates his own financial success. The overarching value of the organizing principle of classical pragmatism for most public administrators is that it should serve them regardless of the mission (or agency) where they practice their profession. It should be an organizing principle that cuts across the profession and can travel with the professional.

Pragmatic Oath

So how do we know the public administrator? What kinetic clues or pantomimic posture betrays his presence, or, more usefully, reassures us of the same beyond the displayed credential? What morsel does he offer up to the nonverbal reasoning²¹ of his audience to chew on, perchance to gain a nodding endorsement from their collective id? One small service the organizing principle of a profession provides is to identify the practitioner. If pragmatism is the organizing principle of the professional public

administrator, then what totem does this provide? More specifically, what is his “mindset” and what are his methods?

The pragmatic administrator is poised to act in a meaningful manner on decisions derived from the most intelligent analysis available from the broadest and deepest base of information feasible. All of this is in an environment of severely defined resources, not the least of which is time. To cope, the effective administrator takes advantage of every bit of leverage offered by the organizing principle of pragmatism. The *scientific* drive to arrive at the right answer is always there, but the need to arrive at the best answer given limited resources differentiates the pragmatist from the pure logical positivist.²² The pragmatic public administrator does not allow *common sense* to supersede the scientifically valid whenever there is choice. Keeping that axiom in mind, however, the public administrator is most effective by making full use of *experience* when the basis for the viable options before her “outrun the scope of already determined ‘facts’ ... which may not be capable of verification at the time” (Dewey 1938, 519).

It is no feat to trust one’s own experience; rather, the consciously pragmatic public administrator seeks to tap into the collective and historical experience of her organizational “community.” Analogous to the useful efficiency fable of the 90 percent untapped brain, the effective administrator may be able to extract more from a less seasoned (or knowledgeable) community than the ineffective administrator might from a crack troupe.²³ Further, she seeks to institute (or improve current) mechanisms for continuously increasing the “intelligence” of the community. She seeks to motivate an inquiring community to listen, learn, share, and persuade.

The mind of the mature public administrator guided directly or indirectly by classical pragmatism is openly focused. She is focused on the issues at hand, and tends to avoid disturbing settled ground. Likewise, she is ready to abandon a path that is apparently leading to destinations of no likely practical consequence. This tendency of focus, however, is balanced by a subconscious that is ever alert and sensitive to any new irritation of doubt. Although willing to confidently operate on current beliefs, her understanding of the fallibilistic nature of knowledge causes her to treat most of those beliefs as working hypotheses. She courts the useful opinion of others. Her internal radar is honed to discover, rather than obscure, any and all evidence that may break down currently fixed beliefs, so that more robust and effective beliefs may arise. In summary, the pragmatic public administrator holds an orientation to reiterative improvement: fresh inquiry is triggered by new information or the irritation of doubt in order to arrive at the best knowable and relevant solutions. All in all, this pragmatic veneer augments the administrator’s own bodily personality; this veneer may instill confidence in his team of policy

administrators, or serve as armor when the need arises to challenge the makers of the policy. Such is the oath of the pragmatic public administrator.

The Pragmatic Question

These initial, and admittedly superficial, assertions and impressions of the manner in which classical pragmatism may speak to the profession of public administration present a case that further exploration is warranted. Indeed, since the success of public administration is by definition in the public interest, it is perhaps not unreasonable to assert that a further exploration of a philosophy with this much promise to that effect may be morally incumbent. Specifically, if pragmatism proves to be the natural organizing principle of the effective, professional public administrator, then it follows that useful results would arise from its conscious identification and application. Using the hard-nosed idealism of the Yankee settler, the public administrator of the 21st century is called then to explore the truth of this assertion, its robustness and potential. The capture of the essence of the successful pragmatic public administrator in a bottle, from whence it can be dispensed, is where this pursuit hopes to ultimately lead.

Notes

1. Notation is in the form of the volume and paragraph in *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce* (Harvard University Press, 1877). For example, “CP5.389” means Charles Peirce, paragraph 389 in volume 5. Peirce’s works are available on line at the “Arisbe: Home of the Peirce Telecommunity” Web site, <http://www.door.net/ariske>. Web-site transcription and markup by Joseph Ransdell and Brian Kariger.
2. Classical pragmatism refers to the philosophy of Charles Sanders Pierce, William James, John Dewey, and Jane Addams. One might also include other early pragmatists such as George Herbert Mead and C. I. Lewis. For the purposes of this article, “classical pragmatism” and “pragmatism” will be used interchangeably.
3. *Webster’s New World Dictionary*, 2nd college ed., *s.v.* “classical pragmatism.”
4. Jane Addams has recently been added to this list by philosophers. Charlene Haddock Seigfried (1996) was the first to make the case that Addams be included as a founder of classical pragmatism in *Pragmatism and Feminism: Reweaving the Social Fabric*. Subsequently, Addams has been included as a founder in philosophy textbooks (Luizzi and McKinney 2001).

5. This first true era of the American citizen that had firmly supplanted the era of the state citizen was accompanied by an obsessive and universal contemplation of the nature of this new beast. That the new era was ushered in by a war pitting freedom against democracy gave them much to contemplate.
6. Sometimes quite literally, as in her idea to utilize the many nationalities within the 19th ward of Chicago, somehow, as a potential force for peace.
7. One small but concrete example is that the Hull House helped address her ongoing concern that privileged young women needed a means of connecting with the real life of the world (Addams 1910, 85).
8. This is an especially apt basis for a Hull House analogy. At first glance, per the Christian parable, Toynbee Hall might represent the idea of giving the fish to the hungry, and Hull House the somewhat superior idea of teaching the hungry to fish. But actually, in Jane Addams's hands, the Hull House goes even beyond that to the idea that the fisherman-teacher also fundamentally benefits from the relationship.
9. Although the term "method" is also used by Dewey to describe the type of thing that pragmatism is, this term makes sense only in the broadest sense. The term "method" implies empiricism, but it should not distract from the art as well as the science of pragmatism. Also there are *methods* within this overarching "method."
10. Compared with other nations, the United States has always been willing to bend and rethink its paradigms when necessary, especially to achieve a specific end (the most famous changes in other countries have often been the result not of bending, but of breaking), and to give amplified voice to out-of-the-box thinking by individuals. A qualitative difference in this, possibly interim, time is the suspicion that the habitual rethinking is motivated as much by default orientation of skepticism as by any desire to progress.
11. Sources contemplating the more obvious manifestations of this, from mobile phones to Napster to the Drudge Report, are too numerous to list.
12. Or redefine the landscape. Eschewing exotic examples of 'future shock' variety, consider the mundane purchase of a book. At the Millennium, every traditional gate and step that stands between an author and a reader is now optional. Currently still desired, despite the cost of each of those steps to the reader and the author, but optional nonetheless. The roles of agent, publisher, editor, print shop, distributor, warehouse, stocker, marketer, bookshop owner are all subject to redefinition, perhaps even continuously. Without

- going into detail, Stephen King proved, right on time at the millennial turn, that an author can now feasibly perform each of the listed tasks. But open for redefinition are not merely job descriptions, but the meaning of “published,” “ownership,” “copyrights,” and perhaps the very meaning of “book” itself. Perhaps this warrants a new call to Peirce, on the meaning of “meaning”?
13. State welfare agencies are actually creatures of all levels of government, in some cases subject to regulatory and financing arrangements from the county level up to Washington, D.C.
 14. The change in role from service delivery to result is but one paradigm shift of many, but the effects of this one shift are dramatic; in some states it has resulted in a public initiated call for the government machinery to cease equating “drug war” success with number of citizens delivered into jail.
 15. Camilla Stivers (2000), in *Bureau Men, Settlement Women*, elaborates on Jane Addams’s place in PA history.
 16. Stivers (2000) notes Addams’s administrative skill but makes no reference to her pragmatism.
 17. This phrase is frequently found as the second point in many listings of Deming’s “14 Points.” However, the term “learning organization” is not found specifically in the original 14-point listing in Deming’s 1986 edition of “Out of the Crisis.” The term was popularized by Peter Senge and is now routinely used as shorthand to summarize a category of Deming’s thoughts.
 18. This sentence was inspired by the “Social Inquiry” chapter of Dewey’s *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry*.
 19. Or “common sense.”
 20. Few experiences are as disheartening for a mission-oriented public professional as that of serving an administrator whose primary interest is self-protection.
 21. The role of the body in the mind, especially the role played in sound reasoning, is a theme explored extensively within pragmatist literature. (This is not surprising, considering that even the most obvious course of action is difficult to undertake without an accompanying “gut feeling.”) The specific concept of “nonverbal thinking” is said to be endorsed and described by Dewey in *Art as Experience*. I cannot help but wonder if “nonverbal” thinking is the link between logical analysis (or reasoning) and intuition. Pragmatist literature seems to hint at the idea that reasoning, particularly to the point of *deciding to act*, is on surer footing (or at least is more pragmatic) when supported by the body, i.e., when intuition is in line with verbal thought. If this is true, then that opens the door to the possibility of nonverbal reasoning as having an independent

quality that can be cultivated and improved. Pragmatism, though, insists that a concept be properly described before its implications are explored too deeply.

Peirce scholars Jesper Hoffmeyer and Claus Emmeche examine in detail the value (and existence) of nonverbal thinking (and by extension, *communicating*) in the article *Code-Duality and the Semiotics of Nature* (Hoffmeyer and Emmeche 1991). The basic premise is that verbal thinking, although liberating the human species in that it allowed the capture and manipulation of thought, is nonetheless a staccato, digital, and incomplete representation of the richer, “analog” (meaning “continuous and complete”) context of the life that produced it. “Nonverbal thinking” is the analog context for the digital representation. For example, a compact disk composed of a finite amount of bits is a digital representation of the experience of a live orchestral performance. Not a perfect method of capturing an experience, but it is the best we can do at the moment.

According to Hoffmeyer and Emmeche, when verbal communication is “deprived of its personal or subjective anchoring... we are led to conclude that the objectivization of the concept of information has been obtained at the cost of depriving the concept of most of its explanatory power concerning real life situations of human communication.” They assert that culture can be seen as being built on the interaction between the discontinuous signs and stutters of digital language and the analog code of “reality” and “behaviour”: “Needless to say, the concept of a cultural code-duality depends on the acceptance of human ‘reality’ as just another message, i.e., as a kind of information. This view does not imply that human beings are not of blood and flesh. But it implies, that human bodily action — from the simple rhythm of breathing to complicated affairs like that of playing the Goldberg variations of Johann Sebastian Bach or climbing Mount Everest — are always of significance. Life processes are embedded in meaning. They always communicate at least the deep message of the human condition, and most of the time they communicate the slightly less deep meaning of the social condition as well.” Which to us sounds a lot like intuition.

22. This is characterizing the logical positivist as the scientist who will not proceed to the next step until the previous step is absolutely proven (or in the case of the philosopher, logically bulletproof).
23. This is the counterpoint to some failed administrators who blame their plight on the caliber of the team with which they are saddled. These (generally untrusting) administrators often have a cynical

understanding of the concept of motivation, and they are blind to their own acts of shutting down organizational intelligence.

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Chapter 14

Making Democracy Safe for the World: Public Administration in the Political Thought of Woodrow Wilson

Brian J. Cook

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Introduction

As the 1916 presidential campaign pressed on toward election day, Woodrow Wilson felt compelled to defend the Democratic Party against questions about its “radicalism.” Such questions had arisen from business reaction to the progressive social legislation passed during Wilson’s first term. To Alabama attorney John B. Knox, an at-large delegate to the 1912 Democratic National Convention, Wilson wrote: “If by radical you mean that a constant attempt is being made on the part of Democratic leaders to keep abreast of the extraordinary changes of time and circumstance, I can only say that I see no other way to keep the law adjusted to fact and to the actual economic and personal relations of our society. But radicalism is a matter of spirit rather than form and I believe that the truest conservatism consists in constant adaptation” (1).

In this brief commentary, Wilson gave expression to key elements in his political and governmental philosophy: that the nation (and the world) was in the midst of extraordinary economic, social, and political change; that public law was the principal expression of, and vehicle for, realizing the objects of what he called “political society”; that the development of law had to be guided by adaptation to new economic, social, and political facts. Despite that, Wilson felt such adaptation must nevertheless rest on deeply rooted history and tradition. With notable adjustment and development over time, these and related components are clearly evident in Wilson’s thinking, across a span of 40 years, about most everything from municipal administration to world peace.

Wilson drew upon his upbringing for his views about politics, government, and administration. His formal education, and experience as an academic leader, shaped and synthesized his ideas along with his intellect and his keen powers of observation and analysis. Especially influential were the covenant theology of his Presbyterian family tutelage, and an organic view of societal and political development drawn primarily from his reading of the works of Walter Bagehot and Edmund Burke. The idea that conserving a political regime meant evolutionary change rather than stasis, and required purposeful adaptation, is particularly Burkean.

These influences reached a focal point in Wilson’s awakening to the inevitability of modern mass democracy and his concern that it be guided by strong political leadership to preserve order, tradition, and principle,

while facing up to the demands of an age of rapid industrial development and technological change. It was in this context that Wilson gave serious and sustained attention to questions of administration.

Wilson's life was as intense, dynamic, and complex as the nation with which he grew. Stretching from the Civil War to the Roaring Twenties, Wilson marked his span of 67 years with both immense personal accomplishments and physical and emotional pain and loss, all the while witnessing great national progress. Indeed, for at least the decade of 1910–1920, the triumphs and tragedies of man and nation were nearly one and the same.

Befitting a man of intricate intellectual and emotional makeup, whose life covered a great sweep of social, economic, and political change, characterizations of Wilson's ideas, principles, and actions are varied, and assessments of his aims and accomplishments are mixed. Moreover, with the major exception of his predecessors from the American founding (Hamilton, Jefferson, and Madison), and the minor exceptions of Machiavelli and Burke, Wilson stands alone among the individuals featured in this volume as both a man of thought and a man of action. Indeed, his writings on politics and government "were never really academic in character; they were not intended as abstract inquiries. They are more adequately described as preliminary exercises in that leadership of public opinion and constructive statesmanship to which, from the beginning, he passionately devoted his life" (2). Hence he often questioned, in both his scholarship and his political rhetoric, the value of theory unguided by facts gained through practice, experience, and historical growth.

It is therefore necessary that I begin my consideration of a portion of the elaborate spectrum of ideas embodied in Woodrow Wilson's words and actions, and their special meaning for public administration theory and practice, by placing Wilson in an informed historical context. To do so properly requires that I provide an overview of the distinctive impacts of Wilson's thought and deeds over the span of his multifaceted career. With that frame of reference, I can then trace and assess in detail the development of his political thought relevant to his ideas about administration. Finally, I can consider the influence of that thought, and the actions and accomplishments that followed from it, on public administration theory and practice. One can hope that out of this review of Wilson's work, those interested in popular government may find guides to innovation in both study and action lost over the intervening years.

Wilson in Historical Context

It is easy to forget how long ago in time and how far back in cultural distance Woodrow Wilson came of age. He lived more than half his life in the 19th century. When he was born in Staunton, Virginia, his home state had not yet attempted to secede from the Union. His earliest recollection, from the age of four at his family's second home in Augusta, Georgia, was hearing that Abraham Lincoln had been elected and war would follow. In the four years that ensued, he watched his father, a Presbyterian minister, serve as a Confederate Army chaplain and coordinator for local relief efforts. The sanctuary of his father's church served as a military hospital, and the churchyard held Union soldiers as prisoners of war (3).

Equally remarkable in retrospect is that Wilson received his undergraduate degree in 1879, when Rutherford B. Hayes was president, from what was then still called the College of New Jersey. Moreover, the existence of graduate schools and the awarding of doctoral degrees in the United States had been firmly established, at Johns Hopkins University, for less than a decade when Wilson began his graduate study at that institution in 1883.

When *Congressional Government* appeared in print for the first time in 1885, Grover Cleveland was in his first term, and he was the first president to serve with the Pendleton Act fully in force. Over the decade following the publication of that first book, Wilson worked extremely hard on the development of his academic career. As he reached his 40th birthday, he was well ensconced as an immensely popular professor and a faculty leader at Princeton, and he had also established a solid reputation as a public speaker. This was an entire century ago, at the same time that William Jennings Bryan delivered his "Cross of Gold" speech to the Democratic Party convention of 1896.

Following on the heels of considerable economic disruption, the 1896 election proved to be a watershed, in which "the really fundamental struggle was over whether industrialism would supersede agriculture in national priority" (4). Industrialism "won a clear victory" (4), and the 20th century was, for all intents and purposes, underway in the United States. Therefore, many of the distinctive forces and pressures associated with at least the early 20th century actually surfaced in the latter decades of the 1800s, when they would have had maximum impact on Wilson's developing political, social, and economic thought. Indeed, the case is clear that Wilson's ambitions kept him well attuned to the forces of social and political commotion and change from his earliest adulthood (5).

Sentinel for a New Century

Despite substantial anchors in a seemingly bygone era, Woodrow Wilson — because of his peculiar sensitivities and later accomplishments — is thoroughly, if not exclusively, associated with the 20th century, and with modern social, economic, and political reform. Across the major segments of a multistage career, as academic political scientist and “literary” politician and historian, as university administrator and higher education leader, and as national and international statesman, Wilson embodied many of the characteristics, and substantially shaped many of the major ideas and practices, of his era and beyond.

For example, some of the central features of the Progressive Era — the establishment of well-defined and largely self-regulated professions, the emergence of a middle class with an increasingly professional and technical cast and thus increasingly dependent on their minds rather than their hands for their prosperity, the push for economic and social reform with a strong moralistic flavor — manifested themselves in Wilson’s personal growth and development. Wilson was not classically but professionally trained — in law, history, and political science. He also “took an active part in the founding convention of the American Economic Association” (6), was a member of both the American Bar Association and the American Historical Association, and served as sixth president of the American Political Science Association. He built his initial success upon the power of his mind and his pen, and then showed how much it was true that ideas had practical, and lasting, consequences. And, immersed in Presbyterian theology throughout his youth, the spiritual and the moral were always at the center of Wilson’s thought. His spirituality changed and grew over time (3), but like many of the progressive reformers, Wilson ultimately linked moral obligation and public service.

More important than how Wilson’s life and personality reflected prominent features of politics and society in the early 20th century, however, is the far-reaching imprint of his ideas and actions on political and social processes and structures. He sought to reform American democracy (and ultimately the world order) not just to meet his ideals, but to prepare it for the modern age. This is the central theme of my review, in the next section, of the intellectual work associated with his attention to public administration. But it pervades most of the intentions of Wilson’s political practice as well.

Thus, he is perhaps most widely remembered for his idealistic efforts to bring change, and peace, to the international order, so as to make the world safe for democracy. The articulation of his “fourteen points” formed the foundation for the Treaty of Versailles and the charter for the League of Nations. The “points” placed a stamp on international politics that

endures in the ideas, structures, and practices supporting both international law and the formal organization of a body of nation-states committed, if sometimes waywardly, to democratic self-determination, cooperation, and peaceful conflict resolution.

Wilson's foray into the international arena was for the most part an extension of the ideas and actions that he formulated and pursued, and the practical achievements he attained, as a result of his attention to American democracy and its place in the development of human civilization (2). Although a range of scholarly judgment about the extent and value of Wilson's influence exists, much recent scholarship reaches quite sweeping conclusions. Thus, in comparing Wilson's New Freedom with Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, Charles Kesler has concluded that "by virtue of his four elections and the peculiar distress caused by the Depression, President Roosevelt's immediate political legacy [was] more striking and long-lasting than Wilson's. But ... in a sense Wilson's influence was greater and deeper, inasmuch as his theoretical and practical achievements made the New Deal thinkable" (7).

Even more expansively, Scot Zentner has recently claimed that "Wilson's political theory underlies much of American political practice and is therefore crucial to understanding the political developments of our time" (8). And weaving Wilson even more deeply into the modern American political and governmental fabric, Stephen Skowronek has counted Wilson among the few "wild card presidents who have embodied a "politics of preemption" — the rejection of received formulas and ascribed roles — that must be considered seriously as the emergent form of politics in the American regime." Capturing much of the essence of Wilson as both literary and actual politician, Skowronek describes political leaders in such circumstances as having little to rely on except their own "reason, talent, ideas, and character" (9).

Reformer of the First Order

Much of the support for these assessments rests on the foundation of Wilson's reformation of executive power and the place of the presidency in the American constitutional system. Thus Arthur Link, the scholar with the longest and deepest connection to Wilson, concluded that "historians a century hence will probably rate the expansion and perfection of the powers of the presidency as his most lasting contribution" (10). More recently, Jeffrey Tulis reached a similar conclusion and again stressed the indissoluble tie between Wilson's thought and practice: "Woodrow Wilson settled modern practice for all presidents that were to follow him.... More importantly, Wilson legitimized these practices by justifying his behavior with an ambitious reinterpretation of the constitutional order" (11).

One cannot connect the full panoply of Wilson's ideas and actions and their influences on American society directly to his interest in constitutional reform and political leadership or to his behavior as president. He was, for example, despite his open skepticism of science and of a scientific study of politics, involved in the development of the social sciences as a distinct body of academic disciplines, in the professionalization of the separate social science fields, and in the "realist" orientation to the study of politics (5, 12).

Although generally regarded to be an educational traditionalist, as faculty member, and then president of Princeton, Wilson nevertheless led the fight for greater rigor and order in the undergraduate curriculum, searched for new methods to encourage active learning, and pushed for the expansion of graduate education. As part of this effort he became a national spokesman for higher education and its improvement (3, 13). He was also involved in general education reform as perhaps the most influential participant in the 1893 Conference on History, Civil Government, and Political Economy, part of the work of the "Committee of Ten" considering the lack of proper standards for American secondary schools (14, 15).

Nevertheless, most of the changes in politics, government, and society — in structures and processes, practice and thought — associated with Wilson emanate from his lifelong concern for the reform of American government and politics. This was reform he sought so as to improve the chances of strong political leadership emerging and effective governance being realized. These reforms included Wilson's reconstitution of the theory and practice of the presidency and of political leadership under the Constitution more generally, which also concerned the role and use of the media in politics. But they also encompassed municipal government reform, political party and electoral reform, expansion of federal government responsibility and action with advances in social policy and political-economic policy, and changes in the executive organization of government and the operation of administrative systems (12, 16–19).

Through all of this, Wilson's papers and public lectures plainly show, ran the vital thread of concern with democracy's development and success in the face of the challenges and contradictions of modernity. Tracing the origins and unfolding of this concern opens a broad window into Wilson's ideas about administration.

Modernizing Democracy

At the very core of Woodrow Wilson's thought and action regarding politics and public affairs was his concern for understanding and explicating the

essential nature of constitutional democracy, and, once comprehending it, then adapting it to preserve it, given the realities of modern social and economic conditions. Approaching it from a historical perspective and method, Wilson characterized the development of political institutions in organic, evolutionary terms, with “democracy as the apex of the long process” (3). Recognizing “the modern reality of corporate life and mass politics and at the same keep[ing] those forces in check” became the aim of his political philosophy (20). Essentially, Wilson engaged in a shifting intellectual and practical struggle for most of his adult life to conceive, form, and bring to reality a modern administrative state resting upon a not altogether accommodating foundation of democratic individualism.

Origins

The sources of Wilson’s strong attraction to the subject of democracy, its development, and its problems are relatively clear. He was of Scottish, Irish, and English heritage, and since boyhood he had been fascinated by British culture and traditions, and British statesmen and political institutions. At least up to the turn of the century, he regarded the British political system as the highest stage of organic development of democratic society. Furthermore, the covenant theology of his Presbyterianism stressed the existence of a “divine scheme of government of the world” (3), and “in its system of presbyteries, synods, and a General Assembly, [the] Presbyterian polity operated under the fundamental assumption that God’s will for the church was determined by the church’s representatives through discussion, debate, and majority votes, guided by the Holy Spirit” (3).

Together, these influences were the font, obviously, of Wilson’s view that the best kind of democratic governance stressed discussion, debate, and oratory. He expressed this in his manuscript “Government by Debate,” in the relatively well-known observation that “It is natural that orators should be the leaders of a self-governing people” (14). Moreover, Wilson held to the maxim throughout the rest of his life and career that discussion, debate, and the unity it could achieve were critical to modern democratic rule. To realize such unity required that constitutional barriers to it had to be overcome, either by changes in form, which he first considered, or in practice, which he ultimately expounded and attempted.

In addition, as part of his self-directed study, before he entered graduate school at Johns Hopkins, Wilson had closely read and critiqued Alexis de Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America* (14). It was Tocqueville who had most clearly and forcefully made the claim of democracy’s inevitable ascendancy, declaring that a “great democratic revolution is taking place in our midst,” which is “universal and permanent” (21).

Finally, Wilson's first clear stirrings of political ambition came in his mid-20s, in connection with national agitation over civil service reform. Expanding, or perhaps more accurately improving, democracy was a central plank in the civil service reform platform. Wilson envisioned himself in the thick of the reform crusade, if not actually leading it. But to do so, he concluded, required further study on his part. Thus he turned to graduate school and "studies in politics and administration" (3, 14).

The reasons for his central concern with the impact of modernity — the social upheavals and new social forms, but especially the economic and technological transformations and the emergence of new economic organizations — are less obvious. As I have already stressed, he grew up witnessing those forces at work in America after the Civil War. But he also studied political economy as both an undergraduate and graduate student, first embracing "the unthinking orthodoxy" of laissez-faire (13) while an undergraduate. He was then shaken from that embrace by Richard Ely at Johns Hopkins. Wilson took a "minor course" in political economy with Ely his first semester at Johns Hopkins (14). By the time he had completed his chapter for a collaboration with Ely and another graduate student on a history of political economy two years later, Wilson showed that he had "assimilated the assumptions of the new economics," which held that "economic theories and policies were the product of local situations and historical development" (14).

Development and Fusion of Concerns

Wilson was never a full-blown populist. Yet he came to believe deeply in the power and importance of public opinion in modern government, and he championed it in his political career. He had to traverse quite a distance in his thinking about the meaning of popular rule to reach that position, however. Thus in his shorthand diary, compiled in the middle of his undergraduate years, he condemned universal suffrage as "the foundation of every evil in this country" (14). He further explored the problems of universal suffrage in an essay written in 1878 (14), and in 1879 he declared that "it is indisputably true that universal suffrage is a constant element of weakness, and exposes us to many dangers which we might otherwise escape" (14).

In the same passage of that same essay — "Cabinet Government in the United States" published in the *International Review* — Wilson also stressed that universal suffrage "does not suffice alone to explain existing evils." The real cause, previewing the argument that would find its fullest expression in *Congressional Government*, was "the absorption of all power by a legislature which is practically irresponsible for its acts" because it operates a committee system that conceals its business behind closed

doors (14). That government in a democracy was best conducted in the full light of public scrutiny was a core principle that Wilson held to as both scholar and statesman.

Underlying his harsh views about popular political participation was a concern about the cultivation of good political leadership and effective institutional management. “His influence in undergraduate organizations ... was usually intended to reduce popular control in the interest of greater efficiency” (13). In his 1878 essay “Some Thoughts on the Present State of Public Affairs,” Wilson argued that “a popular constituency” favored qualities in candidates that could only be acquired at the same time that “young men” should already be in training for legislative leadership. Hence popular influence biased the system against cultivating effective new leaders (14).

By the time of his “Cabinet Government” essay, however, Wilson was already showing signs not of a concern for the importance of restricting popular opinion to encourage the development of political leadership, but for the importance of expanding the proper expression of the popular will through political leadership. The signs grew stronger in his essay “Committee or Cabinet Government?” published in 1884 as a condensed version of the flawed and therefore never-published book manuscript “Government by Debate.” In this essay Wilson continued to champion parliamentary government, but his concern was “the way it promote[d] the democratic process,” and he attacked from several angles the party caucus system, in legislatures at all levels of government, that “inhibit[ed] the popular will” (13).

In *Congressional Government*, Wilson continued this stress on facilitating a properly structured expression of the popular will, while dropping any advocacy of particular governmental alternatives and reforms. The object of his scrutiny was the congressional committee system and its deleterious impact on the nation’s capacity for self-government. Indeed, Wilson was especially concerned with a properly *informed* public opinion, that then could guide “the people’s authorized representatives” (22). What makes *Congressional Government* stand out, however, is the rationale Wilson offers for his inquiry, stated clearly in the “Introductory” (22).

Unquestionably, the pressing problems of the present moment regard the regulation of our vast systems of commerce and manufacture, the control of giant corporations, the restraint of monopolies, the perfection of fiscal arrangements, the facilitating of economic exchanges, and many other like national concerns.... It becomes a matter of the utmost importance, therefore ... to examine critically the government upon which this new weight of responsibility and power seems likely to

be cast, in order that its capacity both for the work it now does and for that which it may be called upon to do may be definitely estimated.

Wilson thus had brought together in a single treatise the two great objects of his intellectual interest, and of his political ambition and civic concern. He sought to reveal the central facts concerning how the federal government, particularly Congress, operated. This would illuminate the weaknesses in the American system of self-government that required attention before American democracy could safely confront the economic and social forces and stresses of the modern age.

Wilson continued the development of his thinking on democracy in his next two major works, essays on "The Modern Democratic State" and "Responsible Government under the Constitution." In the former, written at the end of 1885 and published in revised form in 1889, Wilson still expressed reservations about universal suffrage. "Not mere universal suffrage constitutes democracy. Universal suffrage may confirm a coup d'etat which destroys liberty" (14). Nevertheless, he advanced substantially his organic conception of democracy and the centrality of popular opinion as the most elevated stage of human social and political development (14).

Democracy means a form of government wh[ic]h secures absolute equality of status before the law, and under which the decisive, final control of public affairs rests with the whole body of adult males amongst whom the largest liberty of opinion, of discussion, and of political choice prevails. More briefly, it is gov[er]nment] by universal popular discussion. Most briefly, it is gov[er]nment] by public opinion.

Such a gov[er]nment] really constitutes the people's sovereign. But their sovereignty is of a peculiar sort.... It is judicial, not creative. It passes judgment, or gives sanction; it does not direct. It furnishes standards, not policies. [Not] popular gov[er]nment] and "gov[er]nment] by the people"; but gov[er]nment] in the sense of control, not gov[er]nment] in the sense of the conduct of policy.

[T]he democracy which is now becoming dominant is a *new* democracy,... informed with a life and surrounded by controlling conditions altogether modern.

Properly organized democracy is the best gov[er]nment] of the few. This is the meaning of representative institutions.... Elections transmit the forces of thought and purpose and sentiment from every part of the vast organism to these chief, these

capital organs; and the democratic constitution is at its best only when these organs respond with quick sensitiveness to the suggestions of the body.

Democracy is the fullest form of state life: it is the completest possible realization of corporate-cooperative state for a whole people.... The limit to the benefits of political cooperation is ... to be found by experiment, as everything else has been found in politics.

Similarly, in “Responsible Government,” written in early 1886, Wilson argued that American political institutions rested on “the same basis, upon no other foundations than those that are laid in the opinions of the people” (14). He found that “the heart of our whole system” rested with “the legal conscience of the people of this country” (14). And he again warned that “grave social and economic problems now putting themselves forward, as the result of the tremendous growth and concentration of our population, and the consequent sharp competition for the means of livelihood,” could not be handled by an inept, unresponsive government. The “commercial heats and political distempers” already evident in the “body politic” had to be addressed by reform that provided legislation effectively “sanctioned by the public voice” (14).

With *Congressional Government* and the two major essays that followed it, Wilson had worked out key elements of his political philosophy that he would carry with him in further scholarship, and in his career as an academic and political leader. With Tocqueville, Wilson accepted the inevitable development and diffusion of mass democracy. Wilson also regarded it as the highest form of human social development, particularly because it provided the individual the best conditions for developing his full potential (8). Wilson’s views in this regard are remarkably similar to what William Hudson has labeled “developmental democracy” (23).

But democracy’s inevitability did not guarantee its triumph. Although Wilson’s approach was organic or evolutionary, he did not see democracy’s development as driven by immutable natural law. Human choice, and thus politics, was involved. Hence, again with Tocqueville, Wilson concluded that democracy had to be properly understood and explained, and his explanation was that public opinion was a *controlling* not a *deciding* force. Public opinion gave general expression to national purpose, and it placed constraints on those given the responsibility to govern. But public opinion did not decide specifically what to do. That was the domain of governors — legislators, executives, and administrators. Thus, as Wilson argued with increasing frequency, eloquence, and force in the two decades that followed, public opinion as the core of modern democracy had to be properly led, or more accurately, “interpreted” (11).

Wilson launched his further endeavors to understand the relationship between the people, as the ultimate sovereigns, and elected officials, as the immediate rulers, and how that relationship could best be structured to promote effective governance in the face of the already vast and rapidly increasing social and economic demands of the modern age, by following two lines of development. First, he promoted the systematic study of public administration with the intention of stimulating the adaptation and refinement of administrative methods that would improve the basic capacity and competence of American governments. This ultimately became an effort by Wilson to describe and establish normative principles for public administration's institutional status and role in a liberal democratic regime. In other words, he sought to reconcile modern bureaucracy with popular rule.

Second, Wilson worked further on the problems of popular political leadership, that is, the leadership of public opinion, which the design of the American system imposed. This path he ultimately followed to a thorough reinterpretation of American constitutional doctrine, placing the presidency at the center of the political system, and setting the theoretical foundation for his practices as president.

The work on administration was the more intensely scholarly of the two paths, while the work on democracy and leadership developed with Wilson's expanded career in more popular writing and public lecturing. I lend my attention in the remaining discussion of his intellectual development to his work on administration, both because it is the subject of this volume, and because it has not received the extensive dissection and interpretation it deserves, despite now 20 years of relatively easy access to the key Wilson papers. Wilson also started down the administration path first, although he worked in both areas over roughly the same period. The two intersected periodically, culminating with his final scholarly work: his Blumenthal lectures at Columbia University, published as *Constitutional Government in the United States*.

The Study of Administration

David Steigerwald has argued that Wilson's interest in administration had its roots in his emersion and adherence to a Whig conception of public affairs, especially an emphasis on good government practice to serve the public good (20). But Steigerwald goes on to argue that Wilson's fuller turn to "an academic preoccupation with state administration ... proved both unsatisfying and temporary" (20). The problem, Steigerwald contends, is that in *The State*, the book in which Wilson "worked his ideas [on administration] out more fully" (20), Wilson mistakenly replaced the "self-

restrained individual” with the state as the source of “balance between self-interest and the common good” (20). Thus Wilson “momentarily” characterized politics “as the give and take of everyday administration” (20). Wilson quickly realized this was not in keeping with his “Whig” tenets. He became dissatisfied with the foray into administrative study and moved to other, more lucrative pursuits, including “a series of writings in popular history” (20).

Steigerwald is at least partly mistaken in this regard. Certainly, no evidence appears among Wilson’s published papers to indicate he was disillusioned with the study of administration and abandoned it because of that. His lectures on the subject at Johns Hopkins did impose a great burden on him in time and separation from his family. He continued to teach on the subject for at least seven years after the publication of *The State*, however. The editors of his papers have made a persuasive case that Wilson’s lectures on administration at Johns Hopkins and Princeton show substantial conceptual development over time. They also played an integral part in the continued development of his political ideas (14). Wilson’s work on administration was not an unprofitable detour, then. Instead, it was a critical part of the overall development of his political philosophy.

Initial Attention to the Subject

Henry Bragdon argues that Wilson had “begun to concern himself with administration as well as with legislation and matters of high policy” in the “Committee or Cabinet Government?” essay of early 1884. The editors of Wilson’s papers locate his first writing directly on the subject to his articles “The ‘Courtesy of the Senate’” and “The Art of Governing” of late 1885. Yet *Congressional Government*, which comes in between, was as much about administration as anything else, as Wilson made plain in the original preface.

There, he announced that his chief aim for the book was to make “as plain as possible the actual conditions of federal administration.” He identified “two principal types” of administration, “which present themselves for the instruction of the modern student of the practical in politics: administration by semi-independent executive agents who obey the dictation of a legislature to which they are not responsible [i.e., congressionally], and administration by executive agents who are accredited leaders and accountable servants of a legislature virtually supreme in all things [i.e., parliamentary]” (22). Wilson was, of course, concerned with patronage, corruption, and thus civil service reform. Yet the chief problem with “the federal administration” that Wilson found was mostly not with administration itself, but with the organization and operation of the legislature. Hence he devoted three of his six chapters to detailed analysis of Congress.

But he did address administration directly in his chapter on the executive, and his concern there, as throughout the book, was with fixing clear responsibility for the actions of administration, and giving the public every opportunity to exercise its “control” and “judgment” as a result. Moreover, at this early stage in his treatment of the subject, his conception of administration was exclusively instrumental, and from that emerged his first statement on the now famous, or infamous, politics-administration dichotomy.

Wilson characterized administration as “something that men must learn, not something to skill in which they are born. Americans take to business of all kinds more naturally than any other nation ever did, and *the executive duties of government constitute just an exalted kind of business*” (emphasis added) (22). Wilson stated this in the context of his discussion of the president as the chief administrative officer, for whom he advocated adequate preparation and training. That would give individuals occupying the presidential office the time to develop their capacity for efficiency. Efficiency in turn, he insisted, “is the only just foundation for confidence in a public officer, under republican institutions no less than under monarchs” (22).

Wilson acknowledged that the president was not the entire executive. Indeed, almost all “executive functions are specifically bestowed upon the heads of the departments” (22). Wilson noted that over the course of the development of the constitutional system, these public officials had been recognized as being “independent rather than merely ministerial” (22), but that this independence was never very clearly defined. This ambiguity in the status of administrative officers violated his principle that responsibility must be clearly fixed. The separation of powers, furthermore, was a major source of that blurring of responsibility, accompanied by the development of the fragmented committee system in Congress.

As he had already argued before, much preferable was the British cabinet system, which cleaved to the principle that “the representatives of the people are the proper ultimate authority in all matters of government, and that *administration is merely the clerical part of government*. Legislation is the originating force. It determines what shall be done” (emphasis added) (22).

To correct the consequences of blurred responsibility required, among other things, civil service reform. But the separation of powers also blocked effective reform in the United States because of the same confusion it created over who was a political officer in the government and who was not. Recognizing a fundamental distinction between politics and administration thus was an independent prerequisite of reform.

One of the conditions precedent to any real and lasting reform of the civil service, in a country whose public service is moulded by the conditions of self-government, is the drawing of a sharp line of distinction between those offices which are political and those which are *non*-political. The strictest rules of business discipline, of merit-tenure and earned promotion, must rule every office whose incumbent has naught to do with choosing between policies; but no rules except the choice of parties can or should make and unmake, reward or punish, those officers whose privilege it is to fix upon the political purposes which administration shall be made to serve (emphasis in original) (22).

Questions about whether, and to what extent, Wilson contributed to the establishment of the politics-administration dichotomy have engendered considerable debate (4, 12, 24–27). It is difficult, however, to interpret Wilson's argument in *Congressional Government* in any other way than that politics and administration are distinct functions or activities, substantively and institutionally. "Politics," he argued, "involved choosing between policies" and "fix[ing] upon political purposes," while administration was the work of bringing policies and purposes to realization. The one thing Wilson made clear was that he regarded the distinction as critically important to democratic governance, but that the separation of powers obscured it, resulting in both bad policy and bad administration.

Wilson concluded that politics and administration, although distinct realms and activities, had to be properly and securely linked. Again, the separation of powers and the congressional committee system stood in the way of achieving this linkage in the United States, because in obscuring the distinction between the two, they weakened legislative responsibility for administration (28). This created the "forcible and unnatural divorce-ment of legislation and administration" (22). Such was of serious concern, because it undermined public confidence in the executive (22), left the nation "helpless to learn how it was being served" (22), and distracted "legislation from all attention to anything like an intelligent planning and superintendence of policy" (22).

In *Congressional Government*, Wilson argued quite clearly for a distinction between politics, or perhaps more accurately, legislation, and administration. They required separate institutional arrangements, but they were nonetheless linked functionally and instrumentally, with administration subordinate to legislation (28). This did not mean administration was of minor importance. On the contrary, administration could be equated with governing ("...legislation is like a foreman set over the forces of

government. It issues the orders which others obey. It directs, it admonishes, but it does not do the actual heavy work of governing”) (22).

Governing was, nonetheless, a wholly instrumental activity. It was the work of fulfilling the purposes set by politics, especially the politics of constitution making. This put Wilson squarely in the same camp as most of the American founders (29). Yet out of this initial conception, and “the universal principal of institutional change” he explicated in *Congressional Government* (22), Wilson eventually developed descriptive and normative arguments that recognized governing, and thus administration, as not merely instrumental to the polity. Much more, he concluded, law and administration were constitutive of the polity, that is, they gave new shape to the character of the citizenry, and new purpose to the regime.

Toward a Constitutive Conception of Administration

The works that the editors of Wilson’s papers identify as his first writings on administration appear at about the same time as “The Modern Democratic State.” The editors read in these essays Wilson’s first efforts to address the “problem of how democracy could make professional civil servants responsible to public opinion without impairing their efficiency” (14). They see him “working toward a definition of the field [of administration] that would be relevant in a democratic political system” (14).

Like the major theme in *Congressional Government*, Wilson directed his attention in “The ‘Courtesy of the Senate’” to the importance of fixing responsibility for administration. Despite the title, Wilson found the problem of patronage and “private consultation” on executive appointments most acute in municipalities. He accepted merit selection and professionalization as a part of the remedy, but equally if not more important was to fix clearly ultimate responsibility. This in turn would fix the attention of administrators on their most important concern: efficiency. Responsibility for administration was best secured, furthermore, by subjecting appointment to the judgment of public opinion. Thus Wilson concluded that the “justice of public examination is to be preferred to the ‘courtesy’ of private consultation” (14).

Wilson carried these themes of the controlling force of public opinion and the clear fixing of responsibility for administration forward through “The Art of Governing” and into section II of his 1887 essay, “The Study of Administration.” Indeed, one his most well-turned phrases therein is that “large powers and unhampered discretion seem to me the indispensable conditions of responsibility. Public attention must be easily directed, in each case of good or bad administration, to just the man deserving of praise or blame” (30).

But Wilson's field of view was even broader in the 1887 article, because at base he was still pursuing his concern for adjusting democracy to the modern age. "Old as democracy is, its organization on a basis of modern ideas and conditions is still an unaccomplished work. The democratic state has yet to be equipped for carrying those enormous burdens of administration which the needs of this industrial and trading age are so fast accumulating" (30). Hence, adjusting democracy meant improving its capacity for governance — for administration — and this posed challenges of its own. The principal difficulties lay not only in properly fixing responsibility, however, but also in adapting to democracy administrative methods whose origins rest with authoritarian regimes, and then finding the proper relationship between administration and democratic control. Thus, a more systematic study, especially a comparative study, of administration was called for.

The platform on which the proper arrangements for administration and democratic control are established Wilson made plain in *Congressional Government*, and he repeated it in the 1887 essay: "The Separation of Politics and Administration" (30). As countless public administration scholars since the 1930s have argued, and as Wilson himself recognized, such a conception is descriptively inadequate. Worse, as part of the long train of development in American politics in which political and governmental theory is ever more sharply disconnected from reality and practice (31), the dichotomy is normatively pernicious. An alternative conception of public administration for democratic governance is required, and Wilson expended considerable intellectual energy in the quest, beginning with the 1887 essay.

The 1887 Essay Revisited

Stillman (32), Miewald (33), and Van Riper (24), among others, have concluded that Wilson's first attempt to tackle directly the subject of administration was confused, and even contradictory. This is reason enough not to treat the 1887 essay as the primary source of Wilson's ideas about public administration. But the confusion and contradiction are themselves revealing because of Wilson's central concern with the adaptation of democracy to the modern world through the adoption of effective administrative methods. He thought this possible, again, because he saw administration as amenable to systematic study. And it was so because it involved not the "dull level of technical detail," but the "lasting maxims of political wisdom, the permanent truths of political progress" that transcended even "the debatable ground" of constitutional principle (30). In this context, the first hints of further development in Wilson's thinking about what public administration was

and what it should be, particularly how it was related to “policy politics” (34), emerged.

The core problem in the development of “democratic” administration for Wilson was distilling administrative methods based on those “lasting maxims” and “permanent truths,” placing those methods into the hands of a well-trained administrative cadre, and giving those hands sufficient space to operate without violating the principle of popular rule, more accurately, consent of the governed. But the problem was further exacerbated by the challenges of modernity.

In tackling the problem, Wilson ran into the obstacle posed by a purely instrumental distinction between politics and administration. As Kent Kirwin has explained, “After asserting that administration is a separate realm and proclaiming it to be purely instrumental or mechanical in character, [Wilson] admits that ‘in any practicable government’ (30), it is impossible to establish lines of demarcation between administrative and political functions” (25). Part of the problem, Wilson argued, was that a “great deal of administration goes about *incognito* to most of the world, being confounded now with political ‘management,’ and again with constitutional principle” (30). In other words, politics and administration, although essentially distinct, continued to be confused. But the reason for the difficulty in establishing clear lines of separation was also that “in practice administration is deeply embedded in law” (26).

Public administration’s essential instrumental quality was still at the center of attention, because to speak of it in practical terms “is to speak of it with reference to some end,” and it is law “that gives public administration its definition, that *provides its ends*, and establishes the basis for the choice of means” (emphasis added) (26). So public administration is the practice of government, the matching of “special means” to “general plans” (30). Public administration is nevertheless permeated by politics, or “the evaluative” (26), because the administrator “should have and does have a will of his own in the choice of means for accomplishing his work. He is not and ought not to be a mere passive instrument” (30). Furthermore, questions of administration do tread on political, or, more precisely, constitutional ground, because administrative questions concern both efficiency and trustworthiness, and these are inextricably linked to questions about “the proper distribution of constitutional authority” and the suitable fixing of responsibility (30).

Although the distinction between politics and administration was difficult to maintain in practice, Wilson regarded the distinction as analytically essential for normative theory and the practice of democratic government that would follow it. The central problem was “to establish structural arrangements affording an unhampered expression and an unhampered

implementation of the popular will” (26). Paradoxically, public opinion could interfere with the efficient implementation of the popular will! (14, 26, 28, 30).

Eventually, Wilson concluded that a key part of the answer to the paradox was reliance on the government official closest to public opinion — the president — who therefore could direct and interpret that opinion as much as respond to it (35). But the more immediate answer was “an autonomous civil service, the members of which are obedient to their superiors who, at the top, are responsive to the representatives of the people” (26). Hence the separation of politics (the expression of popular will) from administration, and the differentiation between two types of officials fulfilling these distinct functions, was necessary.

Steady, hearty allegiance to the policy of the government [administrators] serve will constitute good behavior. The *policy* will have no taint of officialism about it. It will not be the creation of permanent officials, but of statesmen whose responsibility to public opinion will be direct and inevitable (emphasis in original) (30).

Perhaps the only clear and consistent theme in the 1887 essay is that administration should be the object of intense, systematic study, and that the results of such study had great potential for contributing to improvements in democratic governance. What public administration’s relationship to democratic politics is, or should be, comes across in the essay as somewhat more tangled and ambiguous. Still, Wilson was reasonably consistent in holding to the idea of a distinction between politics and administration, in which administration is the vehicle for realizing the collective aspirations of the community.

Wilson was still in the first stage of his thinking about the relationship between administration and politics, and the place that administration should occupy in constitutional government. But he was on the verge of taking the next step, because the 1887 essay shows a dawning realization on Wilson’s part that administration was somehow implicated in the formation of collective aspirations, and thus in the constitution of the community. Sidney Milkis has stated it quite dramatically. “Wilson’s concept of a separation of politics and administration camouflages his commitment to a very important political role for the bureaucracy — the infusing of liberal democracy with the institutional capability for a significant expansion of public action” (19). In other words, a new, self-conscious or “self-aware” (36), public administration was critical to adapting American democracy to the modern world because it would alter how

citizens thought of government, particularly what they thought it should do and how they related to it.

I would not go quite as far as Milkis in my interpretation of Wilson's thinking as represented by the 1887 essay. Nonetheless, in his lectures on public administration, politics, and public law of the decade that followed, Wilson did indeed delineate a distinctive institutional domain and constitutive role for public administration in constitutional democracy.

The Lectures on Administration

Wilson presaged the initial direction his lectures on administration would take in a short, unpublished essay of August 1887, in which he compared socialism and democracy. He acknowledged toward the end of the essay that socialism and democracy rested on the same essential principle: "that every man shall have an equal chance with every other man" (14). Moreover, in the "contest ... between government and dangerous combinations [of wealth and influence]" that defined much of the character of the modern social world, democracy might admit the need "to superintend every man's use of his chance." The essential concern became how the "community ... can act with practical advantage" in this superintendence. Socialism and democracy differed in their approaches to this concern, and thus on a "question of policy primarily, but also a question of organization, that is to say of *administration*" (emphasis in original) (14).

Wilson at this point had defined politics as a matter of what the state was to do and how it was to do it. Much the same conception is evident in his first lecture on administration organized for Johns Hopkins. Wilson observed that "We must know what, in the main, the functions of government are before we can go on with advantage to Administration's narrower questions as to the way in which they are to be performed" (14). But he also contended that, "The State in a large and increasing measure shapes our lives.... Business-like the administration of government may and should be — but it is not business. It is organic social life. The way in which it occupies that sphere is our subject, the subject of *Administration*" (emphasis in original) (14).

Here was a truly expansive conception of administration; it is the organization of social life, not just legal prescription and command. It should thus be studied accordingly. This suggests Wilson's abandonment of the more narrow, functionally instrumental conception of administration from the 1887 essay. If administration concerned organic social life, then it must be fundamentally political and would have a substantial impact on the character and aspirations of the citizenry.

The editors of Wilson's papers conclude that this "first definition" of administration Wilson "embodied *en passant*" in his text *The State* (14).

This is also the conception that Steigerwald concludes Wilson found untenable, and which led him to reject his foray into administration as a subject of study. Certainly, by 1890 Wilson had pulled back somewhat from what he concluded was too broad a formulation (14), but he did not reject the efficacy of the subject. Quite the opposite, he engaged in new and vigorous conceptual development on the topic after discovering the German literature on public law.

In this new conceptual development, Wilson established the essential idea of administration as law-related, but ranging beyond the boundaries of law itself. He defined the field of administrative activity as “the field of the discretionary effectiveness of institutions — the field, not of Law, but of the exercise (realization) of legalized function” (14). He continued to refine the idea of administration as institutionally a distinctive function by making fully clear that the distinction was between legislation and administration (14). But he also characterized administration as “itself a source of Law (Ordinance) i.e., of the *detail* only, not law” (emphasis in original). (14)

By 1891, Wilson argued that “legislation,... as well as Administration, may be described as the active promotion of the ends of the State” (14). He described the difference between law and administration as the difference “between origination with its wide range of choice, and discretion with its narrow range of choice,” and thus that the field of administration encompassed “the field of organization, of effective means for the accomplishment of practical ends” (14). It was at this point that Wilson began to arrive at a more complete recognition that administration encompassed not only instrumental but also constitutive qualities.

Thus, in concluding that administration was part of public law, Wilson continued to argue that “Administration is indirectly a constant source of public law.” He contended that it is “through Administration that the State makes [a] test of its own powers and of the public needs — makes [a] test also of law, its efficiency, suitability, etc.” (14). Taking this a step further, Wilson argued that administration “is always in contact with the present: it is the State’s experiencing organ. It is thus that it becomes a source of law: directly, by the growth [of] administrative practice or tradition” (14). As Wilson had argued in 1890, when the people and their legislative representatives were engaged in making choices about appropriate means, and deliberating about the effectiveness of institutions, this was best ventured “under the guidance of men trained in the observance of political fact and force.” Such men were “the heads of administration” (14).

Wilson maintained throughout his lectures that administration was substantively and institutionally distinctive, and subordinate to legislating. Thus he continued to maintain that “we must make the distinction between

offices of policy and control and *offices of administration proper* (emphasis in original): the distinction between policy and administrative instrumentalities" (14). Yet administration was also an integral component of politics and the law; it was part of what made up (constituted) the law and politics of a liberal democratic regime. Hence Wilson insisted that administration "cannot be divorced from its intimate connexions [*sic*] with the other branches of Public Law without being distorted and robbed of its true significance. Its foundations are those deep and permanent principles of Politics which have been quarried from history and built into constitutions; and it may by no means properly be considered apart from constitutions" (14).

Another way in which he states this is in his depiction of the stages of state development. In the "law state," a stage of development the United States had reached, but which was short of the "constitutional state," people and administration were bound together "under a common system of law.... Community and government were integrated under a common power, the power of the Law." But in the constitutional state, achieved by the English constitution, administration is subject to the laws, while "not necessarily organized, energized, and commissioned at every point by the laws" (14). Indeed it is a common theme running through Wilson's lectures that administration transcends in some ways statutory law, that it "cannot wait upon legislation, *but must be given leave*, or take it, to proceed without specific warrant *in giving effect to the characteristic life of the State*. Administration rests upon customary, and so to say essential, law as well as upon legislation" (emphasis in original) (14).

Miewald has determined that as Wilson's theorizing continued to develop, the "organic concept drew Wilson further away from the ideal of absolute laws of administration." Wilson moved to a position in which he saw questions of administration as regime-specific, centering on "the integration of the public service within the distinctive life of a single nation" (33). Although he may have abandoned the idea of universal laws of administration that were discoverable through systematic study, he never abandoned the notion that administration extended in part beyond statutory law, and thus had a hand in shaping the law and the public purposes law expressed.

Wilson's most compelling statement on the nature of administration and its place in a liberal democratic regime connected his understanding of its constitutiveness with his long-standing core concern for the relationship between administration and the controlling force of public sentiment.

Administration, therefore, sees government in contact with the people. It rests its whole form along the line which is drawn in each State between *Interference* and *Laissez-faire*. It thus

touches, directly or indirectly, the whole practical side of social endeavor. Its Questions are questions of *adjustment*, the adjustment of means to ends, not only, but of governmental function to *historical conditions*, to liberty (emphasis in original) (14).

Concluding the point, Wilson echoed Tocqueville, who had argued that the political effects of administration directly influenced the character of the citizenry (21). “Here lie, of course, the test [questions] as to the success or failure of government. There is *an organization which vitalizes*, and there is *an organization which kills*. If government energizes the people by the measure of assistance which it affords, it is good; if it decreases the energy and healthful independence of individual initiative, it is bad — bad just to the extent it does this” (emphasis in original) (14).

Here, it seems, is a clear statement by Wilson of a constitutive conception of administration. How the state is organized to operate — the domain of administration being organizational effectiveness, that is, the adjustment of experience and law, or facts and ideals — is vital to determining the character of its citizens, or more generally the civic vitality of the regime. To be sure, administration is still primarily an instrumentality of politics, but by virtue of the central function it performs, it invariably has a formative effect on the polity.

Wilson took one further formal step in clarifying his ideas about the relationships between politics, constitutions, and administration. It surfaced in his Princeton lectures on the “Elements of Politics” and “Constitutional Government,” delivered nearly in parallel between early March 1898 and late November 1900, and in his last formal notes for the major work he planned but never started nor completed, the “Philosophy of Politics.”

In his “Elements of Politics” notes, he characterized politics as of broader significance than political science, “because it is a study of life and motive as well as form and object” (14). He defined politics, then, as “the study of the life of States; of the genesis and operation of institutions; of the ideas, purposes, and motives of men in political society” (14).

Wilson argued that the objects of political society were many and varied because of the varied histories and political lives of nations. Yet two common objects were order and progress. Four modern political ideas have shaped the pursuit of these objects by political societies: self-government, freedom, equality, and nationality and humanity (which he alternately labeled internationality). Wilson clearly saw politics as concerned with the most basic questions of civilization, of people living in society — the motives, ideals, and purposes they have. In contrast, constitutional government, law, and administration were the integrated institutional instruments of political society, the means by which political purposes could be achieved.

Thus in his “Constitutional Government” lectures, he defined its “ultimate and essential object” to “bring the active and planning will of each part of the [government] into *accord with the prevailing popular thought and need*, and to make it an impartial instrument of all-round national development” (emphasis in original) (14). As he had from *Congressional Government* onward, Wilson saw law-making and administration as distinct, but closely linked. He elaborated on the object of constitutional government as “a cordial understanding between people and government,” and a most fully developed constitutional government was that “under which the cordial understanding extends *beyond questions of fundamental law* to questions of administration and policy” (emphasis in original) (14).

Although constitutions, laws, and administration were instruments of politics and the purposes politics seek to realize, Wilson left no doubt that he understood all three to exert formative effects on those purposes. He made this clear in his discussion of the “moulding and modifying power of law” in his “Constitutional Government” notes (14) in which experiment and experience, particularly in the hands of administrative experts, play a prominent role. He stated it finally and unequivocally in his last notes for his “Philosophy of Politics.”

Institutions are subsequent to character. They do not create character, but are created and sustained by it. After being successfully established, however, they both confirm and modify national character, forming in no small degree both national thought and national purpose — certainly national ideals (14).

The Impacts of Wilson’s Thought and Action

By the eve of his selection as president of Princeton University, Wilson had attained a remarkably subtle, complex conceptualization of administration in a democratic polity. Public-administration scholars and practitioners alike can share the twinge of regret that he never articulated his understanding in a completed manuscript for his “Philosophy of Politics.”

As Wilson moved, year by year, deeper into the world of political action and away from the world of ideas, few if any manifestations of this understanding surface in the political rhetoric of his correspondence, essays, and speeches. He emphasized, instead, the importance of administration in carrying out the law, and its subordination to elected officials and ultimately to public opinion through political leadership and interpretation (37). And he certainly subordinated his concern for civil service reform, efficiency, and effective administrative organization to the impor-

tance of achieving and maintaining party unity in Congress and between the White House and Capitol Hill (38, 39).

Of course, over time Wilson had clearly begun to position himself to realize his life's ambition. Thus more obviously practical political concerns — getting elected and reelected, promoting, explaining, and defending policy proposals, leading the nation and the world in war and peace — came to dominate his spoken and written words and his actions. It is also true, however, that Wilson's political rhetoric and practices show the unmistakable imprint of his ideas about political leadership. His speeches during the 1912 presidential campaign and as president made frequent references to leadership and the interpretation of public opinion. His actions — particularly the establishment of regular press conferences and the precedent-shattering addresses to Congress direct and in person — announced even more resonantly that Wilson had made his theory of executive political leadership his practical guide.

Perhaps the disjunction between Wilson's treatment of administration in concept and his treatment of it in practice can be explained by the change in his political outlook. As both Arthur Link and John Rohr have pointed out, during the time when Wilson gave his most concentrated attention to administration, his political views were demonstrably conservative (5, 40). His close affinity to the philosophy of Edmund Burke is *prima facie* evidence, and at this time he stressed the importance of societal order and the controlling force of law. He thus gave expression to an expansive conception of the state (3).

Following first the stroke he suffered in 1896, then the conflicts over the organization of student life at Princeton that he experienced in the second half of his university presidency, and finally the contacts from Democratic party stalwarts which suggested he might finally realize his political ambitions, Wilson turned to an increasingly progressive political orientation. Wilson's progressivism increased in strength, in fact, throughout his two terms as president. With this outlook, then, Wilson stressed the critical role and influence of the views of the mass of common men, and the importance of subordinating administration to public opinion, and maintaining control over it from above, especially in the person of the president as national leader and interpreter.

Unity, institutional cooperation, and presidential leadership of party and Congress, rather than administration, formed the centerpiece of Wilson's governing philosophy, and the foundation on which he pursued a reform program. Thus he did not make administration the core of a major transformation of the American regime in the manner of Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal (19). Nevertheless, Wilson did lay some of the critical conceptual and practical building blocks. Thus it seems appropriate to concur with Larry Walker's conclusion that "Wilson's influence on twen-

tieth-century public administration has occurred *least of all* through his direct influence on academic public-administration theory” (12).

In the realm of ideas, Walker argues, Wilson contributed substantially not only to the establishment of the social sciences as distinctive academic disciplines, but also to the establishment of political science as one of the premiere social sciences. He also contributed significantly, in his writings and lectures, to advances in both methods of study and pedagogy. “Through both word and example, then, Wilson promoted a dramatic revolution in political study” (12). By helping to establish securely political science as an academic subject, moreover, Wilson helped to lay down the fertile soil within which the study of public administration could grow. Wilson made a more substantial direct contribution by establishing administration as a legitimate, permanent subject of systematic study and university instruction, making him one of the three original “public administrationists” in the United States (12).

Through his political practices, especially as president, Wilson “had deep and lasting effect upon the administrative institutions and practices of the nation” (16). By initiating new grants-in-aid and regulatory programs, expanding the number and variety of administrative entities, and mobilizing for war, Wilson essentially set the United States on the path toward a modern administrative state with a scope and set of responsibilities resembling that of European governments. This activity, and the more far-reaching endeavors of the New Deal and the Second World War built in part upon it, required, of course, new administrative theory to guide and legitimate it. The structural framework for that theory was the politics-administration dichotomy, and the dispute about Wilson’s place as a founder of American public administration largely revolves around the extent to which he contributed to establishment of the dichotomy and all that it has since wrought.

Surprisingly, however, the disputants generally agree that Wilson did not contribute much to the establishment and resiliency of the dichotomy (12, 25). It is thus paradoxical, and frustrating, that Wilson’s direct contributions to public administration theory, and the practices that follow from it, link him almost exclusively, and unalterably, to the politics-administration dichotomy. The many college textbooks on American government and, separately, on public administration are the best barometers of this, for almost without exception they connect Wilson to public administration with reference only to the 1887 essay and the dichotomy idea. The principal reason is obvious. The 1887 essay was published and eventually became widely disseminated through reprintings and annotated collections. In contrast, Wilson’s more advanced work on administration, represented by later essays and lecture notes, was inaccessible until the systematic publication of his papers began in the late 1960s.

The result is most unfortunate, because we now know that Wilson developed the much more subtle and complex understanding of administration, especially its place in constitutional democracy, that I have described. Had this been more widely known from the very beginnings of the discipline, it might have altered considerably the development of both public-administration theory, and practice, in favor of a more congenial integration of administration into the modern theory and practice of liberal democracy.

Instead, one impact has been that although a voluminous body of work interpreting Wilson exists in the scholarly literature, few if any scholars have undertaken a serious effort to build theory upon Wilson's ideas. Wilson's greater affinity for, and much more substantial contribution to, undergraduate education also helps explain this (13), for he never produced a cadre of graduate students who then went on to disseminate and embellish his ideas.

The much more perilous impact, however, is that public administration, as both an object of scholarship and a critical institutional component of a modern democratic regime, has been relegated to an instrumental, secondary status. It is left in the hands of "experts" of various kinds, and thus is of little concern to elected officials or citizens more generally, except as a problem to control. This has left a yawning chasm of misunderstanding and mistrust between the public and public administration that Wilson would never have countenanced.

The chances for a course correction still exist, fortunately, for the true legacy that Woodrow Wilson bequeathed to scholars, practitioners, and attentive citizens was fundamental. We defined anew and elevated again in importance what was perhaps the core question posed by the founding of the American regime, a question that in essence most students of public administration wrestle with in their work: what ideas, institutions, and practices properly combined produce a principled democracy that is also well-administered?

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Chapter 15

Enduring Narratives from Progressivism

Larkin Sims Dudley

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Introduction¹

We are unsettled to the roots of our being ... personal contact and eternal authority have disappeared. There are no precedents to guide us, no wisdom that wasn't made for a simpler age.... We are "emancipated" from an ordered world. We drift.

Walter Lippmann (1914)²

Despite the success of American life in the last half-century,... our politics is rife with discontent. Americans are frustrated with government. We fear we are losing control of the forces that govern our lives, and that the moral fabric of community — from neighborhood to nation — is unraveling around us.

Michael J. Sandel (1996)³

The answer to what has been the influence of progressivism is neither simple nor brief (Waldo 1984). The progressive movement was such a broad reform movement that no one historian has fully succeeded in capturing its many parts (Stettner 1993). Although disagreement exists on exactly when the genesis and flowering of progressivism occurs, the period from approximately 1880 until the beginning of World War I appears to be the period when progressive ideas were most influential (Eisenach 1994; Keller 1977). There is less agreement on what were the major tenets of progressivism and even less on how exactly the reform movement came to affect the study of public administration.

The word “progressivism” itself appears and disappears in the political sphere across nations, first entering British political discourse in the late 1880s, when social and municipal reformers adopted it to designate their “advanced” position within the Liberal party (Kloppenber 1986). The term also occurs in England in 1896 when Leonard T. Hobhouse and a group of intellectuals named their journal *The Progressive Review* and in Germany in 1910 when Max Weber found a political home in the short-lived Progressive People’s party. Journalists Herbert Croly (1909) and Walter Lippmann (1914) identified with the “progressive movement” in 1912, when the term became widespread during the campaign to elect the Progressive party’s presidential candidate, Theodore Roosevelt.

Histories also differ in locating the thrust of the movement. Early histories defined the Progressives as the common people — farmers, workers, and small businessmen who organized to recapture power from the railroads, large corporations, and party bosses (DeWitt 1915; Beard and Beard 1927). Robert Wiebe and others focus on a farsighted “new middle class” of professionals who needed to impose order to solve the problems caused by industrialization. Still others have argued that the most wealthy were the reformers and the beneficiaries of movements to regulate the economy (Wiebe 1967; Kolko 1963).

Although all these groups had some part in the Progressive movement, scholars do agree that beginning in the mid-1880s Americans experienced a period of intense creativity in political, social, and economic theory, initially removed from prevailing political institutions and practices. The world underwent an intellectual and perhaps spiritual transformation,

diminishing many of the political world's intellectual and institutional foundations.⁴ If one can accept that institutional relationships, practices, and purposes define political orders and distinguish one regime from another, then the period from the 1890s until World War I was characterized indeed by just such a change in institutions — new institutions replaced local democracy, local economy, national courts, and coalitions and political parties (Eisenach 1994). The rise and growth of the modern university and the origination of academic social sciences provide the most obvious proof. Progressives wrote textbooks that dominated and disseminated social knowledge and trained at least two generations of academics. Among the lessons taught were that social knowledge must be cosmopolitan in origin and national in import. A new conception of citizenship was popularized that stipulated a belief in national public good unmediated by party interest, region, or sectarian religion. The university became the national church — protector of common values, meanings, and identities. Progressive thinking conquered most major cultural and intellectual bastions in America, except constitutional law, and dominated national institutions, except the courts and the party system (Eisenach 1994).

Although there were differences among them, most Progressives wanted to ameliorate and improve the conditions of industrial life (Ross 1991). Some shared a deep outrage against the worst consequences of industrialism, but they did not wish to dismantle modern economic institutions, only reform them. They had a faith in progress — in mankind's ability, through purposeful action, to improve the environment and the conditions of life. Further, most Progressives preferred to work through voluntary organizations, but became convinced over time that most reform could be achieved only by legislation and public control.

Modernity and Narratives in Progressivism

Some of the contradictions that are inherent in the Progressive Era reflect the difficulty of adjusting to older and newer approaches to the world of ideas and practices. In the view of Guy Adams (1992), Progressive ideology reflects the movement toward modernity that coalesced only within the last century in American culture (O'Toole 1984). Following Turner (1990), characteristics of modernity include: secularization, a rationality of instrumentalism, separation and specialization of life-worlds, bureaucratization, and an escalation of monetarization of values. Beginning in the Progressive Era, technical rationality, a chief component of modernity, combined scientific-analytical thinking (one of the legacies of the 17th-century Enlightenment) and a belief in technological progress (a product of the Great Transformation of the 19th century). Guy Adams (1992) notes that

technical rationality is similar to Karl Mannheim's concept of functional rationality, where tasks are organized into smaller units in the interest of efficiency, and one loses the ability to understand the purposeful nature of the whole, a loss in seeing what Mannheim called "substantive rationality." The conception of reason is narrowed from the premodern-era conception of reason as a process incorporating ethical and normative concerns with instrumental aims.

Ascending concurrently in American culture, both scientific methods and public administration shared a positivist orientation, an emphasis on a range of indisputable fact and the extension of rule of law, and elimination of the metaphysical through the substitute of measurement (Furner 1975). Behind this idea of reform was John Dewey's concept of the empirical idealist, an adherent to a philosophy using intelligence in consideration of a desirable future and searching for the means of bringing it progressively into existence (White 1949). The Baconian idea of science became a vital part of the understanding of Progressive social science. The conditions for a technocratic kind of social science were almost perfect in the United States — a lack of a class-based professorate; fantastic new growth including possibilities for a professional, practical social science; and the belief that all problems could be solved. In the Progressive mind, what was needed was a solid science basis not only for the technical arts and learned professions, but for commerce, government, and social relations. Bacon was committed to the idea that knowledge was specifically for practical use, for "the relief of man's estate." As such, the Baconian features of emphasis on experiment, the amassing of data and analysis of data for patterns, and the emphasis on "remaining close to the facts" was heartily endorsed by the reformers outside academia as well as many inside. Science in America became, then, heavily industrialized science or technocratic science.

Concurrent with the rise of the mystique of science, pragmatism was displacing idealism (Stever 1990). Pragmatism, a term introduced by Charles Sanders Peirce in 1878, posited a contingent universe where meaning and truth are measured in terms of experience, which can contain subjective elements of art, emotion, and supernatural faith. The meaning of conceptions is to be sought in their practical bearings, that the function of thought is to guide action, and that truth is preeminently to be tested by the practical consequences of beliefs. In accord with the Progressive movement, pragmatism moved toward a more social view of action. John Dewey's "instrumentalism" contended that individuals fulfill themselves through relationships with others and stressed the value of action leading toward a "good community (Stafford 1987; Shalin and Mead 1988)." Consistent with the emphasis on community and social relationships, the pragmatic movement promoted numerous of the progressive causes —

child-centered schools, settlement-house efforts to acculturate immigrants, shared decision making among owners and workers, and economic activity explained according to institutional structure rather than classical laws. As Lawrence O'Toole (1984, 145) explains:

The reaction against formalism, a reaction which achieved high intellectual status in the early part of the century, implied at least two significant effects for present purposes. First, the idea suggested to its proponents that they begin to tinker with the world to improve it. And, second, the reaction provided some legitimacy to those who, for whatever reason, were actively seeking to effect social betterment.

Part of the move to modernity also included the belief in the evolution of Charles Darwin or Herbert Spencer, or of ideas attributed to them in the late 1800s. Ideas of natural selection and evolution were one means of explaining the rapid enrichment of some, as well as the lack of security for many. The ideas of society and culture as evolving systems had roots in both evolutionary thought and the increasing knowledge of human variation over time and place that became available during the 19th century. The recognition that morals — as well as law, custom, and art — were learned as part of a particular culture not only influenced anthropology profoundly, but other disciplines as well. This potpourri of ideas — pragmatism, evolution, and most of all, science and technical rationality — were part of the rush to embrace modernity in all fields of academia.

The narratives that would give meaning to at least four generations of scholars and practitioners are amplified in the discourse growing out of the elements of technical rationality, pragmatism, evolution, and the rush of different ideas and new institutions that punctuate the period. J. D. White and G. B. Adams (1994) list six narratives “that have been offered up to give meaning to our professional lives.”⁵ Of the six themes, four are elaborated in this chapter. The following discussion on the rise of scientific methods and management in public administration includes arguments related to two of the narratives White and Adams (1994) identify, the scientific study and practice of public administration, and the belief that theory informs practice. Another narrative identified by White and Adams (1994), the dichotomy between politics and administration, is discussed below under democracy and the economy. What White and Adams (1994) call the Minnowbrook narrative — the emphasis on democratic values of social equity, citizen participation, and proactive government — are considered here under the concern for citizenship. Two other narratives that White and Adams (1994) identify are mentioned only briefly

in this chapter. The legitimization of public administration on the basis of the Constitution is not explored because many of the ideas of progressivism were formed in rebellion to the approach of Constitutional law. A final narrative is that of the effects of gender, race, and class, linkages explored elsewhere (Stivers 1993; Menand 2001). Basically, then, the narratives that are the focus here fulfill two criteria: they both dominate much of progressive thought and continually reappear in the field of public administration.

Preparing the Way for National Institutions

A major theme for most adhering to a Progressive philosophy was the need to use government — particularly the national government and even more particularly the national executive — to control the power of business. The national viewpoint was put forth in direct opposition to an abstract “rights-based” discourse, whether expressed as individual rights, as states rights, or as constitutional formalism (Eisenach 1994). A justification for moving toward the administrative state and the sort of bureaucratic organizations spawned in the early 1900s was the vision of the state as the embodiment of moral as well as legal right. Dewey (1917, 1925, 1929), Croly (1909, 1914), Lippmann (1913, 1914, 1922), Hobhouse (1904, 1911, 1922), and Bourgeois (1912, 1914) believed that the state ought to embody ethical principles because the protection of privilege fostered by organized capitalism stood in the way of such an ethical polity (Kloppenber 1986). Thus, these progressive thinkers, as well as others, tried to channel the spirit of organized capitalism into a new politics of social responsibility. Most scholars today, however, would agree that they really only justified the expansion of state action where the shape of the state changed, but its purpose did not.⁶

The writings of Herbert Croly (1909) are an articulate exposition of the most nationalist views. Two central concepts (national community and national purpose) underpinned his progressive rationale for a more extensive reconstruction of democratic theory to accommodate new institutions and alternative practices in America. Croly (1909) envisioned the American people under competent and responsible leadership deliberately planning a policy of individual and social improvement in which human nature could be raised to a higher level by improvement in institutions and laws. For Croly (1909), democracy must stand or fall on a platform of possible human perfectibility where liberty, social interest, and equality are subordinate to brotherhood and thus, in the long run, mutually helpful.⁷

Croly (1909) does see democracy as “matter of popular government,” but to him, it also means more — a community in which no group is

granted by law any advantage over their fellow citizens (Eisenach 1994). On the other hand, he worries about the very able individual and concludes, again, that personal liberties are needed, but must be achieved within the common good, not for individual, selfish potential. He identified elements normally viewed as essential to democratic theory — majority rule, universal suffrage, individual freedoms, equality — but his reconstructed democracy elevated the able individual, the elite of talent. Here for Croly (1909), a true democracy was less a matter of popular will than popular deliberation guided by the more able, in which argument Croly is closer to Jefferson than he realized (Eisenach 1994).

Sensitivity to the possible perils of the expansion of the welfare state was ever present. Croly (1909, 1914), Bourgeois (1912, 1914), Dewey (1917, 1925, 1929), Hobhouse (1904, 1911, 1922), and Lippmann (1913, 1914, 1922) endorsed the expansion of government services only because they believed that the ascendancy of democratic government should enable the state to serve its citizens rather than vice versa, and the antagonism between democracy and governmental action should fall to the ground (Eisenach 1994). Most supported a “national minimum” in health, housing, education, and work. These proposals were justified by the writings of these scholars in a belief that economic power could be brought under public control through experiments in economic regulation.

In fact, state power increasingly became accepted as a way of restraining excessive private advantage as reformers became eager to break the ties between corporations and political parties hobbling the public interest (Pegram 1992; Skowronek 1982). Between 1903 and 1908, 41 state legislatures created or strengthened commissions to regulate railroads and passed additional measures. At the national level, the growth of a government structure included the emergence of action in antitrust, the public stake in conservation, the authority of the Interstate Commerce Commission, and prevention of the adulteration of drugs and foodstuffs and meat.

In opposition to the nationalizing movement, other Progressive thinkers sought to either preserve self-government by decentralizing economic power and thus, bringing it under democratic control, or treat the consumer as citizen (Sandel 1996; Stillman 1974; Svara 1989, 1998; White 1927). According to Sandel (1996), Louis Brandeis advocated breaking up the trusts, restoring competition, and favoring locally based enterprises. To forestall adverse effects on moral and civic characters of workers, Sandel (1996) notes Brandeis recommended a full-blown “industrial democracy” that not only included assurance of better working conditions, but required a share of responsibility as well as of profits. In other words, the development of citizens capable of self-government was an end, for Brandeis.

Finally, a third approach to the relationship of politics, economics, and citizenship arises in the Progressive era, although its full force is to be felt much later, and recognition of it as the dominant focus does not arise until after World War II. The growth of issues, such as streetcar fares, high taxes, air pollution, and the use of methods of direct democracy — direct primaries, initiative, and referendum — united people as consumers and taxpayers in a new mass politics based on one's consumption identity rather than one's producer or ethnic identity. Both Walter Lippmann (1914) and Walter Weyl (1912) noted the importance of this rise and believed democracy's best hope may lie in the solidarity of the consumer. The change is subtle and important. Croly (1909) held onto the idea of the perfectibility of the citizen, but Weyl's propositions centered around fair treatment for the citizen-consumer, not citizenship or self-government. These ideas become the rallying focus of the 1990s approach to government reorganization.

The Citizen-State Relationship

Most of the Progressive thinkers, whether centralists or decentralists, acknowledged that citizenship must be at the heart of the concept of the state. Two important themes pervaded the period: the need to replace parties as the educator of citizens, and the need to develop alternative loci of citizenship, i.e., the development of individuals and parainstitutions. Popular electoral participation and party identification declined significantly at the turn of the century. Public spaces declined as ad hoc demonstrations and marches to polls, once a way of expressing loyalty in electioneering, fell victim to various reforms: the multiplication of vagrancy laws, the increase in urban police surveillance, the loss of public grazing and hunting lands, the restriction of African Americans from areas in the South. This closing off of public spaces diminished the act of voting as an affirmation of identity in the community and, coupled with the Australian ballot, made voting an individualized private act. Events of the time along with Progressive ideals limited the ability of political parties to serve as the rallying focus for citizenship and citizen education.

Educating citizens, a former task of political parties, was to be assumed in Progressive minds by labor unions, moral and political reform movements, settlement houses, and universities along with town, church, school, and family. The earlier roots of this ideal were early 19th-century ideas of free institutions. These included town, church, and school as well as earlier Puritan notions of family as "little commonwealth." This formulation was expanded to make the institutions of labor unions, political reform movements, settlement houses, and universities "parastates," being sup-

portive of government both by producing good citizens and by carrying out substantive ends desired of an ideal state. The Progressive argument envisions the party as reinforcing constitutional formalism, whereas parastates circumvented and subverted the party (Waldo 1984). This conception provides a thorny problem of accountability: what is the cost of locating citizenship and exercise of power outside of constitutionally mandated boundaries? The progressivist answer was that party politics is corrupt and hidden, but the parastates were visible, and thus accountable to the citizenry.

Thus, citizenship was not a separate identity in the civic republican-communitarian tradition in competition with a private self, but an integral part of one's personality. For Mary Parker Follett, John Dewey, and most Progressives, the state was first located in the good citizen, who, in whatever role and location, spontaneously acts according to consciously held and shared ideas of the public good. Mary Parker Follett, in *The New State* (1918), gives us her concept of a true definition of liberty: a person acting as the state in every smallest detail of life (Eisenach 1994). Where is the state? It is wherever good citizens gather, organize, and act. From the ranks of Follett (1918) and Dewey (1917), there can be no "state" without a people. Thus, the first location of the state must be an internalized idea of membership by citizens sharing values. Dewey extended this idea to that of the state as emancipator of personal capacities, securing to each individual an effective right to count in the order and movement of society as a whole (Eisenach 1994). From the standpoint of ethics, the moral test of a practice or a law became whether it sets free individual capacities in such a way as to make them available for the development of the general happiness or the common good.

Both Follett (1918) and Dewey (1917) thought the democratic state was an achievement to be won in the future. Where, then, to exercise citizenship? First, attempts should be made to reform constitutions, governments, and parties. If that fails, the good citizen participates in governmental institutions that contain the substantive public good. The higher ideal of citizenship as public service was enhanced by the influence of women's growing participation in public life. Whether teacher, charity worker, or mother, all were participating in the task of acting out ideals of public good and therefore "acting as the state in every smallest detail of life." A good citizen is state oriented, according to the Progressives, in the sense of seeking to achieve a larger public good in all his/her actions (Eisenach 1994). Although one cannot say that the Progressive concept of the relationship between citizen and the state immediately took hold in mainstream public administration, the theme has appeared and reappeared in theory and practice, particularly in the 1960s and the beginning of the 21st century.

Reconciling Democracy and Administration

The move toward executive leadership followed the movement to thwart the spoils system, the evolution of a merit system, and the recent development of bureaucracy. In many other eyes, the major purpose of reform was to restore ability, high character, and true public spirit once more to their legitimate spheres in our public life and to make active politics once more attractive to men of self-respect and high patriotic aspirations. A virtuous commitment to public interest was needed, and for the reformers, efficient democratic government could not exist without trusting that commitment would come from expert members of regulatory commissions, appointive boards, and state agencies. This trust, sometimes justified, sometimes not, did have the effect — along with the other forces of industrialization — of distancing the affected, physically, economically, and politically, from those who made decisions. An even greater consequence came from the fact that partisanship ran through the new government structure, and executive stakeholders, who doubled as ambitious partisan leaders, were the ones responsible to advance the public interest.

At the federal level, the executive departments themselves underwent a tremendous change in the period from 1860 to 1920 (Aron 1987). If we define bureaucracy as formal, hierarchical organization managed by salaried officials according to impersonal, enforced, written rules, then the post-Civil War federal government was far from this end. At the turn of the century, the continual growth prompted officials to try more rationalized methods of administering offices and evaluating workers. For example, Richard Henry Dana's *Merit Principle of the Selection of the Higher Municipal Officers of 1903* moves concern from the theological and moral in selection to urging the necessity for experts, suggesting a separation of policy determination from execution, and testing to distinguish executive ability (Rosenbloom 1982).

Out of the Progressive reformers' ambivalence and the parties' desires to keep the bureaucracy from being autonomously developed another peculiar American compromise, an emphasis on a specific type of professionalism. The upper civil service became dominated by those trained in a variety of professions. The role structure centered on job descriptions and specific skills or expertise, with permeable barriers and no clearly delineated series of positions. There were relatively wide entrance gates, allowing access based on skill levels at many points, but well-defined career paths were not numerous. Instead, technical professions were emphasized, a system of grouping positions in classes horizontally across the entire structure. These choices in organizational design limited the autonomy of bureaucracy, but still left some leadership from experts. Part of the justification for the specialized expert knowledge came from the

growing acceptance of technical rationality. Included in the model of professionalism was the development of professional associations, a cognitive scientific base, institutionalized training, licensing, work autonomy, colleague control, and a code of ethics.

From the point of view of the civil servants themselves, there were advantages and disadvantages to the increasing bureaucratization. Prior to civil service reform, jobs were insecure, causing men and women both to subjugate themselves to power to obtain a position. Both found it somewhat degrading; women expressed concern over the compromising of their moral virtue, and men often felt their manhood impugned. Without standardized criteria and rules, autonomous officials were free to exercise anti-female biases, and women found they could not advance because supervisors refused to promote women. Both men and women were sometimes subject to the tyranny of petty supervisors who wielded an extraordinary amount of discretionary power. On the positive side, the new merit system did open clerkships to those who could never have had advantage. Competing and succeeding offered middle-class men a sense of proven expertise. For women, it is less clear, as women were still hired for only low status. The somewhat decentralized day-to-day functioning and power of low-level supervisors meant that middle-class workers found some relief from routinized jobs and closely controlled work routines. Often women won in this ad hoc decentralized system because they could take risks and do men's jobs.

Accompanying the emphasis on professionalism was a tendency toward centralization at both the state and local level, a tendency toward increasing the power of the executive and toward principles of management (Silberman 1993). In 1898, the model charter of the national municipal review recommended concentration of administrative power in the mayor, and in 1917 it recommended moving to a professional manager. In state reorganizations, the exaltation of the powers of the executive branch prompted a rash of schemes for joining the legislative and the executive and/or restraining the judicial and increasing the authority of the chief executive. Further, local merchants decried the inefficiency of the party state. Joined by the rising professional classes, businessmen, social workers, and lawyers wanted to see "business principles" brought into the "business of government." When the Research movement turned from bookkeeping systems to the basic relations between legislature and executive, proponents thought the efficiencies of business procedure required the business concentration of authority. These beliefs became part of the argument for the exaltation of executive power and centralization.

The newly emerging professional middle class viewed good administration as the solution to many social and economic problems and saw civil service as a source of employment. Spokesmen for this group included

Woodrow Wilson, Frank Goodnow, Thorstein Veblen, and Walter Weyl, of whom Wilson and Goodnow are most important for public administration. James Stever argues that Goodnow's and Wilson's message was that the administrator was a safe innovation, an instrumental technician who functioned within the existing political system. This message was meant to be reassuring to other elements of the Progressive coalition, such as the populists, who were skeptical of taking power away from the people (Stever and Noble 1981). Frank Goodnow (1914), who has also been somewhat misrepresented as seeing a dichotomy, instead proclaims some continuity between the political and administrative spheres. When engaged in the general execution of the law, according to Goodnow (1914), administration must be controlled carefully by the legislature or an outside entity. However, Goodnow (1914) further argues that popular government need not be disrupted by competent administrative agencies and that agencies can function alongside traditional political institutions such as political parties. In comparison to Goodnow and Wilson, many pragmatists did not envision the administrator under the control of incrementally oriented party regulars, but instead viewed administrators as a new class skilled in logical reasoning and adept at applying the scientific method to social problems. This new pragmatic administrator was to obey the dictates of logic as well as conclusions drawn from scientific experimentation.

The foregoing discussion about the attempts to reconcile administration and democracy yields two interesting syntheses. One by Laurence O'Toole (1984) is that the "orthodoxy of reform" is retained to reconcile the tensions of bureaucracy and democracy where there is commitment to some vision of democracy, and a recognition of the seeming inevitability of large-scale governmental bureaucracy. The result, according to O'Toole (1984), is that the administrative tradition most followed was developed by individuals hostile to ideology, who banked on experience, and who simultaneously exalted the ideal of democracy and the efficiency of technique. Observations of a slightly different type are those of James Morone, who asserts that the Progressives' concept of administration actually complimented the concept of democracy (Morone 1990). In other words, rather than seeing the two concepts necessarily in tension, Morone posits that they share an underlying motif. Each concept calls for operating beyond politics; each requires digging below partisan claims and clashing interests for the objective public interest of a cohesive people. The new public administration would efficiently implement the public will articulated through the newly purified democratic mechanisms. If you look at them together, the two parts do form a coherent view — one eschews subjective private interest for an objective public one, and the other spurs a multitude of special constituencies for a single universalistic people. As James Morone observes (Morone 1990, 1):

In the recurring quest for the people, Americans redesign political institutions and rewrite political rules. The direct results have been uneven; some efforts enhance popular control, some attenuate it, some seem to manage both.... The institutions designed to enhance democracy expand the scope and authority of the state, especially its administrative capacity. A great irony propels American political development: the search for more direct democracy builds up the bureaucracy.

In summary, the cures proposed by Progressives included rationalization, systemization, coordination, and efficiency. Methods proposed included centralized budgets, a general accounting office, a bureau of efficiency, a commission on economy, a committee on department methods, and expert leadership. Some scholars have stressed the lasting effects of the emphasis on neutral competence in Progressive arguments to the detriment of an emphasis on representativeness and leadership. Yet, more recent scholarship emphasizes that the Progressives asked even more of these new experts. In a recent paper, James Svara (1998) recalls that what was desired was a new type of administrator with expertise and commitment to public service, an administrator who Croly (1914) described as the custodian of a social purpose, who trusts in the faith upon which a program depends for its impulse.

Science and Scientific Management

This efficient democracy envisioned by the Progressives required both justification and coordination. The methods of science were seen as the justification, and the need for coordination was to be met by increasing centralization. Most leading reformers specialized in the new disciplines of statistics, economics, sociology, and psychology. Thus, the study of society moved from the hands of amateurs at the start of the Industrial Era to those of professionals. In the 1890s and the early 20th century, when government roles expanded, political scientists described the processes of administration while training specialists to do the administering. The influence of scientific naturalism and the problems of actual practice led to curiosity about how and why people behaved politically. The specialists became experts, and the experts became active in developing national bureaucracy.⁸

The idea of reform through science and the belief in the scientific management combined with the distrust of patronage and the party system to shore up the concept of a new leader, the expert, and a new way of organizing through regulatory commissions, management systems, and

bureaucracies. Only because science is believed to be objective can one believe that regulatory commissions and professional management will not be partisan, but instead will arrive at scientific truths. The new expert, partially because of the scientific methods available in the execution of duties, is thought then to be the best hope for a true public-service orientation. These themes were played out in the era at an ideological level surrounding the penetration of instrumental values in the arguments for democracy and at a practical level in the arguments at the workplace for scientific management.

One who turned the emphasis on scientific experimentation into the basis for a new management philosophy, “scientific management,” was Frederick Winslow Taylor (1916), an industrial engineer. Taylor’s major thesis was that the maximum good for all society can come only through the cooperation of management and labor in the application of scientific methods. Frederick Taylor (1916) expresses belief in emergence of scientific principles from the study of data, often referred to as the “one best way,” because a principle is the one best way emerging from scientific study of facts. There is also an emphasis on one best man, because different tasks call for different qualities of inheritance and training, which can be discovered through experimentation. To maximize output, Taylor felt the scientific method had to be applied to worker selection, job determination, and the creation of proper environment. Taylor pushed for labor and management to coordinate in order to maximize the benefits for both — wages and profits. The finding of one best way and one best man are encompassed in a wide acceptance of efficiency and fact finding.

Taylor envisioned scientific management as a complete mental revolution on the part of the workingman toward his work, his fellow men, and his employers and on the part of his managers toward fellow workers and daily problems, much in the same way we hear of total quality management (TQM) today. Using five principles (research, standards, planning, control, and cooperation), Taylor (1916) assimilated and applied ideas that were useful to effective management. For Taylor (1916), the first principle of scientific management is the deliberate gathering together of the great mass of traditional knowledge, recording it, tabulating it, reducing it to rules, laws, and mathematical formulas. These new laws, then, are applied with the cooperation of the management to the work of the workmen. For example, that shovelers using shovels that averaged 21 pounds was most efficient is an example of what Taylor (1916) meant by a scientific fact. Further, an example of what is meant by the true revolution is Taylor’s idea that the manager under scientific manager would become a welcomed teacher rather than a feared monitor whom workers would try to dupe. Although emphasis was placed on discovering the one best way, that way could be modified after workers understood it.

As Hindy Schachter (1989) observes, scientific management was most attractive to public-sector-oriented Progressive reformers, even more than to business leaders.⁹ Key Progressives perceived shop management as a means for initiating organizational reform on a manageable and practical scale without damaging business. Many saw in scientific management a way to decrease the conceptual gap between the status-rich professional and the underdog worker. Taylor indicates his empathy with Progressive reformers through serializing *Principles in American Magazine*, a journal known for publishing reform writers, and fighting for the American Society of Mechanical Engineers to hold a conference on air pollution. The ideas to which Justice Louis Brandeis, public manager Morris Cooke, manager and author Henry Gantt, activist Ida Tarbell, and management theorist Frank Gilbreth were attracted included Taylor's emphasis on noneconomic motivation, checking arbitrary supervisors for system gains, allowing talented mechanics to rise into planning, and the idea of training and developing men.

Although Taylor never published ideas related directly to public administration, his associate Morris Cooke, who had a distinguished public-sector executive career, did link work analysis to the Progressive cause and published in several social science journals along with Charles Merriam and Harold Lasswell. Contrary to many interpretations of Taylor, neither Taylor nor Cooke, according to Schachter (1989), posit efficiency as the goal. Schachter (1989) continues by saying that Cooke, whose contributions were to local government, believed government was basically a conversion mechanism for public demands, and, thus, citizen groups should assume the lion's share of setting organizational agendas. Cooke also tackled the question of the "expert" in administration in striving to democratize expertise by forcing the public-sector engineer to put his ideas up for acceptance or disapproval by the interested public. Taylor's influence has been particularly noted on the New York Bureau of Municipal Research, incorporated May 1907, and equated with the founding of the discipline. Not only was the desire to make organizations more efficient, but to make citizens efficient also. In the efforts to organize techniques to help agencies perform tasks more expeditiously and to give citizens the data needed to maintain control over their governments, the Bureau reflects many of the same ideas of Taylor and his circle.

Conclusion

Accentuated in the Progressive Era are both the continuance of age-old political questions and the outlines of modern debates on decentralization and citizen control. Questions about the relationships of government and

private power in a democracy began before the Constitution and emerge in new form almost every decade. Whether that relationship is better set through regulation from the top or through decentralization and devolution dates back at least to the Anti-Federalist–Federalist argument. The arguments about whether and what form of an American administrative state began to bubble up in the 1800s, but they really received a place on the national agenda in the Progressive Era, again to be forcefully debated in the New Deal and from that period forward in American politics. The need for democracy to control concentrated economic power, the need for an administrative state, and the need to keep citizenship at the heart of the concept of the state served as the basis for criticism of governing institutions at the turn of the last century. Of particular significance for public administration in this period are the arguments made by Frank Goodnow and Woodrow Wilson. These include the argument that for administration to execute its special duties, there must be a separation from partisan politics, an issue current enough to reappear with a new interpretation and a new solution every decade.

Another of the Progressive concerns that the development of an educated, active citizenry will be neglected can be found in the Anti-Federalist writing and even the Federalists spoke of national citizenship. Yet, the arguments of the Progressive era, at least momentarily, combined the Anti-Federalist arguments for citizen education with the Federalists' national perspective. On the surface, the arguments for democracy's control of concentrated economic power and the need for an administrative state may seem to contradict an emphasis on an efficient citizen. However, what was unique in the combination was the tying of the concept of citizenship to each citizen's actions in his/her immediate environment through the parastates and seeing such actions as related to citizenship in a national community. When E. J. Eisenach (1994) speaks of the "lost promise of progressivism," it is this connection to both local and national community he laments, a lament that becomes a dominant theme in the last part of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st.

On a different scale, the new ideas about management, science, and democracy become attached to the growing interest in how to organize work, an interest spurred by the tremendous growth in the economy and society. No matter whether one judges Taylor as hero or villain in organizational theory and practice, his contribution to a focus on the workplace, the relationships there, and the processes underneath what before had been seen as discrete jobs is undeniable. Links from the ideas of Taylor and others of scientific management combined with the beginning of the Municipal Bureau of Research. From these multiple sources grew canons of practice for both students and practitioners of administration, some of great value and some misconceived.

These reformers repeated again and again the solutions of science as expertise and instrumental rationality as the fortification for decisions. Yet the linkage of scientific methodology to reform frayed (Furner 1975). The professional social workers and many reformers suggested that practical education for the mass of citizenry was a more appropriate use of resources than searching for scientific law. The “peculiar” attitude of the amateur to both value truth and wish to make truth useful did not survive in most of academia (Furner 1975). Currently, many still lament the forsaking of the reform motif for a “social science” perspective in public administration.

The turning of the last century, then, encouraged citizens to begin thinking on a different scale: a shift of emphasis from community to society, from ethnic and other connections to larger social units, from natural, unconscious order to a conscious social one — one subject to social control (O’Toole 1984). The locus of the public sphere expanded and moved from many smaller general spaces to increasingly distant centralized places characterized by specialization and professionalization. The movement away from parties as a unifying theme went in many directions — toward greater participation in neighborhoods, in communities, in volunteer groups, in formal work organizations, toward a sense of national citizenry, and unfortunately, toward nonparticipation. Yet, the real locus of the public sphere — balanced precariously in many reformers’ minds in the informed citizen — moved away from individuals toward more professional management at the city and state level and toward more formal organizations and institutions at the national level. The belief that the executive was more likely to carry out the public good helps explain to some extent the fascination with autonomous political executives, e.g., strong-mayor or city-manager forms of urban government. Accompanying that belief was the dissemination of much of the public dialogue of the island communities of the 1800s to more specialized niches within public organizations, bureaus, agencies, and local governments. In most of the nation, public space and citizen involvement were casualties of this change.

Although an interplay among the elements of progressivism and pluralism defined much of the content and led to many of the conflicts that shaped early 20th-century American social policy-making, Progressive attitudes did face two powerful counterforces. First, in issue after issue, the search for ways of enhancing social conformity collided with American pluralism, as a variety of ideas emerged from the same economic and social developments. Another countering force was the weight of the past, the persistence — even the strengthening — of the traditional social values and beliefs that found expression in a variety of forms: localism, individualism, religious fundamentalism, and *laissez faire* (Keller 1977). Partially because of this resistance, the thoughts of major progressive intellectuals

were characterized by a belief in and search for policies designed to restore an American social cohesion whose loss they regarded as a major casualty of modern times. To replace the rejection of individualism and socialism, the answer was “the principle of order and organization,” applied to the improvement of individuals and institutions.

Whether couched as a question of the relationship between art and science, self and community, citizen and nation, or politics and administration, the turn of the 20th-century philosophers, thinkers, scientists, administrators, and citizens appeared caught up in reforms that gave somewhat different answers to how one reconciles freedom and order. Laurence O’Toole (1984) makes a strong case that the notion of reform itself seems to provide an organizing idea that transcends the dogmas of earlier days. He along with, most recently, political theorist Michael J. Sandel (1996), speculates that any solution to the freedom-order debate will demand large-scale normative political theory. Eldon J. Eisenach (1994) finds the same controversies emerging in the revival of communitarian thinking and believes reexamination of the relationship between individual rights and community would be a good beginning for a more satisfactory understanding of the dialectic between freedom and order.

We can credit the Progressives for enhancing the debate, sharpening the credibility of polar positions, and momentarily proposing several solutions: those of increased nationalism and those celebrating decentralization and localism, those enhancing direct democracy and those increasing bureaucracy, those favoring development of social self and of scientific management. Although the delicate balancing leaves us somewhat perplexed, that is in character for a nation that always yearns for the direct rule and communal nature of an agrarian colony in the midst of a dense postindustrial society. As James Morone (1990, 98) so aptly reveals:

At the heart of the Progressive agenda lay a political paradox: government would be simultaneously returned to the people and placed beyond them in the hands of the expert.... Both their administrative science and their direct democracy... rested on the assumption of united, virtuous, communitarian people sharing an objective public interest. Once again, the ambiguous image of “the people” served to meld an uneven coalition of interests and philosophies.... They embraced the democratic wish, seeking communal constituencies that were part memory and part myth.

In doing so, out of progressivism came both the scaffolding for the administrative state and the dread of it, and most of all, a founding dialogue about public administration, out of part memory and part myth.

Notes

1. This article is a revised version of material appearing in a book chapter, “Progressivism: Critiques and Contradictions,” in T. D. Lynch and T. J. Dicker, *Handbook of Organization Theory and Management: The Philosophical Approach* (New York: Marcel Dekker, 1998), 227–59. Thanks to Natalia Shakirova and Alesya Bogaevsckaya, graduate students, Virginia Tech, for persistent assistance with formatting this article.
2. Lippmann, *Drift and Mastery*, 152–3, 196.
3. Sandel, *Democracy’s Discontent*, cover page.
4. Eisenach (1994) examines the 19 intellectuals who produced over 150 books and who were the founding members of professional organizations in economics, sociology, and political and social science during the Progressive Era. Of his group of scholars, all but one had college degrees and all but two had done graduate work. They were a tightly knit group in which sociology, according to Eisenach (1994), served both as an integrator of the new social sciences and as the major source of theoretical grounding for Progressive reforms. Included in Eisenach’s list were political economists (Henry Carter Adams, John Bates Clark, Richard T. Ely, John Roberts Commons, Arthur Twining Hadley, Edmund J. James, Edwin Robert Anderson Seligman, Albert Shaw); sociologists (Franklin Henry Giddins, Edward Alsworth Ross, Albion Woodbury Small); professor of literature (Vita Dutton Scudder); and social activists (Jane Addams, Florence Kelley, William Dwight Porter). Intellectual leaders included John Roberts Commons, Henry Carter Adams, Edward Alsworth Ross, Vita Dutton Scudder, J. W. Burgess, E. J. James, A. B. Har, A. L. Lowell, F. J. Goodnow, J. A. Fairlie, and Ernst Freund.
5. In choosing to focus on these dimensions as the undercurrents, and sometimes treacherous undertow, of progressivism, some of the most important themes and personalities of the period for public administration are only mentioned. Most of these, however — pragmatism and John Dewey, George Herbert Mead, and Mary Parker Follett; Woodrow Wilson and the “New Freedom;” and the interaction among the Bureau of Municipal Research, scientific management, and municipal reform — are well-covered elsewhere.
6. J. T. Kloppenberg (1986) observes that there is a gap between theory and practice. Although the values proposed were laudatory, e.g., benevolence, the scholarship of our time reveals that the Progressive theorists did not dwell long enough on the concept of power and how it may slip between theory and practice. In

other words, interest groups often bent policies to their own aggrandizement.

7. Croly (1909) agrees with the French triad — liberty and equality are contradictory, but fraternity could conciliate the principles.
8. See Manicas (1987). For example, experts in administrative processes at the time: Jenks at the United States Industrial Commission; Jakob Hollander, Thomas S. Adams, William Frank Willoughby, Bernard Moses, and Walter F. Wilcox at the United States Census Bureau. Political scientists became especially influential in developing the technical know-how to administer a far-flung colonial empire in Puerto Rico and the Philippines.
9. Schachter (1989) makes a good case that Cooke, and in many cases, Taylor, were not top-down theorists but, instead, advocated noneconomic motivational strategies and understanding worker sentiments, saw the importance of viewing work as play, realized the importance of persuasion as the key to internal efficiency, and stressed the role of information for management a good 10 to 15 years before the insights of the Hawthorne group, Douglas McGregor, and Chester Barnard. Although there may have been sentiments held in common by Taylor and later management theorists, the difference in emphasis is important and, perhaps, underemphasized by Schachter (1989). Taylor and Cooke stressed the process of scientific management, the role of information, and productivity, while the later human-relations school emphasized leadership and employee relations. Further, although explained away by many later biographers, some of Taylor's comments about workers are still very paternalistic.

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Chapter 16

The Bureau Movement: Seedbed of Modern Public Administration

Camilla Stivers

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Introduction

During the early 20th century, groups of Progressive reformers established privately sponsored bureaus of municipal research, intending to use systematic investigation to improve municipal-agency management prac-

tices and loosen the hold of party bosses on urban politics and policy making. So homogeneous were the outlook and approach of the bureau researchers, and so ardent their commitment, that they were dubbed a “movement” by their early chroniclers.^{1,2,3}

In general, the field of public administration, particularly in the United States, has been remarkably inattentive to its historical development,⁴ a pattern one hopes the present volume will help change. To the extent that we do have an intellectual history, municipal research bureaus are widely regarded as a (sometimes the) principal point of origin for scholarship and professional education in public administration.^{5,6,7} Yet the nature of their enterprise and the extent of its influence to the present day have not been examined thoroughly.

This chapter will trace the history, philosophy, and influence of the bureau movement on modern public administration. As its title indicates, the chapter adopts the viewpoint of earlier histories that the ideology and tactics of bureau advocates had a profound effect on the development of the field. It will maintain, however, that the impact in question is both worthy of deeper reflection and more equivocal than the relatively cursory and sanguine accounts in the literature of public administration to this point might lead one to conclude.

Historical Development

By the early 20th century, industrialization, mechanization, and successive waves of immigrants from Europe had increasingly concentrated the U.S. population in ever-larger cities. There, growing demands for basic infrastructure and services strained the capacity of municipal governments organized in the 19th century to cope with the problems of a simpler time. The urban political machine “by default ... as much as by design” had become the “one mechanism capable of coordinating public policy in the industrial city.”⁸ The machines operated on the basis of quid-pro-quo politics that rewarded members’ loyalty at the polls with government jobs, especially on the police force,⁹ and met the policy needs of business elites — a relatively stable economic climate and access to government contracts and franchises — in return for campaign contributions and, at times, outright bribes.

Left out of this equation was a growing group of educated middle-class professionals, hostile to machine politics, who organized themselves to press for improvements in the workings of municipal governments. Much has been written about the motivations of this group, to which the bureau researchers belonged, and scholarly treatments of them vary tremendously. The literature of public administration tends to portray them

as selfless and principled, and accepts their diagnosis of government ills as accurate. Historians, on the other hand, have stressed the reformers' own interests: their middle-class "status anxiety,"¹⁰ their "search for order" in a time of social unrest,¹¹ or their frank interest in government jobs for themselves.¹² The probable truth is that, like most human beings, the reformers' motives were mixed. They were both genuinely concerned to ameliorate social problems and interested in increasing their own influence on urban policy and administration.

Certainly the difficulties of the 1890s, including a serious depression, farmer and worker protests, currency troubles, and the closing of the frontier, produced growing unease among the middle and elite classes, a sense that, as the title of one account suggests, American society might be "standing at Armageddon."¹³ In any case, beginning as early as Woodrow Wilson's well-known essay, "The Study of Administration,"¹⁴ administrative reformers based their arguments in favor of efficiency and expertise on the premise that party-controlled governments were inadequate to the complex challenges they faced.

As the 19th century drew to a close, the municipal reformers began to turn away from "throwing the rascals out" — ousting machine politicians at the polls and replacing them with good-government candidates — largely because success in voting in one reform mayor would be reversed at the next election. A panoply of civic reform clubs and organizations developed, based on the idea that "[e]ven 'bad' men in government could be led down the path of municipal righteousness and if properly guided serve as the instruments of good government."¹⁵ Instead of frankly opposing machine politicians and agency personnel, reformers would try to work with them, offer expert advice, present study results, and defend the needs of agencies at budget hearings.

These organizations quickly became an important outlet for reform energies. As early as 1894, a national conference on good government drew representatives from nearly 250 municipal reform clubs, and the formation shortly thereafter of the National Municipal League linked like-minded reformers from a variety of clubs and locales. While some clubs were concerned with the broad spectrum of municipal problems, others concentrated on specific needs like education, public health, recreation, or crime prevention. Both men and women were involved, with women's clubs providing a protected framework within which educated and well-to-do women, barred from the polls as yet, could put their talents and activism to work on public concerns.

Among the many reform groups, the organizers of the bureaus of municipal research emerged in the early 20th century as a distinctive approach to civic reform. The first bureau was incorporated in New York City in 1907. Its principal organizer, William H. Allen, was a social worker

and general agent for the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, a charity organization noted for the application of efficiency precepts to philanthropy. Allen's experience with the AICP had convinced him that efficient administration made for more effective charities and that this lesson could be applied to government as well. He suggested to R. Fulton Cutting, president of the Citizens' Union, that a nonpartisan agency of experts could research the best administrative methods for city government. In 1905 Cutting and Allen established the experimental Bureau of City Betterment as an arm of the Citizens' Union. As director, they recruited Henry Bruere, a former settlement-house worker and welfare secretary for Chicago's McCormick Works.

As the new Bureau was establishing itself, the reform-minded mayor of New York City, George B. McClellan, had appointed a commission to look into the financial and accounting practices of city agencies. The commission's investigative efforts were stalled, however, due to lack of cooperation on the part of agency officials. In a brilliant end-run around the bureaucracy, Bruere conducted a field study of the condition of Manhattan streets, comparing first-hand observations with available repair records. The shocking state of the streets, which contradicted reported repairs, was publicized in a pamphlet entitled "How Manhattan is Governed." Bruere's report hit New York like a bombshell. As a direct result, Governor Charles Evans Hughes dismissed the Manhattan borough president on the grounds of incompetence. Together with Frederick Cleveland, chair of the mayoral commission, Allen and Bruere succeeded in attracting funding from several wealthy benefactors, including John D. Rockefeller and Andrew Carnegie, for the formation of an independent Bureau of Municipal Research, inaugurated in 1907 with the three organizers as codirectors.

The early success of the New York Bureau quickly led to the formation of similar bureaus in other cities around the United States, 20 of them by 1915. The New York Bureau served as a direct catalyst, with New York men traveling to other cities to offer advice and technical assistance. In 1911, the New York Bureau established a training school to prepare professional administrators. The school produced many graduates who became directors or staffers at bureaus in other cities and thereby promoted the homogeneity of the bureau movement. Bureaus in Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Milwaukee, Dayton, Kansas City, and San Francisco were among the best organized and most active.

With some ebbs and flows in their fortunes during World War I and the depression, municipal research bureaus remained active until the 1940s. By that time universities, legislatures, and state and local governments had established their own research institutes, whose work gradually diminished the perceived need for private, nonprofit organizations in this

arena. The Institute for Public Administration, into which the New York Bureau was organized in the early 1920s, is still active.

According to Gill,¹⁶ more than half the trustees of municipal research bureaus were manufacturers, bankers, lawyers, merchants, realtors, insurance brokers, and financiers. As Gill notes, labor and professions other than the law were virtually unrepresented; more than 80% of trustees came from the business world. There were only a handful of women.

Following the pattern established in New York, the bureaus were dependent upon the support of a few key benefactors. While they received large numbers of \$10-and-under contributions, these made up less than five percent of the total amount. Contributions of over \$100 constituted nearly three-quarters of bureau support. In New York, seven donors gave nearly half of the bureau's total operating funds during its first decade of operation. Gill¹⁶ suggests that the bureaus' reliance on large donors, together with dominance of their boards by business interests, led researchers to stress the "businesslike" quality of their approaches and recommendations, even when the ideas came not from business but from the public sector or from the researchers' own creativity,

Typical Activities

Municipal research bureaus engaged in a wide range of efforts to improve public-management practices. These included the development of municipal budgeting and uniform accounting methods; the establishment of guidelines for the preparation of statistical charts; standardization of personnel procedures such as time sheets, job descriptions, work routines, performance assessments, and retirement systems; the design of organization charts; uniform crime statistics; in-service training of city employees; revamped billing procedures for public utilities; improved garbage collection and sanitary inspection methods; improved purchasing and inventory control; reforms in housing inspection, milk inspection, and medical inspection of school children; and the systematization of records in all areas of government.

The centerpiece of bureau activity, however, was the development of the executive budget. Prior to the bureaus' efforts, government expenditures were typically authorized by city councils on a piecemeal basis. Appropriations were routinely made without systematic reference to available revenues or total projected expenses. Special revenue bonds took care of any shortfalls. In general, the bureaus saw the lack of a comprehensive executive budget as the root cause of inefficient administration. As a result, executive budgeting and the accounting methods it requires became their central concern. Supporting this focus, as we shall see, was

an entire political philosophy that entailed shifting power from the legislature to the chief executive in order for the latter to be able to propose and execute effective policies.

According to Dahlberg,¹⁷ the first municipal agency budget in the United States was adopted by the New York City Department of Health in 1907, after a requested study by the New York Bureau demonstrated the need for it. Bruere's earlier report on Manhattan streets had made clear how agencies had to exaggerate their expenditure requests to ward off automatic cuts by the Board of Estimates and Apportionment. In response to this report, health department director Hermann Biggs asked Bruere to help his department develop a budget. Biggs was convinced that a budget was the best strategy for securing adequate funding by documenting the department's need. Bruere recognized that a health department budget would be a high-profile project, since the department's work affected the entire community directly and involved well-publicized issues like the safety of milk and protection against tuberculosis. Bruere modeled the budget after the AICP budgeting process described in Allen's book, *Efficient Democracy*.¹⁸

Acting on an aldermanic resolution, the Board of Estimates and Apportionment not only approved the health department budget, but directed that all city agencies should follow a similar procedure thereafter. Thus, two principles were established: specification of the purposes for which requested funds were to be spent, and the appropriation of specific sums for specific purposes.

Citizen education was another of the bureaus' key activities, on the theory that informed citizens would hold governments accountable and demand economical and effective use of tax dollars. Many of the bureaus published periodic bulletins describing their research findings or alerting the public to important policy issues. Bureau staff members also addressed civic groups, and some bureaus maintained public information services. Combining public education with their interest in budgeting, some bureaus organized budget exhibits, displaying graphs that showed the costs and benefits of various government activities, along with more tangible items like six-cent hat hooks for which the city government had paid 65 cents apiece. The first such exhibit, held in New York City in 1908, drew 50,000 people and received considerable press coverage.

Philosophy

Bureau reformers employed a rhetoric of nonpartisan neutrality based on their belief in the ability of objective, scientific fact finding to demonstrate the most effective and efficient way of managing public agencies. The

extent to which either effectiveness or efficiency took precedence in the minds and hearts of the bureau men is a matter of some debate in the literature. The bureau researchers themselves maintained that efficiency was the instrument of effectiveness, to be able to accomplish more for a given expenditure. For example, Bruere¹⁹ commented:

The efficiency movement in cities ... began ... in an effort to capture the great forces of city government for harnessing the work of social betterment. It was not a tax-saving incentive nor desire for economy that inspired this first effort ... but the conviction that only through efficient government could progressive social welfare be achieved, and that, so long as government remained inefficient, volunteer and detached effort to remove social handicaps would continue a hopeless task.

The bureau publications of the time are filled with similar statements to the effect that solving problems of city life was the first priority, and efficiency was the means to that end. Schiesl²⁰ supports the idea that the bureaus were sincerely interested in social welfare.

Numerous other commentators, however, have pointed out that, while effectiveness may have come first to start with, efficiency gradually displaced it. As Crane²¹ saw the bureaus, their primary aim was to promote governmental economy and efficiency. Better service was a secondary goal, a stance Crane argued was made necessary by the bureaus' reliance on the financial support of private business interests. Gill¹⁶ agreed, suggesting that the bureau emphasis on science and fact-finding eventually became an end in itself. Waldo,²² after quoting both Allen and Bruere, observed that, over time in the movement, "research and facts have come to be regarded less and less as devices of citizen cooperation and control and more and more as instruments of executive management." Karl²³ argued that the New York Bureau came to define "fiscal reform as the real reform" — in other words, to make the improvement of government methods an end in itself.

At the very least, bureau reformers believed, first, that it was possible to distinguish ends from means, so that the methods of government could be seen as neutral (nonpolitical, value-free), and second, that democratic accountability would be served by administrative practices that made efficient use of available resources. They adopted the politics-administration dichotomy especially as formulated in Frank Goodnow's *Politics and Administration*.²⁴ Goodnow argued in favor of a separation of government functions, with the legislature handling the expression of the popular will and the executive responsible for its execution, rather than the separated powers, checks-and-balances theory of the framers of the Constitution.

The bureau men moved toward a view of government that emphasized the need for centralized control and rational decision making, hence the desirability of a stronger chief executive. They saw separated powers as weakening the executive branch by depriving it of a policy role, and called for such reforms as the executive budget and staff-versus-line distinctions in order to make it possible for the executive to centralize and systematize control over government processes. In this respect, the bureau philosophy represents a fulfillment of Alexander Hamilton's interest in promoting "energy" in the executive to make government capable of strategic action and for the executive to check the power of the legislature, an interest that had been in abeyance during the Jacksonian era.

Dahlberg points to the New York Bureau's report to the 1915 state constitutional convention as a clear example of this Hamiltonian political philosophy. In her view, the crux of the bureau philosophy was the idea that "greatest responsibility and responsiveness is found where the executive is responsible for leadership and administrative direction, and where the electorate must decide when irreconcilable differences arise between the legislature and the executive."²⁵ Dahlberg, a friendly analyst of the bureau approach, calls the lack of a provision for such clear assignment of functions to different branches in U.S. government a "historical accident." The politics-administration dichotomy, she notes, would correct this misstep, producing a government with each part in harmony with the rest, "adapted to perform the service for which it was intended." The proper function of the legislature would be to "control the executive and call him to account for his expenditures,"²⁶ a process aided by the executive budget and a corps of staff specialists serving the chief executive's policy and management information needs.

Charles Beard's introduction to the bureau's constitutional report observed that government to that time had been based on the mistaken idea that legislatures should govern rather than simply call the executive to account by submitting to the people disputes between the two branches. Interestingly, though the new constitution was defeated at the time of the convention, the cause was taken up again several years later by Governor Al Smith. He appointed his own constitutional commission, headed by Robert Moses and staffed by A. E. Buck and John Gaus, all of them New York Bureau "graduates." Most of the bureau's recommendations of 1915 were adopted in the election of 1925.¹⁷

The question of democratic accountability was one the bureau reformers emphasized consistently. In their view, inefficient, wasteful government could not serve democracy well. Officials were responsible to the people for expenditure decisions. Such accountability was impossible with antiquated financial management techniques. Agencies staffed with trained experts rather than people whose main qualification was party loyalty

seemed to the bureau men both a basic requirement and fulfillment of democracy. From their perspective, the average citizen was more interested in well-run government than in direct involvement (again, a Hamiltonian argument). They reasoned that if trained public administrators executed legislative mandates in an effective and efficient manner, democracy would be well served.

Administrative accountability would be supported by what the bureau reformers called “efficient citizens,” who would rally round agencies if they had the information necessary to understand administrative action. The bureaus’ information bulletins and budget exhibits were based on this premise. As William H. Allen²⁷ put it:

Without ... facts upon which to base judgment, the public cannot intelligently direct and control the administration of township, county, city, state, or nation. Without intelligent control by the public, no efficient, progressive, triumphant democracy is possible.

Allen saw citizen reformers unarmed with systematic knowledge as well-meaning but ineffective do-gooders — “candles under a bushel” — who could be transformed by the acquisition of facts.

Although the rhetoric of efficient citizenship has an appealing ring, the bureau men’s understanding of “the public” was limited. It was shaped by the Progressive tendency to define “the public” in distinction from either capital or labor. As Dawley notes, for Progressives the public consisted of “social workers, journalists, lawyers, educators, and other middle-class opinion makers who were supposed to represent some disinterested general will.”²⁸ The rejection of political parties by educated middle-class people can be traced to their sense that the Democratic party served working-class immigrants and the Republican party big business and finance capitalists. This left no place for the new professionals — hence their stress on being “nonpartisan.” Many of the Progressive reform proposals were premised on the need to harmonize and reconcile class differences. This aim was served by ideas of “the public” and “the public interest” that took hold during this period. Ehrenreich²⁹ points out that, after setting aside capital and labor, the only public left is the middle class. For Progressives, “the public” symbolized the idea of a classless society, where differences could be transcended under the rationalizing and harmonizing guidance of expert professionals.

For the new professionals, conflict of any kind and especially among classes constituted a failure to find the best solution to an issue, a position outlined most clearly in the work of Progressive management thinker Mary Parker Follett.^{30,31} The bureau men’s reliance on scientific investigation as

the basis for building working relationships with agency incumbents embodies the sense of Follett and others that the facts of the situation could point toward an approach that all interests would recognize as best. In addition, as Dahlberg¹⁷ suggests, bureau reformers believed that ordinary folk were by and large uninterested in the workings of government, making it the responsibility of enlightened citizens to see to it that government was well run.

In their focus on administrative decision making based on factual analysis, the bureau approach anticipated Herbert Simon³² by some 40 years. The movement away from “good men” toward “good methods”³ also prefigures Simon’s emphasis on rejecting unproven principles of administration in favor of the results of scientific investigation, but with more trust than Simon was willing to put in day-to-day experience. Bureau researchers held that careful analysis of actual practice in agencies could yield useful information, data that would be reliable because it was systematically acquired, an approach largely derived from Frederick Taylor’s³³ method of identifying principles of scientific management by painstaking study of ongoing work.

The Survey Approach

The bureau men were interested in examining existing practices in order to improve them. This led them to adopt what was called the “survey approach,” an epistemological orientation that later commentators^{5,6} have seen as both the centerpiece of the bureau perspective and the taproot of the modern field of public administration. Historians of public administration see the survey method as a sign of the scientific orientation of the bureaus. In the early 20th century, however, surveys had not reached the level of methodological sophistication now taken for granted, nor did they entail the kind of detachment expected today. For Progressive reformers, the word “survey” connoted a systematic approach to gathering facts about a neighborhood or community for the express purpose of problem solving.

Although their contributions to the survey method remain unacknowledged in the literature of public administration, the pioneers of the approach in the United States were the settlement houses. The first survey was conducted by residents of Chicago’s Hull House;³⁴ it exhaustively delineated socioeconomic characteristics and problems of the immediate area. The Hull House survey report was notable for its detailed maps, documenting the concentration of various ethnic groups in certain blocks, the relationship between ethnicity and weekly income, the relegation of the very poor to crowded rooms in the rear of tenements while those with more resources clustered at the front. The report provided house-

by-house information, as well as a number of special reports on issues like sweatshops, child labor, and charities in Cook County.

Other surveys quickly followed, including two conducted under the auspices of South End House in Boston. In 1907, the survey approach broadened from the neighborhood level to an entire community. The Pittsburgh Survey, sponsored by the Russell Sage Foundation, sought to describe the conditions of an entire city as they were being affected by industrial development. Over 60 researchers spent a year collecting statistical data on urban problems and interviewing steelworkers, managers of steel plants, women workers, clergy, and real estate brokers. As Cohen³⁵ notes, “The Pittsburgh Survey was part of the political arsenal used by urban reform groups against political machines.” Its findings were used to consolidate 27 wards into nine at-large districts, thus breaking the hold of the Pittsburgh machine. The survey also documented, using the steel industry as an example, how the unregulated workings of capitalism undercut the capacity of citizens and communities to participate in democratic institutions.³⁶

Bureau researchers took the Pittsburgh Survey as their model, though it is likely they were more attracted to the machine-busting side of the effort than its critique of capitalism. Both Charles Merriam’s³⁷ progress report on municipal research and Luther Gulick’s⁷ retrospective cite Pittsburgh as the exemplar, even though Bruere’s 1906 survey of Manhattan streets predated the Pittsburgh research by a year and the publication of its findings by three. In any case, the idea that systematic investigation could be the key to loosening the hold of political machines on the workings of city agencies quickly became the centerpiece of the bureau approach to reform.

Reporting in 1928 on the work of the New York Bureau and the National Institute of Public Administration that grew out of it, Gulick³⁸ admitted that, in the hands of bureau researchers, the “survey method” became rather loosely applied to a wide variety of investigations in order to connote rational, nonpartisan analysis:

The term “survey” was used to describe the Bureau’s studies of city government because it conveyed the idea of the inclusive, objective, and scientific approach which the Bureau applied to its work.... The term was not original with the Bureau. It was being used at that time in the same sense by the Russell Sage Foundation in its “Survey of Pittsburgh.”

As Gulick goes on to describe, a typical bureau survey entailed descriptive analysis of the organization and functioning of a government department or, indeed, an entire government. The analysis would encompass applicable constitutional and statutory provisions, scope of work, major activities, budget, personnel, and interactions with other agencies.

It sought to uncover objectives, need for the work, methods, division of labor, and record keeping to arrive at a judgment as to whether the agency or government was meeting existing needs efficiently and was prepared to cope with future demands. Such research projects were actually more like today's case study than the modern social science survey. In many respects — particularly in questioning the agency's need to exist and the extent to which it accomplishes its purposes — today's performance measurement movement echoes many of the dynamics set in motion by the bureau surveys. Certainly the latter established as a precedent the notion that systematic investigation could determine the worth of public administrative work.

To sum up the philosophy of the bureau movement, one can do no better than Waldo's assessment, which is worth quoting at length:⁴⁰

The spirit of the Bureau movement has deeply affected public administration. The Bureau movement was a part of Progressivism, and its leaders were leaders of Progressivism. They were tired of the simple moralism of the nineteenth century, although paradoxically they were themselves fired with the moral fervor of humanitarianism and secularized Christianity. They were stirred by the revelations of the Muckrakers, but despaired of reform by spontaneous combustion. They were sensitive to the appeals and promises of science, and put a simple trust in discovery of facts as the way of science and as a sufficient model for solution of human problems. They accepted — they urged — the new positive conception of government, and verged upon the idea of a planned and managed society. They hated "bad" business but found in business organization and procedure an acceptable prototype for public business. They detested politicians and were firm in the belief that citizens by and large were fundamentally pure at heart, desirous of efficient and economical government, and potentially rational enough to "reach up" and support a vigorous government, wide in its scope, complex in its problems, and utilizing a multitude of professional and scientific skills.... They caught the vision that "true democracy consists in intelligent cooperation between citizens and those elected or appointed to serve."

The municipal research bureaus represented the quintessence of the tension between democracy and efficiency in terms of which Waldo summed up the forces of reform that produced the field of public administration. Waldo held that the administrative reform challenge was to reconcile the desire for managerial efficiency, derived from science and

achieved by experts, with democratic values. The bureaus' particular strategy was to argue that efficient management was democratic, first, because corruption and waste were not in the public interest, and second, because management carried out the will of the people as expressed by the legislature and had no politics of its own. Both of these are still live arguments in the field, as will be suggested below. Certainly the tension between efficiency and democracy is not only an ongoing but a constitutive one, as Waldo noted.

From Training to Education

How was it that the bureau approach became a central influence in the development of the field of public administration? The link was forged out of the interest of bureau men preparing competent experts to assume responsibility for efficient management in public agencies. A small-scale training effort by the New York Bureau evolved in a relatively short time into full-fledged professional education under university auspices, and the connections between them were direct.

The spark was lit when the bureaus' growing recognition of the need for training met its financial angel, Mrs. E. H. Harriman. Harriman, whose husband was a generous supporter of municipal research, became interested in modeling the American civil service on the professional services found in England and France, but her offer to fund the necessary educational program was rejected by Harvard, Yale, and Columbia on the grounds that "politics" were "dirty" and "unacademic."⁴¹ At the same time, leaders of the New York Bureau, especially William H. Allen, conceived of the idea of a training school. Allen and Harriman joined forces in 1911 to launch the school, with Harriman writing letters to well-connected men requesting their financial and moral support (according to Dahlberg, the only one who doubted the need for the school was Woodrow Wilson!). Some 485 applications were received from 106 cities in 25 states for the first class of 25 students. The first group included men with academic or practical backgrounds in finance, several engineers, a lawyer, and a school superintendent.

The training was extremely practice-oriented at first, with each student paired with a bureau member and assigned to research a particular agency or function. One typical assignment: "Work out a report with recommendations covering the civil service in New York City, including conditions governing employment, development of individual efficiency, reward of efficiency through proper compensation, proper discipline, welfare, etc."⁴² All trainees took an accountancy course. The normal length of training was two years and focused on whatever issues or needs were current in

municipal government at the time. Required reading included Frederick Cleveland's book on municipal accounting, Bruere's *The New City Government*, Allen's *Efficient Democracy*, and perhaps inevitably, Frederick Taylor's *Principles of Scientific Management*. Although there were few organized classes and virtually no lectures at first, over time the training began to assume a more conventionally academic format.

Charles A. Beard's evaluation of the school after its first year said that it met "every requirement of a university" but added the "practical contact with the world of affairs" that universities were not offering.⁴³ As a result of Beard's report, Columbia, the University of Pennsylvania, New York University, and the University of Michigan began granting graduate credit to trainees. Beard became director of the school in 1915, after which the training became more systematic and academic, with requirements in budgeting, accounting, municipal politics, and law. When Beard assumed directorship of the New York Bureau in 1918, Luther Gulick took over as head of the training school. Among the better-known graduates of the school were Robert Moses, A. E. Buck, Lent Upson, Luther Gulick, and Mabel Newcomer.

In 1914, the University of Michigan began offering an M.A. in public administration, a program headed by former New York Bureau men, and several other master's and bachelor's level programs followed, all directly or indirectly linked to the training school.⁶ When the Maxwell School was established at Syracuse University in 1924, the first class consisted of students who transferred there from the training school along with its then-director, William E. Mosher, who became dean. Mosher continued to bring Maxwell School classes to New York for three-month internships until 1930, and approval by the New York staff was required before Maxwell students received their master's degrees.

The roots of public administration as an academic discipline, then, are firmly planted in the bureaus of municipal research, preeminently in the New York Bureau. Ridley and Moore's⁴⁴ progress report on training for the public service cited the Maxwell School for its "conviction that administration per se has a definite content which can be taught," and Stone and Stone's⁶ history of public-administration education makes clear the ties between university-based and training-school approaches. Certainly the political represented in the bureau approach still shapes the field of public administration in fundamental ways.

The Influence of the Bureaus

In his assessment some 45 years after the founding of the New York Bureau, George Graham⁴⁵ identified several beliefs that he felt guided

academics in the teaching of public administration. They included the power of reason, the rationality and factual correctness of Western cultural values, the essentially administrative nature of the application of reason, and the possibility of finding equitable solutions to public problems — all tenets that the bureau men would likely have endorsed or did so explicitly. Graham's perspective perpetuated important aspects of the bureau approach: while he rejected the politics-administration dichotomy on which the bureaus relied, he fully accepted their faith in strong and competent administrative leadership and echoed their questioning of the doctrine of separated powers, which he suggested might usefully be left to “rest uninterrupted in antiquarian splendor.”⁴⁶ For those who believe that bureaucrat-bashing is of recent origin, Graham's observation that for a generation “public administrators have been on the ‘hot seat’ of professional and public criticism” is noteworthy (the more things change ... etc.).

As the present essay is being written, the field of public administration is at about the same remove from Graham as his report was from the field's source in the bureaus of municipal research. While a thorough review of the philosophy and practice of contemporary public administration is well beyond the bounds of my chapter, I want to conclude by suggesting, at least, that the bureau men's philosophy is still central to the field. While my case example, the reinventing government movement, is far from the whole of public administration today, the ardor with which contemporary reformers have embraced the reinvention frame of reference suggests that today's fundamental administrative values are much like those of the bureau reformers and that the implications of that continuity may deserve more attention than they have yet received.

Reinvention: Forward to the Past?

When looked at in light of information about the bureau movement and its role in shaping something called “public administration,” the call to reinvent government⁴⁷ and the speed and enthusiasm with which it has been taken up at both the federal and state levels reveal nuances that are not apparent when they are considered out of historical context. Examined within this context, not only does reinventing government seem less new than it might otherwise, but indeed, its major proposals begin to sound terribly familiar. If we accept the arguments of historians that municipal reformers acted not only out of altruistic concern to improve government, but also for various self-interested motives, and if reinventing government reflects, as I will try to show, many of the same features as the bureau reformers' proposals, then parallels between the two movements may

suggest that they serve similar aims and thus reveal aspects of the current reinventing fervor we might otherwise miss.

For simplicity's sake let us take the Gore Report as our example of reinventing government. Its recommendations are based on the premise that "the central issue we face is not *what* government does, but *how it* works"; the main problem is "good people trapped in bad systems."⁴⁸ Both of these ideas echo the perspective of the bureau reformers. The first accepts the bureau notion that how government does its work can be separated from what it does and that the one can therefore be addressed without creating implications for the other. In other words, as of old, means can be separated from ends. The second adopts the bureau men's reform strategy, which was (as Waldo held) to seek good methods rather than good men — that is, to rely on administrative rather than political solutions (again, assuming the two can be separated).

Reinventing government in fact resurrects the politics-administration dichotomy on which bureau reformers relied but which public-administration thinking ostensibly banished several decades ago, and relies on it for the same reason: to strengthen executive branch power at the expense of the legislature. The Gore Report's indictment of red tape is a reflection of the administrative expert's dislike for politically imposed controls. It is defended on much the same ideological basis as the early 20th-century reformers called for "scientific" approaches to public management: that is, politics-as-usual is ineffective; it does not ensure results and it wastes the public's money.

The Hamiltonian idea that what people want is not participation in government but results, that is, services that work well and do not cost very much, is reflected as strongly in arguments for reinvention as it was in the bureau perspective. Both strengthen the administrator's hand. Today this is done in the interests of managerial "creativity" and "entrepreneurialism." Formerly, it was done for the sake of being "scientific" and "businesslike." Again, just as the bureau men argued for "efficient citizens" armed with facts to rally round expert administration, today advocates of reinventing government suggest that "customer service" will win the hearts and minds of a disenchanted public. In the same way as the bureau men once argued that democratic accountability would best be served by getting government to work efficiently, the identical argument is now made on behalf of the National Performance Review and similar reinvention efforts.

In sum, the difficulty that Waldo saw in the Progressive reform approach to early public administration exists today: reform is based on an unacknowledged theory of governance masquerading as a set of management techniques. Today we are not only absorbed with reinventing government, but our decontextualized enthusiasm for procedural strategies

like total quality management, productivity improvement, and performance measurement suggest continuing reliance on Progressive orthodoxy in early public administration. As Waldo observed, the most basic postulate among public administration's founders was "that true democracy and true efficiency are synonymous, or at least reconcilable."⁴⁹ The contemporary field of public administration is excessively concerned, just as the bureau men were, with finding the right management technique and is insufficiently sensitive to the political dynamics that inhabit every public administrative procedure — even the most apparently innocuous.

Reminding ourselves of public administration's roots in the bureaus of municipal research presents an opportunity to become more sensitive to the intertwining of facts with values, of policies with implementation methods, of politics with administration. The question Waldo posed is still relevant: "Are students of administration [including its practitioners and its theorists] trying to solve the problems of human cooperation on too low a plane?"⁵⁰ Without rejecting the bureau men's dedication to improved methods, we might also raise our sights more fully and more regularly to the substantive dimensions of public administrative work, that is, its inevitable implication in questions of the public good.

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Chapter 17

Positively No Proverbs Need Apply: Revisiting the Legacy of Herbert A. Simon

Peter L. Cruise

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Introduction¹

Perhaps no movement or school of thought had more effect upon the field of public administration in the mid-20th century than did logical positivism. In the late 1930s, just as the field was beginning to flower both as a profession and as an academic discipline — due in large part to the pioneering work of classical-period writers such as Frank Goodnow, Leonard White, W. F. Willoughby, Luther Gulick and Lyndall Urwick — the seeds of the logical positivist perspective had been planted. These seeds, mainly in the form of works published by Chester I. Barnard, already were questioning basic tenets propounded by Gulick and Urwick and, by implication, the writings of the field's first serious scholar, Woodrow Wilson (1887). Soon the attacks were further refined and were led most notably and articulately by a young University of Chicago doctoral student named Herbert A. Simon. During the late 1940s and early 1950s, these attacks would be responsible for such a fundamental shift in the locus and focus of the study of the discipline that, for a time, even the name “public administration” seemed to disappear from the academic and professional landscape (Henry 1995). Although Herbert Simon died in February 2001, nearly 60 years and millions of critiquing words have passed since the start of the logical positivist revolution. The aftereffects, like lingering radiation from an atomic bomb, resonate in the discipline today at the beginning of the 21st century.

Simon and logical positivism influenced many disciplines, but Simon the individual was, first of all, a political scientist and student of public administration. According to Augier and March (2001, 396), even though Simon's interest in human problem solving led to pioneering work in disciplines that are seemingly far removed from public administration, he retained a perspective familiar to that field — a commitment not only to understanding human behavior, but also to reforming human practices and institutions.

This chapter explores the rise of the logical positivist perspective in the field of public administration, its heyday, and finally its diminution. Epistemology and important epistemological and philosophical antecedents to logical positivism, such as empiricism, modern science, the scientific method, and logical atomism are reviewed. Within these schools of thought, writers such as Alfred North Whitehead, Bertrand Russell, Ludwig Wittgenstein, and the writers in the Vienna Circle and each of their significant contributions to the beginnings of the logical positivist movement are examined.

Once these European philosophers began to influence American writers, especially Chester Barnard, logical positivism and public administration were to remain strange bedfellows for a number of decades. The most significant individual, and to whom logical positivism is most identified, is Herbert Simon. Although Simon long ago left writing about the discipline, his early writings marked the dramatic shift from the classical to the behavioral period in public administration (Fry 1989; Henry 1995). The theories propounded by Simon and the subsequent effect of his writings are still present in the field and are examined in this chapter.

The dominance of the logical positivist perspective in public administration would result in many strange things: an early split in the field that even today explains why university public-administration departments are located where they are; a decline in the 1950s and early 1960s in public administration as an academic field of study, in favor of political science, so severe that a separate identity for the discipline nearly vanished from American colleges and universities; an early 1970s counterrevolution against logical positivism, which began with the new public administration champions at Syracuse University and resulted in a reinvigoration of the field; and in the 1980s and early 1990s, in a touch of irony, the acceptance of alternative, anti-logical-positivist approaches to research in the field, such as phenomenology and qualitative methods. The chapter concludes with an exploration of these reactions to the close relationship between logical positivism and public administration. If the two were indeed strange bedfellows in the middle of the 20th century, they are now, in the early 2000s, perhaps still in the same house but occupying separate bedrooms.

Epistemology and the Philosophical Antecedents of Logical Positivism

A Definition of Epistemology

Epistemology is the branch of philosophy concerned with the theory of knowledge. Traditionally, central issues in epistemology are the *nature*

and *derivation* of knowledge, the *scope* of knowledge, and the *reliability* of claims to knowledge (Edwards 1967). An inquiry of knowledge in the study of public administration is heavily influenced by what the academic community believes are the proper means to decide as to what gets included in the literature of the field. Students and academics interested in exploring the major epistemological views in public administration typically ask questions like: How does each view largely define accepted knowledge? What are the implications to public administration? Are any of the views dysfunctional? In what ways? What are the implications to the development of the field or discipline? (Lynch 1990).

Philosophers have frequently been divided over the nature and derivation questions in epistemology. For example, rationalists (i.e., Plato and René Descartes) have argued that ideas of reason intrinsic to the mind are the only source of knowledge. Empiricists (i.e., John Locke and David Hume), on the other hand, have argued that sense experience is the primary source of our ideas (or knowledge). The debate between the rationalists and empiricists continued for quite some time and later took a significant turn with Immanuel Kant's discussion of whether there could be synthetic a priori knowledge, that is, knowledge not based on experience but which is a condition of the comprehensibility of experience (Popkin and Stroll 1990). Kantian philosophy, however, is not a focus of this discussion. Kant, although antiempiricist in the derivation of knowledge question, agreed with the empiricists in the scope of knowledge question in that knowledge is limited to the world of experience (Popkin and Stroll 1990).

Regarding the question of the reliability of knowledge, a significant influence in the history of epistemology has been the role of the skeptic in demanding whether any claim to knowledge can be upheld against the possibility of doubt. As early as René Descartes (1596–1650), who set aside any claim that was open to doubt, the role of the skeptic was to increase the level of rigor and precision necessary to posit knowledge (Edwards 1967). Postmodernist perspectives notwithstanding, in contemporary epistemology the role of the skeptic has been somewhat diminished. Even Descartes and modern science would propose at least one basic truth with his statement: *cogito, ergo sum* (I think, therefore I am) (Edwards 1967). As will be discussed later, individuals such as George Edward Moore and Ludwig Wittgenstein have been influential in redirecting attention from the defense of claims to knowledge against doubt to an analysis of their meaning.

Philosophical Antecedents to Logical Positivism

To understand how logical positivism answers the basic epistemological questions discussed earlier, we must first focus on aspects of the philo-

sophical perspectives of two earlier movements: empiricism and modern science. Aspects of these two movements form the foundations upon which much of logical positivism rests.

Empiricism and Modern Science

A good understanding of the empiricist perspective can be determined from the word itself — the term comes from the Greek word *emdeiria*, meaning experience. The basic tenet of empiricism is that legitimate human knowledge arises from what is provided to the mind of the individual by introspective awareness through the vehicle of experience. It is (1) a *rejection* of other doctrines (such as Platonism) that state that when the human mind first encounters the world it is already furnished with a range of ideas or concepts which have nothing to do with experience, and (2) an *acceptance* of the idea that, at birth, the mind is a “white paper,” or *tabula rasa* — void of all characters — and that only experience can provide it with ideas (Edwards 1967). Interestingly, these statements are in sharp contrast to aspects of modern science as espoused by Descartes, who said that man has certain innate seeds that, if properly cultivated, would grow into knowledge. However, the similarities between empiricism and modern science, and their collective contribution to logical positivism, are more important than their differences and will be discussed later.

Empiricism has taken many forms, but one common feature is that it starts from experimental science as a basis for understanding human knowledge (Edwards 1967). This is opposed to the rationalist approach, which starts from pure mathematics as the basis for understanding human knowledge. Empiricism and its major proponents developed during the 17th and early 18th centuries, most directly as a result of the growing success and importance of experimental science and its gradual identity separate from pure mathematics and other disciplines. Major early proponents of empiricism, known collectively as the British Empiricist School of Philosophy, were Francis Bacon, John Locke, Bishop Berkeley, and David Hume. Later individuals, also usually classified as empiricists, in the 19th and early 20th centuries include John Stuart Mill and Bertrand Russell (Beck 1966).

Russell’s inclusion in this list provides one of the major personality links between the classical British empiricists and the beginnings of logical positivism in the 20th century. Empiricism’s earliest days can be traced to ancient Greece and the first declared empiricist Epicurus (341–270 B.C.E.). Epicurus maintained that the senses are the only source of knowledge. He was also an extreme atomist and held that sense perception comes about only as a result of contact between the atoms of the soul and the

films of atoms issuing from bodies and objects around us. According to Epicurus, all sensations are true and there is no standard other than sensation to which we may refer our judgments about the world (Edwards 1967). Implicit with Epicurus's description of knowledge is that man cannot discover the real, indubitable truths of the universe, but only can develop probable hypotheses about the world around him.

The inductive knowledge-from-observation and hypothesis development and testing motifs that undergirds empiricism flowered more fully during the time of the British empiricists in 17th-century England. Hypothesis development and subsequent experimentation — by individuals such as Robert Boyle (i.e., Boyle's Law) and Isaac Newton (i.e., laws of thermodynamics) — that were necessary for empiricism to be accepted were expanding rapidly in the physical sciences in 17th- and 18th-century Europe. Empiricism sees the acquisition of knowledge as a slow, piecemeal process, endlessly self-correcting but *limited* by the possibilities of experimentation and observation (Beck 1966).

Modern science, as developed by Descartes, has a number of parallels to empiricism, and these parallels are important to the development of logical positivism. According to Descartes, the solutions to the questions posed by epistemology lay in the systematization of knowledge. In the ideal method described by Descartes, man would start with basic axioms whose truth was clear and distinct, setting aside anything that can be supposed to be false until he arrives at something that cannot be supposed to be false.

Critical to this basic analysis is that nothing should be accepted as true unless it was clear and distinct. Next, one should analyze the basic axiom, starting with simple thoughts and only later proceeding to more complex thoughts. Following these steps, one should review the entire process so that no possible consideration is omitted (Popkin and Stroll 1990).

The most important similarities between modern science and empiricism include the need to systematize the acquisition of knowledge, thereby avoiding the introduction of extraneous variables that could confuse and cloud the final product and the need for careful self-correction and comprehensiveness throughout the process to avoid overlooking or omitting important variables that could affect the final product. The most important difference between the two perspectives includes the issue of the existence of certain innate truths. Modern science and Descartes propose that the universe can be explained in terms of absolute properties or truths. By employing the appropriate procedures described above, we can discover knowledge that, under no circumstances, can be false. Empiricists, on the other hand, say that even if systematized procedures for the acquisition of knowledge were employed, man cannot discover absolute truths, but can only develop probable hypotheses about the

universe. Within certain confidence intervals and at certain levels of significance, man could work out a theory of knowledge, but only within the bounds of the actual achievements of scientists. Discussion of “limits” and “bounds,” along with the disputation that certain organizational absolute “truths” were, in fact, proverbs, would resonate strongly nearly a century after they were first discussed when logical positivists like Herbert Simon would examine the behavior of individuals within organizations with concepts such as “bounded rationality” and “satisficing.”

Just as logical positivism owes much to empiricism and modern science, it is useful to examine the thinking and writings of several early 20th-century philosophers and scientists who were not only the bridges between the 18th- and 19th-century perspectives of empiricism and modern science, but contributed their own important concepts to logical positivism as we know it today. Before embarking upon an examination of the 20th-century philosophers important to the development of logical positivism, it is useful to explore several aspects of contemporary philosophy to gain an understanding of the context in which these individuals developed their various perspectives regarding philosophy and epistemology.

Philosophy and the philosophical tradition are nearly 3,000 years old in the Western world. Even with this long history, the exact nature of philosophy is still a matter of debate. For example, the early Greek thinkers thought of philosophy as we might now think of contemporary science. These individuals thought that, through philosophical reflection alone, the nature of the universe would be revealed to them. The explanations of the universe gained through philosophical reflection gradually grew more complex and grandiose. For example, in ancient Greece in the fourth century B.C.E., Democritus worked out a crude version of atomic theory 2,000 years before empirical verification of it was possible (Popkin and Stroll 1990).

Over time, as man’s curiosity of nature grew and as knowledge of it increased, the study of nature became an activity that broke away from philosophy and became the new discipline of “science.” This breakaway is a comparatively recent event, however, because as recently as the 19th-century, university physics courses were still described as “natural philosophy” courses (Popkin and Stroll 1990). The current practice of universities awarding doctorates of philosophy to individuals in the physical sciences (as well as in many other fields of study) is another example of the early dominance of philosophy over science. Although science is a broad descriptor encompassing many aspects of the physical and natural worlds, all activities associated with science utilize a common methodology. This methodology still includes the ancient philosophical stance of thoughtful reflection of the world, but also involves the careful observation and experimentation with it. This process became known as the scientific

method (Edwards 1967). Further, according to proponents of this perspective, true knowledge of the world can only be acquired through the use of the scientific method.

With the breakaway of science from classical philosophy in the late 19th century, obvious questions developed: What is philosophy apart from science? What kind of knowledge does philosophical activity result in? Is philosophy different from science? Does philosophical activity result in any knowledge at all? (Popkin and Stroll 1990). In the 20th century, several influential philosophical movements developed, each with answers to these and other important questions in philosophy and science. Important to the development of logical positivism was the perspective of logical atomism and the works of Whitehead, Russell, Wittgenstein, and, eventually, the Vienna Circle.

Logical Atomism

Logical atomism is an extremely complex philosophical perspective, based primarily on highly technical mathematical or symbolic logic as developed by Alfred North Whitehead and Bertrand Russell during the period from 1910 to 1913. This section deals with just a few of its fundamental propositions important to the subsequent development of the works of Ludwig Wittgenstein, a student of Bertrand Russell, and Wittgenstein's influence on the early logical positivists.

Alfred North Whitehead, Bertrand Russell, and Principia Mathematica

After more than ten years of work, Whitehead and Russell, in a series of three volumes entitled *Principia Mathematica*, described a new type of logic, broader in scope than the then standard and accepted logic system based on the works of the Greek philosopher Aristotle. This new system of logic described the relations of symbols to each other (symbolic logic). The importance of the work by Whitehead and Russell lay in the fact that it did not reject the centuries of work by philosophers since Aristotle, but refined it, through mathematics, to a degree of precision never before seen. This symbolic logic could also be used to develop a precise new symbolic language, beyond that of natural languages like French, English or Spanish, that could clarify the meanings of sentences for further philosophical analysis (Popkin and Stroll 1990).

Principia Mathematica and the writings of Whitehead and Russell would receive even further explanation and elaboration with Ludwig Wittgenstein (1899–1951), whom many regard as the greatest philosophical

genius of the 20th century. Wittgenstein, among other things, thought of philosophy as an autonomous discipline (e.g., separate from science) dealing with its own sort of particular problems. He did not believe that science could solve philosophical problems and, in later life, would say that even philosophy could not provide any factual information about the world (Popkin and Stroll 1990). It is only one part of Wittgenstein's great body of work, however, that would launch the logical positivist movement. Several statements contained in Wittgenstein's 1922 work *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* would be responsible for a small group of students in Austria, led by a University of Vienna professor named Moritz Schilick, to describe this new philosophical perspective.

Ludwig Wittgenstein and Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus

The logical atomist perspective of Whitehead and Russell received its most comprehensive explanation in this work of Wittgenstein. Wittgenstein's version of logical atomism became known as "picture theory." Continuing with the previous examination by Whitehead and Russell of logical precision in language, a perfect language, according to Wittgenstein, is like a map, as it pictures or mirrors the structure of reality. As philosophers attempt to utilize the logical atomistic perspective and symbolic logic to develop aspects of the structure of reality, they would be *actively engaged* in the process, not in a merely passive and reflective stance as in the past (Bergmann 1967). This single part of Wittgenstein's massive work would become extremely significant for the eventual development of logical positivism. Wittgenstein's contention that philosophy is a genuine activity, just as science is, would become a major focus for the Vienna Circle. But unlike science, philosophy does not discover new facts or new knowledge. Philosophy describes the structure of the world, and how its basic ingredients are constructed. This is knowledge, but not the same kind of knowledge that science develops (Popkin and Stroll 1990). As just described, the philosophical system of logical atomism was a metaphysical system in the traditional sense, and as such, it would be rejected shortly by thinkers who would use the same symbolic logic developed by logical atomists to contend that metaphysical knowledge developed by such thinking was nonsense (Bergmann 1967).

"Philosophy as Activity" and the Rise of the Vienna Circle

As has been described, logical positivism is often thought to have been initiated by the remark of Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* to the effect that philosophy is not a theory, but an activity. The

group associated with the beginnings of the movement consisted of individuals meeting in seminars in Vienna, Austria, conducted by Moritz Schillick in the early 1920s. The original members of the group were committed to science either by scholarship or profession, and philosophy was more of an avocation. Among its members were Hans Hahn, Fredrich Waismann, Herbert Feigl, Otto Neurath, and Rudolf Carnap. The original focus of the group was empiricism, however they were heavily influenced first by Whitehead and Russell and then, more profoundly, by Wittgenstein (Gross 1970).

In elaborating upon Wittgenstein's view that philosophy was not a theory but an activity, the Vienna Circle held that philosophy does not produce propositions that are true or false; it merely clarifies the meaning of statements, showing some to be scientific, some to be mathematical, and some to be nonsensical (Wedberg 1984). Four principles of logical positivism were eventually developed by the Vienna Circle. The first principle is that of *logical atomism*, which says that all complex statements depend on their truth based on simple statements about what may be sensed, and that none of these simple statements can entail any others. The second principle is the *verifiability theory of meaning*, in which only those propositions that can be given meaning verifiable by scientific methods could be said to be either true or false. Therefore anything else, especially metaphysical philosophy, has no genuine meaning. George Edward Moore, and individuals at the *Cambridge School of Analysis*, is most closely identified with verification theory. For a time, a second center of logical positivism flourished in England, rivaling the one in Vienna. The third principle of logical positivism is the *analytic character of a priori knowledge*, which holds that all necessary statements reveal the contents of our ideas, rather than reporting truths about the world. Finally, the fourth principle describes the *emotive theory of values*, where statements of value are neither true nor false, but are simply expressions of attitude (Gross 1970; Wedberg 1984).

Of the four principles of logical positivism described by the Vienna Circle and the Cambridge School, it can be argued that the two principles that describe the verification principle and the emotive theory of values would have the greatest impression on the budding career of Herbert Simon and, subsequently, a profound effect on American public administration. It is not a great leap to see that Simon's attack on the work of Gulick and Urwick in *Principles of Administration* and his promotion of the "fact-value dichotomy" in his own work *Administrative Behavior* are direct extensions of these basic principles of logical positivism as developed in the Vienna Circle and the Cambridge School of Analysis. Although Simon was not the first to challenge the direction of the new discipline of public administration, by building upon the tenets of logical positivism

he would force a major shift from what was then the classical perspective to the behavioral perspective in public administration (Fry 1989). Although Simon used the logical positivist perspective as developed by the Vienna Circle in the 1920s to mount much of his subsequent work in public administration, we have seen that the philosophical traditions of logical positivism actually stretch back through logical atomism and the empiricist and the modern science schools of thought of the 15th and 16th centuries, and actually begin in ancient Greece with the first declared atomist and empiricist, Epicurus.

Logical Positivism and Public Administration Theory: The Rise of Herbert Simon

By the time the Vienna Circle was meeting and discussing the theory of logical positivism in the 1920s Austria, President Woodrow Wilson was already dead, and his famous, public-administration-founding essay, “A Study of Administration” was over 30 years old. In this essay, along with a discussion of a necessary separation or dichotomy between politics and administration, was a clear call for the serious study of the new field of public administration (Wilson 1887). Twelve years after Wilson’s essay, in 1900, books discussing the emerging discipline of public administration were written by Frank Goodnow and Leonard White and further developed the concept that the activities of administration in government should be separate from politics or political influence. If this occurred, said these individuals, the concepts of efficiency and the “one best way,” both developed through the work of Frederick Taylor and the scientific-management movement, could be brought into administrative activities (Henry 1995).

By the early 1920s, the bureau movement in the United States was also in full flower. As an outgrowth of the Progressive movement’s desire to reform government at the municipal level, the establishment of New York City’s Bureau of Municipal Research (BMR) in 1906, in particular, was to bring forth a number of major figures in public administration who would later be attacked by the adherents of logical positivism (Pugh 1985). The early BMR writers, who collectively became known as the ABCs, were William Allen, Henry Bruere, and Frederick Cleveland. Each of the ABCs dealt with aspects of municipal government administration that had been open to problems and corruption in the past. Their works collectively, like the mission of the BMR itself, called for the promotion of efficient and economical government; the adoption of scientific methods of accounting and reporting the details of municipal business; and the collection, classification, analyzation, correlation, interpretation, and finally

publication of the resulting data related to the administration of municipal government (Allen 1907; Bruere 1912; Cleveland 1913). The activities of the BMR were designed to direct government energy effectively and efficiently for ultimate social betterment. It is not difficult to see aspects of empiricism and modern science contained within the works of the ABCs and in the mission of the BMR: systematization of knowledge, a reliance on observation and data collection, and a search for innate truths (i.e., the one best way) among other things. Even though it shared this common philosophical ancestry with logical positivism, also contained within the bureau movement were concepts abhorrent to the logical positivist perspective.

The philosophy of writers who came from the bureau movement perhaps best explains their eventual conflict with logical positivism. The founders of the BMR, for example, were social idealists in the sense that they were philanthropists and settlement-house workers concerned with getting the fullest amount of benefit for the public with altruistic, rather than economic, motives. The founders, as part of the Progressive movement, were concerned with ways of increasing government responsibility that reflected an interest in social control of economic life and in making the expanding industrialism in the United States subject to a rational and benevolent democratic program. Government officials had to be responsible to the citizens who elected them to office. Citizens also had to be responsible by insisting that their elected officials be accountable to them (Waldo 1955). A strong values base undergirds these relationships and, indeed, the entire bureau movement. This strong values base, along with pronouncements of “the best way” to do this or that discussed by later bureau-movement writers Luther Gulick and Lyndall Urwick in their book *Papers on the Science of Administration* provided ammunition for a young doctoral student at the University of Chicago, Herbert A. Simon.

The Influence of Chester Barnard

Although the history of the development of public administration was certainly altered dramatically by the writings generated by Herbert Simon during the late 1940s and through the 1950s, Simon owed an intellectual debt to the works published in the 1930s by Chester Barnard. However, Barnard was certainly not a logical positivist. Barnard was an empiricist whose empiricism was derived from experience and observation (Fry 1989). It could be argued that his work, especially when discussing executive decision making in organizations, was rooted in the trait theory of leadership school. When Barnard describes the development of executives within organizations, he deemphasizes intellectual ability and

academic training and emphasizes intuition, know-how, hunches, and other characteristics related to intensive experience. This early description of managers in organizations would have effects beyond Simon, when, in the early 1970s Henry Mintzberg (1973), in *The Nature of Managerial Work*, would describe through data developed through qualitative methods the decision-making process of managers in a variety of organizational settings.

Herbert Simon adopted major aspects of Barnard's work as he began to describe decision making within organizations. For example, Simon agreed with Barnard's conceptualization of the organization as a system of exchange and the definition of authority suggested by that conceptualization (Fry 1989). Although disagreeing with his conclusions as to its source, Simon also adopted Barnard's atomistic approach that complex formal organizations evolve from, and consist of, simple formal organizations (Fry 1989). This atomistic thinking by Simon continued with his research methodology. The unit of analysis in Simon's work became decision premises, rather than the decisions themselves (Fry 1989).

Finally, Simon builds on Barnard's description of human nature and the ability to choose among alternatives within an organizational setting (Fry 1989). Barnard felt that individuals are limited in their power to choose by physical, biological, and social factors. According to Barnard, the organization's role, as defined by its purpose or mission, also helps to prescribe a set of alternatives among which individuals can choose (Wolf 1974). Simon's "satisficing man" model with its *bounded rationality* is firmly rooted in Barnard's explanation of individual behavior.

Perhaps the most important departure from the work of Barnard is Simon's promotion of the logical positivist's "value free" zone required for the development of a science of administration. Simon argued that facts (i.e., statements about the observable world and the way in which it operates and can be either true or false) could be logically separated from values (i.e., statements about what "should be" or preferences for desired events and cannot be true or false, or even studied) and analyzed in a value-free zone (Simon 1947). Unlike Simon's approach, underlying Barnard's writings in public administration is a motif of an "open system" in which all social phenomena must occur. Although the complexity of each subsystem limits our understanding of cause and effect, Barnard felt that all subsystems (e.g., facts and values; politics and administration) are connected to the system and even a larger supersystem. They interact and are at the same time determined and determining forces in the system (Wolf 1974). Under Barnard's explanation, and in direct conflict with Simon's work, no decision-making or value-free subsystem could be artificially carved out or isolated from any other part.

Attacks on the Works of the Classicists

Although interest had been growing for some years since the 1920s and 1930s to expand upon the work of the classical-period writers who attempted to develop a more scientific approach to the study of public administration, Herbert Simon's formidable responses did not come until the late 1940s. In 1946 Simon, a recent graduate of the University of Chicago's doctoral program in political science, published a paper entitled "The Proverbs of Administration" in *Public Administration Review* (PAR) in which he sharply criticized the previous work in administrative theory and then outlined several requirements for an inductive and scientifically based theory of administration based on the tenets of logical positivism (Simon 1946). This chapter was subsequently reprinted as a chapter in Simon's first book, *Administrative Behavior: A Study of Decision-Making Processes in Administrative Organization*, which was published in 1947 and was based on his doctoral dissertation (Simon 1947).

In his PAR paper, Simon was critical of much of the previous work by writers such as Gulick and Urwick, when he described aspects of it as "proverbs" and often in contradiction with itself. The attack focused on four principles promoted by Gulick and Urwick in *Papers on the Science of Administration*. The very inclusion of the term "science" in the title of the book seemed to disturb Simon as he mounted his attack on the Gulick and Urwick principles. The principles were specialization; unity of command; span of control; and organization by purpose, process, clientele, and place. Although Simon agreed that these ideas were acceptable as "criteria for describing and diagnosing administrations," he felt that when they were treated as immutable laws, they were often in contradiction. Simon cleverly went on to analyze them as laws and attempted to prove their contradictory nature. In summarizing his position, Simon wrote: "Administrative description suffers from superficiality, oversimplification and lack of realism. It has confined itself too closely to the mechanism of authority and has failed to bring within its orbit the other, equally important modes of influence on organizational behavior. It has been satisfied to speak of 'authority,' 'centralization,' 'span of control,' and 'function' without seeking operational definitions of those terms" (Simon 1946, 56).

In his book *Administrative Behavior*, Simon undertakes the task of laying out a comprehensive theory of administrative organization based upon a logical positivist view of knowledge acquisition. Simon argues that the role of the scientist is the examination of factual propositions, specifically those based upon the observation of manifest behavior or those logically inferred from observation. Simon proposed that neither the values of the scientist nor those of the person being observed should enter into research or theory building, as no knowledge of the world can be developed from value laden or "should be" statements (Denhardt 1984).

The Models of Man: Rational, Administrative, Satisficing

The rational model of administration and its associated terminology, as first proposed by Simon over 50 years ago, have entered the lexicon of public administration. Terms developed long ago and often still used today include “satisficing man,” “bounded rationality,” and “administrative man.” According to Simon, at the basis of administrative organization is the concept of rationality. Organizations are created to enhance human rationality and structure human behavior so that it may approximate rationality (Denhardt 1984). Like the Epicurus and the Empirical school but unlike Descartes and the modern-science school, Simon felt that absolute or pure rationality could not be achieved but only approached. Following this line of reasoning, individuals are also limited in their capacity to respond to complex problems. Due to this limitation, individuals find it necessary to join together in groups and organizations to deal effectively with the world around them (Denhardt 1984). And in a continuation of this thinking evidently inspired by G. W. F. Hegel, Simon felt that only through organizations can an individual approach rationality.

Simon’s administrative man was developed to replace the classic economic man (who was basically a utility maximizer) and exists whenever an organization’s values displace the individual’s own values or the organization substitutes for the individual’s own judgment and decision-making process (Denhardt 1984). Because true rationality cannot be achieved, an individual is limited (i.e., bounded) in his perception of rationality. When decisions are necessary, his cognitive and analytic abilities are also made under the operating system of bounded rationality and he “satisfices;” he makes limited decisions that are merely satisfactory and sufficient for the situation (Fry 1989).

Simon discussed the rational model of administration once more in his 1957 book *Models of Man*. In the years after and continuing until the time of his death, Simon turned increasingly toward the social psychology of decision making, and to information technology and the processes of cognitive development.

Simon and Logical Positivism’s Effect on Public Administration

Perhaps Dwight Waldo best summarized Herbert Simon’s early effects on the discipline of public administration. According to Waldo (1980, 78), Simon

replaced the [Wilsonian] politics-administration dichotomy, and offered in its place the fact-value distinction of logical [positivism]. He revealed the shallowness of the claims to science, but offered

‘genuine’ science. He demonstrated the ‘principles’ to be rules-of-thumb, folklore, but held out the hope of arriving at empirically based knowledge that would pass the test of true science. Simon is ... the strongest intellect to address our core problems [in public administration] in the past generation. If he could not give us a new set of firmly held orienting beliefs to replace the old ones, then we are not likely to have a replacement.

However, Simon’s early challenge to public administration and his call for a “genuine” science of administration based on social psychology principles conducted in a value-free zone made many in the field uncomfortable. In the midst of this discomfiture, political scientists added to Simon’s challenge by attacking the action-orientated, practice base of the field. Noted political scientists even called for a “continued dominion of political science over public administration” (Henry 1995, 30). Public administration began to decline as a separate identity at many colleges and universities, becoming many times only an area of emphasis within larger political science departments. However, during the period from the mid 1950s until the early 1960s, an important shift was also taking place with the discipline of public administration that would eventually lead to a rebirth of the field. As political scientists and the progeny of Herbert Simon grew and dominated, what was left of classic public administration — specifically those individuals unsatisfied with Simon, logical positivism, and behaviorism generally — began to seek shelter elsewhere. The unifying epistemological perspective became general management, and the port in the storm became Schools of Business (Henry 1995).

With the inauguration of School of Business and Public Administration at Cornell University in the 1950s, individuals who still believed in the necessity of the discipline of public administration to address real-world, value-laden issues would gain a foothold and began the long climb back to a place in the sun. Eventually, the rapid expansion of government programs during Lyndon Johnson’s Great Society, the founding of the National Academy of Public Administration, and with the rise of the “New Public Administration,” colleges and universities with autonomous schools and departments of public administration grew rapidly and now account for the majority of all such programs in the United States (Henry 1995).

The Public Administration Counterattacks on Logical Positivism

It is certainly reasonable to say that the growth of logical positivism brought about the (temporary) abandonment of the core values of public

administration inculcated by those individuals in the Progressive and bureau movements in the then-budding discipline. The shift away from value-based considerations weakened and split the field and left a lasting mark that today still haunts the discipline. A section from a recent paper by Robert Berne, dean of the Wagner School of Public Service at New York University, in which he discusses public service needs for the 21st century at a National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) conference highlights the continuing effects of Herbert Simon and logical positivism: “just as there is no way to separate policy from administration, there is no such thing as value free work in public service. Like it or not, the public sector is all about values and I believe that some of our current problems (in public administration) stem from our inability (as academics) to address the role that values play” (Berne 1995, 85). This is only one of the calls for a return to value-based approaches to the discipline of public administration.

As early as 1955 in the book *The Study of Public Administration*, written at the height of its dominance over public administration, Dwight Waldo (1955) attempted to force the discipline away from logical positivism. It would take 13 years and a more organized and concerted effort on the part of Waldo to achieve his desired impact on logical positivism.

The New Public Administration: Values Are Important

The return to a value-centered approach to the discipline of public administration began in earnest in 1968 when Dwight Waldo, director of the Maxwell School, invited a group of young intellectuals to Syracuse University to discuss the state of the discipline. Unrest and turbulence, present on the American scene at the time, also highlighted the conference. The resulting book, *Toward a New Public Administration*, consisted of papers presented at the conference as well as commentary and several chapters assessing the impact of the movement. Called alternatively the “Minnbrook perspective” or just “new public administration,” the common themes among the diverse perspectives presented included the wish for a “proactive administrator” with positive values to supplant the so-called “impersonal” or value-free bureaucrat; the desire that “social equity” at least match efficiency as the goal of public administration; the emphasis upon adaptive and client-centered organizations rather than bureaucracies; and the revolt against “value-free” social science, to be replaced by social relevance (Marini 1971).

In the years after the Minnowbrook Conference, the literature of public administration began to echo many of the themes raised by the participants. For example, H. George Frederickson and Frank Marini, among others, first discussed the potential future of public administration as an

outgrowth of the Minnowbrook Conference, describing the importance of concepts such as social equity and value premises (Marini 1971). Frederick C. Mosher and a panel at the National Academy of Public Administration, at the request of the U.S. Senate Select Committee investigating President Nixon, wrote about the need for strengthening codes of ethics for elected officials in the wake of the Watergate scandal (Mosher 1974). Samuel Krislov (1974) introduced the concept “representative” when addressing the structure and composition of bureaucracy and the need for it to reflect the diversity of its clientele. The number of public-administration writers who presented value-based reasoning in their works continued to grow throughout the 1980s and 1990s. By the early 2000s, Simon’s long-ago call for value-free zones in which to develop knowledge central to the field of public administration, if not lost in the mists of time, was certainly out of the mainstream of the discipline.

With the return to a value base in public administration, new perspectives, methods, and tools for academics and researchers were necessary. These needs led to the growth and acceptance of alternative research perspectives within the field.

The Growth of Alternative Research Perspectives: Phenomenology and Qualitative Research Methodology

Phenomenology is a school of thought whose principal purpose is to study phenomena, or appearances, of human experience while attempting to suspend all consideration of their objective reality or subjective association (Popkin and Stroll 1990). The atomistic, knowledge through experience, and tabula rasa nature of man motifs, first proposed long ago by Epicurus, are present in this school of thought, although phenomenologists would never classify themselves as empiricists. Phenomenology’s major writers include a combination of the works of Soren Kierkegaard (1813–1855) and aspects of the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900). Edmund Husserl (1859–1938) and later his student Martin Heidegger (1889–1976) expanded on Kierkegaard and Nietzsche through works published early in the 20th century and are responsible for what we now recognize as contemporary phenomenology. They believed that philosophy could be an exact science, based on certainty that rested on no presuppositions. In a return to the modern science of Descartes and a rejection of empiricism, phenomenology searches for absolute truths through a “phenomenological reduction” of consciousness and, through this process, uncovers what is intuitively certain along with the essences of experience (Popkin and Stroll 1990). The appearance of the phenomenological perspective in public administration can be first seen in the

case method, which began in the 1930s when, under the aegis of the Committee on Public Administration of the Social Science Research Council, case reports were written by practicing public administrators on managerial problems and how they solved them (Henry 1995). The popularity of the case method, although diminished by the general diminution of the field under the assault of the logical positivists, returned as the field expanded in the late 1960s and flourishes still today.

As the field of public administration again embraced value-based research, alternative methods of data collection and analysis were also necessary. The phenomenological perspective, now combined with *ethnography* and *participant-observation*, was utilized more frequently, especially in the production of doctoral dissertations in public administration. The expansion of alternative methods of research design, data collection, and analysis in the field has not been welcomed by all, however. Guy Adams and Jay White (1994), building on the earlier work of Howard McCurdy and Robert Cleary (1984), feel that the quality of doctoral dissertations in public administration throughout the 1980s was poor, as evidenced by the subsequent lack of appropriate, mainstream, peer-reviewed public-administration publications by the newly minted doctoral degree holders. According to Adams and White, this situation contributed to a lack of knowledge and theory development within the field. Perhaps Herbert Simon and logical positivism are not as far back in the mists of time as we thought.

Postscript: the Legacy of Herbert Simon and Logical Positivism for Public Administration

Inasmuch as logical positivism attacked and weakened public administration for a time, it is also fair to say that the writers in the field during the classical period provided their attackers with plenty of ammunition. By overstating their positions in search of universal truths and absolutes, the classical-period writers, however well intentioned, provided Herbert Simon and others large targets that were easy to strike.

In his defense, by demanding higher standards for proof of knowledge development and proposing a multivariate approach to the study of public administration, Simon forced the field into a period of introspection and reevaluation from which it has emerged, perhaps still suffering from its long-standing identity crisis, but certainly more robust and more willing to deal with value-based issues than ever before. For this effort alone, Herbert A. Simon will always remain prominent in the pantheon of public administration.

Notes

1. An earlier version of this chapter, titled "Of Proverbs and Positivism: The Logical Herbert Simon," appeared in Lynch and Dicker, *Handbook of Organization Theory and Management*, N.Y.: Marcel Dekker, 1998, 273–287.

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Chapter 18

Mary Parker Follett: Lost and Found — Again, and Again, and Again

Mary Ann Feldheim

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Introduction

Mary Parker Follett has been called the prophet of management by Peter Drucker (1995) and has been identified as a pioneer in public administration, in organizational studies, in conflict resolution, and in adult education. At the beginning of the 20th century, Follett's work received international recognition, and she has been identified as one of the first management consultants and a scholar of democracy. Yet, after Follett's death, the popularity of her ideas faded, and her work has been lost and found again and again, only to find popularity once more as we enter the 21st century.

This chapter will first provide a biographical sketch of Follett followed by a discussion of her philosophy. Then the reasons for the changing popularity of Follett's ideas will be explored, and the relevance of Follett's philosophy in the 21st century will be discussed. In the following section, the specifics of Follett's life are examined.

Biographical Sketch

Mary Parker Follett was born in Quincy, Massachusetts, in 1868 into a prominent Quaker family. Her early education was at the Thayer Academy, where she studied philosophy, and the scientific method nurtured her idealistic, philosophic thinking. During her teen years, Follett's father died, which with another inheritance gave her an independent income but also required her to assume responsibility for the care of her mother and brother. In 1888 Follett entered Radcliffe College, which was called Harvard's Annex for Women at the time. There she studied economics, government, and philosophy and was influenced by Albert Bushnell Hart, who specialized in historical fact and political analysis (Crawford 1971; Parker 1984; Persons 2002; Smith 2002).

While at Radcliffe, Follett spent a year in England attending Newnham College in Cambridge, forming a lifelong fascination with English life. Her thesis *The Speaker of the House of Representatives* was published in 1896 and quickly gained recognition as the first thorough study of this office and as a valuable contribution to the study of constitutional law. Follett's education was interrupted by the necessity of caring for her mother, who was an invalid, but in 1898 she graduated from Radcliffe summa cum laude (Crawford 1971; Parker 1984; Persons 2002; Smith 2002).

After graduation, Follett spent a year in Paris in postgraduate study, and upon returning to Boston began her initial public activity in the field of social work. Working among the poor and disadvantaged of Roxbury, Follett created social, athletic, and educational clubs for men, one of which

was housed in a public school building. This initiative was the first of its kind in demonstrating the value of using school buildings after hours for community activities. In 1908 the Women's Municipal League supported the creation of "school community centers" and made Follett the chairman of the committee to accomplish this. Based on her work in creating community centers, Follett was appointed to the first Placement Bureau Committee for Vocational Guidance and Identification of Job Opportunities, appointed a member of the Massachusetts Minimum Wage Board, and was elected vice president of the National Community Center Association. These commitments involved working with industry and served to broaden Follett's interest from political and social to industrial relations (Parker 1984; Persons 2002; Smith 2002).

As a result of her community work experience, Follett changed her view of democracy, promoting governance through local neighborhood networks, which she advocated in her book *The New State*, published in 1918. This work brought her international recognition as a leading political scientist and authority on business administration. In 1924 Follett published the *Creative Experience*, reflecting her expanding interest in industrial relations and management. In this book Follett advocated the creative encounter of individuals from different classes and occupations coming together in small groups to solve social problems through the integration of experiences. According to Follett, integration rather than conflict was the answer to industrial relations (Crawford 1971; Parker 1984; Persons 2002; Smith 2002).

As her reputation grew, Follett gave lectures at Metcalf's Bureau of Personnel Administration in New York and at the Rowntree Lecture Conferences in Oxford, England, living intermittently in both England and the United States. Follett was also actively involved with the League of Nations and was a member of the Taylor Society. During this time, many of Follett's lectures were published along with several shorter articles, and she contributed to edited works by Henry Metcalf on management: *Scientific Foundations of Business Administration*, 1926; *Business Management as a Profession*, 1927; and *The Psychological Foundations of Management*, 1927. These lectures and her writings helped to maintain Follett's position in the late 1920s as a popular lecturer on adult education, industrial relations, business management, and public administration. In 1933 Follett returned to the United States from England to attend to personal matters, where she died following an operation on 8 December 1933 at the age of 65 (Parker 1984; Persons 2002; Smith 2002).

As a person, Mary Parker Follett has been described as energetic, childlike in her views, dogmatic, sometimes arrogant, provocative, and stimulating. However, her most endearing quality was her ability to give each person she interacted with the feeling that she was genuinely

interested in him or her, allowing her to develop and maintain deep, lifelong friendships with both men and women (Crawford 1971). Follett's friendship with philanthropist Pauline Agassiz Shaw provided backing and support for many of the initial community-center programs she established. Her collaboration with Eduard Lindeman, a social scientist, resulted in the publication of Follett's *Creative Experience*. Follett actively worked on behalf of women's suffrage, civil education, vocational guidance, and the development of neighborhood centers by cultivating neighborhood support, political support, negotiating conflicts of interest, and advocating for enabling legislation (Tonn 1999).

Follett devoted her life to studying the psychological foundations of human activity, and her philosophy is broad and eclectic, with foundations in the fields of political science, public administration, industrial and scientific management, and psychology (Crawford 1971). In the following section, Follett's philosophy is discussed in detail, providing the foundation for her continuing influence in contemporary administrative thought.

Follett's Philosophy

The Follett philosophy is that any enduring society, any continuously productive industrial organization, must be grounded upon a recognition of the motivating desires of the individual and the group. Consistently, Miss Follett sought to force home a realization of the fact that the democratic way of life, implemented by intelligent organization and administration of government and of industry, is to work toward an honest integration of all points of view, to the end that every individuality may be mobilized and made to count both as a person and as an effective part of his group and of society as a whole. (Metcalf and Urwick 1940, 9)

The aim of Follett's work was to create a better society, and her approach to the problems of governance began with the psychological analysis of the nature of the consent of the governed and the conditions under which it could be made spontaneous (Metcalf and Urwick 1940, 14). In *The New State* (1918) Follett explored the psychological nature of groups and the relationship of the individual to the group (Konopka 1958). She proposed deepening people's capacity for and commitment to citizenship through the use of local neighborhood networks, which could provide the conditions under which citizens would learn democracy (Smith 2002).

Law of the Situation and the Giving of Orders

For Follett, the law of the situation is based on the concept of complex, reciprocally related interactions that are constantly changing and evolving, providing repeated opportunities to achieve a healthy process or new synthesis, which is integration. One interpretation of integration is that it is a harmonious marriage of differences that produces a new entity, and the real leader is the person who can understand the law of the situation and get the most out of it (Fox 1968).

The giving of orders is based on the law of the situation, rather than positional authority. Orders are given because they are demanded by the logic of the situation incorporating input from those with expertise in the area, which Follett contends decreases employee resentment (Nohria 1995).

Follett's key idea in the giving of orders is that each individual takes a conscious, responsible, and experimental attitude toward the experience, noting the results and analyzing the successes and failures by uniting all in a study of the situation. The goal is to discover the law of the situation, and once that happens, the situation — not the employer or employee — dictates the necessary orders. Finally, the situation is always evolving, and the orders should change with the situation, thereby creating circular behavior that is adaptive to the situation (Metcalf and Urwick 1940). Linked with the law of the situation and the giving of orders, Follett developed a dynamic view of the organization that supported her management philosophy.

Principles of Organization

Follett advocated an integrative unity of the organization or the state, where members work together to get the facts and consider the situation and in which there is collective responsibility for decisions. The holistic approach taken by Follett can be seen in her application of the concept of integrative unity to both business and government.

The process of integration, which is called coordination here, is applied by Follett to management within a given organization focusing on the full, willing, and honest contributions of all parties involved. The principles are that there must be coordination by the direct contact of the people involved from the very beginning, and that there must be a reciprocal relating of the factors in the situation on a continuous basis (Fox 1968; Metcalf and Urwick 1940).

One of Follett's basic philosophies emphasized the importance of understanding of the similarities and differences among people. This was to be realized by bringing together people from different walks of life and occupations to create a shared experience. This has been called a

“psychological interpenetration” of the experience of another and was detailed in her work *Creative Experience* (Persons 2002).

According to Follett (1919) community is a creative process of integration, where people decide some course of action that is a result of the interweaving of ideas, personalities, and the situation. Community in this sense creates personality, power, freedom, and purpose, and the greatest contribution a citizen can make to the state is to learn creative thinking.

An integral part of integration is the development of the individual, which Follett based on her work in the community centers and with adult education. Adult learning for Follett is the process of engagement and encounter, where the individual thinks through his or her experience, questions its meaning and truth, relates the experience to his- or herself and learns from the experience (Smith 2002). Follett’s holistic approach incorporated creative thinking into the development of all social organizations, whether public or private.

Within the setting of community, creative thinking integrates the thoughts of many individuals to an issue with the goal of being productive. Through interpenetration, this unifying activity changes its quality moment to moment, and it is the process to which, according to Follett, we give our loyalty and activity (Metcalf and Urwick 1940).

Democracy, then, is productive interrelatings that have power. “We build the real state, the vital and moral state, by reinforcing actual power with actual power” (Metcalf and Urwick 1940, 587). By viewing community as the process of unifying of our differences and by giving these communities power, we can achieve democracy and freedom. Follett, in developing her concept of integrative unity, then needed to address the concept of power.

Power

Follett begins by defining power as the ability to make things happen and to initiate change, while viewing the urge to feel powerful as the satisfaction of being alive. In this context there would be varying degrees of power and intensity. Control then is defined as power exercised as a means toward a specific end, while authority is vested control either through strength or weakness. Using Follett’s definition of power, it is neither good or bad, but a condition of being human. However, Follett indicates that power is usually seen as “power-over” another person or group, which is coercive. In her model of integration using the law of the situation in making the social organization a functional unity, power is jointly developed, coactive, and is termed “power-with” reflecting the participative process. For Follett power cannot be delegated, as genuine power is capacity, based upon the ability of individuals to grow capacity

for themselves and focusing again on the development of the individual (Metcalf and Urwick 1940). For Follett, the creative experience was the key to individual growth, and constructive conflict was at the heart of interpersonal relations.

Constructive Conflict

Follett begins her discussion of constructive conflict by asking her readers to consider conflict as merely a difference of opinions and of interests without making a value judgment. The three main ways of dealing with conflict are domination, compromise, and integration. In both domination and compromise, someone wins and someone loses, while with integration both party's desires are met and nothing is given up. Integration requires new ways of viewing the situation, and the creation of something new (Metcalf and Urwick 1940).

To achieve integration, the differences and conflicting values are first brought into the open, thereby uncovering the conflict. Discussion of the values allows both sides to reorder or revalue their desires and seek ways to help each other achieve these values. The use of the circular response, where behavior precipitates behavior, helps the participants respond to the situation and the existing relationship. The process of conflict resolution requires open and honest communications, intelligence, perception, and inventiveness along with the necessity to move to action. Follett advocates teaching people the art of cooperative thinking and the reciprocal adjustment of the situation (Metcalf and Urwick 1940).

In the following section, the legacy of Follett will be discussed historically and then in relationship to the areas of conflict management, adult education, organizational management, and public administration. Each of these areas has utilized Follett's work, and each of these disciplines have lost and found her ideas repeatedly.

Lost and Found

Obscurity of Ideas

Follett has been identified as a founder of organizational studies and one of the first management consultants (Murphy 1996), a pioneer in conflict resolution (Davis 1991), an early leader in adult education (Smith 2002), and her work has been identified as a precursor to modern theories of public administration by Morton and Lindquist (1997). Yet, following Follett's death, her work lost favor with theorists in management and public administration.

At the beginning of the 20th century, Taylor's scientific management dominated what is now seen as the first administrative management period. During this time, the call for professionalism based on the attributes of knowledge and social responsibility was primarily advocated in the writings of Follett. In the second administrative period, there was a move toward democracy in the workplace, with authority and responsibility coming from function, and Follett's work gained popularity, reflecting the optimism regarding managerial practices that dominated the 1920s. With the depression, the third administrative period began, as administrative theorists faced a changed political culture. Follett's focus on democratic administration was linked with the failed economic system. The writings of Barnard became popular in the 1930s and 1940s in which he advocated a strong hierarchy and the value of efficiency to fight first the Depression and then World War II. This shift further diminished support for the work of Follett (Miller and O'Leary 1989).

In public administration, the Progressive Era played a key developmental role with its focus on creating a less corrupt and more responsive government. Two forms of progressivism developed, with one school seeking to increase federal regulations and power, while the other was grounded in communal action. Follett represented the latter, emphasizing democracy as a continuous process of interaction between individuals in an ever-changing society, reminiscent of the Anti-Federalist sentiments of earlier times. The progressivism that embraced scientific management took a Federalist perspective and came to dominate mainstream public administration thinking. Follett's call for a revival of communitarianism, or increased democratic participation at the local level, was considered an out-of-date concept after her death, a perspective that held until the 1960s (Raadschelders 2000).

According to Drucker (1995) public administration established itself as a separate discipline during the 1930s and 1940s as America focused on making government more controlling, bigger, and more powerful to meet the economic challenges of the depression and the growing threat of war. Because of the country's focus on expanding government and conquering other nations, Follett's philosophy of smaller, more participative government and a system of conflict resolution that integrated the interests of the involved parties were rejected and even seen as subversive. This assessment of the situation is echoed by Waldo (1984), who states that Follett's work was neglected due to her communitarian ideas, which ran counter to the field's focus on regulation and power.

Lawrence (1995) offers several other reasons for the neglect of Follett's work following her death in 1933. One reason for neglect is that ideas need to be sold by a person, which Follett did when she was alive, which could explain her initial popularity and its posthumous decline. Another

reason for neglect is that the review criterion for scholarly journals at the time, which focused on quantitative research, did not favor the qualitative nature of Follett's work. Finally, it is possible that the American love of new ideas limited the reading of works of early scholars in management, such as Follett, whose managerial examples may have decreased her potential future popularity because they were specific only to the time in which she lived.

Revival of Ideas

The first major recognition of Follett's work following her death came when Metcalf and Urwick (1940) published her collected papers in *Dynamic Administration*. In the introduction to their book, Metcalf and Urwick pay tribute to Follett as a first-rank political and business philosopher who tackled the fundamental problems of the community, the state, and the industrial organization. Follett's work in *Dynamic Administration* received a much more favorable reception in England than in America, where her work remained unknown by most new scholars in the area of administration.

In 1952 Waldo (1952) explored the development of a theory of democratic administration that utilized work outside of the field of public administration. The focus of the essay was to discern the frontier of democratic administration and move toward it. Follett's work helped establish that new frontier with its focus on the law of the situation, conflict resolution, integrative unity, decentralized responsibility, and "power with" not "power over." Waldo, in his theory of democratic administration, envisioned a society where all would participate, both as leaders and as followers, a state achieved through education that taught civic participation and conflict resolution. Waldo was concerned with trying to reconcile public administration with democracy, and questioned the politics/administration dichotomy (Snider 2000a) by using many of Follett's philosophies.

In the years that followed, her ideas were frequently cited in the literature of management and administration. Fox (1968) acknowledges the enduring contribution of Follett to public-administration and management theory by reviewing the key concepts that marked her philosophy. Follett's idealism, which focused on healthy social processes, is acknowledged as both a weakness and a strength, and her theories of human integration and conflict resolution are identified as tools to help administrators deal with change. Fox (1968) saw the benefits of Follett's theories in dealing with a tumultuous time in American history.

Follett's work continued to influence theorists in public administration, organizational management, conflict resolution, and education in the years

that followed, but by the end of the 20th century, a groundswell of interest in Follett's work occurred in all disciplines. Raadschelders (2000) indicates that this renewed interest in Follett is due to an increased focus on the historical aspects of administrative theory attributed to postmodern thinking. With this historical focus, there has been increased attention given to the call for the type of communal government advocated by Follett.

Pragmatism

One area of renewed interest has been in pragmatism, which has attained new relevance for postmodernist theorists in public administration who are rethinking the public interest. According to Box (2001), pragmatism is the basis for the discourse theory of O. C. McSwite (1996), which draws its inspiration from the group process work of Follett. Pragmatic discourse seeks to enhance governmental legitimacy by shifting the focus of administration from directing to the creation of community through collaboration with citizens (Box 2001), which is the message Follett so eloquently put forth in the Progressive Era.

The focus on pragmatism has generated a renewed interest in the work of Follett, who was one of the few early thinkers, who seriously considered the merits of pragmatism. However, the early, more pragmatic works of Follett were ignored by the efficiency-oriented public-administration orthodoxy of her day. Part of the reason for Follett's work being ignored was the constrained, operational outlook of Beard, who dominated the field of public administration at the time (Snider 1998, 2000b). During her lifetime, only Follett's more practitioner-oriented works were emphasized in public administration, such as "The Giving of Orders" (Snider 1998).

According to McSwite (1995) the postmodern interest in the work of Follett and pragmatism provides a way of the understanding organizations through a pragmatic human subject created through the process of social relationships. This revitalized pragmatism is backed by Follett's practical orientation and the extensive writings on systems theory focusing on the process of social relationships.

Snider (2000a, 2000b) advocates the increased study of pragmatism in public administration through further exploration of Follett's thought. The intent of this study would be to ensure that public administration does not miss the promise of pragmatism or of Follett's work again.

Democratic Processes

In public-sector literature, there are three areas in which greater democracy is proposed. One area focuses on citizen participation, advocating partic-

ipation by citizens, clients, politicians, and representatives of other agencies in public-organization decision making. Another area is participatory policy analysis giving citizens a voice in the early steps of policy making. The third area focuses on the enhancement of democratic administration of public organizations (deLeon and deLeon 2002).

Internationally, citizens are being involved in policy making through innovative processes such as citizen's forums. These processes seek to include a broad cross-section of lay citizens who are randomly selected to deliberate a policy issue. After consulting with numerous experts, these groups develop a set of written recommendations that are widely disseminated. Citizen's forums emphasize diversity and group deliberation, which was advocated by Follett and other early pluralists (Hendricks 2002).

At the end of the century there have been calls to strengthen American political and administrative institutions (Frederickson 1997). According to Musso (1999), one way to enrich the local political community is to utilize the work of Follett, paying greater attention to local communities and focusing on engaging people in debate to develop social and political understanding and participation. The work of Follett on honest communication and conflict resolution can help administrators play a facilitative role rather than just an advisory one.

Ventriss (1998) argues that radical democratic thought advocated by Follett and others has an important role in public-administration theory today by reconceptualizing democratic citizenship. The concept of democratic citizenship emphasizes the involvement of citizens in governing, focuses on the use of public spaces for deliberation, and utilizes education to build knowledge and confidence in civil involvement, which were the tenets of Follett's work.

Another aspect of increasing democratic participation revolves around increasing the responsiveness by public administrators, which is advocated by Stivers (1994). Responsive administrators demonstrating the ability to listen skillfully can reduce the tension between administrative effectiveness and democratic accountability. For Stivers, the experience of listening requires a respect for differences, an attitude of openness, and reflexivity, which are key elements that Follett advocated so eloquently in *Creative Experience*.

While many modern scholars' work in public-administration theory may not explicitly rely on Follett's ideas, they are often consistent with them, as seen in calls for a new, more participatory paradigm in public administration, or in the movement to promote a legitimate role for bureaucracy through group process, and also in the cry for the reinvention of government, which advocates participation over hierarchy (Morton and Lindquist 1997).

According to Tonn (1996), Follett has had many admirers in the United States, but the important aspects of her work have only been partially implemented. One reason for her limited acceptance in the United States is that her ideas run counter to American individualism. Follett advocated a genuine union of individuals through true group process, where there is continual acting and reacting, bringing out differences and integrating ideas into new group concepts. The challenge is to move beyond our individualism and to engage in a group process that respects differences and builds a strong democracy.

Follett was a strong advocate of using an interdisciplinary or holistic focus. In the following section, Follett's legacy will be discussed beyond public administration in the areas of organizational studies and conflict management.

Follett's Interdisciplinary Legacy

Follett's writings are humanistic and holistic based on her readings, social experiences, and observations with a deliberate normative approach. She was one of the earliest management thinkers to deviate from the classical management school contributing to the founding of the behavioral and holistic schools of thought. Interestingly many of her theories have been confirmed by empirical studies conducted in the 1960s and 1970s (Parker 1984).

In 1995 Graham reintroduced the work of Follett in her edited book, *Mary Parker Follett: Prophet of Management*, attempting to identify her legacy to the study of organizations and management. In this book, Peter Drucker (1995) calls Follett the prophet of management for presaging the major management movements that followed and helping to establish the foundation for total quality management. Rosabeth Kanter (1995) indicates that Follett's mutual problem solving and the use of cross-functional committees in flatter, less hierarchical organizations foreshadows all forms of employee involvement, participative management, quality circles, and team-based approaches to management. More importantly, Follett provided a philosophical basis for corporate ethics by stating that morality is social and comes from being a member of a group in relation to others. In Follett's view, the integrated life is found when a person's work becomes community oriented and service based, building on her principal message that relationships matter and that people are innately good and imbued with a cooperative spirit.

Lawrence (1995) states that Follett uses systematic analysis or systems thinking throughout her writings, as indicated by terms such as the "total situation or total environment." Follett was a true pioneer in her application

of systems thinking in management processes and made a remarkable contribution to the emergence of the human-relations perspective on organizations. Follett was also the first to conceptualize styles of handling interpersonal conflict examining power and conflict, two of the major areas of study in organizational behavior and management (Rahim, Antonioni, and Psenicka 2001).

Others have used the work of Follett as a springboard for new ideas. In the area of occupational behavior, Mumford (1983) in 1983 developed a participative methodology using many of Follett's ideas to involve users at all levels in the design of computer systems, arguing that the impact of democratic ideas on the philosophy of systems can be considerable.

In 1989 Hurst, Rush, and White (1989) proposed a creative management model that moved beyond strategic management, based on the assumption of a dynamic environment that requires integration by a diverse group of managers to adapt to the changing environment. Follett's authority of the situation is used as the basis of shifting power coming from the person(s) with the most knowledge of the situation. This creative management model repackages many of Follett's ideas on the importance of adaptation and integration.

Dalrymple and Drew (2000) state that the traditional paradigm in organizational management based on Taylor's scientific management is giving way to a new quality paradigm. The beginning of the quality paradigm can be traced to Follett's call to treat workers with dignity, which is put into practice as total quality management. The quality paradigm gained a substantial following in postwar Japan, where the total quality management movement resurrected the work of Follett, who has become a revered management figure in that nation. The ascendance of the quality paradigm is one reason for the resurgence of appreciation for the work of Follett.

Another area where the work of Mary Parker Follett is seeing a resurgence in popularity is in the field of conflict management, where Follett is considered a pioneer in integrative negotiations. In the *Creative Experience* (1924), she discusses the limitations of facts in decision making, indicating that facts do not remain stationary; do not overcome diversity of opinion; are selected by individuals and experts; often defy measurement; and are interpreted by individuals based on their needs. Follett's detailed and pragmatic analysis of facts contains lessons for today's students of conflict resolution, by emphasizing that the more we improve our fact-finding and fact-handling skills, the closer we come to the democratic ideal (Davis 1991).

McKersic and Walton (1992) utilized Follett's work in their development of a behavioral theory of labor negotiations. Using the idea of integrative bargaining, Follett advocated using distributive bargaining to turn disputes

such as labor negotiations in a positive direction. Distributive bargaining is seen as more effective in one-shot transactions, while integrative bargaining is more beneficial when the parties have ongoing relationships.

At the end of the 20th century, Follett's work in negotiation and dispute resolution experienced a revival, which can be traced to societal changes regarding the value of negotiation in dealing with organizational differences. Follett's influence is credited in two of the most influential books on negotiation and dispute resolution — *A Behavioral Theory of Labor Negotiations* by Walton and McKersic in 1965 and *Getting to Yes* by Fisher et al. in 1991. However, the underlying premise of most theory on negotiation is based on enlightened self-interest, which is at odds with the communal context of Follett's integration to foster creative agreement making. The discipline needs to move more toward Follett's integrative negotiation, where parties identify respective interests and revalue them in light of the other's response, ultimately seeking a way to find a place in the final solutions (Kolb, Jensen, and Shannon 1996).

Another area linked to conflict resolution is international relations, where Follett is seen as a prominent early innovator incorporating the study of women and gender into her work. Follett's major contribution to international relations was to identify patterns of conflict that could not be resolved by dividing limited resources between parties, but which could be resolved when treated as exercises aimed at creating new structures based on cooperation. Recent work of peace researchers, such as Kelman, Curle, and Rappoport, reflect the foundations established by Follett in international relations. However, Follett never established a secure base in international studies despite her extensive work with the League of Nations (Murphy 1996).

Recognition of the interdisciplinary work of Follett has been lost and found again and again. Today we are seeing a resurgence of interest in her work, and part of that new acceptance is stemming from the issue of gender.

The Issue of Gender

Limited recognition has been paid to Follett in organizational management, according to Parker (1984), because her work did not fit into any one school of thought. Follett's work has been classified as part of the scientific management school, as part of the human-relations school, and as a forerunner to systems theory. Another explanation of Follett's limited popularity is that some writers ignored her work because of her gender, evidenced by the fact that women did not receive recognition in management until the late 20th century.

Stivers (1996) would suggest that Follett's work has had a problematic history, not because she was a woman, but because her ideas do not fit well with mainstream organizational and management theory. However, Follett's gender may be considered an issue because her ideas were culturally "feminine" based on a caring approach that did not sit well with the masculine management world.

Follett did not consider herself a feminist, but Morton and Lindquist (1997) make a case for categorizing her work as feminist based on a formal philosophical analysis. First, ontologically Follett's organization and democratic theory is based on human relationships, which is a primary emphasis of feminist theory. Second, epistemologically the law of the situation developed by Follett sees knowledge being developed through observation and experience, a stance taken in feminist literature. Lastly, Follett's ethical vision is that of integration through embracing diversity and open honest communications in conflict resolution, which reflects many feminists' approach to conflict resolution. Because Follett's work offers a coherent approach to management and democratic processes, Morton and Lindquist advocate using her work and feminist theory as the field of public administration seeks to build theory to improve public management and enhance the legitimacy and responsiveness of governmental organizations.

For Murphy (1996) gender biases specific to international relations limited the acceptability of Follett's work in this area. The masculine culture of diplomacy predominant at the League of Nations deterred acceptance of Follett's work and forced her to turn her attention to other areas where she could find acceptance, such as the business community.

Kanter (1995) is convinced that Follett's gender played a role in her neglect because she was not an academic or a chief executive officer, thus denying her two means of ensuring lasting importance. In addition, Follett was a utopian with communitarian ideas that run counter to American individualism. Kanter also believes another reason Follett was so popular in England and in Japan, and not in America, may have been that geographic distance makes the ideas of women more acceptable. Lastly, Follett asked managers to use their judgment, recognize interdependence, and use conflict constructively to find integrative solutions to problems, but she did not provide techniques, strategies, and plans at a time when management science was to provide blueprints to managers.

The challenge for the new century is to find ways to transform fragmented and conflicted relationships between nations and peoples into relationships capable of building peaceful societies. This challenge can be met using tools developed by Follett focusing on relational power and conflict resolution to create nondisciplinary spaces for dialogue (Saunders 2002). This focus on Follett encompasses all of the disciplines — conflict

resolution, organizational management, education, and public administration — that have repeatedly lost her ideas and rediscovered them utilizing her own broad perspective on human relationships.

Follett's relevance to society today is based on what Parker (1995) calls her five senses. The first is Follett's sense of organic unity, with all organizations being inherently social constructs providing a broad basis for understanding. This sense of unity is further enhanced with Follett's interdisciplinary, holistic approach to relationships within organizations. Follett's third sense is her humanity and belief in the importance of human relationships within a society. Another area where Follett has relevance is her sense of culture, with a focus on matching the culture and values of a country with the organizational strategies. The last sense needed in an interconnected world is Follett's concept of reciprocal service, which stresses the ethical necessity for social and economic responsibility to the greater society by all individuals and organizations.

Today we recognize what Follett tried to tell us so long ago, that our society is made up of social organizations where restoring citizenship based on a functioning civil society is the crucial challenge (Drucker 1995).

Moreover, Follett's fundamental ideas are of individual commitment through direct and responsible participation, and her most important psychological contribution is to our understanding of behavior pointing out that we react not only to the other party, but to the relationship that exists between us, which creates part of our response. Follett's legacy is based on her insights, which were designed to help each unique person become a better person, a more effective manager, and a more responsible citizen.

Conclusion

Mary Parker Follett is remarkable for numerous reasons. First, Follett was woman in a man's world at the beginning of the 20th century, who received international recognition for her philosophy and management ideas. Second, Follett's concepts of the law of the situation and integration have laid the foundations for organizational studies, for the discipline of conflict resolution, for behavioral management, for systems theory, for total quality management, and for adult education. Third, in public administration Follett's work was originally limited to the "giving of orders," but by the end of the 20th century the concepts of democratic citizenship and pragmatism were seeing a renewed interest and acceptance.

During her life, Follett gained popularity and acceptance primarily as a management consultant, but following her death her work fell into obscurity. One reason was that much of Follett's popularity came from

lectures given in New York and London, and her ideas no longer had this venue for expression. Another reason is that with the depression and World War II, the focus in administration turned to hierarchy and efficiency, and Follett's communitarianism was seen as subversive. However, in the 1960s with the Civil Rights movement and the women's movement, Follett's work gained new followers who resonated with her ideas of inclusion, shared power, and the intrinsic value of each individual.

At the end of the 20th century, Follett's work experienced a revival in the disciplines of management, conflict resolution, and public administration. This renewed interest has been attributed to postmodern thinking, with its historical focus and interest in pragmatism. Also, there has been a movement worldwide to increase citizen participation with a focus on local communities, and Follett's work on creating public spaces for resolution of creative conflict have found renewed favor. The renewed interest can also be attributed to the holistic nature of Follett's work and its timelessness.

Follett's work has been lost and found repeatedly in the 20th century, and in the 21st century we may see the same changing fortunes. On a very basic level Follett's work represents the human side of enterprise identified by McGregor (1985) as Theory Y, with Taylor's scientific management as Theory X. In public administration and private management, Theory X, focusing on hierarchy and position power, has predominated particularly in times of national security. In the wake of September 11, the challenges of terrorism and religious separatism in the United States have resulted in increased hierarchy with the Department of Homeland Security and increased presidential control. Now more than ever, Follett's holistic philosophy of integrating all points of view while valuing the individual is needed in international relations as well as in public administration.

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Chapter 19

Administrative Statesman, Philosopher, Explorer: The Life, Landscape, and Legacy of Dwight Waldo

Charles Garofalo

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Introduction

Dwight Waldo's contributions to academic public administration have been amply described, documented, defended, and even disputed by a number of scholars (O'Toole 1982; Gazell 1983; Brown and Stillman 1986; Fry 1989; Marini 1993; Frederickson 1999; Lynch 2004). Their observations, combined with Waldo's own articles, essays, and books, guide us through the thought of the elder statesman among American public-administration scholars of the mid- to late 20th century. These writings illuminate the evolution of Waldo's thinking and establish his place in the pantheon of administrative theorists. As Rosemary O'Leary (2001) of the Maxwell School said after his death in 2000: "It's sort of like Elvis dying. The King is dead, and there'll never be anyone else like him." In this context, this essay has three goals: to provide a brief biographical sketch of Waldo's life, to survey the landscape of Waldo's thought and contributions, and to limn the major contours of Waldo's legacy for the future of what he called "self-aware" public administration.

Waldo's Life

Dwight Waldo was born in 1913, graduated from college in 1935, and in 1937 completed a Master's degree in political science at the University of Nebraska. His thesis was on the thought of Graham Wallas, a British political theorist whose faith in the unity of reason and emotion Waldo shared and consistently exemplified in his conviction of the inseparability of facts and values. After receiving his Master's degree, Waldo attended Yale University as a doctoral student specializing in political theory. His dissertation was subsequently published as *The Administrative State*. In 1942 he joined the U.S. Office of Price Administration, where he spent much of the next two years "setting ceiling prices for caskets and funerals" (McCurdy 1998). After the OPA, he spent two years with the Bureau of the Budget, working on the postwar organization of the federal government.

In 1946, Waldo became an assistant professor of political science at the University of California at Berkeley, where he remained for the next two decades. During his tenure at Berkeley, he spent a year as a technical assistance adviser at the University of Bologna and ten years as part-time director of the Institute of Governmental Studies, which provided technical advice to state and local governments in California. While at Berkeley, Waldo also assumed the editorship of the *Public Administration Review*, a position he held for 11 years. In 1967, he moved to Syracuse University as the first Albert Schweitzer Chair at the Maxwell School of Citizenship

and Public Affairs. In 1977, Waldo relinquished the editorship of the *Public Administration Review*, and in 1979 retired from full-time teaching. Upon retirement, he accepted an 18-month fellowship at the Woodrow Wilson International Center in Washington, D.C. He remained in the Washington area until his death in 2000.

Waldo's Landscape

Commentators on Waldo's work tend to agree on the roles he played and the subjects he emphasized in his more than 50 years as a public administrationist. For example, Laurence O'Toole (1982, 108) suggests that, in his role as political theorist, Waldo was occupied by one central question: "What problems and opportunities does administration in idea and practice pose for democracy and vice versa?" Beginning with *The Administrative State* (1948), Waldo reminded us that public administration is fundamentally about governance, which is inseparable from values. As political theorist, administrative historian, chronicler, author, editor-in-chief of *Public Administration Review*, the first Albert Schweitzer Professor in the Humanities at Syracuse University's Maxwell School, sponsor of the first Minnowbrook Conference, and as a member of the National Academy of Public Administration, Waldo was concerned with the relationship between politics and administration, the relationship between bureaucracy and democracy, and the place of public administration in the larger society.

Yet, Waldo's contributions notwithstanding, Brian Fry (1989) raises a number of issues that cast a somewhat different light on Waldo's role. For example, Fry (1989, 243) maintains that Waldo was "more a critic and commentator on the field of public administration than a creator." More specifically, Fry (1989, 243) argues that the "larger problem with Waldo's work is his essential ambivalence," ambivalence concerning the politics-administration dichotomy, the art and science of public administration, the similarities and differences between public and private administration, the relationship between bureaucracy and democracy, and the question of whether public administration is a profession. Essentially, Fry (1989) believes that Waldo's work lacks clarity and specificity. Waldo, he claims, was intellectually indecisive, promiscuous, and skeptical, asking many questions, perhaps, but answering few.

Fry's (1989) position, however, is not shared by Frank Marini who objects, in particular, to Fry's (1989) description of Waldo as a critic or commentator rather than a creator. In Marini's (1993) judgment, such a description discounts Waldo's originality and creativity. For example, Marini (1993) maintains that the terms "orthodox public administration" and "politics-administration dichotomy" first appear in Waldo's work, along with

the distinction between self-conscious American public administration and the practice of public administration. Marini (1993) concludes that what has, paradoxically, led to an underappreciation of Waldo's creativity and originality has been a combination of his literary skill, personal modesty, lack of closure, avoidance of dogma, and the philosophical and historical themes that he pursued. Waldo's ideas have become so basic to public administration that it is difficult to see their originality and importance.

Between the late 1940s and the late 1980s, Waldo periodically published his ideas on politics, administration, and values. In *The Administrative State* (1948), he noted that rejection of the politics-administration dichotomy was not a solution to the problem of the proper relationship between the two. What should administrators do if the law is unclear, or permits discretion, or if there are conflicting interpretations of the law in different branches? How should an administrator resolve conflict between public duty and private conscience? Although he failed to answer his own questions in any definitive sense, Waldo prefigured later scholars who specialize in ethics in public administration with all its complexities.

In 1952, what has come to be known as the Simon-Waldo debate occurred in the pages of *The American Political Science Review*. Actually originating in a footnote in Waldo's March 1952 essay, "Development of Theory of Democratic Administration" (Waldo 1952), the so-called debate centered on Waldo's skepticism concerning logical positivism and Herbert Simon's reply in the next issue in June (Simon 1952). As young Turks in their 30s, Waldo and Simon circled the concepts of efficiency, democracy, and values, with Waldo claiming that both the politics-administration dichotomy and the fact-value dichotomy were inaccurate. Indeed, in Waldo's view, Simon's admittedly outstanding contributions to administrative study had been made when he (Simon) "worked free of the (logical positivist) methodology." This was the sum total of Waldo's allusion to Simon. Nonetheless, this single reference elicited responses not only from Simon but also from Peter Drucker, whose comments were notably lengthier than Simon's and focused, not surprisingly, on the nature and evolution of large-scale organizations.

Simon replied by stating that logical positivists do not distinguish between "value decisions" and "factual decisions," that political theory, for all its "assertion, invective, and metaphor" might have been "esthetically pleasing" but not convincing, and that its lack of logical rigor "would not receive a passing grade" in an elementary logic course. Waldo's riposte, in the same issue and in the same vein, bordered on the ad hominem, claiming, among other things, that Simon's "convictions are monolithic and massive," that "[h]is toleration of heresy and sin is nil," and that "[t]he Road to Salvation is straight, narrow, one-way, and privately owned." While Waldo acknowledged that he was not opposed to positivism and

empiricism, but that he refused to wear intellectual blinders, this exchange, more than a half century ago, can hardly be considered a genuine debate or even epistemologically enlightening. It was, in fact, more like an academic precursor of CNN's Crossfire than reasoned, respectful discourse.

Two years later, Waldo (1954) argued that administrative theory should embrace ethical theory because ethical theory is inevitably involved in human behavior. The next year, he maintained that the value problem in administrative study should be seen in relation to the politics-administration dichotomy, which had defined the value problem out of existence. In Waldo's view, the value problem consists of a cluster of questions: If values enter the administrative process, what values? What values should be stressed? How can values be inculcated? (1955).

In the late 1960s, Waldo (1968) suggested that academic public administration had not yet faced up to the implications of the abandonment of the politics-administration dichotomy and the many value problems that ensued. Such problems ranged from questions of personal behavior in administration to the perennial questions about the nature and ends of government. Then, in the 1970s, he again noted that little progress had been made in developing a replacement for the discredited politics-administration dichotomy. Public administration still had to acknowledge that government included a moral component (Waldo 1971), that public morality meant action directed to the interests and welfare of more inclusive populations than self, family, clan, or tribe (Waldo 1974), and that a critical aspect of our political-ethical problems continued to be the justification of a nonneutral civil service (Waldo 1975).

Waldo claimed that the centrality of political-administrative relations is embodied in the combination of democracy with effective administration (Waldo 1980). He claimed, as well, that the dichotomy is not all wrong and still served some useful purposes, although he failed to identify them; and he, once again, observed that no replacement for the dichotomy had yet been invented. Further, Waldo identified a dozen ethical obligations in the public service, including those to the constitution, the law, democracy, professionalism, and the public interest. Then, in another prescient move, he pointed out that morality in public office is presented in the media as a simple matter of obeying the law, being honest, and telling the truth. But that is not so, as he put it. Morality in public office, as Waldo knew and as later scholars have shown, is a far more complex and perplexing proposition. Finally, Waldo made two additional contributions in the 1980s to the politics-administration discourse. In 1984, he argued that the dichotomy cannot be abolished or ignored, and that our task is to understand it and find constructive ways to connect the two (Waldo 1984). In fact, he believed, that the problem of public administration's identity requires dealing successfully with this crucial matter. He

also claimed that the conceptual and institutional space of the dichotomy allowed public administration to be seen as a profession based on scientific principles, unfortunately to the exclusion of values. This led to the dilemma in which it is immoral for a public administrator not to follow the will or instructions of a political superior regardless of the administrator's own conscience, a dilemma that places the burden on the administrator for discerning the morality of a political superior's will or instructions. Three years later, he again explored this subject, suggesting that the politics-administration distinction is simplistic but not absurd: simplistic because of variegated politics, policy, and administration, not absurd because the distinction often has analytic and prescriptive importance. The nature and application of such importance, however, were not delineated (Waldo 1987).

Nevertheless, despite possible conceptual incompleteness, Waldo's prescience in his insistence on the salience of values in all aspects of public administration is undeniable and, until recently, perhaps even unparalleled. Consideration of values in administrative scholarship and performance was central to Waldo's thought and commitment to democratic administration. To Waldo, public administration was a morality, an ideology, and conscious study of its values might lead to a reduction of stress and confusion, as well as the development of a moral administrative architecture.

Unlike many of his contemporaries and professional descendants, Waldo did not flinch at the moral complexity, indeed messiness, of public administration, nor did he expect to offer complete, permanent, or technical resolutions to that complexity or messiness. If nothing else, his prescriptions or recommendations were, like the man himself, grounded in modesty, humility, and, above all, humanity. Respect for the inherent challenges of administrative practice, rather than academic posturing, was an integral part of Waldo's character.

More specifically, Waldo understood that public administrators must be able to apply core values in concrete circumstances, often to resolve ethical dilemmas. He saw that even in compliance-based systems, the exercise of discretion is inevitable. He knew that the public service cannot function without it, and therefore, it is unrealistic, even unethical, to deny the exercise of discretion or to pretend that it does not exist. And he might well have asked Robert Behn's question: "Why would we assume that the manager of a business firm, the manager of a non-profit social-service agency, the manager of a religious organization, or the manager of a political party would have something to contribute to the political process but a public manager would not?" (Behn 1998, 221). It seems fair to infer that Waldo would have agreed that to deny discretion is to deny the public administrator's identity as a moral being with autonomy, dignity,

and judgment, and perhaps worse, it is to deny citizens the level and quality of professionalism that they deserve. Discretion is an integral and enduring part of moral agency, legitimacy, and accountability, subjects to which Waldo devoted himself for more than 50 years.

Waldo's Legacy

As the paterfamilias of academic public administration, what inheritance did Waldo leave his professional progeny? Or to put the question in more contemporary parlance, is public administration better off than it was before Waldo? The answer is a resounding yes, despite his occasional critics. Many public administrationists feel that the field is clearly better off for his contributions, and that his iconic status is well-deserved. O'Toole (1982), for instance, asserts that, because of Waldo, public administration is more plural and less respectful of convention. Marini (1993) believes that Waldo was a trailblazer, mapping new directions for future scholars, offering a cornucopia of concepts, perspectives, and possibilities for them to contemplate, explore, and elaborate. H. George Frederickson (1999) is impressed by Waldo's writing style, pedagogical influence, and gift of administrative prophecy. Thomas Lynch (2004) suggests that Waldo had a "remarkable ability to see the much larger philosophical implications of a practical subject," that "he moved the philosophical boundaries of PA out to the larger fundamental questions while still addressing the day to day challenges of the practitioner." In the view of these four scholars, as well as others, Waldo's reputation as an administrative anthropologist, prognosticator, even psychic, is irrefutable. It is on his shoulders that the rest of us stand. As James D. Carroll observes, Waldo's continuing concern with the relationship between civilization and administration, bureaucracy, and democracy, "is enduring and will endure because it illuminates timely issues in a paradoxically timeless way" (Carroll 1997, 204).

On the other hand, Fry (1989), as noted, finds Waldo less original and innovative, more a chronicler than a creator. On a more general level, but nonetheless germane to Waldo's abiding interest in politics, administration, and values, Kenneth Meier (1997) contends that the real problem with the politics-administration dichotomy is that, in rejecting the dichotomy, scholars confined themselves to studying the bureaucracy and, therefore, produced an incomplete view of governance. The study of bureaucracy is clearly important, but we must recognize that the political branches of government have administrative components as well. Thus, Meier maintains that public administration must be redefined "to encom-

pass the design, evaluation, and implementation of institutions and public policy” (Meier 1997, 194). Waldo, it seems, would have agreed.

Perhaps in keeping with the disciplinary eclecticism of public administration, Waldo was a scholar with large and catholic interests. He was preoccupied with questions of purpose, significance, and meaning, as well as with the complexities of political and institutional relationships. Politics, governance, administration, bureaucracy, democracy, culture — this was the vineyard in which Waldo toiled for a half century, as he tried to understand, suggest, stimulate, and promote dialogue among his colleagues and students, as well as a sense of the public interest and the importance of the public service. But, as he himself acknowledged, the solution to the politics-administration-values conundrum continued to elude him. Although his sketches of the dichotomy in historical-philosophical terms provide perspective, he never was able to offer a replacement for the dichotomy nor a resolution of the alleged attendant identity crisis. Thus, his contribution to the settlement of this central issue was inconclusive.

On the other hand, conceptual development in any field, including self-aware public administration, is like a relay race, with one generation of scholars handing off the baton to the next. In American public administration, Woodrow Wilson passed the baton to Frank Goodnow, Leonard White, and others, who, in turn, passed it on to Waldo. Salient questions for those of us currently toiling in Waldo’s vineyard concern what advances we can point to in the development of our specialty, and to whom we will pass the baton. This is rather like the academic version of the oath of the Athenian city-state, in which we pledge to leave our profession not only not less but greater than it was left to us. Like a 15th-century explorer wandering into uncharted waters, groping for knowledge and understanding of his own and the larger world, Waldo honored that pledge, and left us all the better for it.

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LATER MODERNIST OPPOSITION

V

Chapter 20: Modernity, Administrative Evil, and the Contribution of Eric Voegelin

Every political order is in some part an accident of existence. The mystery of existential cruelty and guilt is at the bottom of the best order; [and] while the dictum that “power is evil” cannot be maintained without qualification, it is true if it is qualified as characterizing the component of the existential accident in order.

Eric Voegelin, *The Collected Works of Eric Voegelin*, 1989

Chapter 21: Marshall Dimock’s Deflective Organizational Theory

The successful executive, therefore, is he who commands the best balance of physique, mentality, personality, technical equipment, philosophical insight, knowledge of human behavior, social adaptability, judgment, ability to understand and get along with people, and sense of social purpose and direction.

Marshall Dimock, *Executive in Action*, 1945

Chapter 22: Phenomenology and Public Administration

It is we who are genuine positivists. In fact, we permit no authority to deprive us of the right of recognizing all kinds of intuition as equally valuable sources for the justification of knowledge, even that of 'modern' natural science.

Edmund Husserl, *Ideas*, 1913

Chapter 23: The Existentialist Public Administrator

Hell is other people.

Jean-Paul Sartre, *No Exit*, 1947

Chapter 24: John Rawls and Public Administration

Implicit in the contrasts between classical utilitarianism and justice as fairness is a difference in the underlying conceptions of society. In the one we think of a well-ordered society as a scheme of cooperation for reciprocal advantage regulated by principles which persons would choose in an initial situation that is fair, in the other as the efficient administration of social resources to maximize the satisfaction of the system of desire constructed by the impartial spectator from the many individual systems of desires accepted as a given.

John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, 1971

Chapter 20

Modernity, Administrative Evil, and the Contribution of Eric Voegelin

Gerson Moreno-Riaño

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“Modernity,” so writes N. J. Rengger, “is a concept that does not have a fixed, easily delineated meaning or provenance.”¹ The number of scholarly works treating the subject of modernity substantiates the validity of Rengger’s claim. Just what does it mean to be modern? And, for the purpose of this chapter, what does it mean when we attach the term “modern” to social concepts such as “administration” or “organization”?

That such things as the “modern organization” or “modern administration” exist is not to be doubted. But what does the usage of “modern” convey in these instances? Does it denote a historical, sociocultural context? A differentiation of operational mechanisms? A set of moral characteristics?

In providing an answer to the question of “modernity” as it relates to administration and organization, I will herein advance the claim that modern organizations have a propensity toward administrative evil of the sort perpetrated on so many innocent human beings in the 20th century and decried by scholars in the field of administrative ethics.² I am thus suggesting that administrative evil is not a historical oddity or outlier that occurs once or twice a century. Rather, I am suggesting that administrative evil can be a more common occurrence than we would like to think and has the possibility to be perpetrated at any given time by any organization, public or private.³ To accomplish this goal, I have divided this chapter into three sections. The first focuses on conceptualizing “modernity” itself. Rengger, for example, primarily considers modernity as a mood “which is amorphous, protean and shifting but which nevertheless asserts a powerful influence on the ways in which we think, act and experience.”⁴ I, too, will treat “modernity” as a mood but seek to structure its fluidity so as to give it a recognizable shape. This, in turn, leads to an analysis of what is meant by the term “modern” organization. In this section, attention will be given to the distinguishing characteristics of such organization type as well as its reflection of the modern ethos presented in the first part of the chapter. I conclude my investigation with a brief but poignant overview of the important 20th-century philosopher Eric Voegelin, whose philosophy of consciousness and unique reading of modernity offer an important contribution to an understanding of the moral implications and dangers of modern organizations.

The Meaning of Modernity

As mentioned earlier, the literature on the subject of “modernity” is vast. But it is possible, in spite of the apparent ethereal and amorphous character of “modernity,” to distinguish it from other similar qualifiers (e.g., pre-modern, postmodern) by considering its view of the world or the mechanisms by which it arrives at its world explanation.⁵ From its inception, there are three aspects that have characterized the modern mood, namely, scientific rationality, technology, and mastery.⁶ In spite of the varied perspectives on modernity, there is a wide consensus characterizing modernity as embracing and advancing a commitment to scientific rationality. As Toulmin writes,

Despite all the ambiguities surrounding the idea of Modernity, and the varied dates that different people give for its origin, the confusions and disagreements hide and underlying consensus. Throughout the current controversy — whether about the modern and the post-modern in art and architecture, the virtues of modern science, or the defects of modern technology — the arguments rest on shared assumptions about rationality. All parties to the debate agree that the self-styled “new philosophers” of the 17th century were responsible for new ways of thinking about nature and society. They committed the modern world to thinking about nature in a new and “scientific” way, and to use more “rational” methods to deal with the problems of human life and society.⁷

Modernity, as Connolly reminds us, distinguishes itself from other historical and “less rational” and “less scientific” eras and perspectives by establishing as legitimate a particular understanding *inter alia* of rationality and human reason.⁸ The structure of modern rationality and of a modern conceptualization of human reason assumes a set of presuppositions that are important for our discussion.⁹ Primarily, modern scientific rationality is prejudiced against any authoritative sources of knowledge that are local or culturally based. Scientific rationality emphasizes universal and general criteria of truth that are graspable by any capable human mind. Implicit in this claim is the modern assumption that human reason is a cognitive faculty that is found in every human being, a faculty that is “self-sufficient” and “autonomous.” Furthermore, modern rationality is to be “detached” from its objects of study. It is to be a “procedural” and “rule-following logic.” It assumes that “uniquely rational procedures exist for handling the intellectual and practical problems of any field of study.”¹⁰

Scientific Rationality is intimately related to the advent of technology or the “technological imagination” in the modern era.¹¹ Here the focus is not actual technological production or materials. Rather, it is the attitude that life is a technological problem to be solved, an illness that can be cured by rational guidance and instrumentation. The technological imagination of modernity emphasizes a problem-solving attitude as the essence of knowledge, science, and reason. It operates on the basis of efficiency, utility, and means-ends rationality. It expresses a deep and abiding faith in progress or the continual eradication of life-problems through the acquisition of knowledge (i.e., technical know-how). Such a perspective is indifferent, at best, and hostile, at worst, to culture, tradition, and questions of existential meaning. The technological imagination makes no distinction between human beings and the rest of nature. All that exists are objects to be manipulated and engineered. As Connolly writes,

In modernity the insistence upon taking charge of the world comes into its own. Nature becomes a set of laws susceptible to human knowledge, a deposit of resources for potential use or a set of vistas for aesthetic appreciation. While each of these orientations jostles with the others for priority, they all tend to place nature at the disposal of humanity. Human and non-human nature become material to work on.¹²

An understanding of the mood of modernity would not be complete without its final element: mastery. It is a natural by-product and result of the workings of scientific rationality and the technological imagination. The modern drive to control, to master has been given voice by many, including one of the “fathers” of modernity, Niccolò Machiavelli.¹³ It has also been given ample and sympathetic treatment by the American philosopher John Dewey.¹⁴ But one can find perhaps its clearest expression in the writings of Friedrich Nietzsche.¹⁵ Nietzsche’s concept of the will to power suggests that the entire framework of the natural, social, and moral disciplines, along with sociopolitical arrangements, are creations of human beings to master not only existence but others as well. While human beings convince themselves that their endeavors are motivated by the disinterested pursuit of truth, Nietzsche suggests that the opposite is true, namely, that all of our pursuits are based on a pure self-interest of self-aggrandizement realized through the mastery of our environment. This, so Nietzsche claims, should not cause alarm but should be welcomed by the “high spirits” of the earth, for it is through mastery that human beings (at least a particular type of human being) can realize their mission of grandeur. Thus all the tools at our disposal — philosophy, politics, social institutions — are means by which our will to power can be exercised in a dialectical process where we create the gods before whom we are willing to bow.

What does this drive for mastery, then, mean for human beings and their world? It signifies the enslavement of modern persons to a continual remaking and reframing of the world, to an unending and anxiety-ridden creative and re-creative act in which human beings continually refashion themselves and their societies. This is the essence of modern progress. And buried deep within this seemingly noble notion of progress is the necessity to manipulate and control other human beings. As Connolly argues,

[In modernity] the world loses its earlier property as a text upon which the will of God is inscribed and through which humans can come to a more profound understanding of their proper place in the order of things. But, ironically, in a world governed

by the drive for mastery, any absence of control is experienced as unfreedom and imposition: the experiences of alienation, estrangement, expression, authoritarianism, depression, underdevelopment, intolerance, powerlessness and discrimination thereby become extended and intensified in modern life. The drive to mastery intensifies the subordination of many, and recurrent encounters with the limits to mastery make even masters feel constrained and confined. These experiences in turn accelerate drives to change, control, free, organize, produce, correct, order, empower, rationalize, liberate, improve and revolutionize selves and institutions. Modern agencies form and reform, produce and reproduce, incorporate and reincorporate, industrialize and reindustrialize. In modernity, modernization is always under way.¹⁶

The dictates of modernity, and those who live according to these, suggest a society that is “methodical and precise.” One where life is a “progression of achievements,” where “the requirement of rational justification is extended to all life,” where all is desacralized and considered only from the perspective of “cost-effectiveness” and “instrumental efficiency.” It is, as Gellner so aptly states, where

Innovation when beneficial is adopted without undue inhibition. No sacred boundary demarcation of activities hampers its implementation. All of this supports and dovetails with an orderly division of labours and makes possible a rational accountancy of success and failure. The free, untrammelled choice of means is encouraged both by the clear specification of aims and by the leveling out of the world: all things are equally sacred or equally profaned and so there are no sacred prescriptions or proscriptions to inhibit the choice of methods. They become subject to considerations of efficiency.¹⁷

The “Modern” Organization

As moderns, we have been socialized within the context of modern organizations. Few are the societies or, for that matter, lives that have gone untouched by the actions of modern bureaucracies whether public or private. And it is perhaps possible that our continual contact and familiarity with modern organizations and their principles of operation may numb us to their profound impact. Earlier I suggested that acts of genocide and dehumanization were not mere historical anomalies but

were all-too real possibilities during the modern era. And the portrait of “modernity” just presented briefly highlights the mechanical and engineering approach by which modernity’s view of social and human beings is characterized, an approach which, as is argued later, facilitates the continual possibility of administrative evil to exist. Now, we must consider how the character of modernity creates and affects administrations and organizations.

Alasdair MacIntyre, in his work *After Virtue*, suggests that the moral philosophy of modernity is emotivism and, consequently, in modern life no distinction exists between “manipulative and non-manipulative social relations.”¹⁸ MacIntyre suggests a very important question for our purposes: “What then would the social world *look* like, if seen with emotivist eyes? And what would the social world *be* like, if the truth of emotivism came to be widely presupposed?”¹⁹ In other words, what would our social environment be like if governed according to the dictates of modernity? A special case in point is that of “organizations” or “those bureaucratic structures which ... define the working tasks of so many of our contemporaries.”²⁰ To answer these questions, we must turn to Max Weber.

Weber’s view of, as he calls it, “modern officialdom” captures the essential effects of the portrait of modernity given earlier and, consequently, the characteristics of the modern organization. One of the virtuous traits of modern organizations is what Weber calls “technical superiority,” rendering modern organizations much like a “machine.” As Weber writes,

The decisive reason for the advance of bureaucratic organization has always been its purely technical superiority over any other form of organization. The fully developed bureaucratic mechanism compares with other organizations exactly as does the machine with the non-mechanical modes of production. Precision, speed, unambiguity, knowledge of the files, continuity, discretion, unity, strict subordination, reduction of friction and of material and personal costs — these are raised to the optimum point in the strictly bureaucratic administration, and especially in its monocratic form.²¹

The technological superiority of modern organizations emphasizes the virtue of specialization. Administrators must be experts in their field, amassing more technological know-how and a substantial body of knowledge in their particular vocation. Officials must continually train and acquire as much professional information as possible so that their duties can be carried out efficiently and superbly.²² Administrators, in carrying out their duties, must also be *sine ira et studio* or “without passionate

anger and bias.”²³ They must carry out “impartial ‘administration,’” that is to say, they must be objective and procedural. As Weber suggests,

The honor of the civil servant is vested in his ability to execute conscientiously the order of the superior authorities, exactly as if the order agreed with his own conviction. This holds even if the order appears wrong to him and if, despite the civil servant’s remonstrances, the authority insists on the order. Without this moral discipline and self-denial, in the highest sense, the whole apparatus would fall to pieces.²⁴

To be part of a modern administrative structure, then, entails the loss of the moral self for the sake of organizational integrity and advancement as well as vocational fulfillment. According to Weber, the possibility for *ira et studium* (passionate anger and bias) does not exist for administrative personnel. These are required and expected to fulfill their specialized functions according to “purely objective considerations” by which business is conducted “according to *calculable rules* and ‘without regard for persons.’”²⁵ Organizations themselves, so argues Weber, take on a purely objective character the more “dehumanized” they become. This is successfully accomplished the more

... completely [bureaucracy] succeeds in eliminating from official business love, hatred, and all purely personal, irrational, and emotional elements which escape calculation. This is the specific nature of bureaucracy and it is appraised as its special virtue. The more complicated and specialized modern culture becomes, the more its external supporting apparatus demands the personally detached and strictly “objective” *expert*, in lieu of the master of older social structures, who was moved by personal sympathy and favor, by grace and gratitude. Bureaucracy offers the attitudes demanded by the external apparatus of modern culture in the most favorable combination.²⁶

No room exists for administrators actively to deliberate the moral content of an organization’s actions or of a superior’s orders. The very premise underlying modern organizations is that “questions of ends are questions of values (irrational and biased), and on values reason is silent; conflict between rival values cannot be rationally settled. Instead, one must simply choose between parties, classes, nations, causes, ideals.”²⁷ The only values that are rationally demonstrable are the morally empty ones of efficiency, effectiveness, and specialization.

The Contribution of Eric Voegelin

Various critiques have appeared lately regarding the dangers of the modern ethos as it relates to organizations and public administration.²⁸ Most of these decry the tendency of modern rationality, technology, and the drive for mastery to facilitate the possibility of organizations to commit great acts of human evil. And the commonality among these various critiques is that administrative evil is correlated to some of public administration's greatest assets. What is it, though, about the modern ethos that has brought about some of the most horrific events in the history of mankind? What is it about rationality, technological progress, and mastery (or certainty), these neutral and often benign notions, that engenders the dehumanization and destruction of human beings?

Eric Voegelin, one of the most important thinkers of the 20th century, provides an important answer to these queries.²⁹ Voegelin regarded the pillars of modernity as only a symptom of a much more serious problem. He argued that the roots of administrative evil were in the modern intellectual revolt against existential order, truth, freedom, and noetic reason. Hence, the logic of modernity was merely symptomatic of a deeper problem of human consciousness. Before providing an exposition of Voegelin's critique, I would like to present a brief biographical sketch of Voegelin's life and career.

Eric Voegelin was born on 3 January 1901 in Cologne, Germany, and received his doctorate from the University of Vienna in 1922. Voegelin's academic career was shadowed by the rise of the Nazi party and authoritarianism in Austria. By 1938 Voegelin had established himself as an insightful and serious scholar, having published various important works.³⁰ In spite of this, Voegelin's works, in particular his critique of the Nazi race idea, were considered threatening to the new political order and prompted his exodus to the United States in 1938.³¹ Voegelin's intellectual and scholarly legacy has allowed him to be recognized as one of the 20th century's most important thinkers. By the time of his death in 1985, Voegelin had left a rich legacy of scholarly publications. His intellectual pursuits centered on an in-depth study of order as it was embodied in different political systems throughout history as well as a philosophy of consciousness. Within this research program, Voegelin rigorously investigated the concept of administrative evil and its relation to modernity.³²

To understand Voegelin's view regarding the roots of administrative evil, it is important to comprehend his theory of consciousness and concept of nous (i.e., reason or understanding). As Voegelin writes, "The problems of human order in society and history originate in the order of consciousness. Hence the philosophy of consciousness is the centerpiece of a philosophy of politics" (Voegelin 1996, 7). Social and political organizations

represent the consciousness of the individuals who not only compose these but who continually support them. One way to comprehend Voegelin's understanding of consciousness is to think of consciousness as a process in the acquisition of knowledge and understanding about existence and one's participation therein. For now, it is important to note that Voegelin's criticism of the modern ethos was due to what he perceived to be its lack of consciousness — a lack of knowledge and understanding about reality and our place in it. As will be seen later, such a lack of consciousness has devastating effects on the types of social and political order that arise from it.

According to Voegelin, consciousness — the process of acquiring comprehensive knowledge about reality — has three dimensions: intentionality, luminosity, and reflexivity, all of which reflect various degrees of reality.³³ Intentionality is perhaps the most basic attribute of consciousness. It is the object-directedness nature of our minds. Luminosity is the characteristic of consciousness that leads us to discover that we are participants in a greater reality than the one we immediately experience by way of our senses. Reflexivity is the ability of human consciousness to remember and reflect on its experiences of reality; it is the art of contemplation. These dimensions of consciousness illustrate the complexity of reality. On the one hand, intentionality reflects the object-relatedness of reality. As human beings, we experience reality in terms of objects that we can observe, study, touch, and direct. However, luminosity reflects the transcendent characteristic of reality. Reality as such is not an object open to regulation and control but is the nexus in which we simply participate, one which we have not created and cannot manipulate. In this sense, reality is simply a given beyond our reach. Reflexivity allows us to reflect on our existence and our experiences of reality and should lead us to an understanding of the whole of reality, not just a part.

This holistic view of reason, argues Voegelin, is not part and parcel of the modern era. Modernity rejects this robust concept of reason for an instrumental view of reason. Rather than articulating reason and consciousness in terms of luminosity of and reflexivity toward existential order, modernity held reason to be nothing more than an instrument of human passion and it limited consciousness to nothing more than knowledge about experienced objects, not a luminosity toward a transcendent existential order. This instrumental view of reason resulted from a rejection of the transcendent order of existence as the ground for personal and social order. In lieu of this fundamental order of existence, another possible order of existence was posited (one within our immediate experience and at the mercy of our passions) by which we could ground personal and social life as we saw fit. Human passion became the foundation of social and political life, and instrumental rationality (i.e., utilitarian rationality)

became the means by which to build the edifice. Insofar as this occurred, it blinded man to the truth that he was “not a self-created, autonomous being carrying the origin and meaning of his existence within himself” (Voegelin 1978, 92).

Having correlated the root of administrative evil to the modern rejection of existential order, Voegelin investigated one of the most prevalent symptoms of this “disease,” viz., utilitarian rationality.³⁴ Rational utilitarianism grew out of the scientific desire to understand the causal processes of the elements of nature. A knowledge of causal forces led to the formation of “means-ends” relations between objects, with the implied assumption that once one understood the “means” portion of the equation, one would easily know how to achieve a desired “end” (Voegelin 1998b, 207). In this process, knowledge was perceived as a useful commodity, an advantageous good that assured that scientific and public organizations possess the needed control and power to “magically cure the evils of existence and transform the nature of man” (Voegelin 1998b, 208).

Utilitarian rationality and a pragmatic conceptualization of knowledge grew in part out of the mathematical speculation of the early modern era. Such speculation emphasized the analysis of experienced reality as an analysis of brute matter and its interrelations. Such thinking, argued Voegelin, led to a fundamental shift in the development of human consciousness and understanding of human nature. Whereas the life of contemplation and existential meaning had once been valued, the rational-mathematical approach placed a greater emphasis on the life of action and material well-being (Voegelin 1998a, 166). Human beings began to be regarded as mere automatons with no existential purpose. Human nature as such was an amoral mechanism, easily manipulated in terms of its inner dynamics of pleasure and pain. It was a brute and cold part of cause-and-effect nature. Thus, an organizational principle of the modern organization, as it applied utilitarian rationality to its operations, was the manipulation of this “human” mechanism for organizational goals (Voegelin 1975, 47–8):

The curious interlocking of concepts which alternately belong to the pleasure-pain happiness group ... makes sense if it is understood as a manageable means-end concatenation which can be bent to ulterior purposes by a legislator or educator who is in possession of the absolute standards of value.

Such reduction of human nature made the modern administrator a powerful figure. He now could achieve organizational goals by manipulating individuals’ sense of satisfaction. Further, the “managing legislator” was able to imbue this manipulation with an artificial sense of morality

by constructing a context for “ethical action” within the organization (Voegelin 1975, 59). Since modern organizations only recognized the material interests of their subordinates or social members at large, they based their organizational culture around the expansion and manipulation of one’s desire to experience pleasure and avoid pain. Organizational allegiance and loyalty could be harnessed by “educational rewards of pleasure and punishments of pain” while our human passions would be satisfied “in accordance with the rewards or punishments held out by the structure of society in which they operate” (Voegelin 1975, 48). Organizational ethics, then, ceased to be of substantive value, becoming nothing more than puppeteer’s strings by which members of an organization were managed for some institutional goal. Human beings were no longer considered free moral agents but were regarded as naturally determined egoists, empty of moral substance with the “ethical” being decided by the “analyst-legislator” (Voegelin 1975, 51).

Voegelin is one of the few intellectuals outside of mainstream organizational-theory scholars who advance an organizational theory that accounts for the disastrous effects of modern organizations upon their members. By rejecting the possibility of an existential dimension to reality, modern organizations harm their members by making them mere instruments of the institution. Once human beings are recognized as no more than passion-driven machines to be managed, the possibility of administrative evil is all too real. A renunciation of existential questions of life and morals, truth, and contemplative reason facilitates the abuses that modern organizations engender, since it is these components of reality that could actually limit organizations’ tendencies to manipulate and abuse human beings. Furthermore, the indirect rejection of these limits signals a tacit endorsement of the “pragmatic planning will” of modern administrators, a will that is reckless and uninhibited by such things as the dignity of humans, political rights, and social responsibility. Viewing human beings simply as organizational resources also means that ethics becomes nothing more than external organizational controls over the inner mechanics of the human machine, controls that substitute for the sort of internal values and organization that ought to guide and direct human action. Man thus becomes unable or even unwilling to think, consider, and perhaps even solve moral dilemmas, since the possibility for moral reasoning is taken away from him. Man is now told what to do and how to think; he is managed both from within and from without.³⁵

Once Voegelin identified the root of administrative evil and investigated one of its symptoms, he deduced the horrible implications, namely, a loss of reality for human beings. Once knowledge had become a useful means for social and political efficiency, the rational-utilitarian approach grew to the extent that its “social prestige” brought into question and delegitimized

the pursuit of any other value (Voegelin 1998, 207). This had the terrifying effect of “narrowing” human experience to the sole arena of “reason, science, and pragmatic action” (Voegelin 1998, 209). For individuals, this meant a minimization of humanity and personal dignity (Voegelin 1999, 86). Human experience had been denied access to an existential dimension and, more disconcerting, it had been denied participation in that dimension. Since questions of existential import had been delegitimized, only questions of material importance received social and political attention. This, then, negated the possibility of truth, of contemplative rationality (i.e., reflexivity), and of human freedom. Since any kind of existential order was questioned, individuals and societies could no longer orient themselves by investigating the existential possibilities for earthly and personal order. The only means of societal and individual order became public organizations and their administrators, since these possessed a legitimated source of authority and knowledge (i.e., scientific rationality). Freedom was found only by expanding the possibility of mastery at the expense of existential limitations; instrumental rationality and efficiency were substituted for contemplative thought; and the uncertainty of acquiring truth gave way to the sensibility and certainty of scientific findings. Wisdom, in the modern mind, is replaced by technical rationality, and moderation is discarded for a limitless search for human perfection, honor, and control — a search that has no regard for any sort of limits, moral or otherwise.³⁶

Summary and Conclusion

It was suggested earlier that, for Voegelin, the transformation of consciousness from questions of existence to concerns for material well-being was brought about by a shift in the process of thinking. Whereas rational thought prior to the modern period included an openness toward questions of existence and of moral ends, with the onslaught of the scientific revolution and the Enlightenment, rational thought had also to include scientific analysis and logical principles. Two standards of certitude and social organization now arose and were in competition. One could appeal to some existential order as a justification for particular answers to fundamental questions of life (e.g., what is reality? what is human nature? what is the basis for morals or political arrangements?). The moderns, though, claimed a need for greater certainty and, implicitly, a need for a greater degree of control. Thus, an appeal to the scientific method, to a rigorous logic, would at least give the impression of a greater degree of certainty and control in the process of social and political administration. It would at least avoid the “ambiguities” of existential

questions by grounding political and social life in actual experience and not mere contemplation.

One of the assumptions of Voegelin, as seen earlier, is that man's fulfillment is dependent on the degree to which he can think fully and choose wisely. The more open one is to existential questions and answers to our individual and social predicaments, the greater the possibility that one may choose better life arrangements than if one were closed to such existential possibilities. Voegelin is a believer in the dignity of mankind and the possibility of goodness. Freedom to think and choose, though, are important in the process of human fulfillment. Modernity, however, has negated the possibility of thought and choice by restricting the objects of thought and choice and, therefore, it has indirectly curtailed man's freedom and ultimately his possibility for fulfillment. This is extremely ironic. No other historical era has exhibited such zeal in harnessing thought and creativity for the organization and liberty of society, yet at the same time no historical era has exhibited the moral collapse and lack of individual and social fulfillment that is part of our modern experience. How is it that the remarkable institution of the modern organization has failed so often and with such far-reaching consequences?

For Voegelin, rational utilitarianism produces a "pathos of autonomy and self-reliance" that is part of the core of administrative evil (Voegelin 1998, 211).³⁷ The rational-utilitarian approach achieved such wide renown in the modern era because it gives a sense of "absoluteness." It presented the prospects of understanding a "new order" of existence, one that was within our reach and control. Reality could now be verified, experimented upon, and manipulated for different purposes. The standard of truth and truth itself became the output of particular experiments and methods. Claims of reality or truth were justified by mathematical, scientific, and logical analysis, leading to a sense of "self-reliance" and self-sufficiency. Metaphysical and existential ambiguities ceased to be considered within the minds of the scientist, since a better standard had been obtained. For Voegelin, though, the scientific propositions and their truth-values are legitimate so long as they remain within a logical system of science. The dilemma is when these propositions transcend the system of scientific logic and their meanings are applied from the scientific realm to the existential dimension of human beings.

For Voegelin, the logic of administrative evil is easily deduced from the foregoing analysis. Scientific-technical rationality delimits the arena of human experience to only that which can be analyzed and rearranged within a scientific understanding of reality. This automatically has the effect of reducing the moral weight of social problems and human beings to questions of administration and organization rather than moral or existential dilemmas. Morality and ethics become aspects of a system of rational-

analytical thought, aspects that can be organized and reengineered according to organizational needs. In essence, morality and ethics, as parts of a rationality-based system, become “means” to organizational goals rather than “ends” of human life. Organizational ends or successes, whether they involve insider trading, willful cover-up, or the murder of millions, are in some way normal behaviors because they are logical organizational outcomes to administrative processes that regard only efficiency and effectiveness as the best criteria for sound organizational decisions.

Understanding Voegelin’s criticisms of modern organizations leads one to ask what solutions his perspective can offer to address the problem and continuing possibility of administrative evil. First and foremost is the need to reconsider the seriousness of existential questions and aspects of reality as important dimensions of human life. As Voegelin noted, the death of this aspect of humanity is “the price of progress” (Voegelin 1987, 131). This is not a new idea in the field of public administration, but certainly it is not a popular one, given the paucity of research reflecting this viewpoint (a notable exception is Denhardt 1991). Administrators and scholars in the field should be more open to issues of existence and transcendence in their organizations and research than they currently are. It is an openness to consider the implications of these issues that forces individuals in an organization to engage in the kind of moral reasoning that is one of the crowning achievements of a mature human being. Furthermore, it is moral reasoning that allows one to arrive at the limits that thwart an organization’s attempt to act in an evil way. As Voegelin suggests, when modern organizations close themselves to existential areas of thought, the slippery slope of administrative evil is all too present. By considering the possibility of other limits outside those of an organization’s own making, organizations and their managers may be more likely to avoid some of the cases that are cited in the literature (e.g., Adams and Balfour (1998), R. Nielsen (1996)).

The above considerations also point one to other fruitful directions. Primarily, they point to the need for reconsidering the grounds of ethical action within an organizational context. Just what that ground may be is a debatable question. Adams and Balfour (1998) suggest a communitarian approach to ethics in the concluding pages of their work. There is also another alternative that has received attention in the public administration literature: character or virtue ethics (e.g., Hart 1994; Kolenda 1998; Cooper and Wright 1992). Character ethics is built upon the sort of openness to existential questions that Voegelin suggests. As one of its advocates comments, “the ethics of virtue requires a moral commitment to specific — often transtemporal, transcultural — values, as opposed to the more fashionable moral relativism” (Hart 1994, 108). Such an approach, Hart notes, is in direct contrast to the view that “ethics is just another tool to

be used to achieve organizational objectives” (Hart 1994, 108) — a view that many modern organizations and administrators represent.

Besides just another approach or possible solution, why should public administration and organizational theorists take virtue ethics seriously? In one sense, the ethics of character provide one more limitation against the abuses of organizational power by placing the responsibility for behavioral control away from the external mechanisms of the organization to the internal choices of the individual. Character ethics salvages the loss of inner control and guidance that modern organizations and technical rationality have helped to precipitate by recognizing the fact that human beings are not just mechanisms but are meaningful beings with the ability for moral reasoning. Further, it limits the overreaching administrative will and the organizational “urge to monitor and control” by taking into account that certain human problems and dimensions of life cannot be resolved by external organizational controls and mechanisms.³⁸

These suggestions are an attempt not only to steer organizational ethics away from the potential of “moral deafness” but also to demonstrate how Voegelin’s rich philosophy contains within itself possible directions for modern organizations. Voegelin’s philosophy and its embodiment in various ethical models leads to an appreciation and sensitivity for the importance of organizations that respect human life, human rights, truth, reason, human freedom, and civic responsibility. Such an appreciation and attentiveness does not assume that an organization must “sympathize” or “fully empathize” with an opposing moral position or claim. Rather, as Bird (1996) argues, moral deafness often begins by evaluating opposing moral positions exclusively using our own frame of reference to the exclusion of all others. This not only leads one into a reductionistic inattentiveness to opposing moral positions, but also to our considering these as “peripheral or discountable” (Bird 1996, 78). We must be willing to step outside our own limited frame of modern reference or face the possibility that administrative evil will continue to be an all-too-real possibility and not simply a speck on the radar screen of history.

Notes

1. See N. J. Rengger, *Political Theory, Modernity, and Postmodernity* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1995), 39. A similar comment is made by J. Cottingham in addressing Descartes’s contributions to modern philosophy. Cottingham writes that “Descartes is often called the ‘father of modern philosophy,’ but the concept of modernity is a slippery one.” See J. Cottingham, *A Descartes Dictionary* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1993), 5. See as well C. Larmore, *The Morals of Modernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge

- University Press, 1996), 189. In particular, see chapter 9, where Larmore writes, "One of the enduring concerns of modern thought has been the nature of modernity itself."
2. By "administrative evil," I primarily mean the perpetration of acts of dehumanization and genocide by modern public or private organizations. This definition is borrowed from G. B. Adams and D. L. Balfour, *Unmasking Administrative Evil* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1998). For examples of other discussions of "administrative evil," see R. P. Nielsen, "Arendt's Action Philosophy and the Manager as Eichmann, Richard III, Faust, or Institutional Citizen," in *Economics, Ethics, and Public Policy*, ed. C. K. Wilber (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1988), 175–86; and H. Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (Cleveland: World Publishing Co., 1966).
 3. Zygmunt Bauman advances a similar claim but specifically in regard to the Holocaust. See Z. Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (1989; reprint Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1991).
 4. Rengger, *Political Theory*, 41. Here Rengger is quoting Richard Bernstein's definition. See R. Bernstein, *The New Constellation: The Ethical-Political Horizons of Modernity/Postmodernity* (Cambridge, U.K.: Polity Press, 1991).
 5. I borrow this term from Á. Heller, "The Three Logics of Modernity and the Double Bind of the Modern Imagination," in *Public Lecture Series No. 23* (Budapest: Collegium Budapest, Institute for Advanced Study, January, 2001).
 6. I will treat each of these aspects separately, though in reality they are intimately related. Further, I will interchangeably employ the terms "scientific rationality," "modern rationality," "bureaucracy," and "modern reason." Notice will be given to the reader if the meaning conveyed by the usage changes.
 7. S. Toulmin, *Cosmopolis: The Hidden Agenda of Modernity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 9.
 8. W. E. Connolly, *Political Theory and Modernity* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1993).
 9. I am partially indebted in the explanation of this criterion to J. Coleman's discussion of the modern notion of reason and truth. See J. Coleman, *A History of Political Thought: From Ancient Greece to Early Christianity* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), 12–3.
 10. Toulmin, *Cosmopolis*, 11. It is important to note that while modern rationality may be a method to discover truth and solve problems, it is also a particular way of life. Ernest Gellner addresses this point by portraying the day-to-day life of the modern rational person. See E. Gellner, *Reason and Culture: The Historic Role of Rationality and Rationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1992). In particular, see chapter 7, "Rationality as a Way of Life." I address this notion again in note 17.
 11. I employ Heller's discussion of the "technological imagination" and its relation to modernity in what follows. See Heller, "Three Logics of Modernity," cited above.
 12. Connolly, *Political Theory and Modernity*, 2.

13. See N. Machiavelli, *The Prince*, ed. R. Adams (New York: Norton, 1992).
14. See J. Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty: A Study for the Relation of Knowledge and Action* (1929; reprint, New York: Perigee Books, 1980).
15. It should be noted that Nietzsche's concept of the will to power, developed below, is applied by him to the entire moral and philosophical development of human beings from antiquity to his time. In this sense, his contribution is not solely directed at the modern era. However, Nietzsche does suggest that it is in the modern era and beyond where the will to power can be most creative and unbound for social and moral reconstruction.
16. Connolly, *Political Theory and Modernity*, 3. Alasdair MacIntyre draws a similar dark picture of modernity, and as he argues, its moral core is emotivism (i.e., the moral position suggesting that it is impossible to provide rational justification for objective morality). He writes, for example, that modernity, due to its emotivist core, obliterates "any genuine distinction between manipulative and non-manipulative social relations" and advances a type of moral discourse characterized by "the attempt of one will to align the attitudes, feelings, preferences and choices of another with its own. Others (i.e., people) are always means, never ends." See A. MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (London: Duckworth, 1981), 19, 23. The tension between emotivism and rationality in modernity is beyond the scope of this chapter. However, see Gellner, *Reason and Culture*, for a brief treatment.
17. Gellner, *Reason and Culture*, 136–7. Gellner goes on to give a further account of social interactions and organization in the modern world. He writes: "Dealings between men are similarly rational, guided by the free choice of clear ends by both partners, and by the coolly assessed advantages inherent in any bargain between them. Contractual relations replace those based on status. Society as a totality comes to be seen in the same light. Its organization is not given, but determined by rational contract. It is but the summation of free and rational contracts, entered upon by free and rational individuals."
18. See note 16.
19. MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 24.
20. *Ibid.*, 25.
21. Gerth, H. H., and C. Wright Mills, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (1948; reprint, London: Routledge, 1998), 214.
22. *Ibid.*, 198–199, 232–233. MacIntyre suggests that bureaucratic effectiveness is based on "the rationality of matching means to ends economically and efficiently." See MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 25.
23. *Ibid.*, 95. Weber translates the Latin as "without scorn and bias."
24. *Ibid.*, 95.
25. *Ibid.*, 215. "Without regard for persons" implies that modern administrations operate by disregarding acquired social statuses.
26. *Ibid.*, 216.
27. MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 26.
28. For example, see Adams and Balfour, *Unmasking Administrative Evil*.
29. Several scholars have introduced Eric Voegelin to the field of public administration and organizational theory. For example, see G. Moreno-

- Riano, "The Etiology of Administrative Evil: Eric Voegelin and the Unconsciousness of Modernity," *American Review of Public Administration* 31, no. 3 (2001): 296–312; and A. G. Ramos, *The New Science of Organizations* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981). With the permission of Sage Publications, I draw heavily from my article "The Etiology of Administrative Evil: Eric Voegelin and the Unconsciousness of Modernity" in writing parts of this chapter.
30. For example, consider the following works (all translated by Ruth Hein and published by Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge, except where noted differently): *Über Die Form des Amerikanischen Geistes* has been translated as *On the Form of the American Mind*, 1995; *Rasse und Staat* has been translated as *Race and State*, 1997; *Die Rassenidee in der Geistesgeschichte von Ray bis Carus* has been translated as *The History of the Race Idea: From Ray to Carus*, 1998; and *Der Autoritäre Staat* has been translated as *The Authoritarian State: An Essay on the Problem of the Austrian State* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1999).
 31. For an account of Voegelin's incredible escape to the United States, see B. Cooper, Ed., *Eric Voegelin and the Foundations of Modern Political Science* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1999).
 32. While the term "administrative evil" is not expressly used in Voegelin's works, its substantive meaning is quite evident in many of his writings.
 33. One of the many places in which Voegelin's account of these can be found is in E. Voegelin, *In Search of Order*, vol. 5 of *Order and History* (1987), published by University of Missouri Press, Columbia, 1–45.
 34. The terms "scientific analytic mind-set," "technical rationality," "scientific mindset," "utilitarian rationality," and "rational utilitarian" will be used interchangeably in this chapter, since Voegelin employs these to signify the use of instrumental reason, science, and technology in modern organizations.
 35. For an excellent insight into this problem, refer to E. Voegelin, (1975), 69–70.
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 37. The analysis that follows is an exposition of E. Voegelin *History of Political Ideas Volume VI: Revolution and the New Science*. B. Cooper (Ed.) (*Collected Works*; v. 24), (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1998), 210–212; E. Voegelin. *Hitler and the Germans*. D. Clemens and B. Purcell (Eds.), (*The Collected Works of Eric Voegelin*; v. 31), (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1999), 240–250; and E. Voegelin. *Anamnesis*. G. Niemeyer (Ed.). (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1978) 175–182.
 38. I am indebted to Sullivan (1995) for this analysis.

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Chapter 21

Marshall Dimock's Deflective Organizational Theory

James A. Stever

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Introduction

Marshall Dimock offers students of organizational theory a large and sprawling landscape of concepts, approaches, and arguments. At first glance, these disparate elements present a dizzying array, particularly when the relationships between the major components of his theory seem to be riddled with internal contradictions and inconsistencies. The intent

of the following review of Dimock's scholarship will be to build the case that his contributions to the discipline are best understood as a gradual deflection away from conventional organization and administration theories and toward an embrace of premises that were not shared by the milieu in which he operated. Whereas Dimock's early career can be characterized as an endorsement of prevailing public-administration norms, his writings during the 1950s began to contain a discernible rejection of the direction that many of his colleagues in public administration and political science were taking. By the 1970s, Dimock had acquired an iconoclastic reputation. By the 1980s, he had consolidated and articulated his reasons for embracing what proved to be a novel and unique perspective on the role of organization and administration in modern society. His legacy to organizational theory is an alternative approach that challenges conventional wisdom.

Dimock's deflection away from the organizational theory of his peers can be illustrated by following his intellectual migration through five distinct historical contexts. Within each, he moved further away from what he regarded as wrongheaded prevailing norms and closer to what has become characteristic of his unique approach to organizational and administrative theory. These five contexts are:

- The founding of the public-administration profession and the establishment of the American administrative state
- The New Deal era
- The era of the imperial presidency
- The behavioral era of political science
- Problems of the administrative state during the 1980s

The Contexts of Marshall Dimock's Scholarship

The professional career of Marshall Dimock spanned not only the founding era of the public-administration profession in America, but the rapid growth of the administrative state, the New Deal era, the consolidation of power within the American presidency, the behavioral revolution within political science, and the decline of the administrative state in the 1980s. His 1903 birth in San Bernardino, California, occurred amidst the rapid industrialization and urbanization that spawned the Progressive movement. By 1928, he had earned his Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University with a specialty in political science and economics. He wrote his dissertation on congressional investigating committees. At the time of his death at age 88 in 1991 on his farm near Bethel, Vermont, he remained active in scholarly, professional, political, and community affairs. Each of these successive

contexts progressively shaped his thinking, and the lessons that he drew were often at odds with those learned by his peers and contemporaries.

The entry into professional life for many turn-of-the-century American leaders was an education at a northeastern university. Institutions such as Harvard and Johns Hopkins dominated American intellectual life throughout the 19th and even into the early 20th century. The professors in these universities were steeped in European culture, idealism, constitutionalism, and committed to noblesse oblige. Though born in California, Dimock's graduate-school experience was at Johns Hopkins, and it transformed him. The geographic center of his life became the northeast, where he settled eventually on a Vermont farm. He developed an abiding affinity for the northeastern political culture and tradition, remarking that Woodrow Wilson and Franklin D. Roosevelt were his two favorite presidents (Dimock 1980).

By virtue of obtaining a graduate education at Johns Hopkins, Dimock acquired a classical, liberal arts mindset about administration. This education placed him in direct contact with many leading figures in 20th-century government, including Arthur O. Lovejoy, W. W. Willoughby, W. F. Willoughby, and Frank J. Goodnow. These scholars manifested an abiding concern for the American constitutional tradition. Their intent was to render it compatible with the rapidly growing administrative agencies within the American State. These scholars were not administrative technicians and specialists, but rather were concerned for constitutional, ethical, and cultural issues generated by the introduction of administrative agencies into the traditional liberal state. Rejecting the pessimism of Durkheim and Weber about modern administration, this tradition, with Woodrow Wilson as its chief spokesman, believed that constitutionally constrained administration could be a positive contribution to American liberal democracy.

Dimock was one of the charter members of the American Society for Public Administration. These founders understood professional public administration as an enterprise steeped in political theory and rejected the later premise that administration could be a free-standing, specialized, technical profession. Public administration was to be externally grounded, guided by the principles of liberal constitutionalism, political economy, philosophy, and statecraft. Woodrow Wilson's question, articulated in "The Study of Administration" (1887), was the question actively pursued by the founders: can the American constitutional tradition be reconciled with administrative principles so that the resulting administrative state enhances the political economy and culture of America?

After receiving his Johns Hopkins Ph.D. in 1928, Dimock taught at the University of California at Los Angeles from 1928 to 1932. His move to the University of Chicago was providential, placing him in a political

science department that became one of the architects of the New Deal. Supported by Charles E. Merriam, Rockefeller funds, and colleagues who were on the cutting edge of governmental reform, Dimock became one of the central brain-trust members who traveled on designated Pullman cars from Chicago to Washington, D.C., to frame the outlines of Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal (Dimock 1980, 50).

The period from 1932 to 1945 was one in which Dimock served with distinction and without dissent. He left the University of Chicago in 1937 to serve the Roosevelt administration in a variety of distinguished positions: with the Immigration and Naturalization Service under Frances Perkins, as assistant secretary of labor, and as chief executive of the Sea-Going Manpower Program in the War Shipping Administration. With the survival of the country at stake, Dimock functioned as a loyal servant of the state. There were no indications in this period that he harbored reservations about the administrative state or that he harbored alternative approaches to public administration and organization. During this 13-year period, he worked to ensure that the administrative state not only developed apace, but functioned smoothly and at peak efficiency.

Conventional professional wisdom during the New Deal and World War II supported a larger and more powerful presidency, one that was substantially in control of federal administrative agencies. Arthur M. Schlesinger (1974) labeled the presidency that emerged as the "imperial presidency." For many scholars and practitioners of public administration, the development of the presidency became synonymous with sound governmental management. From the beginning of his work within the Roosevelt administration, Marshall Dimock was professionally associated with groups supporting a strong presidency. However, by the mid 1950s, he began to challenge whether the presidency could be significantly strengthened through organizational means. Though his autobiography, published in 1980, defends the original contributions of Louis Brownlow's Committee on Administrative Management (Dimock 1980, 95), he challenged the successive attempts to strengthen the presidency, arguing that large and powerful presidential staffs interfered with the personal ability of presidents to govern. Frank Sherwood (1994) argues that Dimock eventually came to the position that strengthening the Executive Office of the President was a limited solution carried to excess.

In addition to their support for the imperial presidency, Dimock had other concerns about administrative professions in the postwar era. The behavioral revolution presented a dilemma for many classically trained political scientists. As a Johns Hopkins graduate, Marshall Dimock believed that the foundations of politics and administration were intellectually grounded in law, philosophy, and religion. Traditional political science was the basis for his approach to organization and administration. He

served in the University of Chicago Department of Political Science, 1932–1941, as a professor of political science at Northwestern University, 1945–1948, and as head of New York University's Department of Government, 1955–1962. In contrast to many of his peers who adapted and assimilated the few behavioralist assumptions of the 1950s, Dimock rejected this approach from the outset. He opposed its premises about the origins of human behavior as well as the implications of this approach for organizational management. Thus, Dimock did not follow Elton Mayo and Herbert Simon into the new world of organizational behavior.

Finally, as the large governmental organizations constituting the American administrative state came under heavy criticism during the late 1970s and 1980s, Dimock's later scholarship searched for ways to reestablish their legitimacy as an integral part of liberal government. On one hand, Dimock insisted that administrative agencies were necessary to integrate and implement government policy. On the other, he acknowledged that the administrative state had become distended and intrusive. As a remedy, he proposed to shrink the administrative state long before this reduction became fashionable. To accomplish this, he urged the citizenry to accept more personal responsibility. His later scholarship argued that the failure of administrative organizations could be traced to leadership. His solution was the restoration of political leadership as a first step toward the revitalization of governmental organizations. Dimock's last published work was devoted to an exploration of ways to restore the administrative state to its former grandeur and promise (Dimock 1991).

At the time of his death in 1991, he was actively pursuing the revitalization of the administrative state by attending professional conferences, speaking before professional associations and civic groups, as well as producing manuscripts and articles. His last work (unpublished) was titled "A Philosophy of Administration." Though he had written a book by the same title in 1958 (Dimock 1958), this second book on the subject represented another original attempt to clarify his thinking about the philosophical basis of administrative organizations. This last manuscript presented an alternative basis for modern organizational theory. It extrapolated and clarified themes that began to surface in his published works on organizational theory during the late 1940s.

Dimock's scholarship can be divided into two periods: early and mature. The early period extends from 1928 to 1945; the mature from 1945 to 1991. From 1945 onward, his scholarship was iconoclastic, providing an atypical philosophical prism through which to view the modern organization. This post–World War II scholarship commenced with the publication of *The Executive in Action* in 1945 (Dimock 1945). During the subsequent four decades, he produced a series of books devoted to organizational theory. Closer examination of these books will illustrate

Dimock's progressive embrace of organizational principles that originated in premodern, as opposed to modern, philosophy.

Major Works

From the publication of his first book, *Congressional Investigating Committees*, in 1923, to the end of World War II, Dimock had published ten books and 57 articles on various institutional aspects of public administration. During this early period he worked with other colleagues to develop public agencies that served overarching public interests. He promoted, along with other colleagues, the constitutional basis of public administration, and accepted the premise that the ends of public organization must be democratically determined. If there was a distinguishing trait to his scholarship during this early era, it was that Dimock proposed alternative means for developing and controlling the American administrative state. Whereas the Brownlow Committee suggested that the executive should be the primary unit within the federal government to control and supervise administrative agencies, Dimock argued that the Congress was the more appropriate locus of control (Seidman 1994). This issue was particularly controversial in the case of government corporations. Their quasi-public, quasi-private status placed them at the margins of the federal government, but raised questions about supervision and control. Dimock acquired expertise on such issues and explored the problems associated with integrating these corporations into the federal administration. He focused on a range of public corporations, including public utilities, the Panama Canal, and the Inland Waterways Corporation. In the case of the Panama Canal, he argued: "Every Policy affecting the Canal administration is an appropriate subject for Congressional attention" (Dimock 1933, 33). This insistence on congressional management differed from the approach taken by the Brownlow Committee — one which placed management and operational control under the executive branch and giving the Congress indirect, broad influence. However, these were means-oriented, technical issues among professional colleagues characteristic of the internal tensions found within any profession. Dimock's broader, more fundamental and foundational departure from the conventional norms of the profession began with the publication of *The Executive in Action* in 1945.

The Executive in Action inaugurated a new era in Dimock's scholarship, one in which the practical, technical, and instrumental questions of administration gave way to questions and themes of a philosophical, theoretical nature. This landmark book represented Dimock's attempt to communicate directly with those who aspired to manage large organizations. It offered advice on predictable management problems such as meshing line and

staff, delegating, maintaining unity of command, and building the organization. This book was addressed primarily to practicing organizational executives, and it served as the platform for Dimock's subsequent management consulting career. Yet, simmering beneath this seemingly practical book was a challenge to the systems-theory and behavioral approaches that were gaining popularity in the postwar management milieu.

The introduction to the book laid out two claims. The first was that organizational managers were destined to be the leading statesmen of postwar industrial nations. It recognized the growing power of large organizations. This was a theme reminiscent of diverse types of literature in the post-Progressive period — arguments advanced elsewhere by Mayo, McGregor, Burnham, Mannheim, and Veblen. The second was original, expressing Dimock's own assessment of the relationship between organization and leader. Whereas the period literature — ranging from Marxist literature to management literature — acknowledged the growing power of organizations, their assessment was that the inherent power of organizations explained why organizational executives were powerful. Dimock stood this argument on its head, arguing that organizations were epiphenomenal, deriving their vitality and energy from that of their leader. Though the philosophical base for this original perspective on organization was not established by *The Executive in Action*, subsequent postwar works elaborated and justified this point of view.

Free Enterprise and the Administrative State (Dimock 1972) signaled a clearer philosophical departure from the conventional wisdom on the administrative state. Whereas Dimock's prewar writings differed with colleagues over the appropriate means by which to advance the administrative state, this work challenged both the necessity and desirability of such a state. *Free Enterprise and the Administrative State* was written by an author who had undergone a fundamental change of mind. Also, whereas earlier works were written to a professional audience, this work was written to executives, businessmen, and the broader public.

The opening line of *Free Enterprise and the Administrative State* conveyed Dimock's shift: "The Free Enterprise System is said to be losing ground in the United States and to be giving way to an all powerful 'administrative state'" (Dimock 1972, 76). The remainder of the book depicts a dialectical relationship between free enterprise and the regulation promulgated by the large organizations of the administrative state. Dimock urged his business audience to conduct their affairs responsibly — on a small scale — in order to dispel the argument that business requires government regulation. Only irresponsible, power-hungry businessmen who rampantly use technology to create corporations that abuse the public trust require government regulation. Such an argument set Dimock apart from his colleagues, who assumed the inevitability and

growth of the administrative state — one that would inevitably displace the old individualistic, free-enterprise approach to business organization. Whereas the public administration profession of the 1950s was attempting to fashion a humane, democratic administrative state, Dimock was trying to squelch the need for such a state in order to maintain 19th-century values that he regarded as superior to any that could develop in large administrative organizations.

How can this shift be explained? One way is to consider Dimock's changing personal situation. After the war, he retired from active government service and entered the academy, serving from 1945 to 1948 as professor of political science at Northwestern University, then serving from 1949 to 1950 as a Vermont state legislator. He also turned to farming as an avocation. However, to dwell on these career shifts is to overlook the more fundamental explanation: a shift in intellect. This shift can be summed up as a movement away from modern philosophy combined with a progressive embrace of premodern philosophy.

Prior to 1945, he worked within the American constitutional tradition, a perspective that was fundamentally modern. Like other constitutionalists, he acknowledged that shifting circumstances obviated old constitutional arrangements. Constitutionalists are modernist in the sense that the constitution becomes an instrumental document by which to progressively improve society and the human condition. This historicist faith that society can be perpetually improved clashes with premodern perspectives, which view the human condition as one in which social structure and human personality are influenced, even determined, by nature. For example, from Aristotle's perspective, human character and the polity grew in the same organic fashion as trees and other natural phenomena. In migrating to the premodern perspective on organization, Dimock began to doubt whether the professions could use their knowledge and the administrative state as instruments for the improvement of American democracy. Instead, he began to develop a theory of organization and administration that viewed organizations and individuals as natural products. Hence, the task becomes that of understanding how organization and administration are influenced by nature — how they grow and decline in accordance with natural rhythms.

Vestiges of this premodern philosophy emerged first in *A Philosophy of Administration*, published in 1958, a book that he regarded as a sequel to *The Executive in Action* (Dimock 1958, 19). In contrast to the functional and mechanistic POSDCORB principles of administration (planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting, and budgeting), Dimock proposed naturalistic principles of administration and urged leaders to grow the organization in organic fashion while maintaining balance and harmony among the institution's constituent parts. Dimock was fully aware of the differences between his organizational philosophy and other

approaches. In making his case for an alternative approach, he criticized contemporary approaches for attempting to reduce organizations to little more than orderly interactions that produced decisions in machinelike fashion (Dimock 1958, 19). Biology, he argued, was the appropriate foundation for administration. To him, the behavioral approaches to administration were misguided in their engineering attempts to identify the essential parts of organizations and standardize their operation, including their interaction with other constituent parts.

The casual reader of Dimock's philosophy might assume that the origins of his organic philosophy extend back only to 19th-century idealism; that he was merely reviving the early modern Germanic or British organic approach to statecraft and applying it to administration. Such a reading would overlook Dimock's basic skepticism about the possibility of a distinctly modern approach to administration. His criticism was that administration was an enduring feature of the human condition, an essential enterprise involving the integration of basic parts of any given society. He denied that modern science could develop forms of administration that were substantive improvements over those that developed in ancient civilization. Dimock (1959, 41) argued that balance within an administrative organization is an enduring task confronted by virtually all administrators throughout history. And balance within administrative organizations is akin to balance within biological systems — a continual, delicate process. The only difference is that within administrative systems there is no organ such as the brain that assures balance. It is the judgment of the leader that assures the organization is properly integrated and synchronized.

In *Administrative Vitality*, Dimock's (1959) premodern approach to administrative theory was elevated to high art. In this book he used premodern organic philosophy to construct a theory of organization. Challenging Weber's pessimistic prognosis for modern organization, Dimock argued that organizations are not inherently predisposed to either bureaucratic rigidity or to decay (Dimock 1959, 87). He also stopped short of endorsing the classical argument that human institutions are subject to the same rhythms found in nature. Rather, using Toynbee, he observed that "the gifted individual is able to harmonize all the diverse elements of his environment into an effective whole" (Dimock 1959, 49). The gifted individual Dimock was referring to was the administrator, and the "whole," the organization. Rather than place faith in organizational structure or design, as were many of his contemporaries, Dimock relied on the administrator. He understood that organizations decline when they become introverted, rule ridden, and otherwise blind to the needs of their environment. In contrast, organizations remain vital when their leaders use authority to resist these enervating tendencies or when employees voluntarily respond to environmental challenges (Dimock 1959, 93).

With the premodern approach, Dimock swam against the current of modern organizational theory — a current depicting the organization as inherently powerful, as a superior institutional form by which to accomplish the work of the modern era. His later works revisited, amplified, but never departed from this theme. For example, 18 months before his death, he published “The Restorative Qualities of Citizenship” in *Public Administration Review* (Dimock 1990). This article argued that the foundations of governmental renewal lay in restoring the virtues and vitality of individual citizens. Governmental institutions cannot compensate for irresponsible, weak individuals. His last major manuscript, currently unpublished, was a book devoted to administrative philosophy. It argued that organizations must conform to nature, that they wither if they do not take account of the natural qualities and inclinations of their employees or the principles of nature such as balance and integration.

At the time that he crafted this approach to administrative organizations, Dimock’s ideas were not in vogue, but rather at odds with the dominant modern approaches then in fashion: e.g., systems theory, cybernetic theory, structural approaches, and the managerial school founded by Barnard and Mayo. Locating Dimock within this array of 20th-century administrative and organizational theory is a challenging task, largely because Dimock himself staked out his novel positions with relative indifference to other theories. He wrote for practical businessmen and the educated public with minimal concern for the academic enterprise of staking out the relationship between his theory versus others. This difficulty notwithstanding, his theory can be understood by comparing it with other recent premodern theories that have developed. Also, his theory stands in sharp contrast to the managerial theory of Mayo and the behavior theory of Herbert Simon.

Relationships to Other Theory

Other premodern theories with naturalistic overtones have surfaced since Dimock’s approach paved the way during the 1950s. For example, during the 1970s, the entrepreneurial approach shifted attention back to the natural qualities of leaders. It became fashionable to attribute the success of any given organization to the creative talents of its founder. In this vein of thought, Eugene Lewis (1984, 9) defined the public entrepreneur as “a person who creates or profoundly elaborates a public organization so as to alter greatly the existing pattern of allocation of scarce public resources.”

Premodern naturalism also entered the spectrum of organizational theory through the power approach to organization. Eschewing structural explanations for the subordinate place of women in organization, Rosabeth

Kanter (1977) argues that women must learn to wield power. Others besides Kanter have acquired an appreciation for the role of nonrational factors in the organization. Jeffrey Pfeffer (1992) finds that leaders share certain natural qualities enabling them to rise to positions of prominence within organizations: e.g., energy and physical stamina, sensitivity to others, charisma, and an ability to tolerate conflict. These are natural endowments that affect individual success having little to do with traditional modern explanations for leadership success such as mastery of leadership technique or rationality.

In retrospect, Dimock's pioneering premodern approach to organizational theory was a novel approach, the first of its kind. His attempt to introduce biology as an explanation for organizational dynamics occurred amidst a skeptical milieu of modern theory, and these rival theories understood organizations in radically differing terms. It is certain, though, that Dimock would not have agreed with either the entrepreneurial or the power approaches. For all of his emphasis on the natural qualities of the leader, he placed an abiding emphasis on ethics and morality as the *sine qua non* of leadership, qualities that entrepreneurial and power theories seldom stress. Dimock defined strength as strength of character as opposed to strength defined strictly in power-oriented terms. One can anticipate that Dimock's response to Pfeffer and Kanter would be that leaders who attempt to lead without ethical and moral consideration for others alienate rather than stimulate trust and cooperation within the organization. Dimock (1959) sought to avoid any religious or transcendental argument for ethical leadership. Rather, he concentrated on the salutary impact that ethics had throughout the organization.

The rival organizational theories most prominent on Dimock's horizon were those advanced by the managerialists. The major theorists in this tradition were Lawrence J. Henderson, Elton May, Fritz Roethlisberger, George C. Homans, T. N. Whitehead, and Chester Barnard. Collectively, they believed that modern organization itself was a superior institutional form that should be used to refit industrial society for the challenges of the 20th century. Unlike Max Weber, they adopted a positive approach toward organization, believing that it was a resource, not something that was destined to detract from the quality of life available to the modern individual. Though Herbert Simon was not an integral part of this school, Dimock considered Simon and the managerialists to share a common fault. Each encouraged dependence upon the organization, treating the organization as an aid or as a crutch to rationality and creativity. This violated Dimock's own approach, one that viewed individual character and creativity as prior to organization, not created and enhanced by it. His criticisms of Simon were quite direct. In *Administrative Vitality*, he argued that Simon assumed erroneously that organizations could enhance indi-

vidual rationality and aid their power to reach rational decisions. Such a strategy was flawed because, from Dimock's perspective, organizations ought to encourage individuals to think in creative ways. They should not depend upon accepted organizational canons of rationality (Dimock 1959).

It was Simon's as well as managerialism's view of the individual that differed most sharply from Dimock's own assessment. Both believed individuals and the concept of free-standing individual rationality to be an outworn, 19th-century approach to modernity. For individual rationality, both Simon and the managerialists sought to move the locus of rationality from individual to organization. Mayo, for example, repeatedly argued that individuals, left to their own devices, were ill-prepared to cooperate effectively with others. For Mayo and the managerialists, individuals not only had to be taught to cooperate, but they required an organization that would perpetually socialize and otherwise constrain them to cooperate. Believing that the work in the 20th century was destined to be performed by collectives of specialists rather than by discrete, talented, and skilled individuals, Mayo and others turned to organizations as the ongoing instrument for rational effective cooperation.

This vision of collective rationality and collective work ran counter to Dimock's own assessment of the 20th century. For him, the 20th century, like all centuries before it, was a period in which a few gifted individuals integrated other individuals into effective organizations. However, this integration was based on cognitive volition, trust, and ethical relationship. Dimock viewed Simon and the managerialists as resorting to behavioral trickery because they harbored far too dismal an assessment of the cognitive and moral faculties of the average man. Hence, administration becomes an enterprise too heavily laden with an emphasis on noncognitive behavioral control. Dimock encouraged leaders to manage by intellectual and ethical methods that appealed to mankind's more noble, higher abilities and characteristics.

In spite of his many strident disagreements with fellow colleagues, Dimock remained active in the professions and close friends with many of the leading intellectual figures of his era. For example, he routinely corresponded with and visited Luther Gulick, who developed the more functional POSDCORB approach to administration. He actively corresponded with friends and colleagues in government service throughout the world. Dimock's death triggered a torrent of tributes and eulogies testifying to his personal as well as intellectual impact.

The definitive assessment of his contributions and legacy has yet to be written for several reasons. First, the corpus of his intellectual contribution is vast: 47 books, hundreds of professional articles, and an extensive but important array of nonprofessional publications such as his popular animal stories. All of these must be synthesized and will have a

bearing on any authoritative assessment. Second, his unpublished manuscripts await final editing, publication, and assimilation into the professional milieu. Hence, any assessment of Dimock's legacy must be a qualified assessment.

Impact and Legacy

Dimock's most significant impact on the professions occurred from 1930 to 1950. From 1950 onward, his primary impact was on organization theory and philosophy. The behavioral revolution passed him by, both in public administration and in political science. During the 20-year period between 1930 and 1950 when he was at his professional zenith, he helped frame the intellectual issues that affected the institutions and public policies of the New Deal and World War II era. Once the study of organizational behavior effectively displaced the classical approach to organizations that he had learned at Johns Hopkins, he developed a new audience appealing primarily to businessmen as opposed to professionals.

In the long run, the new intellectual foundation that he laid for organizations as an outsider from 1950 onward may outweigh his early professional influence as an insider. His writing during the 1950s challenged professional orthodoxy, and it remains to be seen whether this challenge will grow into a major paradigm affecting the study of organizations. He argued that the enduring basis of the modern organization is the individual rather than the inherent rationality imbedded in the structure and processes of the organization.

Dimock's organizational individual was at odds with the vision of the employee that emerged in Herbert Simon's neoclassical approach or from the writings of managerialists such as Mayo or Barnard. The neoclassical and managerial approaches depicted the average employee as prone to habit and inclined to take orders so long as these orders did not violate deeply held convictions or moral norms. These approaches also painted the average employee as one in need of guidance and assistance from the organization. Hence, the rational organization aided the individual in adjusting to the technical, complex world of the 20th century.

In contrast, Dimock reversed the image, arguing that the organization depended more on the individual than the individual on the organization. Left to their own devices, Dimock argued, organizations would become ossified, rule ridden, and bureaucratic. Organizations depend on the vitality of individuals.

The debate that Dimock opened, though, is more significant than simply to cavil about individual versus organization. His writings challenged the pervasive assumption that organizations, *sui generis*, were

destined to displace individuals as the dominant actors of modern society. The Progressive movement planted the seeds of this faith in organization: that somehow administrative organizations, once attached to government, would eliminate patronage and usher in an era of good government. The classical, managerial, and neoclassical approaches to organization encouraged this faith. Dimock was among the first administrative theorists to challenge the foundations of this dominant point of view.

The record will undoubtedly show that Dimock lodged this challenge without resorting to radicalism or skepticism. Finding no audience within the profession, he used his considerable talents to carve out a new career in business consulting. However, throughout his career, he remained loyal to the ideal of a progressive political economy, one governed by well-administered, vital organizations. To this extent he was a modernist. Yet, he recognized that for modernity to persist and flourish, it could not succumb to faith in exotic organizational technologies. Rather, the strength of any organization lay in its leadership and in the character and creativity of individuals who worked within the organization.

One of the pillars of Dimock's legacy is that he sketched out not only an alternative basis for the organization, but an alternative route by which modernity could advance — one that relied extensively on premodern philosophy. The impact of his scholarship will inevitably depend on how it is perceived by scholars who are themselves disenchanted with conventional modern organizational theory. One alternative has been to embrace postmodern philosophy and reject modern organization altogether. Dimock has little to say to those who accept this alternative. He chose premodern, not postmodern thought. Yet, Dimock's premodern organizational theory is, in many respects, more satisfying than the genre of premodern organizational theory, which resurged in the 1970s. This 1970s theory attempts to deflate conventional modern theory by arguing that no modern organization management technique is immune from old-fashioned power principles. Hence, 1970s premodern theory argues that power is the common denominator of all organizations throughout time. Dimock's premodern theory rejects power as the basis for organization. Nor is Dimock skeptical of the positive role that organizations can play in advancing modernity and improving the standard of living for the masses. Instead, Dimock argues that organizations must be founded on individuality and ethics, not on techniques of influencing and molding organizational behavior. This was the essence of Dimock's scholarship — one that sought to correct the professional excesses of his time.

Dimock's peers, professional colleagues, and friends understood that he was writing from an unconventional perspective. This unconventional reputation was well deserved. Whereas the dominant professional ethos of Dimock's milieu was modern, his approach was not modern. At some

junctures, his observations about organizations were antimodern. These observations lead to the broader question: how can Dimock's scholarship be categorized? The previous narrative has used the term "premodern" to describe his philosophical approach to organizations. Yet, this term can include a wide variety of medieval, antimodern, ancient, and classical perspectives. The following section will consider Dimock's premodern orientation more closely and will argue that Dimock's work ultimately rested upon classical foundations, themes, and convictions.

Classical Foundations

The classical worldview is one seldom linked to organization theory. Systematic, scientific study of organizations is largely a modern phenomenon. Though, from a Weberian perspective, vestiges of organizations in the form of bureaucracy can be traced back into ancient societies, the ubiquity and intensity of theory devoted to organization, per se, is coterminous with the developing of modern philosophy and the exigencies associated with modern society. Organization theory, driven by modern philosophy, becomes scientific, technical, empirical, and experimental, and, above all, rational. In contrast, the classical orientation evokes images of gods and goddesses, marble temples, and a philosophical approach to life. The Greeks, though they understood some scientific concepts, did not apply them to organizations. Moreover, the modern concept of efficient, rational organization was not a part of classical thought.

Prior to Dimock, conventional wisdom dictated that classical thought was an unsuitable platform for modern organization theory, and there were sound reasons for this conclusion. The distance between original classical thought and organization theory can be illustrated by considering briefly the nature of classical thinking. The earliest manifestations of the classical worldview can be found in the epic poetry of a blind poet named Homer, who wrote in the eighth century B.C.E. (Dihle 1994, 10). The resulting genre of Homeric epic poetry depicted ordinary, straightforward people in the grip of cosmic forces and challenges. The mindset commonly associated with the philosophy of the classical period was originated in the fifth century B.C.E. under the influence of Plato. Platonic philosophy cast the individual and conventional society as the reflection of transcendental forms. Hence, the structure of society and even individual behavior itself was driven by factors that were beyond the cognitive capabilities of even the best and brightest individuals. Plato did hold out the hope that elite philosopher kings could attain some fragmentary knowledge by studying how these forms shaped and molded human behavior and experience.

Even the challenge to Platonic thought from Aristotle in the fourth century B.C.E. did not change the dominant parameters of classical thought. Though Aristotle challenged the existence of transcendental forms, he nevertheless accepted the individual as a product of nature that grew and developed according to predetermined natural processes. Aristotle also explained politics in the same way. The politics of a given society was shaped, influenced, and determined by the quality of the people in the society. This explains Aristotle's explanation for democracy. He argued that common people (the *demos*) prefer democracy because such a governmental form suits their inherent natures.

Dimock was the first prominent modern organizational theorist to consciously renounce modernist presuppositions but to attempt a linkage between classical philosophy and organization theory. His efforts resulted in a corpus of organizational theory with classical, not modern, philosophical foundations (Stever 1994). There are two pervasive indicators within the corpus of this theory that suggest the presence of classical foundations: (1) his theory of organizational leaders, and (2) his rejection of modern ideas of progress and affinity for classical growth/decay explanations for organization development.

Written in 1945, *The Executive in Action* was the first indicator that Dimock was moving away from the modern ideal of a professionally trained, technically adroit manager. Chapter one of this work depicts the manager in Aristotelian terms, as an individual who must be balanced. In Dimock's (1945, 11) words:

The successful executive, therefore, is he who commands the best balance of physique, mentality, personality, technical equipment, philosophical insight, knowledge of human behavior, social adaptability, judgment, ability to understand and get along with people, and a sense of social purpose and direction.

He was careful to soften this classical rhetoric with the qualification that managers were not natural elites because they were born with natural leadership qualities.

However, 13 years later in his *Philosophy of Administration*, Dimock moved closer to the classical theory — arguing that those who influenced society most were gifted individuals with natural gifts. Consider the following passage:

Administration is outstanding individuals. Individuals who in their personalities and character exhibit an integration of universal values, such as wisdom and reverence, honesty and integrity, devotion to human interests, as well as those traditions

which are favored in the cultural stream of particular civilization, such as the American where dynamism and decisiveness, logic and objectivity are given special attention (Dimock 1958, 5).

In this work he also refers to administrators as constituting a "class" who, acting through institutions, shape the society of which they are a part (Dimock 1958, 2). These statements about leadership are strikingly reminiscent of Plato's conviction that the gifted rule. Moreover, it echoes a pervasive classical theme: that an individual's character is naturally given and cannot be significantly altered through training or through the acquisition of skills techniques.

A second indicator of Dimock's classical-world view is his naturalistic analysis of organizational behavior and development. Greek philosophy gave the principles of growth and decay center stage. *Physis* (growth) was a central analytical principle present in Aristotle's *Politics*. *Administrative Vitality*, published in 1959, was the first credible book on organization theory to build a theory of organization around classical growth/decay principles. In the opening chapters of the book, Dimock makes it clear that growth and decay are fundamental, universal principles. Predictably, organizations are subject to these principles. The task of the managers is to understand how to maintain the vitality of organizations and avoid debilitating decay in which the organization acquires rigid bureaucraticlike traits that results in its ossification. *Administrative Vitality* was a series of instructions to managers on how classical principles of growth and vitality can be enhanced by wise leadership.

In the final analysis, the organization theory of Marshall Dimock should be understood as a pioneering effort to recast the foundations of conventional modern thinking about organizations. Like all pioneering works, his work was often misunderstood and occasionally opposed because it challenged the prevailing professional wisdom. Moreover, though he forged a linkage between classical philosophy and organization theory, he did not produce a systematic, definitive explanation of the full relationship between these two modes of thought. That task must inevitably be left to future theorists capable of applying classical wisdom to modern concepts.

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Chapter 22

Phenomenology and Public Administration

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Introduction

For more than half a century, critics of logical positivism have pointed out the inherent limitations of empirical research and offered alternative philosophies and methods for examining phenomena that scientists cannot observe and measure. One group of critics, the phenomenologists, has argued that the research methods of the physical sciences are ill-suited to the study of human behavior and society. They insist that to

understand human behavior, one must recognize that how one perceives the world affects how one acts and that perceptions differ because reality is a social construct. People are not simply responding to objective conditions, in other words. Phenomenological methods of research and approaches to administration had great appeal during the 1960s and 1970s, and the philosophy still enjoys some currency today in public administration and other social-science disciplines. A large part of the appeal is that phenomenology offers a methodology for dealing with societal problems that have confounded analysts and policy makers by relying on the understanding, the *verstehen*, of those most knowledgeable about the problems and their causes. The philosophy also offers a methodology for dealing with the public by reaffirming that public officials are part of that public and, thus, have a responsibility to deal with them as fellow citizens rather than as customers or clients. As the title of a recent public-administration text expressed it, “The Government Is Us” (King and Stivers 1998).

Phenomenology is derived from the Greek words *phainomenon* (appearance) and *logos* (reason or word) and can be loosely translated as “reasoned inquiry” (Stewart and Mickunas 1974). A simplistic definition of phenomenology would be a philosophical perspective arrived at by the elimination of one’s assumptions and biases concerning everything except perceived reality. Scholars trace the philosophical roots of phenomenology, as an analytical method and as a framework for describing and explaining social relationships and psychological orientations, to the works of Edmund Husserl (1859–1938), often called the “father of pure phenomenology.” Husserl (1962) felt that Rene Descartes (1596–1650) made a critical error when he distinguished between the activity of the conscious mind (*reas cognitans*) and the objects of conscious thought (*reas extensa*). Subsequent thinkers assumed the activity and the objects to be separable, and the distinction enabled philosophers and scientists to treat consciousness as an empirical phenomenon amenable to investigation by the quantitative methods of natural science. However, Husserl (1962) argued that the activity of consciousness and the objects of conscious thought are inseparable aspects of human experience. His argument for a transcendental phenomenology was predicated on the importance of subjective interpretations of reality. It also provided a methodology for determining the true essence of reality through an understanding of the perceptual filters that influence the processes by which individuals and groups take in, store, and interpret information on social and physical phenomena. As stated by Ralph Hummel, the best-known proponent of phenomenological methods in American public administration, Husserl and his disciples argued that the “ways of knowing define reality” (Hummel 1994, 15–6). Consciousness is the beginning place, according to Husserl

(1962), although others have argued that a more abstract state of being should be the beginning place.

Phenomenologists reject the propensity to treat the subjective as an objective reality because consciousness is not itself an object, and some conscious phenomena are not measurable and thus amenable to empirical science (Stewart and Mickunas 1974). They attempt to account for those subjective qualities that empiricists assume to be unreal or treat as objective, observable phenomena. They seek to divest themselves of their assumptions concerning what is real and what is not and to begin with the content of the human consciousness as the focus of their investigations. In essence, they seek to shift from questions of reality to questions of the meaning of phenomena. Phenomenology has numerous permutations and definitions, but Husserl's writings are generally considered the starting point for a discussion of the philosophy. Subsequent writers, including Alfred Schutz (1899–1959) and Martin Heidegger (1889–1976), expanded upon Husserl's early ideas, but phenomenologists as often call them heretics as heroes of the movement. Moreover, Husserl's own view of phenomenology changed over time and according to the nature of his inquiries.

Despite the discord among phenomenologists, the philosophical approach has considerable appeal. Philosophers and scientists have applied phenomenology to every field from ethics to music to social behavior. Strands of phenomenology underlie the existentialist works of Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus and are present in the approach to psychology of Viktor Frankl (e.g., Spiegelberg 1969). Phenomenology gained considerable popularity as a philosophical alternative to logical positivism and as a scientific approach during the post-World War II period, largely because of the growing number of apparent policy failures. It continued to be somewhat popular among American scholars during the 1960s and 1970s, and still has its proponents in the academic and philosophical communities. This chapter examines the philosophy from its roots in the phenomenological movement; provides an overview of its philosophical underpinnings, focusing on its challenge to logical positivism and its defense against the empiricists' critique; synthesizes the application of phenomenological methods in the social sciences; and reviews the influence of phenomenology on public-administration theory and practice.

The Phenomenological Movement

Our dominant scientific method has long relied on sensory experience to define and study the social world, i.e., logical positivism or empiricism. The focus is on observable phenomena. Researchers in the social sciences adopted the tools of the natural sciences, often with little regard for

problems of application when dealing with human behavior, and often with too much confidence in the empirical method. For positivists, if phenomena could not be observed and measured, they were often discounted and seldom studied seriously. Other analytical approaches were often criticized as being unscientific. To be sure, alternatives to positivist methodologies have been elusive. But, when Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) opened the door with the notion of subjective reality, i.e., that a subjective ordering of data determines the interpretation of empirical reality (Harmon and Mayer 1986), the debate was joined. A product of that philosophical debate was phenomenology.

Herbert Spiegelberg (1994) has referred to phenomenology as having a “dynamic momentum.” In fact, the origins of the term itself are ambiguous enough to complicate the history and tenets of the philosophy. Despite the meanings given the term by a number of other philosophers, for the last half century or more it has come to be associated with the phenomenological movement and Edmund Husserl. Nonetheless, it should also be noted that there are several major streams in the philosophical debate and some rather fundamental differences among them. As Spiegelberg warns, while Husserl may be identified as a central figure in the phenomenological movement, his own interpretation changed over time, and his students tended to be “flung off at a tangent” (Spiegelberg 1994, 2) following currents initiated by Husserl’s own work. The resultant lack of a clear line of succession from Husserl to one or more of his students or to another proponent of the philosophy also complicates the history. Indeed, while early philosophical threads associated with phenomenology can be traced to his teacher, Franz Brentano (1838–1917), and Carl Stumpf (1848–1936), Husserl is still considered the major force behind the movement.

Initially, Germany was the center of the phenomenological debate, particularly among widening circles of scholars in Göttingen and Munich (Spiegelberg 1994). The coeditors of the *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und Phänomenologische Forschung*, which was published from 1913 to 1930, provided some focus for the discussions, but the political climate under the Nazi regime forced many students and scholars to move to institutions outside of Germany. French existentialist writers, such as Jean-Paul Sartre and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, picked up some of the concepts as the debate became more widespread. The International Phenomenological Society, founded in the United States in 1939, offered some focus for the philosophical debate, but provided little coherence for the philosophy itself. Alfred Schutz brought the discussion of phenomenology to the United States through his teaching and the publication of some of his early works in English, particularly *Phenomenology of the Social World*, published in Germany in 1932 and not published in the United States in English until

1967. While Schutz became a central figure in the American phenomenological movement, many still look to Martin Heidegger, who was chosen by Husserl as successor to his faculty chair at the University of Freiburg, as his "legitimate heir." Serious disagreements between the two men, as well as conflict related to the exclusion of Jewish faculty from the university during the Nazi period when Heidegger, a member of the Nazi party, served as rector, suggest that Heidegger's work diverged significantly from that of Husserl. And, in fact, Heidegger worked on topics other than phenomenology for a time. But subsequent writings, particularly in the 1960s, indicate that Heidegger experienced a renewed interest in phenomenology as a method of scientific inquiry and embraced many of Husserl's principles in his own interpretation of phenomenology. Whether his interest was genuine or opportunistic is uncertain, however (Spiegelberg 1994). Regardless of Heidegger's intentions, his later work still provides a methodological foundation for social-science researchers (e.g., Hummel 1994).

In some measure, the development of the phenomenological movement may have been related to the political and intellectual ferment of the early 20th century, fueled by war and economic depression. The major impetus may have been the growing concern that the science rooted in logical positivism was not addressing the practical needs of society and that philosophical tools were not being brought to bear on the issues of the day. It was hoped that phenomenology would help fill in the gaps in scientific inquiry, rather than supplant positivist scientific methods altogether, and reaffirm the importance of philosophical approaches to inquiry in social science. Phenomenology appealed to the sensibilities of many social scientists in the 1960s and 1970s as the limitations of behavioralism became more and more apparent. The proponents of logical positivism and, by extension, behavioralism promised a value-free, objective social science (Harmon and Mayer 1986). Postbehavioralists, including the proponents of phenomenology in its several forms, pointed out the problems of individual and social biases that influence interpretation of social phenomena and decisions concerning which phenomena scientists examine and in what context.

Certainly, during the turbulent 1960s, there was also a political backlash against science's presumed objectivity and its lack of socially sensitive values. Denunciations of science were common in the political literature of the time, particularly as science was used to provide support for the policies of the elites rather than answers for the problems of the poor and disadvantaged. Indeed, the promise of a new scientific method that recognizes the need to address social problems directly and at an individual level made phenomenology, as well as existentialism, all the more attractive to social scientists. Apart from the political baggage of logical

positivism, the science of the day was viewed as a sterile god, based upon analogies far removed from the reality of society and addressing questions of little direct importance to modern society (e.g., Hummel 1994, 211). Clearly, the milieu enhanced the allure of phenomenological approaches to social-science research. The writings of Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus to those of C. Wright Mills and Herbert Marcuse encouraged officials, citizens, and scholars to break the bonds of their cultural and political value systems and to examine the realities of others in society. It was a time for questioning the rationality, including the science, of the state.

The Phenomenological Perspective

Despite rather fundamental differences among some of the streams of philosophical discussion, philosophers generally agree upon certain principles that define phenomenological methods and reasoning. According to phenomenologists, there may or may not be an objective reality, but there is an *essence* that may be widely accepted as representing reality. Each individual defines and acts within an operational reality, a *Lebenswelt* or lived-world, which may differ according to his or her perceptions (Stewart and Mickunas 1974). Clearly, we human beings largely define the world by our senses with all their inherent limitations. Some of us have broader ranges in our perceptions of sound or clearer vision than others, but all of us hear and see approximately the same things.

This is true of our perceptions of social phenomena, as well. In a sense, we each have our own “realities” and, thus, have our own imperatives for action. However, we generally hold common perceptions of social and physical phenomena that permit us to interact reasonably coherently, particularly if we understand the perspectives of those with whom we are interacting. In phenomenological terms, our consciousness of the world is the logic by which we define reality. Ideology, religion, experience, milieu, and other social and psychological factors, as well as the tools, such as language and ethics, with which we observe and comprehend what goes on around us, affect our perceptions of reality. At what level those perceptions are biased is a matter of debate among phenomenologists, but most would agree that the focus should be on rather fundamental values, i.e., one’s *Weltanschauung*. Phenomenologists argue that an individual can divest himself or herself of assumptions and biases by assuming a *natural attitude*. One’s understanding is, according to Husserl, common-sensical and does not need empirical verification or logical inference. According to phenomenologists, this natural attitude should be the beginning place of philosophy, just as it was with the

classical Greek philosophers. Phenomenologists seek to return to the state in which one has no biases or assumptions about one's social world or lived-world, thereby assuming the philosophical attitude in which all things (except reality) are open to question and investigation. The process of divesting oneself of beliefs, biases, etc., Husserl variously called "phenomenological reduction," "phenomenological epoche," and "bracketing" (Stewart and Mickunas, 1974).

The conceptualization of the consciousness is the foundation of the phenomenological approach. The world and consciousness are interdependent, neither having meaning without the other. The link between the conscious mind and the object of that consciousness is *intentionality*, meaning that conscious activity is consciousness of a thing (an object). A phenomenon is any "thing" of which one is conscious (and any phenomenon is a legitimate concern for philosophy or science). Experience of a phenomenon, then, is more than simple sensory perception; it is concerned with any thing, any phenomenon, of which one is conscious, be it physical object or idea. Seeing, for Husserl (1962), did not mean seeing only with the eyes. It meant perceiving with the mind, as well. This nonempirical seeing Husserl called *intuition* (Stewart and Mickunas 1974). Taking a slightly different tack, it can be said that phenomenologists believe that all phenomena are intimately knowable. Reality is not restricted to those things that can be empirically verified or logically inferred; rather, reality is based on a common-sense knowing or *verstehen* of the social world. Reality should not be a focus of scientific or philosophical inquiry; reality is a given of the natural attitude (Schutz 1963a; Stewart and Mickunas 1974).

Using Max Weber's ideal types and concepts of action as reference points, Alfred Schutz formulated the framework of an existential phenomenology. Experience, according to Schutz, creates a complex social world. We base our perceptions upon how we view the world and on our participation in social relationships. Those with whom we interact or with whom we can interact directly represent a world of consociates. Within this grouping, we may participate in *Thou*, *We*, or *They* relationships in terms of whether we view ourselves as participants in projects (directed action) and whether we view others as subjects or objects of action. In *We* relationships, there is great potential to understand truly the motives and interests of others. According to Schutz, there is also a distinction between what is "here" for the individual and what is "there." That is, individuals have an internal understanding of their world and the world that is outside (Natanson 1970). Perspectives on phenomena may change in space and time, and we may also share perspectives. Perceptual meaning is all-important. For example, we can view a hammer as an object and as a means of hammering a nail. When we see a hammer, we

generally perceive it in both senses. The content and context of phenomena are parts of our consciousness.

In contrast, as relationships become more distant, farther from our own understanding, we tend to create abstract explanations. We interpret, extrapolate, and develop ideal types to explain the motives and actions of others and, thus, lose fundamental understanding of perceptions and perspectives (Kirkhart 1971). In effect, the *They* perspective or orientation separates the observer from the actors being studied, and the observer must interpret actions without necessarily having the advantage of understanding the reality that is driving them. The observer's own reality may also bias the observer. The result may be a process of typifying the world (Natanson 1973) because of the tendency to relate observed phenomena with facts or objects already known through prior experience and interpretations shared within a society or smaller social grouping. There are conventions that reflect selectivity in attention, and these pose a limitation or obstacle for the scientist.

The Phenomenological Approach

Phenomenological reasoning is not diametrically opposed to that of logical positivism. Indeed, phenomenologists, for the most part, do not attack empiricism as being invalid as a scientific method; rather, they insist only that empiricism presents a very narrow view of the social world in several ways.

The first argument is that logical positivists take social reality for granted and, at the same time, dismiss as unreal and unobservable the meaning of human activity (the social reality of the actor). Logical positivists also attempt to deny their subjectivity, hiding behind objective measuring devices borrowed from natural science. Above all, according to Schutz (1963b), the logical positivists miss the essence or meaning of what they are trying to observe. There is a basic difference between social and natural science, and that difference is man. The natural scientist can bracket or draw boundaries for his own relevant part of the social world (and it is social for the scientist), but the social scientist cannot interpret the behavior of others without knowing what their realities are — what their lived-worlds are like. After all, the observed actors base their behaviors on their own purposes and meanings, not on those of the observing scientist. In any case, the imposition of natural-science logic and method does not leave room for interpretation of the meaning of conscious activity (Schutz 1963b).

In addition to being unsuited to the interpretation of meaning in phenomena, logical positivism, according to phenomenologists, attempts

empirically to verify largely subjective phenomena. Beliefs, orientations, motivations, etc. are not observable phenomena; nonetheless, they are phenomena. Empiricists often attempt to make the unobservable observable. One result is that they ascribe their own beliefs, orientations, and motivations to the observed actors. The result is the same whether the observers are focusing on the actors or the phenomena. Phenomenology requires that the focus be on both, as inseparable aspects of the phenomena — the conscious mind and the world. In summary, phenomenologists believe that the logical-positivist approach is too narrow, but perhaps valid for genuinely observable phenomena. They assert that observers must recognize each phenomenon for what it is without imposing a methodology that is inappropriate to the subject matter. Scientists must approach subjective subjects with subjective methodologies, i.e., phenomenology (Stewart and Mickunas 1974).

The critics of phenomenology, on the other hand, base their greatest attacks on the issue of subjectivity. Objectivity has become almost synonymous with empirical science, and subjectivity has become associated with bias and nonscientific methods. What then of the phenomenologists' subjectivity? Phenomenologists hold that all social scientists "abstract" from the world according to the problem being studied. The abstractions made by empirical scientists are themselves subjective. They remove the generalizations, the formalizations, the idealizations, and all the other analytical and theoretical constructs from the reality of the phenomena observed. According to Schutz, "Strictly speaking, there are no such things as facts, pure and simple ... [t]hey are ... always interpreted facts" (Schutz 1963a, 304).

What of the subjective meaning of behavior that the phenomenologists wish to ascertain in their research? They contend that one can know to a certain extent the motivations of another, if one knows the circumstances or lived-world of the other. The process of self-typification allows phenomenological researchers to approximate a perception of an actor's social world to supplement their common-sense knowledge of that same world. In short, phenomenologists believe that a bond of humanness, or intersubjective knowledge, provides a basis for understanding the lived-world of another (Schutz 1967, 97–8). In addition, to approximate a perception of an actor's lived-world, phenomenologists can make determinations based on the actor's degree of socialization. The more socialized the actors are, the more predictable their behavior will be and the more decipherable their motivations should become. The actor's common-sense knowledge, developed through the process of socialization, is much more readily accessible through observation by the researcher due to his or her inherent empathy (the *Thou* orientation). The test of the researcher's findings from objective validity should be the logical consistency of the findings with the actor's common-sense knowledge (Schutz 1963b).

The Phenomenological Approach to Social Science Research

The purpose of phenomenological social-science research is to “make explicit what is implicit in the social action of members of a given society” (Goldstein 1963, 295). Stewart and Mickanus offered a brief characterization of the phenomenological view of society stating that “phenomenology views society as comprising free persons making choices within the context of the value system of the society” (Stewart and Mickanus 1974, 128–9). To understand the structures and institutions of society, one has to understand the values that underlie their creation. The key to phenomenological research in the social sciences is value structures. Many phenomenologists view values not as absolute, but as identifiable “object-like” phenomena. Basic values may change, but they are “nearly universally experienced,” and, as transcendent phenomena, they can be isolated or bracketed through intuitive inquiry (Friedrich 1973, 182–3).

The important methodological question is how researchers are to understand the values of other human beings and their societies. Phenomenological, qualitative research methodology not only addresses the technical aspects of research design, data gathering, and analysis of findings, but also addresses problems — such as assuming the natural attitude, interpreting behavior objectively, controlling the impact of the observer on the observed, and not empathizing so much with the subjects of the inquiry that the researcher jeopardizes objectivity. More specifically, phenomenologists seek the natural attitude through which they can define the everyday world free of the biases of history, notions of causality, and intersubjectivity. Only by stripping away the experiences that create a false picture of the world can the social scientist understand phenomena. At what place in human consciousness the essence of reality is to be found is a matter of conjecture and debate. For Husserl and the transcendental phenomenologists, intuition is the source of the natural attitude. For the existentialist phenomenologists, peeling away the biases created by experience is the means of achieving the natural attitude.

To oversimplify, phenomenologists argue that there is not simply an idiosyncratic definition of reality. Rather, human experience colors how one perceives the world, and one has to peel away the biases created by one’s psychological, social, and political predispositions to uncover the “truth.” Natanson (1973, 8) refers to this as a process of “self-scrutiny,” to “practice the natural attitude.” Finding the common ground, the shared reality, will then permit researchers to examine phenomena objectively. The notion of subjective interpretations of reality being essential to an understanding of social and physical phenomena seems intuitively logical. The adage of “walking a mile in another’s shoes” in order to understand

that person's motivations and values is certainly consonant with this idea. Similarly, the adage of "where one stands depends upon where one sits" on issues captures the notion of values based upon perspective. In some measure, phenomenology recognizes differences in perspective. However, more precisely, phenomenological analysis focuses not only on the points of view of actors, but also on developing a thorough understanding of the world in which they live.

The real appeal of phenomenology is the promise of a philosophical tool for achieving an unbiased view of social phenomena. Philosophers and writers such as Heidegger, Sartre, and Merleau-Ponty certainly subscribed to that notion. Phenomenology rests on a line of reasoning that does not entirely deny objective reality, but assigns great significance to reality as defined subjectively. Phenomenologists put a premium on understanding the values that one uses consciously or unconsciously to interpret one's surroundings and to guide one's actions. In some measure, research requires selecting a perspective and having some understanding of the importance of experience to the development of a thorough understanding, what Wilhelm Dilthey calls *verstehen* (Harmon and Mayer 1986, 293), of social and physical phenomena. An internalized understanding on the part of the researcher facilitates reconstruction of the perspectives of participants in particular events and thus affords a perspective from which the researchers can understand and assess the rationality of the participants' actions. In that way, phenomenological methodologies provide a vehicle for moving from the philosophical level to the practical, from the abstract to the concrete.

Perhaps the best-known applications of phenomenological inquiry in the social sciences have been the anthropological and sociological uses of participant observation as a means of gaining insight into the motivations and values of subject-actors. Biologists have even used the same technique to observe animal behavior by placing researchers within animal herds and other social groupings. Cultural anthropologists have used it to gain the confidence of and insight into primitive societies. The researcher seeks to achieve common-sense knowledge of the observed actors by interacting within their social world, with or without the subject-actors knowing that they are being observed. A major facet of the phenomenological critique of behavioralism is the presumed connection between attitudes and behavior. Phenomenologists do not make the distinction between cognition and action. Both are part of the same process. Other applications of phenomenological techniques have been personal interviewing, usually unstructured interviewing, and the study of personal documents to aid in understanding the lived-world of actors (Bogdan and Taylor 1975, 4-7). An application of phenomenological techniques in the study of history, for example, would involve the researcher immersing

him or herself in historic literature, such as diaries, letters, autobiographies, and other personal accounts of events, in order to understand why individuals and groups behaved as they did during a particular period of time or in response to a particular stimulus.

The criteria for defining the boundaries of the phenomenological movement, or for identifying those using phenomenological methods, are, according to Spiegelberg: (1) the use of “direct intuition ... as the source and final test of all knowledge, to be formulated as faithfully as possible in verbal descriptions ... insight into essential structures as a genuine possibility and a need of philosophical knowledge,” and (2) “conscious adherence ... to the movement ... full awareness of these methodical principles” (Spiegelberg 1994, 5–6). As Carl Friedrich (1973) has expressed it, one should try to describe phenomena in as general terms as possible, “asking ... for the essence of it” (Friedrich 1973, 175–6). The objective is to focus on the essence of the phenomenon, rather than to seek a conceptual clarity that may distort the meaning of the phenomenon under study. Put another way, the phenomenon is more important than the words used to describe it in measurable terms.

The concern with the use of language is central to the phenomenological critique of logical positivism, but more importantly, it is central to the phenomenological view of man’s understanding of the world. The phenomenological literature devotes considerable attention to hermeneutics, the connection between language and knowledge (Mohanty 1989, 21). Clearly, language serves a critical role in conceptualizing and understanding the world. While translation may provide an approximate meaning, the conceptualizations and analogies inherent in language have an impact on how phenomena are experienced and remembered and on how they affect future behavior. In addition to focusing on the impact of language, the procedures for applying phenomenology to inquiry include (Spiegelberg 1994, 659):

- Investigating particular phenomena
- Investigating general essences
- Apprehending essential relationships among essences
- Watching modes of appearing
- Watching the constitution of phenomena in consciousness
- Suspending belief in the existence of the phenomena
- Interpreting the meaning of phenomena

Spiegelberg went on to note that the first three procedures underlie the work of all affiliated with the phenomenological movement and that the remaining four procedures were not as commonly accepted or applied (Natanson 1973, 24). The defining criteria of phenomenologists were to

accept the notion of essences distinct from the empirically observable and to employ intuition in examining those essences. However, the practical problems of how to frame research questions in a manner consistent with the precepts of phenomenology and the nature of the intuitive investigation have generated considerable debate among phenomenologists. Alfred Schutz (1899-1959) suggested focusing on the natural attitude, examining how meaning developed and reconstituting the social and psychological environment that affects how we perceive and value phenomena. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, on the other hand, focused on the differences between what we perceive and the essence of the phenomena (Natanson 1973, 27–30).

In reference to the latter approach, one method of applying phenomenological principles is through imaginative variation. According to Mohanty (1989, 29), the researcher should:

- Start with an actual or imagined instance of the sort under consideration. This arbitrarily chosen example will serve as the model.
- [Develop] an intuitively open multiplicity of variants upon it, which are to be produced in imagination voluntarily and arbitrarily.
- [Expect that,] as one proceeds, a unity, an invariant structure [will show] itself as that but for which the example arbitrarily chosen as example (or the sort of thing under consideration) would not be thinkable as an example of its kind. Transforming actual phenomena into possibilities and reducing the possibilities into an essence, a transcendent reality.

The imagined phenomenon provides an ideal type as the researcher intuitively sorts through possibilities in order to arrive at a reasonable essence, a transcendent reality in Mohanty's terms. Understandably there is some conflict between social scientists employing empirical methods and those using phenomenological methods. The verifiability of research findings is a major issue. Although the phenomenologist may document his or her understanding of social phenomena and may examine the reasoning, there may be little or no empirical evidence to substantiate the conclusions. "[P]henomenology and empirical science operate at qualitatively different levels," according to Natanson (1973, 34). Existential phenomenology very much affected the development of the "growth psychology" movement of the 1960s and 1970s. The notion of using self-revealing behaviors to encourage and clarify interpersonal relationships and thereby to encourage personal growth is an extension of the *We* relationship Schutz described. Sharing one's perceptions permits others to understand the reality that is guiding behavior, and that sharing results in a social or *We* perspective that facilitates the setting of personal goals that

are consonant with the group. In the process, communication is improved, and less effort is expended in behaviors designed to hide feelings. Client-centered therapies were also a logical application of the methodology. Abraham Maslow's self-actualized–self-transcendent state, with individuals responding to more than their own basic needs, identifying with their jobs and comfortable with themselves, was also a product of the phenomenological perspective (Kirkhart 1971, 142–3). Organization theory had run into the Weberian model. While scholars raised questions about how well the Weberian ideal type fit bureaucratic reality in many cases, there had been very little challenge of its basic assumptions or explanation of how to incorporate organizational change into the static model (Kirkhart 1971, 144–5).

At this juncture, public-administration scholars began to explore the utility of phenomenology as a tool of social-science research and as a vehicle for understanding fundamental changes that were taking place in American society in order to guide policy making and government administration.

Phenomenology and Public Administration

In large measure, phenomenology's impact on the study of public administration is the result of its impact on social-science research in general. Public-administration scholars have been as prone to the same frustrations with the dominant positivist scientific method as have other social scientists. In fact, Dwight Waldo (1952; 1980) criticized logical positivism in an article in the *American Political Science Review* as early as 1952, although alternatives to positivist approaches were scarce at that time — at least in the United States. Larry Kirkhart (1971) made the clearest proposition of a phenomenological perspective in public administration in his contribution, "Toward a Theory of Public Administration," to the landmark 1968 Minnowbrook Conference. The participants in that conference struggled to understand the changes that were taking place in American society and the role of public administration in addressing social needs. As Dwight Waldo (1971), sponsor of the conference, stated in his foreword to the edited volume of Minnowbrook papers, the meeting was intended to address the study and practice of public administration in a time of "mounting turbulence and critical problems" (Waldo 1971, xiii). The papers by Kirkhart (1971) and Frank McGee (1971) related public administration to the social-science theories of the day. Then, as now, the field of public administration was amorphous, albeit somewhat constrained by the boundaries of the discipline of political science in which most of its theorists were trained. Logical positivism was the dominant

scientific orientation and dictated a research methodology based on empirical investigation. Scholars generally viewed experimental designs as a goal that social scientists should pursue. Within the behavioral sciences, the clear objective was to minimize subjectivity and thereby to assure or, at minimum, to increase objectivity. Public-administration scholars borrowed concepts and theories from a wide variety of fields, but the social-science research tradition tended to come from political science. As Kirkhart pointed out, a clear definition of “public administration” was elusive at the time of the Minnowbrook conference. Such a definition likely would have helped public-administration researchers clarify their values and would have provided a clearer understanding of the field. Nonetheless, the philosophical and scientific turbulence that was overtaking traditional social-science thinking held promise for public-administration research, and Kirkhart addressed that potential. For the Minnowbrook participants, the challenges to logical positivism were both intriguing and frustrating. Phenomenology was identified as a major movement relatively new to the United States and the United Kingdom that offered a methodology to guide social-science research rather than a philosophy to define its parameters.

The subjectivity of reality and truth has profound implications for public administration. Understanding the impact of public organizations on their employees and clients requires an understanding of the perspectives of those actors, including the values and perspectives of the society as a whole. The observer, whether a researcher or a practitioner seeking to improve administration, must understand the meanings that individuals attach to programs and processes. A favorite topic in the literature of public management is the notion of a “bureaucratic personality” creating perverse incentives contrary to effective decision making and efficient administration yet supportive of organizational or personal interests. The “administrative man” model is certainly a common topic in public-administration education.

The idea that cultural and professional values influence problem definition, the range of decision options that are considered, and the ultimate selection of a course of action also has some currency in the literature. That lawyers tend to view administrative problems in terms of applications of law and that engineers may be biased toward engineering solutions to problems should be rather obvious. However, it is perhaps less obvious that the values of individualism, egalitarianism, and competition limit the search for solutions for social problems in the United States because Americans are somewhat predisposed to certain kinds of solutions, even when they intuitively appear wrong. That observation, of course, is based on the assumption that Americans have common perceptual filters. Gender, ethnic, and other differences may well broaden the perspectives of Americans, although other cultural influences may constrain them.

There are also problems when bureaucrats or technocrats assume the *They* perspective, rather than viewing themselves as part of the society they serve and as having responsibility for addressing the issues that society feels are important. As Ralph Hummel argues, public employees need to redirect their energies from serving their “technical systems” to serving the public (Hummel 1994, 23). Bureaucrats, according to Hummel, develop broad policies that represent imperfect analogies or models of the lived-world in which their clients function and implement narrow procedures that fail to respond to the unique and varied interests and needs of the clients. Bureaucrats try to fit their clients to models designed to serve the needs of the bureaucracy itself (Hummel 1994, 212). Efficiency and other organizational values supplant individual understanding of the physical world, affecting clients and employees alike (Hummel 1994, 19–20). These ideas are certainly not new, although Hummel’s framing them in phenomenological terms may be.

Norton Long (1954) noted over 40 years ago that the objectives of public administration had seemingly drifted from a concern with the public interest to a preoccupation with organizational efficiency and control. Professionalization, bureaucratization, technical proficiency, and isolation from public scrutiny and accountability have discouraged attention to the broader public interest in favor of a highly rationalized system of administration. Long (1996) noted, too, the negative impact on the presidency when the symbolism of the position is ignored as officials pursue more partisan self-interests. Even today, many public administrators and public administrationists do not see the inherent political nature of management reforms and how they may distract organizations from their mission to serve the public. In 1954, Long also pointed out the importance of having a “representative bureaucracy” to help inform policy making by broadening the perspective and clarifying the public interest, but he has more recently concluded that that role seems to have fallen prey to partisanship. Indeed, Frank Sherwood (1996), in responding to Long’s 1954 article and a 1996 follow-up in *Public Administration Review*, argues for a renewed public-administration role in formulating the policy agenda by identifying important issues and helping policy makers and the public make informed choices. Robert B. Reich (1988) suggests much the same role for public administrators in his book *The Power of Public Ideas*. In some measure, Sherwood and Reich may be suggesting that public administrators help elected officials and the public find the natural attitude by structuring the policy-making process so that the public can understand important issues and express their interests.

The impacts of individual and organizational perspectives on problem definition (e.g., Dery 1984) and policy making (e.g., Waugh 1989; 1990) are also widely accepted. Professional training, predispositions toward

certain administrative styles and roles, language, and other aspects of organizational culture can profoundly affect the willingness of individuals and their organizations to trust and cooperate with others involved in multiorganizational and intergovernmental programs and, thus, determine the effectiveness of joint efforts (Waugh 1993). Ethics, by phenomenological reasoning, is also a social construct and, as such, is based upon shared views of right and wrong instead of values external to individuals or social groupings. Individuals and societies create systems of ethics, either consciously or unconsciously, based upon experience or need. While there are some generally accepted norms of behavior, such as not stealing from one's organization and not ignoring the needs of clients, there are certainly many less-agreed-upon values in our typical codes of ethics and standards of performance.

Action theory, too, is associated with the postbehavioralist movement and phenomenology (e.g., Gunnell 1973). Michael M. Harmon (1980, 1981) outlined the application of action theory to public administration and argued for a new paradigm encompassing such aspects as an "active-social" concept of self, intersubjectivity (the meaning of actions of self and others), the *We* relationship, the compatibility of decision rules, the need for personal responsibility in administration, the desirability of a "proactive" administrative style, and the importance of "moral-ethical" administrative practice. To the extent that action theory has influenced current studies of organizational culture and learning, phenomenological methods continue to have a major impact on public administration. The notion of a social construction of reality within organizations is explicit within that literature. "Organizational culture is the shared set of meanings and perceptions of realities that are created and learned by organization members in the course of their social interactions," according to Steven Ott (1989). Robert Golembiewski's (1992) "ideal-type" of a culture characterized by openness, self-knowledge, and trust, as prerequisite to a "regenerative system," is explicitly connected to the phenomenological literature. One can find a clearer connection between the principles and practice of phenomenology in the literature relating to action theory and research. In essence, one may construe action theory as empirically focused, but relying more on "local" values. The goals are empirically testable questions and generalizable answers, but the emphasis is on what works in a specific locale and at a specific time. Individual and group perspectives and values, i.e., "realities," are important variables in the success or failure of an organization or program (Argyris, Putnam, and Smith 1985; Golembiewski 1996). In some measure, individuals define reality, but in group and organizational settings, shared meanings may develop that provide a framework for understanding the meanings of actions and whether they are good or bad or neither (Berger and Luck-

mann 1966). The challenge to practitioners is to recognize and manage the culture (Gortner, Mahler, and Nicholson 1987).

Michael Vasu, Debra Stewart, and G. David Garson (1990, 319–21) elucidate the phenomenological perspective of the impact of technology on organizations and individuals. Citing writers such as Peter Lyman, they describe the view that we are in danger of “technical hegemony.” While the studies cited in response to the phenomenological critique indicate that computers do not appear to have a negative impact on workers, there are indications that the “technical culture” created by computer technology is affecting the power structure within organizations. Certainly philosophical critiques of technological innovation are not uncommon, nor are warnings that technology threatens our culture (e.g., Postman 1992). The phenomenological critique, however, encourages a close examination of technology and its social impact and challenges the attitude that technology and rational decision processes are value-neutral.

In some measure, Ralph Hummel (1990) raises some of the same issues by focusing on the “intentions and beliefs of workers,” including the common perceptions and the conventions of language and symbol. There is also a strong normative component in his analysis, which encourages efforts to empower employees, rather than manipulate or coerce, and to develop “circle” rather than “pyramid” managers. He argues for less hierarchical relationships, more empowerment of workers, “open” bureaucracies, and role flexibility. “The first step on the way to becoming the circle manager of post-modernity is to recognize the ways of understanding where they already exist” (Hummel 1990, 215). Hummel goes on to extol the virtues of synthesizing methods of understanding “because they connect science and reason to practicality” (Hummel 1990, 215).

Conclusions

While practitioners and scholars have not widely embraced phenomenology, it has had a profound influence on public administration practice and research. Phenomenology has significantly influenced the literature and language of the field, in addition to theory, research, and practice. As a practical matter, phenomenological reasoning encourages attention to how people relate to bureaucratic organizations and government programs, as well as to each other. For example, as Hummel and others have pointed out, the tendency to “objectify” people in social-science research and in government administration may have serious repercussions. The apparently low public regard for government agencies and officials may well be a reflection of how insensitive and unresponsive many agencies and officials have been in recent decades. As Hummel suggests, the

assumption of a *We* perspective, in which the public, the clients, become subjects rather than participants in public programs, creates perceptual barriers that reduce the capacities of agencies to understand and address social problems.

Professionalization, too, often creates distance between public employees and their clients and between employees themselves that may alienate support. Even more fundamentally, as David Rosenbloom (1986) has pointed out, bureaucracy is a middle-class institution, and its processes and organizational complexity may confuse and alienate others, particularly lower-income Americans (Rosenbloom 1986, 389–92). Public employees themselves often feel alienated, as well. Administrative reform seems to have taken on a life of its own. In some measure, it is a problem that economics has apparently become the language of administration and policymaking, with the result that economic values are preempting all others. In other words, economic needs are increasingly supplanting other human needs.

Additionally, there are indications that public- and private-sector organizations will suffer in the long term for their lack of attention to non-economic needs. Nonetheless, even the language of administration is designed to promote economic values. For example, thousands of employees have lost their jobs in recent years, and organizations sanitized the language of job termination to downplay the impact on individuals and to emphasize the organizational rationale for the terminations. Organizations changed the terminology from “layoff” to “reduction in force” to “downsizing” and, finally, to “rightsizing.” The latter term suggests that terminations are a positive phenomenon, but from the perspective of the employees who lose their jobs and the coworkers who have to assume their responsibilities, that is certainly untrue.

Phenomenology offers a useful set of tools and perspectives for public-administration researchers and practitioners. Researchers may fail to recognize important issues because they are not sensitive to the realities with which people and communities must contend. Officials may well alienate public support for programs by depersonalizing the administrative processes and by failing to respond to the problems that the public feels are important. Although the consociated model, more particularly public administrators’ *verstehen* of social needs and their identification with the public, may only be a “wish-thought” (McGee 1971, 168), consistency between administrative values and societal values is essential.

The decline of public support for government services strongly suggests a need to reevaluate current preoccupations with cost efficiency and managerial reform, particularly when they are inconsistent with the need to address societal problems. Interestingly, phenomenologists have warned about misuses of Max Weber’s bureaucratic model, indicating that public

administrationists and administrators need to be aware of the abstract nature of ideal types. Weber intended his classic bureaucratic model to help the researcher understand relationships among variables and help practitioners understand bureaucratic processes. The model does not represent reality. As pointed out during the Minnowbrook conference in 1969, it is a problem in the field of public administration that positivists took the Weberian model to be a goal rather than a device for understanding bureaucratic structures better. The tendency to use it as a model of reality simply will not work and is certainly not desirable. Weber was cognizant of the subjectivity of bureaucratic behavior, including individual orientations toward social relations, the group, power and authority, and the role of the state in society (Kirkhart 1971, 148–55). In fact, Weber was a contemporary of many of those involved in the phenomenology movement. While he differed with them on some important issues, their discussion influenced him. Weber did not intend his ideal-type to be a normative model.

The phenomenological perspective supports a consociated model of bureaucracy, in which project teams replace strictly hierarchical structure, decision making is decentralized, leadership is situational, clientele are represented in the organization, and employees are highly professional and mobile (Kirkhart 1971, 158–64). In that regard, phenomenology supports a normative model of administrative organization and behavior. In fact, Hummel (1990) suggests that the traditional “pyramid” or hierarchical manager and the classical Weberian bureaucratic model will become dysfunctional in an age in which information flow and role flexibility are far more important than administrative control. He and others predict changes in administrative structure and process as we find ourselves in a world of shared power with increasing demands for multiorganizational responses to problems, collaborative administrative arrangements, and participative decision making. The movement away from “command and control” structures, with their centralized executive authority, to more collaborative and cooperative arrangements suggests profound alterations in how people relate to each other and to their organizations (Waugh 1993).

Lastly, phenomenology offers a means of reaffirming the importance of philosophy to social science and the importance of understanding “man in the actual context of his immediate experience, his life-world” (Natanson 1973, 42–3). Phenomenology poses interesting questions about the nature of contemporary social and natural science. While there is a certain attraction to the seeming simplicity of reducing social phenomena to numbers and thereby divining society’s future, phenomenology makes one aware of the limitations of science as it is currently practiced. Few would disagree that there are phenomena that defy observation. Most would agree that there are subjective elements in logical-positivist science.

Subjectivity is not necessarily bad. Phenomenology offers a pragmatic approach to scientific inquiry that is sometimes lacking in empiricism. About that pragmatism, Husserl (1962, 787) stated: “it is we who are genuine positivists. In fact we permit no authority to deprive us of the right of recognizing all kinds of intuition as equally valuable sources for the justification of knowledge, not even that of ‘modern natural science’”

Philosophers and scientists view phenomenology as a supplement or complement to empiricism, another tool to help understand social and physical phenomena. It has had and continues to have a significant impact on the social sciences, including public administration. As Carl Bellone and Lloyd Nigro (1980) pointed out, although positivist science has its limits, it does have value in administration and policy making. Scientists and administrators need to be reminded that human values should be the central values. Administration is not simply a process of rational, value-neutral action. It has normative bases and effects.

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Chapter 23

The Existentialist Public Administrator

William L. Waugh, Jr.

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Introduction

Existentialist philosophy was the rage on college campuses and in intellectual circles during the 1960s and 1970s. The writings of the French existentialists, principally Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus, inspired students to take to the streets in pursuit of social justice and an end to the war in Vietnam. The general distrust of government officials and lack of confidence in their abilities or willingness to address the divisive political

issues and growing social conflict created frustration, and existentialist philosophy provided a justification for individual action.

While the passion and idealism of the 1960s may have waned, strong threads of existential philosophy remained very much a part of the social conscience in the United States and other Western nations. Indeed, the appeal to individual responsibility and the call to action has been renewed as demonstrators take to the streets to protest against war in the Middle East, the impact of globalization upon workers, the widening gap between rich and poor, the environmental damage resulting from uncontrolled development and global warming, and other issues. Again elected officials and public administrators are being called upon to bring their expertise to bear in resolving the serious problems of society, and public administrators are being encouraged to exercise their individual responsibility through political action.

As Sartre and his compatriots argued decades ago, all members of society should recognize their duty to address injustice and inhumanity, especially their responsibility to rectify the ills to which they contributed through their own action or inaction. Public administrators were no less responsible and, perhaps, were even more responsible for the lack of progress in addressing the problems and, therefore, had a special responsibility to act. They were encouraged to use their policy expertise and influence to effect social and political change. For public administrators, the challenge required a reevaluation of their responsibilities to their agencies and to those elected to represent the people. The individual responsibility to address society's problems conflicted with their professional responsibilities. Nonetheless, many administrators heeded existentialism's call to action and joined the struggle to resolve society's ills.

The call has been issued again for individuals to accept their responsibilities to act, although relatively few have yet heard it. Most public administrators and other government officials have been distracted by economic and national security problems, but more and more are being frustrated by the unwillingness of elected leaders to address the problems effectively when they know how it might be done. Existentialism's message may provide the catalyst to challenge the status quo. For example, Hugh Hecló, in his John Gaus Lecture at the 2002 annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, observed that "public Administration is as public administration does" (to borrow from Forrest Gump) and noted the existential nature of the observation (Hecló 2002). Hecló argued that, while public administrators today seem preoccupied with performance measures and cost efficiency, they ultimately will be judged in terms of what they do to make the nation and the world better. Hecló went on to describe the role of public administrators as stewards of the nation's future, as well as its past and present. Elected officials reflect the current will of the populace, at least in some measure, and public administrators are

charged with implementing that will. But, public administrators should have a deeper understanding of the nation and act to preserve its past and its future, even when elected officials and the public choose actions that may damage that future. Stewardship is more fundamental than current mechanisms of political and administrative accountability and more important to the long-term health of society.

In some measure, Hecló's (2002) words echoed those of Anders Richter 32 years earlier. In a 1970 article in *Public Administration Review* entitled "The Existential Executive," Richter expressed concern that public administrators were not addressing the issues of the day. The nation was in turmoil over the increasingly apparent failure of American foreign policy in Vietnam, growing frustrations with the War on Poverty, deepening racial conflict, and increasing intergenerational conflict fueled by fundamental social change. Cities were burning and communities were deeply divided. Richter suggested that public administrators had a social responsibility to act and that senior administrators might lead a "revolution from the top" by helping extricate the United States from Vietnam, solve the problems associated with poverty, achieve racial harmony, and so on. His argument was grounded in existentialist philosophy and humanistic psychology. It was an argument that went on in many professional circles from urban planners to medical doctors to social workers in the 1960s and ushered in an era of policy advocacy. Public administrators, according to Richter, have a responsibility to exercise their freedom to act to preserve individual and societal options for the future. Existential philosophy appealed to frustrated administrators and encouraged them to do something about the problems themselves through political activism.

Existentialism's roots can be found in the period between the two world wars, but the philosophy did not begin to have an impact until after World War II. The existentialists challenged the dominant scientific and philosophical paradigms of the postwar period and encouraged those frustrated by the inability of government and business to address the problems of society. They also encouraged individuals and, by extension, communities and nations to address the problems that they helped create before, during, and after the war. The existentialists advocated stripping away ideological, economic, and personal biases to expose the causes of conflict, poverty, and suffering and to rely upon individual responsibility to find remedies. They concluded that individuals bear responsibility for their own actions and that they are not trapped by their past, but can be defined in terms of their potential. The perspectives offered by existentialist writers on the direction and extent of the social and political change engendered considerable excitement. Their books were widely read and discussed on college campuses, and they were invited to speak and to comment on the issues of the day. The group was not large. Jean-Paul Sartre (1905–1980) was the

acknowledged leader and most visible proponent of the existential movement following World War II and, along with Albert Camus (1913–1960), Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908–1961), and Simone de Beauvoir (1908–1986), provided the core of the existentialist literature. Sartre and his colleagues did not invent existentialism, however. Many of the existentialist concepts were developed during the 1920s by German idealists. Sartre introduced the concepts to a wider audience and helped make existentialism a subject of literary commentary and social debate. That philosophical debate fueled political discussions and encouraged political activism among students and scholars in Europe and North America.

In suggesting the applicability of existentialist principles to American public administration, Richter argued that bureaucrats, as they gain more and more knowledge of cause-effect relationships and how that knowledge might be applied, have a social obligation to exercise their *free will* in the public interest. Moreover, according to Richter, they have an ethical responsibility to do so. The primary question for the administrators should be how to ensure *objectivity* so that they are responding to the true *essence* of the phenomena. In other words, the principal question is: how can public administrators ensure they are responding to objective conditions, rather than to erroneous perceptions of reality engendered by cultural and organizational biases? Just as the U.S. Department of Defense fostered an orthodox perspective on the Vietnam War, including the measurement of success in terms of enemy body counts, and the foreign-policy establishment fostered a belief in the fundamental conflict between communism and capitalism framed in terms of the “domino theory,” professional and organizational contexts color perceptions of reality and the range of “acceptable” policy options. Conformity with the accepted value systems and the dominant political perspectives was strictly enforced. Nonconformity or deviance, even when supported by knowledge, was discouraged, and deviants were severely punished. Thus, public administrators, even when they discerned conflict between what they knew to be true and what their agencies averred to be true, were constrained in their freedom to act upon their knowledge and experience (Richter 1970).

Richter went on to argue that administrative approaches are dominated by the technology and values of the new administrative professions. He concluded that: “The enemy of true reality is ultrapracticality” (Richter 1970, 418), meaning that impersonal, scientifically derived, programmed decision making is too far removed from human experience to be objective. Indeed, rather than being value-neutral tools of administration, the techniques of rational analysis and decision making very much determine the ends and means of administrative action and policy making. Rational methods got the United States into Vietnam and kept the American people from understanding and correcting what they were doing. Pressures to

conform, fear of job loss, habit, indifference to society's needs, routine and regulation, and the tools and methods of administration distort our perceptions of reality and keep us from understanding and acting upon its *essence*. Public administrators, according to Richter, should be seeking *authenticity*. In the vernacular of Richter's day, public administrators should be seeing and "telling it like it is" rather than as their organizations say it is. Technical perspectives and professional arrogance distort our understanding social and economic problems. "We must discover proactive administrators who possess the objectivity to make responsible choices" (Richter 1970, 420) and who can accept the consequences of their actions.

Citing Sartre's observation that one's freedom rests on the freedom of others, Richter argued that public administrators have a fundamental and compelling responsibility to act. Freedom is defined in terms of options for the future, and public administrators should act to preserve options for themselves and for society. That freedom, according to the existentialists, is rooted in individual responsibility. "The existentialist executive makes his own choices" (Richter 1970, 421). Richter also pointed out the importance of the generalist administrator with a broad perspective who can see beyond the minutiae, beyond the technical details, and understand the options that the future will offer to individuals and to society as a whole. He offered the example of Abraham Maslow and the organizational humanists whose theories were based upon the notion that people desire to grow as individuals and that organizations can facilitate that growth by encouraging autonomy and individual capacity building. He also pointed out the value of *authentic* organizations, sensitive to the true *essence* of reality and focused on long-term goals and options. For Richter, such organizations, when guided by skilled and ethical administrators, would be better able to perceive and preserve society's options for the future (Richter 1970).

Richter's advocacy of a more activist bureaucracy was borne of his experience at the Federal Executive Institute (FEI). Many federal executives attending FEI expressed concern and frustration about the apparent unwillingness of top-level officials to correct programmatic deficiencies, even when solutions were known and available. They also were concerned that many executives relied too heavily on analytical tools and rational decision processes rather than trusting their own experience and judgment (Richter 1970). Richter's view that administrators were not free to use their own judgment was not particularly controversial at the time. There had been several well-publicized cases of whistle-blowing, not least of which was Daniel Ellsberg's release of the Pentagon Papers to the media, that had provided ample evidence that most administrators were not free to express their own opinions or to act upon them. The whistle-blowers paid dearly for their honesty. But, they did see their responsibility to act. The existence of individual responsibility for ethical conduct is likely the

most important and lasting legacy of existentialist philosophy in public administration and business administration.

Richter had joined the debate that Sartre and his friends had started. Other public administrators and public administrationists had also joined in. Policy failures provided the fuel. Frustration with government's inability to deal with problems that should be manageable provided the passion. Public-administration scholars provided some guidance. Existentialism, particularly in conjunction with the phenomenological approach to the study of administration, was a subject of discussion at the Minnowbrook conference in 1969 and in the public-administration literature into the 1980s. While the argument that public administrators become political activists was not one that held great sway outside of the proponents of the "new public administration" (Frederickson 1980), the concern that there should be some responsibility to ensure that policy failures were averted continues to this day. The existentialist notion of individual responsibility certainly provided a foundation for the development of codes of ethics.

Why has existentialism again become relevant for public administrators? Perhaps the reason is the seemingly overwhelming preoccupation of public administrators today with the means of public management, i.e., the tools, rather than the ends. Public administrators are armed with management "tool boxes" and performance evaluation systems and are told that their jobs are effective policy implementation and efficient program management. There is little room for active roles in policy making and discretion in policy administration, despite growing social and economic problems associated with the widening gap between the rich and poor, environmental problems stemming from global warming and uncontrolled development, political problems due to the power of special interests, and cultural conflicts as social change threatens traditional values and technology encourages a homogenization of mass culture. Terrorism, globalization, disinvestments, and other issues threaten the stability of nations and the international order. In short, we live in a tumultuous era, and there is growing frustration about the lack of answers to address critical issues or, in some cases, the unwillingness to address issues when solutions are known and achievable. In many respects, the threats of war and social upheaval today seem very similar to the threats in the 1960s, when existentialist philosophy offered a way out of the morass. The renewed interest in the philosophy is understandable.

The Origins of Existentialism

Existentialist thought evolved over time, and its tenets vary from writer to writer. While there are common elements, a variety of perspectives are

generally subsumed by the label. Jean-Paul Sartre was the acknowledged leader of the philosophical movement and, indeed, his own views changed over time. The roots of existentialism can be traced to the writings of Martin Heidegger and other German phenomenologists prior to World War II, and many of the basic ideas were discussed in academic and philosophical circles at that time. Sartre studied in Germany prior to the war and likely picked up those ideas before they became part of the broader intellectual discussion in Europe. Sartre was the social commentator and most visible spokesman for the movement, but Albert Camus helped bring the philosophy to a much broader audience with his novels. The discussion reached the United States in the 1950s and 1960s.

Existentialism is best understood within the social context in which it grew. Sartre was born in Paris in 1905 and taught in several high schools. He began writing for a variety of publications, generally following the current philosophical debates. He served in the military from 1929 to 1931. He returned to teaching after military service and received a grant to study in Germany. While studying at the French Institute in Berlin during 1933–1934, Sartre was introduced to the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl and likely read the works of the German idealists before they were translated into French and made more broadly available. He lived a bohemian lifestyle with Simone de Beauvoir until drafted back into the military in 1939. He was captured by the Germans in 1940 but escaped the following year. He spent the remainder of the war in the French Resistance, initially in a small group cofounded by Merleau-Ponty and later in a teaching position. He founded the literary journal *Les Temps modernes* in 1944 and, as his writings gained popularity, he toured and lectured in the United States and other countries (Howells 1992).

Sartre was in the middle of the major philosophical debates of the 1930s and 1940s and was profoundly affected by both World War I and his own military experience in World War II. He and Merleau-Ponty embraced the humanist philosophy of Marxism, but both were opposed to the oppressive practices in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Sartre denounced the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956, French violations of human rights in Algeria, apartheid in southern Africa, Soviet actions in Czechoslovakia and elsewhere in Eastern Europe, United States involvement in Vietnam, the Biafran civil war, and the Yom Kippur War. Sartre sided with the Israelis in the latter conflict. He drew attention to the plight of the boat people from Vietnam and other humanitarian crises (Howells 1992).

In the preface to Frantz Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth* (1963), Sartre supported Fanon's argument for violent overthrow of colonialist oppressors. He accused the French people of being guilty of the exploitation of colonial peoples and the atrocities committed by the French military in

Algeria, and he called for individual action to rectify the sins of colonialism. He argued that the French were responsible for colonial oppression because they had passively accepted it. It was not enough to urge nonviolence when they had not acted to end hundreds of years of oppression (Sartre 1963, 25).

For Sartre, it was not enough to acknowledge the atrocities committed against the Algerian, Vietnamese, and other peoples of the developing world. He wanted the French people to understand how they were complicit in that oppression and why they should help alleviate its effects. Sartre won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1964, but he declined to accept because to do so might suggest compromise with a societal perspective on individual action. After a very full decade of political activism, his health began to fail in the early 1970s and he died on April 15, 1980 (Howells 1992, xix–xvi).

Sartre's philosophy evolved from atheistic phenomenology to Marxism to a more applied form of existentialism. As a result, he became a target of critics from both sides of the political spectrum, and that seemed to endear him to those trying to find reasonable political ground and dissatisfied with the options offered by political leaders. Moreover, his bohemian lifestyle, flaunting convention, added to his appeal.

The Existentialist Philosophy

Sartre's writings have come to epitomize existentialist thinking. They express an extreme individualism, a focus on freedom and responsibility, and the need to accept that the meaning in our lives comes from us rather than from others (Solomon 1988, 277). In essence, the beginning place is the individual. By exercising free will, individuals shape themselves and take responsibility for their own actions. It is at that level that the past, present, and future are given meaning.

Martin Heidegger's (1889–1976) *Dasein*, meaning "its existence precedes its essence," provided a point of philosophical departure for the existentialists and for Sartre in particular (Solomon 1988, 160). The notion of *existence preceding essence* is that one may imagine and act upon a phenomenon, meaning it exists, before it becomes real or tangible. In other words, we respond to and act upon options that we anticipate. The *dialectic* of Hegel and, later, Marx posited the idea of future options or phenomena being products of the past and present. The past provided the conditions for the present and future to emerge. Sartre's philosophy emphasized the importance of understanding the *essence* of the past and the present in order to anticipate the future. But, the future is not predetermined. It can be changed through individual action.

While the focus is on individual perspectives, the *self* is not defined as static and knowable; rather, it is defined in relationship with the world in which one lives. Moreover, the self is not so much the product of that world as it is the possibilities that the world provides. It is through experience that the self is defined. As described by Sartre, “Man makes himself” (Solomon 1988, 174). Central to this notion for Sartre was the freedom to choose, i.e., the presence of free will, and the desirability of *authenticity*, truthfulness to one’s self and one’s responsibility to act (Solomon 1988, 175).

Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855), a Danish philosopher, is often acknowledged as the first existentialist writer, but Edmund Husserl’s phenomenological method provided the foundation for much of Sartre’s work. However, Sartre disagreed with Husserl’s notion that the world is a construct defined by the consciousness. Reality is not a social construct. The self and the world are distinct, according to Sartre, although the self is found in the world. Consciousness is selfless, “pre-reflective.” Sartre and the other French existentialists made the distinction between the “being-for-itself,” or for consciousness, and the “being-in-itself” of the physical world, the rational man, and the meaningless world. For Sartre and his colleagues, the indifferent world was without God, but not all existentialists were atheists. Existentialists also differ on the possibility of meaning, and Albert Camus, for one, judged the “Absurd” world to be devoid of meaning. That did not mean that people should lack purpose, rather it meant that being human was sufficient motivation for individuals to act (Solomon 1988).

The existentialists and phenomenologists disagreed generally over the nature of man. The existentialists generally argued that man is neither good nor bad. One has the freedom to choose. Consequently, one can be what one chooses to be and, moreover, one is responsible for one’s choices, regardless of the reasons they were made. The reason for the choices, to Sartre, made no difference — one is always responsible. Camus and Merleau-Ponty, on the other hand, were more forgiving, and their philosophies accepted that circumstances may limit or force choices, and some actions can be excused as not being voluntary (Solomon 1988). The focus on individual responsibility was appealing to those wishing to assign blame for the atrocities committed during World War II and the oppressive regimes that were created in the postwar period. As a former prisoner of war, Sartre was less inclined to forgive his captors than were his colleagues. He judged that there was no excuse for the Nazis, and to have supported them even passively was complicity.

Consciousness is “nothingness,” according to Sartre. It is an awareness capable of seeing “the world as it is or as it might be, as well as the way it is” (Solomon 1988). Consciousness is not distinct from the world. *Facticity*, a concept borrowed from Heidegger, represents one’s past and

its potential implications or impact on one's future. It is essential to understand and accept one's past, but not to be constrained by it. For Sartre, the past may be used or overcome, but it cannot be ignored because it helps shape future opportunities. He was very much a product of his past experience. *Transcendence* is one's ability to envision the future and to formulate intentions to act to realize the desired future. Hence, Marx's vision of a classless society had considerable appeal. *Fallenness* is the tendency to betray one's potential, one's self, by denying that one has choices or by denying one's past. Failing to act when injustice has occurred is such a betrayal of one's self. Sartre argued that one should understand one's past but, rather than be trapped by it, one should use it as a starting place to achieve one's potential (Solomon 1988). To act in *good faith* is to act in a manner consistent with one's self. In short, the goal is to be truthful to oneself, to understand one's past and one's current and future options, and to exercise one's freedom to choose one's own future. That is one's responsibility to oneself and to society. Subconscious or unconscious motives are rejected as impossible or irrelevant.

The ultimate value for existentialists is freedom in terms of both exercising one's own choice and defending the choice of others. The intention to do so is more important than the achievement (Solomon 1988). While Sartre envisioned the exercise of freedom as an individual action, the notion of seeking larger social ends was the logical next step. Sartre began to formulate his social philosophy in *Critique of Dialectical Reason* (1960), but it was unclear how one could reconcile the understanding of one's facticity and transcendence and the exercise of one's free will with the need to action on behalf of society or one's organization (Aron 1975). Sartre was fundamentally an individualist, and his philosophy did not easily expand to include the freedom and responsibility of other people. As he stated in *No Exit* (1989), "Hell is other people." Including other people constrained action and affected one's understanding of oneself. The perceptions of others tend to affect one's own expectations and, to Sartre, responding to the perceived expectations of others is to act in *bad faith*. The problem is how to assure that one is being *authentic* and to choose actions that support a collective good. Accepting that individual and social action could be reconciled marked a fundamental shift in Sartre's philosophy. Supporting political revolutionaries struggling against colonial oppression or political repression or capitalist exploitation, who were consistent with their own responsibilities to act, was easier to justify than supporting an organization or political party with more ambiguous goals and no clear responsibility to act. Broad revolutionary goals were easier to accept than specific policies, hence Sartre's attraction to Marx's general philosophy and the dialectic and his strident opposition to Soviet actions in Eastern Europe.

Existentialism and Marxism

Jean-Paul Sartre's brand of Marxism was far more humane than those brands practiced by the communist regimes of his time. Nonetheless, his connection to those regimes and to Communist parties in France and elsewhere is an important factor in considering his impact on American society in general and American public administration in particular. As Daniel Bell noted in his 1962 work, *The End of Ideology*, Marxist philosophy still generated serious political discussion in Europe after World War II, but American intellectuals had largely abandoned Marxism by the beginning of the war (Bell 1962). By the 1960s, the American Communist party had a very small following and, among intellectuals, the appeal was more philosophical than ideological. Sartre's attachment to Marxist philosophy was much the same way, which likely increased his appeal among European and North American students and intellectuals. He was ideologically isolated from both Cold War establishments, and that suited his personality. He was very much a loner, and he tended to alienate his friends and colleagues periodically. He felt uncomfortable in political parties and other organizations and wanted to avoid undue influence by others. His lack of connection with the establishment and the challenge he offered to the status quo was very appealing to those who were looking for direction.

Sartre liked the communalism inherent in communist philosophy, but rejected the notion of economic determinism. In fact, economic determinism, to his mind, was an unacceptable excuse for action (or inaction) (Solomon 1988). However, the Hegelian *historical dialectic* did appeal to him. Understanding the past and present and their inherent potential for the future was very much an existentialist goal. The dialectic was widely discussed during Sartre's studies in Germany, and it very much fit into the existentialist frameworks he encountered in the writings of Edmund Husserl and the other German phenomenologists.

And, Sartre was also attracted to Marxist humanism, the belief in man's responsibility for man and the responsibility to free man from oppressing conditions. Man creates his own world (Schaff 1965). Sartre had a series of intellectual rapprochements with the French Communist party and other Marxist groups, including the Soviet Communist party, but each was interrupted by disagreements over Soviet political and military actions. He decried the distortion of Marxism by Stalinists and, through speeches and writings, attempted to reaffirm the underlying humanism of Marxist philosophy. Erich Fromm summed up that view of Marxist humanism in the introduction to *Marxism and the Human Individual* (1970) by the Polish scholar, Adam Schaff. Fromm concluded that Marx believed that societal arrangements should contribute to the "growth and unfolding of man."

Progress in science and art depends upon freedom so that man can “perfect himself” (Schaff 1965, x). Freedom permits one to reach one’s potential.

Raymond Aron went to school with Sartre and suggested that Sartre’s view of Marxism reflected the idealism of the revolution before Stalinism took hold, and was based upon Marx’s writings prior to *Das Capital* (Aron 1975). Many Marxists were embarrassed by the oppressive actions of the Soviet government (Dobson 1993). Sartre’s sincere concern over the abuses of power by the Soviet government was well received on both sides of the Atlantic. As he stated in *Existentialism and Humanism*: “Nor does this mean that I should not belong to a party, but only that I should be without illusion and that I should do what I can” (Sartre 1957). Authenticity was all-important for the existentialists.

Existentialism and Public Administration

Administrative theory, particularly that applied to the public sector, has tended to go through cycles in which subjective or objective theorists have dominated. The immediate postwar period was dominated by more objectivist theories of public organization, including those by Herbert Simon, Vincent Ostrom, Graham Allison, Anthony Downs, and Gary Wamsley (Denhardt 1990). By the 1960s, there was increased interest in psychoanalytical, phenomenological, and other alternative (to positivist) approaches. The new theorists that emerged included Dwight Waldo, Robert Golembiewski, Ralph Hummel, Frederick Thayer, and Robert Denhardt. Existentialism was one of the philosophies that entered the theoretical debate in public administration, particularly through the writings of Dwight Waldo and the participants at the Minnowbrook conference in 1969.

For example, in 1968, Dwight Waldo, then editor of *Public Administration Review*, argued that public administrators bore some responsibility for the turmoil of the time. He concluded that the failures and successes of public administration had contributed to the problems of the day and that public administrators should have acted to address the problems sooner. According to Waldo (1968, 365), “*If* we have so much wealth, and *if* we have so much know-how — and we brag a lot about both, you know — why can’t we create a livable environment, shackle violence, abolish poverty, and generally secure equal treatment and justice?”

Waldo even went on to cite Albert Camus’s bureaucrat character in *The Plague* (1978), suggesting that relying on routine processes when events demanded extraordinary action and creativity represented a failure of public administrators to live up to their responsibility. The expertise was there to act, and it was in the public interest to act. Bureaucratic neutrality notwithstanding, Waldo called for more *self-conscious* action and warned that

rational administrative processes, such as planning, programming, and budgeting system (PPBS), causes “undue restriction of vision, leads to over narrow parameters and oversimplification of premises” (Waldo 1968, 367). He acknowledged that political involvement was risky, but concluded that not helping the nation deal with revolutionary change was also risky.

Waldo had a central role in organizing the Minnowbrook conference in 1969 to examine the state of public administration. Michael Harmon, a participant, used the existentialist literature to justify activism among public administrators. Harmon suggested that public administrators try to understand the relationship between their personal own choices and those in the public interest. As Sartre had argued, one’s freedom rests on the freedom of others. Ethical and political neutrality is a failure to act responsibly in the interests of the individual and society. Not using expertise and experience to address socioeconomic problems is both unprofessional and poor citizenship (Harmon 1971).

Waldo’s and Harmon’s arguments were not without opposition, however. John Paynter took the opposite position. He questioned whether such activism would “meet the conventional democratic test of administrative responsibility” (Paynter 1971). While the notion of politics and administration being separate had been discredited, there was great reluctance to remove the distinction altogether. Anders Richter’s article appeared soon after the Minnowbrook gathering.

In contrast, while they may have acknowledged the potential of individualist approaches, others argued for more objective or empirical methods of determining social and political options. For example, Vincent Ostrom argued in a 1980 *Public Administration Review* article that organizations are artifacts, “works of art,” that represent intentions to pursue specific ends, and that there are two methods of accounting for the strategies chosen to pursue those ends. The first is to presume that individuals share “a basic similitude of thoughts and passions” and that one can infer their strategy if one understands the context of their actions (Ostrom 1980, 310). However, the other method he described involves “elucidating the appropriate information,” i.e., communicating personal and organizational preferences, through market pricing and other conventions. That function, he observed, is more often the province of organizations (Ostrom 1980). Ostrom concluded that language and other communication mechanisms are frequently ambiguous, imprecise, and value laden and do affect administration and our methods of understanding it, a view shared with the existentialists. But, he took a different tack and determined that “The alternative to developing a value-free science of administration is to become explicitly aware of the fundamental role that values play in all forms of artisanship in general, and in the forms of artisanship involved in the organization of human societies in particular”

(Ostrom 1980, 315). To that end, he recommended that we develop a better understanding of individual and social purpose through self-examination. This perspective is essentially diametrically opposed to that of the existentialists, who argue for a focus on individual purpose and, perhaps, examine social action to develop an understanding of human purpose.

In short, the importance of individual values and perspectives and the need for self-scrutiny was acknowledged, but the answer to the question of how to understand reality is to be found in our shared values, rather than within each of us. And, our shared values are manifested in the artifacts, the organizations, of our society, rather than to be divined from experience and philosophical reflection. The notion of an objective reality, distinct from and independent of human consciousness, even more clearly differentiated his philosophy from that of the existentialists.

Vestiges of existentialist philosophy can also be found in more recent works. Existentialist phenomenological approaches are rare in the public-administration literature, but there is increasing attention to the importance of human perception and organizational predispositions to the definition of policy problems (Dery 1984). Policy problems are not part of an objective reality; there is a subjective, constructionist element in their definition. For example, the phenomenon of terrorism has identifiable elements that distinguish it from other forms of violence, but individuals and agencies tend to define terrorism in terms that fit their own cultural, political, and organizational orientations, and they then design policies based upon the assumptions inherent in those interpretations. For national security personnel and agencies, terrorism is definable in international terms, usually with nations being the basic unit of analysis. For law-enforcement personnel and agencies, terrorism is defined in legal terms. They have their own predispositions toward particular methods of alleviating the problem, and victims (individuals) are the unit of analysis. For academics, the definition of terrorism has to have conceptual clarity. And, to be sure, some define terrorism in more positive terms, reflecting support for revolutionary goals. "One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter," in other words. The phenomenon has different meanings to different people and, at the same time, has an *essence* that is common. The term carries considerable political baggage that affects its connotations. But, one can cut through those biases to focus on the essence of the phenomenon and, thereby, find a policy that may address the problem effectively (Waugh 1990).

Conclusion

Existentialist philosophy provided a course of action at a time when many wanted to be "part of the solution rather than part of the problem." During

the 1960s and 1970s, many people in the United States felt tremendous guilt for the war in Vietnam, racial injustice, extreme poverty in many parts of the United States, and other social, political, and economic conditions. Officials were blamed. Government in general was blamed. And, other members of society were blamed. The level of frustration was so great that the survival of the political system was in doubt. Pragmatic approaches had failed, and a new approach was needed. As Richard Page has suggested, existentialism offered a way out. It encouraged individuals “to soar above reason in an individualistic response to the wrongs of society” (Page 1971, 64). The activist orientation of the existentialists appealed to those frustrated by government and societal failures and to those seeking socially meaningful roles. Large organizations of all sorts were distrusted, science and technology were distrusted, and “doing one’s own thing” was the mantra. But, not all took to the streets to protest or to work on the problems. Idealists were also encouraged to seek public-service jobs to help alleviate poverty, protect the environment, and so on. The Peace Corps, Vista, and other programs provided vehicles for social action.

The popularity of existentialism was due to a number of factors. John Raulston Saul (1992) suggests that the brief popularity of existentialist philosophy was due to the fact that Westerners, in general, are uncomfortable with a philosophy that encourages people to be judged by their actions rather than by their power or position. That may be all the more true when the actions upon which someone is judged are based upon individual interests or needs rather than upon a broader social interest (Saul 1992, 287). Phenomenology, focusing on subjective interpretations and, in large measure, rejecting the positivist subjective/objective dichotomy, was similarly in vogue (Denhardt 1981; Jung 1973), although it was certainly not as popular as existentialism.

For a brief time, public-administration theorists embraced existentialist philosophy. Alternative views of public organizations and the roles of public administrators had great appeal. Waldo, Harmon, Richter, and others found utility in the philosophy for understanding public administration and expressing the frustration that was common among public administrators, as well as the rest of society, for failed policies. The call for administrators to exercise their moral responsibilities to the public is still relevant, particularly when elected officials lack the expertise or the willingness to address critical issues. The call is also relevant when administrators are blind to the political impact of their actions, when the tools or methods of administration become more important than the ends. Guy Adams and Danny Balfour (1988) have provided good examples of administrative values, principally efficiency, being used to pursue “evil” ends. The efficient machinery of the German bureaucracy was set to the task of murdering Jews efficiently. The example of welfare reform being

designed to reduce welfare rolls, e.g., reduce costs, with little or no attention to the implications of cutting off benefits to poor families, is also compelling evidence of administrative failure (Adams and Balfour 1988). It should not have been a surprise that there would be increased homelessness and malnutrition. A protection against unethical or “evil” administrative actions is for public administrators to judge whether actions are right or wrong based upon their own value systems. Management techniques are not value-neutral, and management values may well be inappropriate. Organizations are not ethical or unethical; it is the individuals within the organizations that set the values.

Existentialism also has had a lasting impact on public-administration research. Existentialist and transcendentalist phenomenology, for example, provides an alternative to empirical social science. It encourages a reexamination of the relationships between individuals and groups, organizations, and governments. It encourages an examination of the *authenticity* of perspectives and the exercise of *free will*. It reminds us that *freedom* is critical if individual growth and creativity are valued. While only a few scholars and practitioners choose to “soar above reason” (to use Page’s words), their perspectives are important to an understanding of public administration and a counterbalance to the perspectives of those enamored of logical positivism and seduced by economic conceptual frameworks. Alternative philosophies and critical theories appear all the more important given the apparent failures of current philosophies and theories to provide answers to our pressing problems. If public administrators decide to exercise their own responsibility and political activism results, that is all the better.

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Chapter 24

John Rawls and Public Administration

Stephen L. Esquith

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On its face, John Rawls's political philosophy seems to be unconcerned with, if not openly hostile to, public administration. In Rawls's ideal democratic society, almost all adult members are property owners¹ and free to participate in a "social union of social unions"² while striving for "meaningful work in free association with others."³ And in defending this ideal, Rawls has little directly to say about the study or practice of governing through complex organizations. His account of government institutions is limited to traditional constitutional principles like separation of powers and the rule of law. As for the functions of government, he distinguishes between a handful of economic tasks but warns: "These divisions do not overlap with the usual organization of government but are to be understood as different functions"⁴ that presumably can be

carried out apart from and under the control of the deliberative, more democratic processes of representative government.

Nor does Rawls treat administrative decision making as a special form of political reasoning with its own peculiar “burdens” or limitations.⁵ As the veil of ignorance is gradually lifted, that is, once a just constitution and the laws pursuant to it have been made, Rawls argues, then these higher rules can be applied with full knowledge by judges and administrators, and followed by citizens “generally.” Administrative decision making occurs against the same background of principles, laws, and facts that judicial decision making does and, for that matter, that the choices and judgments of citizens do when they face fundamental questions like whether or not to obey a military order.⁶

What Rawls does say about administration, at a high level of abstraction, suggests that a society that is too dependent upon a public administration informed by classical utilitarian principles, would not be acceptable to him.

Implicit in the contrasts between classical utilitarianism and justice as fairness is a difference in the underlying conceptions of society. In the one, we think of a well-ordered society as (a) a scheme of cooperation for reciprocal advantage regulated by principles that persons would choose in an initial situation that is fair; in the other as (b) the efficient administration of social resources to maximize the satisfaction of the system of desire constructed by the impartial spectator from the many individual systems of desires accepted as given.⁷

Two things stand out in Rawls’s general criticism of utilitarian administrative politics: First, he rejects the idea that the institutions that form the basic structure of a well-ordered society (its government, economy, and social life) should be designed to manage society’s social resources as efficiently as possible. Second, by efficient administration, he means arranging these institutions for the maximal satisfaction of the existing desires of an artificial body as seen from the point of view of an allegedly impartial spectator. If public administration consists simply in the efficient administration of government agencies and bureaus with this maximal end in mind, then clearly Rawls is opposed to it.

Has public administration been utilitarian in this sense? Twentieth-century attempts to conceptualize public administration began this way, but classical utilitarian principles have been subjected to a variety of criticisms as both prescriptions for and descriptions of what public administrators do for the last 50 years.

The early Wilsonian belief that public administration could and should be separated from politics had as one of its corollaries that efficient administration was desirable but only possible when administrative and political “functions” were not carried out within the same organizational structure. But even within a purely administrative structure, Luther Gulick

added in 1937, to be efficiently carried out the functions performed must be “homogeneous.” Where they are “non-homogeneous” (for example, water supply and education), unwanted technical inefficiencies will occur if they are carried out within the same administrative unit.⁸

Gulick and other less-sophisticated adherents to Frederick W. Taylor’s theory of scientific management clearly believed that efficiency was “the single ultimate test” of good public administration. These early writers on public administration, however, soon were vigorously criticized by academics not unsympathetic to the idea of public administration. As Robert Dahl argued in 1947, even Gulick had trouble remaining faithful to the belief in efficiency given what he knew about political reality.

It is far from clear what Gulick means to imply in saying that “interferences with efficiency” caused by ultimate political values may “condition” and “complicate” but do not “change” the “single ultimate test” of efficiency as the goal of administration. Is efficiency the supreme goal not only of private administration, but also of public administration, as Gulick contends? If so, how can one say, as Gulick does, that “there are ... highly inefficient arrangements like citizen boards and small local governments which may be necessary in a democracy as educational devices.”⁹

Not only have academic writers on public administration questioned the value of efficiency as the sole or even primary measuring stick for judging the legitimacy of government, they have also questioned the possibility of impartial administration and the separation of politics and public administration. Perhaps the most powerful rejection of scientific management and the politics-administration dichotomy was Dwight Waldo’s 1948 study, *The Administrative State: A Study of the Political Theory of Public Administration*. The internal workings of public bureaucracies, like their conduct within the larger political system as a whole, were also subjected to a political analysis. Philip Selznick’s 1948 study, *TVA and the Grass Roots*, made it clear that the development of a career bureaucracy is a political process and not a scientific creation.

Finally, students of public administration have recognized that public administrators, even as political actors, do not make rational decisions based upon some encompassing or overarching conception of the good, the way a utilitarian would want. They are not spectators any more than they are impartial observers of the political process. They are entangled in a complex process of empirical analysis and evaluation that allows them, at best, to “muddle through one problem after another.” According to Charles E. Lindblom writing in 1959, the public administrator at best “focuses his attention on marginal or incremental values. Whether he is aware of it or not, he does not find general formulations of objectives very helpful and in fact makes specific marginal or incremental comparisons.”¹⁰

Public administrators have not ignored efficiency or impartiality entirely, but they continue to temper these values with concerns for effectiveness, due process, the political imperatives of labor-management relations, and the fair distribution of public goods and services. Both academic and practicing public administrators do not simply assume that an impartial spectator can aggregate the existing desires of citizens, or even that they should try. Administrators, like all other political animals, are participants with vested interests, past associations, and career plans. Public administrators have probably always known this, and gradually students of public administration have come to take it more seriously. In addition an equally important fact is that citizens often want to play an active role in the formulation and implementation of public policies, and in the process sometimes critically reflect on their existing desires. It is simply impossible to conflate citizen desires at any one time into a single meaningful index. Citizens are often aware of the contingent nature of their desires and act with this in mind.

In short, the classical utilitarian myth of an impartial spectator who sets the rules of government and the myth of a totally passive constituency that only wants its transparent, fixed desires satisfied have little to do with either the theory or practice of public administration. In the real world of public administration, the ideal of social cooperation envisioned by classical utilitarians like Bentham and Sidgwick became largely irrelevant at about the same time Rawls began to publish his work in political philosophy.

In this real world of public administration, I want to consider Rawls's theory of justice from two converging angles: (1) the role that Rawls's theory already has played in the evolution of public administration in this postwar period and (2) the additional contributions the theory can make.

When speaking of Rawls's theory of justice, I will be primarily concerned with Rawls's own writings, especially *A Theory of Justice* (1971) and *Political Liberalism* (1993).

These two books express the essentials of a lifelong project that include many articles and lectures that often diverge in their details from the two books but not, I believe, in their overall significance. Another feature of Rawls's corpus is that, like other important philosophers, Rawls's work has been carefully interpreted, criticized, and in some cases extended.¹¹ It is often difficult to draw the line between his own exposition of his theory and the meaning of the theory as it has been elaborated by others. This is especially true in an area like public administration, where Rawls's views are for the most part implicit or only suggested. In speaking about the relevance of his theory for public administration, I will often rely on others who have sought to make Rawls's views more explicit or extend them in this direction.

Many scholars in the field of public administration have cited Rawls and consider his work relevant to their own. In this essay I have chosen to focus on only a few, with special emphasis on the work of H. George Frederickson. I do not mean to suggest that only Frederickson has gotten Rawls right or even that he makes the best arguments for extending Rawls in this direction. However, his work, I will argue, provides a very effective way of dealing with the diffuse subject of intellectual influence. Frederickson has been a key figure in public administration in the United States over the past half-century, and his references to Rawls are both thoughtful and wide-ranging.¹²

Rawls's Theory of Justice

The entry of Rawls's theory of justice into the discourse of public administration was prepared three years before the publication of *A Theory of Justice*, when the first Minnowbrook conference was held in September 1968 at Syracuse University. At this conference, young academics in the field of public administration gathered to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the field and plot a "new" course. The organizing force behind the conference was Dwight Waldo, who realized that in such turbulent times, public administration was already being transformed, and public administrators were facing new and difficult issues.¹³ While not a participant at the conference, H. George Frederickson presciently noted at the time that a key, if not *the* key feature of the new public administration was "social equity." "Conventional or classic public administration," Frederickson wrote, "seeks to answer either of these questions: 1. How can we offer more or better services with available resources (efficiency)? or 2. How can we maintain our level of services while spending less money (economy)? New Public Administration adds this question: Does this service enhance social equity?"¹⁴

Looking back on Minnowbrook I, Frederickson wrote in 1989 that the conference identified nine important themes that subsequently became central aspects of public administration. Three of these themes, in particular, including "social equity," define the areas within public administration that Rawls's theory of justice has proved to be most relevant. Quoting from Frederickson's list:

- Social equity has been added to efficiency and economy as the rationale or justification for policy positions. Equal protection of the law has come to be considered as important to those charged with carrying out the law (public administrators) as it is to those elected to make the law.

- Ethics, honesty, and responsibility in government have returned again to the lexicon of public administration. Career service bureaucrats are no longer considered to be merely implementors of fixed decisions as they were in the dominant theory of the late 1950s and the early 1960s; they are now understood to hold a public trust to provide the best possible public service with the costs and benefits being fairly distributed among the people.
- Effective public administration has come to be defined in the context of an active and participative citizenry.¹⁵

These three moral themes in the new public administration represent, roughly, the contact points between Rawls's theory of justice and public administration. For convenience, I will call them distributive justice, administrative ethics, and participation.

Frederickson, perhaps more than anyone else inside public administration, has worked tirelessly to keep these themes alive and support others in the endeavor. In *New Public Administration* (1980), there is a distinct tone of urgency. According to Frederickson, a public administration that does not actively seek to correct the inequities and suffering in modern democratic societies like the United States will inevitably exacerbate these problems because it "will eventually be used to oppress the deprived."¹⁶ Citizens must be given a greater amount of choice in public services, bureaucracies must be decentralized so as to be more responsive, neighborhood councils must be formed with real power to influence outcomes, and, most of all, public services must be equitably distributed, especially across racial and economic class lines. It is on this last measure of equity that Frederickson turns directly to Rawls for a more detailed set of principles of social equity.

Frederickson quickly summarizes Rawls's method of moral reasoning from behind a "veil of ignorance" and restates the principles of justice as fairness chosen in this "original position" equal liberty, fair equality of opportunity, and the difference principle (that only social and economic differences that are to the benefit of the least advantaged are permissible). Frederickson then endorses David K. Hart's interpretation of Rawls, in which he highlights his relevance for the new public administration.¹⁷

Following Hart, Frederickson argues that Rawls's principles of justice ensure that organizational needs never override individual liberties or needs for primary goods. Frederickson says,

The problem is one of making complex organizations responsible to the needs of the individual. This requires rising above the rules and routines of organization to some concern for the self-respect and dignity of the individual citizen. Rawls's theory

is designed to instruct those who administer organizations that the rights of individuals would be everywhere protected.¹⁸

In an earlier article, written two years after Hart's, Frederickson includes the following revealing gloss on Rawls's relevance for public administration. Not only do the principles of justice as fairness serve as ideal guides for legislative and constitutional decisions, they are especially important in a political society in which electoral politics does not exhaust political activity.

The reason this [Rawlsian] perspective is so central to modern public administration is that public officials are in positions of implementing public programs; therefore, they have power over patterns of service distribution.... Modern public administration should seek to activate a kind of democracy in which majority rule through electoral process and the general patterns of "pluralism" are combined with protection for minorities, not only by the courts, but by the organizational structure or designated powers used in public administration and by the normative or ethical behavior of public servants.¹⁹

Second, Frederickson argues that public administrators should be held to a higher ethical standard than other citizens. Rawls makes the distinction between the natural duty to advance justice as fairness, which all persons with a sense of justice have, and the additional obligation that those who hold public office or have benefited from being in a well-ordered society have. According to Rawls,

The thing to observe here is that there are several ways in which one may be bound to political institutions. For the most part the natural duty of justice is the more fundamental, since it binds citizens generally and requires no voluntary acts in order to apply. The principles of fairness, on the other hand, bind only those who assume public office, say, or those who, being better situated, have advanced their aims within the system. There is, then another sense of noblesse oblige: namely, that those who are more privileged are likely to acquire obligations tying them even more strongly to a "just scheme."²⁰

Again following Hart, Frederickson suggests that one element of this new "noblesse oblige" is a duty to perform public service. Because not all persons are genetically "equal," the more advantaged have a moral duty to serve all others, including the disadvantaged, not for altruistic reasons but because of the significance of interdependence.²¹

This seems to go beyond Rawls's argument. Rawls's conception of political obligation is that those who are in public service or who have benefited from the principles of justice as fairness have an obligation to follow these specific principles. This is a stronger constraint on their conduct than the natural duty to advance and uphold just institutions that those who are more passively and less advantageously a part of even a well-ordered society have. Frederickson and Hart want to add that public administrators are not only obligated to follow the letter of the principles of justice themselves, but also put themselves at the service of the less advantaged. Why? Frederickson suggests that without the willing cooperation of the less advantaged, those who are better off would be worse off. To sustain this cooperation, they must serve as public administrators. This is a creative extension of Rawls's own argument for the difference principle based on the dynamics of social cooperation.²² Hart suggests that it is through this kind of "fraternal" work as public administrators that a higher form of self-respect becomes possible. Public administrators serve to enhance their own self-respect as well as the self-respect of others through the provision of some public primary goods and the protection and maintenance of others.²³

Frederickson adds one more point in this initial effort to extend Rawls to public administration. The model for Rawlsian public administration is not to be found in legislative or executive action, but in judicial decisions.²⁴ The distribution of public services and job opportunities has been the subject of several important court decisions. Unlike judges, however, for public administrators to fasten onto an appropriate operational conception of social equity, they must take a very different stance toward their clients and consumers.

It is difficult to know of citizens' needs if the public administrator is not in direct and routine interaction with elected officials and legislative bodies. Thus, participation and political interaction are critical to the development of the concept of social equity. The public official will come to be understood as a processor and facilitator for elected officials of government who must respond to rapid social, economic, and political change. In fact, an ability to mobilize government institutions to change may well come to define leadership in the future.²⁵

Although Rawls takes a very strong stand in defense of the fair value of political liberty, his principle of participation does not go this far. Rawls would clear away direct and indirect obstacles to political participation such as unequal educational opportunities and discriminatory voting laws, but, according to Rawls, there is no duty to participate in public life or to stimulate others to participate. Public administrators that encourage or prod citizens into greater participation, then, might be exceeding the bounds of office from Rawls's point of view, but this is a matter of speculation, since Rawls does not treat it explicitly.²⁶

The new public administrator is not only guided by Rawlsian principles of justice and bound by a strong obligation to serve as a public administrator. The new public administrator must also be an active participant in a public dialogue that includes citizens themselves as well as legislators and other elected political officials about the needs of citizens. How should this public dialogue be conducted? What method of moral reasoning is appropriate in this forum? Frederickson alludes to one possible answer: "The theory of justice would provide a means to resolve ethical impasses (the original position)."²⁷ Frederickson does not discuss exactly how the original position could serve as a device for guiding moral arguments, but as we shall see below, this becomes a primary concern of Rawls in *Political Liberalism*.

Frederickson has not remained content simply to champion the positions he developed during the 1970s. Since *New Public Administration*, he has self-critically reexamined his views. This voice has been joined by others within public administration who feel the need to clarify its ethical foundations and principles.

We can begin with an interesting article by Frederickson and Hart published in 1985 that returns to the concept of noblesse oblige. Throughout the 1980s, public administrators and government workers in general were subjected to virulent attacks, especially from the Right. Middle-class tax revolts, corporate anti-union campaigns, and a more diffuse hostility toward "big government" put public administrators on the defensive. Where the new public administration called for more-equal service delivery and citizen participation in public administration, the public agenda in the 1980s was dominated by demands for privatization and greater consumer choice.²⁸

In defending the profession in this context, Frederickson and Hart shifted away from a primary concern with social equity and citizen participation. Instead they emphasized the need for a new civic humanist conception of administrative ethics. What virtues, what kind of moral character, they asked, should public administrators have to merit the trust of their "constituents"? Relatedly, what kind of civic virtue should public administrators seek to cultivate in citizens in general so that they can trust these professionals?

Influenced by the conservative strategy of legitimating professional discourses by tracing them back to the American Founders' original intentions, Frederickson and Hart turned to Jefferson and other selected Founders. They argued for an ethic of civic humanism centered on the virtue of "benevolence." Frederickson and Hart realized that, in an important sense, this diverged from Rawls's earlier conception of noblesse oblige and political obligation,²⁹ but they apparently felt that the times required it. Before examining this administrative ethic in more detail, a further

comment is necessary on the context in which the need for administrative ethics had become so pressing.

One way of thinking of this need for an administrative ethic is to recognize that what public administration needed was a discipline of its own. However, the word “discipline” is intentionally ambiguous.³⁰ In one sense, public administration was still struggling to be an academic discipline like political science, law, and economics. It was still searching for its own particular corpus of knowledge, research methods, classical texts, and equally important, its institutional bases in universities, publicly funded research institutes, and private foundations. In this sense it was a discipline in friendly competition with other new professional disciplines like policy analysis. In a more distant manner, it was a vaguely hostile competition with new academic programs like women’s studies, Black studies, and other cultural studies programs.

Simultaneously, this emerging institutional discipline was also a discipline in the ethical sense. As a body of knowledge, it prescribed a training regimen for practitioners, a method of cultivating the habits of heart and mind needed to bear up under the pressures of public office. Research methods and modes of engagement with other professionals provided some disciplinary training needed to get public administrators into fighting form: public administrators had to learn what it takes to do your duty, hence the emphasis on administrative ethics. In this regard public administration was no different from other professional disciplines. Medical ethics, legal ethics, and then scores of other professional ethics had been created in the 1970s to cope with consumer dissatisfaction and inter-professional turf battles.³¹ Public administrators realized that they too would have to discipline their forces if they were to hold on to their tenuous place within the academic and professional labor markets.

The question becomes now, what did Frederickson and Hart mean precisely by a civic humanist ethic for public administrators? First, they argued that one of the things that got public administrators into trouble was the perception that they were devoted, above all, to their own individual bureaucratic careers. Using the striking comparison between Nazi bureaucrats and Danish civil servants during World War II, they argued that while the former had lost any feeling of moral responsibility to a regime that was a corrupt charade, the Danes under Nazi occupation continued to feel a “profound commitment to the democratic values of their nation and genuine love of the people.”³² The protective acts taken by Danish bureaucrats for Jewish citizens were done not as extraordinary individual acts of moral courage, but as acts of civic duty. For them, all Danish citizens, including Jewish citizens, deserved the equal protection of the laws, individual freedom, and the other rights detailed in the Danish constitution. It was the patriotic duty of bureaucrats to see that these

“democratic values” were upheld. Here was a model of the ethical bureaucrat that other citizens could trust.

Therefore, we define the primary moral obligation of the public service in this nation as the patriotism of benevolence: an extensive love of all people within our political boundaries and the imperative that they must be protected in all of the basic rights granted to them by the enabling documents. If we do not love others, why should we work to guarantee the regime values to them? The “special relationship” that must exist between public servants and citizens in a democracy is founded upon the conscious knowledge of the citizens that they are loved by the bureaucracy.³³

To recover this ethic of benevolent patriotism, Frederickson and Hart turned to the American founding. Emphasizing the influence of the “moral sense” school of the Scottish Enlightenment on the Americans, they argued that statesmen like Thomas Jefferson and James Wilson recognized that human beings were not narrowly self-interested egoists. They possessed a keen moral sense, and “both citizens and public servants [were] possessed of an extensive and active love for others — in other words, they possess a sense of benevolence.”³⁴

In the case of public administrators, the patriotic duty to act benevolently involves more than a vague “sense of benevolence.” In fact, Frederickson and Hart argued, public administrators must be “both moral philosophers and moral activists.” They must be able to interpret the fundamental “regime values” of the country and measure any policies they are enjoined to carry out against these values. For example, they should not permit the value of equal educational opportunity to be subverted through executive orders and less forthright forms of bureaucratic inertia. While elected officials have a similar responsibility, the fact that public administrators are around longer and have responsibility for the “day to day implementation of public policy” means that they have an even more stringent duty to uphold these values.³⁵

Frederickson and Hart close their argument by noting that Rawls did not rely so heavily on the virtue of benevolence in his theory of justice. It is unfortunate, they suggest, that he did not realize, as Jefferson did, that democratic government depends upon the heroic benevolence of a committed bureaucracy. Public administrators, they conclude, should not settle for less.³⁶

In 1988 Minnowbrook II was held, and the papers published in *Public Administration Review* by participants in this 20th-anniversary conference reflect the defensive shift away from social equity and participation toward a disciplinary administrative ethic. In his introduction to this issue, Frederickson compares the two conferences along several dimensions. One difference is in the “mood, tone, and feeling of the two conferences.”

The 1968 conference was contentious, confrontational, and revolutionary. The 1988 conference was more civil, more practical. Both conferences were theoretical, but the 1968 conference dialogue was decidedly anti-behavioral, while the 1988 conference was more receptive to the contributions of behavioral science to public administration.³⁷

This is arguably a promising sign for a young profession. Public administration is no longer simply opposed to the existing political order, but is now searching for a way to make its cause more effectively from the inside and, where possible, in alliance with neighboring professions, such as economics and policy analysis. But there is another way to read this change in “mood, tone and feeling”. To do this, let us take a closer look at David K. Hart’s opening article, which pursues the theme of administrative virtue.

Hart reiterates the claim that he and Frederickson had already made that people are by nature capable of benevolent love for others as well as self-love. He describes this capacity not just as a potential virtue, but as a need: “all individuals have an innate need to love others” just as strong as the need to love themselves.³⁸ In the case of public administrators, this need should be fulfilled in four ways. The first three are fairly noncontroversial. Public administrators should use their discretion and good judgment to ensure that individual civic autonomy is not sacrificed to some greater good. Second, they should “govern by persuasion.” That is, they should argue honestly and eloquently in their capacity as public servants, and not deceive or arrogantly try to impose their will. Third, they should resist corruption, especially the subtler forms of corruption that accompany the “tyranny of expertise.” Mutual trust, not fear, should motivate their relationships with citizens. Finally, and this is the virtue I want to underscore, public administrators should stand as “civic exemplars.” According to Hart,

Because so many of those who have power are so inaccessible and their power is so great, their qualities of character must be made constantly evident to the people. A people who would be free and virtuous need the reinvigoration that comes from seeing exemplars of civic courage.³⁹

In demonstrating their “fidelity to the Founding values,” exemplary public administrators encourage citizens to trust the more powerful public administrators among them who are “inaccessible.” This is an odd argument, not because exemplary figures cannot have this effect, but because of what it suggests about Hart’s own purpose. The “tone” of the argument is very different from that of Minnowbrook I. Rather than ask how powerful bureaucrats can be made more accessible, Hart is suggesting that the

estranging effects of their inaccessibility can be partially mitigated by other bureaucrats on the front line who present themselves in a benevolent, discursive, and trustworthy manner.

Hart says that what is needed is a “partnership in virtue among all citizens.” By acting autonomously, valuing persuasion, avoiding the arrogance of expertise, and exemplifying, at least on the front line, fidelity to the Founding regime values, public administrators can show citizens that they are willing and able to act with benevolent love toward them. In return, perhaps, citizens will show the same respect toward bureaucrats and join in this “partnership in virtue.” The tone here is not simply one of greater cooperativeness and openness to behavioralism. What Hart suggests in this call for a “partnership in virtue” is that we should trust the exemplars of benevolence and not press those who wield the most power to share it more broadly or exercise it more openly. It is a partnership in virtue, not in power. This modern version of civic humanism, in fact, comes much closer to the elitist Ciceronian model Hart invoked at the outset of the paper than he may have realized.

After *Minnowbrook II* what remained of the original new public administration made something of a comeback. Administrative ethics did not cease to be a pressing legitimating concern for public administration. Frederickson, however, was drawn back to the other earlier concerns of equity and participation. In 1990 he published yet another article on social equity and acknowledged that Rawls was still the philosophical inspiration for this theme in the new public administration. Frederickson also admitted that “the theory thus far has been of limited use in the busy world of government.”⁴⁰ What was needed was a more fine-grained descriptive theory that distinguished between different public goods and services. Equality or equity in one area may not be the same as equality or equity in another. Second, public administration must make use of the techniques of policy analysis to identify more precisely which bureaucratic structures and decision rules influence the distribution of particular goods and services. Sometimes rules that seem to be designed strictly for organizational efficiency and effective service delivery have unintended distributional effects. It is (once again) urgent that these techniques be applied in the field of public administration, given the increasing inequalities in the distribution of goods and services over the past decade.⁴¹

This urgency is acutely felt in the area of environmental policy making. Frederickson suggests that equity requires that public administrators have a special duty to look out for the interests of future generations, both proximate and far into the future. Reliance on markets to solve policy problems such as toxic-waste disposal and the proper use of wetlands inevitably disadvantages future generations.

Even in areas such as education and transportation, there is the highly complex issue of how much the present generation should pay for the well-being of future generations. Frederickson seems to agree with Rawls's philosophical justification for a strong principle of intergenerational justice. However, he argues that its application must be tailored to specific policy areas.⁴² While Frederickson skims over a large number of philosophical views in this article, he shows creativity in applying his own differentiated view of equity to several different problems, and he does it with newfound enthusiasm. Clearly Rawls's theory continues to influence him, and his own personal commitment to social equity in public administration has not flagged.

Frederickson undoubtedly now feels the need to apply moral principles to particular cases and refine them in light of these cases. He hints that this, more than philosophical speculation, is the first order of business for public administration.⁴³ The relationship between moral principles and cases is similar to Rawls's concept of reflective equilibrium, but for Rawls, the test of moral principles is how well they cohere with considered moral intuitions against a background of just institutions.⁴⁴ The parallel to Frederickson's turn to case studies is admittedly loose, but some philosophers have developed a similar point using the concept of moral casuistry. We might say that Frederickson overlooked an opportunity to apply Rawls's conception of reflective equilibrium to the pragmatic turn in his own work at this point.⁴⁵

I want to consider one last article by Frederickson that raises a slightly different theoretical issue, the meaning of the word "public" in public administration.⁴⁶ This will take us back to Frederickson's earlier passing comment on the original position as a method of moral reasoning.

In this 1991 article Frederickson surveys the competing theories of public administration and suggests four "requisites" for any general theory of public administration. First, any sound theory of public administration must be grounded in the "regime values" of the Constitution. This means that the theory must specify the highest moral obligations of public administration in terms of values to which every citizen is committed. Rawls holds a similar view in *Political Liberalism*, where he emphasizes that his theory draws upon the "fundamental ideas ... implicit in the public political culture of a democratic society."⁴⁷

Second, the theory must endorse an "enhanced" conception of virtuous citizenship like Hart's conception of civic humanism. Virtue here is not simply a noncognitive feeling or emotion. Frederickson makes it clear he believes that the virtuous public administrator is someone capable of philosophical reflection on and critical judgments about contested terms like equality and equity as well as someone who wants to do this for the public's good. Third, public-administration theory must spell out ways of

responding to the collective interest and also inchoate public interests, not just the individual and group interests of private citizens. Collective interests include the unexpressed interests of future generations to a clean environment and a rich cultural heritage; inchoate public interests include the interest in equal treatment under the law. Finally, Frederickson asserts, a theory of public administration must characterize the relationship between public administrators and their public in terms of love and benevolence, not only self-interest.

Looking back over these four requisite conditions for a sound theory, Frederickson concludes that they contain a vision of the public that public administrators serve and that bears partial resemblance to the implicit publics in each of the five competing theories (pluralist, public choice, representative government, clientist, and “citizen” theories). It is the last, the citizen theory of public administration, that comes closest to satisfying all four requisite conditions for a conception of the public as Frederickson defines them. Pluralist, clientist, and public-choice theories are only responsive to organized interest groups and those with enough private resources to be heard. The theory of the public as a body of represented voters is more promising, but not sufficient: it ignores the need for an ongoing day-to-day relationship between citizens and bureaucrats. Only the conception of the public as a body of citizens rather than clients, consumers, constituent voters, or special-interest groups seems to match up fairly well on all four counts.

While this comes as no surprise, what is interesting is Frederickson’s attempt to find a metalanguage for comparing and synthesizing these competing theories. He wants to develop a language about the public that they all share, even though they seem to approach this amorphous concept from very different directions. In other words, Frederickson is searching for a method of moral reasoning that would allow us to weigh the strengths and weaknesses of the five competing theories in a moral way.

In Rawlsian terms, this could be done using the original position. If you did not know whether you belonged to a strong interest group, a powerful voting block, a rich lobbying group, or a well-respected professional organization, what virtues and principles would you choose in your theory of public administration? This use of the original position, I think, is a legitimate extension of Rawls’s characterization of it as a device for “public reflection and self-clarification.”⁴⁸ It is a method of “public reason,” not just a technical philosophical tool, that can be used to discuss vexed public questions as long as there is some “overlapping consensus” to begin with.

That Frederickson had sensed this earlier but not explored it is understandable. In constructing his framework for a theory of public administration in 1991 he has, in fact, found a way to make good use of perhaps

the most essential part of Rawls's theory, the original position. More important than Rawls's preferred moral principles, the method of reasoning from behind a veil of ignorance serves as a way of representing particularistic preferences so that their public values can be critically compared. This is what Frederickson wants to do. Even though all five competing theories have a different degree of public worth for him, they all have some public merit.

The consumer model of the public that public-choice theorists presuppose, perhaps the least favored from Frederickson's own perspective, has to be granted some legitimacy. While programs like school vouchers threaten to worsen social and economic inequality, it is also true that many public schools have been unresponsive to the need for self-respect, especially among poor minority students. If special publicly chartered and publicly funded schools that emphasize minority cultural traditions can enhance self-respect without discriminating against majority students or neglecting other educational goals, then providing families with this option seems to have a certain *prima facie* legitimacy from a Rawlsian point of view. Care would have to be taken so that the quality of mainstream public education did not suffer, but the point is that this sort of "public choice" is not necessarily unjust. Freedom and self-respect are no less "regime values" than equality.

What I am suggesting is that Frederickson, in so many words, has called for the use of what Rawls calls "free public reason" to the internal theoretical debates in public administration. Public reason is the manner in which we settle disagreements about "the good of the public and matters of fundamental justice" in the public domain among citizens.⁴⁹ Public reasons are those, given in this context, that avoid appeals to controversial moral, religious, and philosophical doctrines. These address only the "constitutional essentials" of the political society.⁵⁰ They are reasons offered in a fair-minded, civil, and tolerant way. And they are reasons guided by "principles of reasoning and rules of evidence in the light of what citizens are to decide whether substantive principles properly apply and to identify laws and policies that best satisfy them."⁵¹

There is an "overlapping consensus" that Rawls claims exists in liberal democratic societies over liberty and equal opportunity. Thus reasonable persons with different comprehensive moral views of the good society and the good life can agree, but using public reason, on principles governing the basic political structure of that society. This has its analog in the consensus Frederickson hopes to identify among the five competing theories of public administration. Although these theories rest on a different metaphysical conception of the person and "the public," they all accept the regime values of a liberal democratic society. On the basis of this overlapping political consensus, advocates for the competing theories

can discuss the meaning of administrative virtue, responsibility, and discretion. Such a discussion, then, would be an example of the use of free public-administrative reason.

In extending Rawls's account of public reason in this direction, I have linked it with his earlier formulation of the original position and the later notion of free public reason. The two earlier methods of reasoning are not obviously identical, and some commentators have even argued that Rawls's shift to free public reason is a mistake. However, public reason is less precise than the original position. Its avoidance of strong truth claims seems to surrender the ideal of impartiality that motivated *A Theory of Justice*.⁵² On its own terms, it may not be enough to sustain an "overlapping consensus" among deeply opposed parties in a liberal democratic society.⁵³

Although Rawls does sometimes describe the original position in decisionist terms, he has gradually adopted a different way of characterizing it as device of representation and a method for "public reflection and self-clarification."⁵⁴ That links it directly to the seemingly more broadly based method of public reason. Rawls did not believe all citizens must rely on the original position to make all of their political decisions. To step behind the veil of ignorance every time a political decision has to be made is cumbersome. However, for public administrators, judges, and citizens facing significant political issues like civil disobedience, the original position in this less decisionist sense is a prerequisite for identifying and fine-tuning the guidelines for free public reason. If public administrators must have a philosophical frame of mind, as Frederickson argues, then theirs should enable them to deliberate behind the veil of ignorance. Ordinarily, most citizens can simply be taught to respect these guidelines of public reason. However, public administrators must be able to adjust and interpret these guidelines as well as on a day-to-day and case-by-case basis. This means they should be able to use the original position as a device for representing the public content of competing views when parties disagree.

In justice as fairness ... the guidelines of inquiry of public reason, as well as its principle of legitimacy, have the same basis as the substantive principles of justice. This means in justice as fairness that the parties in the original position, in adopting principles of justice for the basic structure, must also adopt guidelines and criteria of public reason for applying those norms.⁵⁵

The constraints on knowledge and motivation in the original position must be adjusted to bring considered judgments and principles into reflective equilibrium. In addition, public administrators must adjust these

constraints by trying to find a socially acceptable set of guidelines for free public reason, one that all the (reasonable) parties involved will accept. In the debate between public-choice theorists, representative democrats, constitutionalists, and virtue ethicists over the purposes of public administration, the mediating public administrator can find agreement on the guidelines governing public reason. They must rely on the original position or something like it to clear away the conceptual confusions and false problems. In this sense the theorists of public administration can be characterized as political educators. They teach those in government how to think about basic issues like responsibility, participation, and equity.⁵⁶

Conclusion

To summarize, I have called attention to three areas in which Rawls's theory of justice has had a direct relationship to recent work in public administration:

1. The extensions of Rawls's theory that public administrators such as Frederickson have suggested (e.g., the extension of the obligation of noblesse oblige and the principle of participation)
2. The refinement of the Rawlsian conception of equality as applied to different public services
3. The development of a complex theory of administrative virtue that reaches beyond Rawlsian civility to benevolence

In addition, I have argued that the search for common ground among competing theories of public administration, not just Frederickson's own preferred theory, relies on something like Rawls's device of the original position. The original position, which Frederickson asserts is a model of moral reasoning public administrators should follow, is designed to specify guidelines for free public reason (and not just pick out particular regulative principles of justice). In this capacity the original position can mediate between competing theories of public administration, themselves already attempting to mediate conflicts between bureaucrats and their clients and constituents.

This second-order mediating function that Frederickson would like Rawls's theory to perform for public administration has already occurred in other spheres where professional ethics and policy analysis are more complexly articulated. In medicine, for example, we can distinguish three levels of political activity. The first level is that of the social practice of medicine itself. This social practice includes the professional-client relationship between doctors and patients. However, it also includes the

lobbying activities of professional medical associations, the expert testimony medical professionals give in legislative and judicial hearings, and the organized activities of patients and others concerned about the power of the medical professions.

As conflicts between doctors and patients (both individual clients and organized consumers of medical services) erupt and develop, two kinds of mediating forces have emerged in response. One force is expressed in the language of policy analysis. Experts in epidemiology, for example, have been enlisted to mediate conflicts such as the availability of experimental drugs for certain contagious diseases. How should clinical trials be run? How quickly can new drugs be made available commercially? Doctors, patients, drug companies, and consumer groups are unable to solve problems like these themselves and must rely on policy analysts to help them out. The other force is expressed in the language of professional ethics. These less quantitative and scientific questions concern the moral duties of professionals and rights of corporations, clients, and consumers. For example, what is the "informed consent" of a patient? In this case the mediating force is wielded by medical ethicists who, like policy analysts, provide some help in resolving the conflicts between professionals and their clients and consumers.⁵⁷

Realistically, these efforts at mediation often fail. Policy analysts disagree among themselves about what counts as an emergency and how new drug trials should be structured. Professional ethicists certainly do not all speak in one voice. To mediate among them, a second-order mediation sometimes comes into play. At this more abstract level, philosophical methods of reasoning like the original position or the impartial utilitarian spectator are enlisted. They help professionals, the advocates of clients and consumers, policy analysts, and professional ethicists to construct a provisional consensus that will see them through the problem or conflict at hand.

I am suggesting that the disciplinary social practice of public administration, in a rudimentary way, is beginning to show signs of the same kind of three-tiered differentiation. Public administrators, like physicians and other medical professionals, often find themselves embroiled in rigidified conflicts: businesses threaten to leave town, unions go on strike, clients file embarrassing lawsuits, and consumer groups occupy public spaces. As street-level bureaucrats, public administrators have to deal with individual clients; teachers have their students, social workers their cases. Above the street-level, public administrators must still face organized consumer groups, from taxpayers in revolt to neighborhood associations demanding better municipal services, either in the press or in court.

These first-level conflicts can be partially resolved by policy analysts and codes of administrative ethics. The former can help by calculating

just how much money is needed, say, for a new sewer system. The latter can help by spelling out just how far an assistant principal can and should go in disciplining unruly students. But as in the case of medicine, policy analysts and administrative ethicists will disagree. Again, some method of reasoning is needed to decide how to iron out these conflicts.

Frederickson's attempt to find some common ground — ground that different conceptions of “the public” in public-administration theories can occupy — addresses these second-tier conflicts from yet a third level. Rawlsian guidelines of public reason chosen behind a veil of ignorance might be able to set the ground rules for debates among competing theories of administrative effectiveness, social equity, and participation.

In the case of publicly chartered schools mentioned above, only public discussions of the issue after the facts and possible consequences are on the table are likely to settle the matter. The costs to taxpayers, parents, teacher unions, and other students and the benefits to students in the charter schools will not be weighed by policy analysts and ethicists alone. Because there will be disagreements about the facts, possible consequences to the school system, and the morality of this kind of cultural education in the public schools, guidelines for public debate among these parties will have to be set if the issue is to be resolved in a deliberative manner among administrators and the directly interested parties.

There is no reason, in principle, to think that this kind of second-order mediation cannot work in public administration just as well as it has in medicine. Is it the right thing to do? From the point of view of preserving professional authority and satisfying client and consumer needs, it seems to be the right thing to do. But, are these the only relevant perspectives? Should we simply assume that what is good for professionals, clients, and consumers is good for a democratic society as a whole? The appropriate moral limits of professional authority and the reasonable needs of clients and consumers may not be limits that can be defined behind the veil of ignorance. Public administration, like other disciplinary social practices, may be moving in a Rawlsian direction, even though Rawls's particular principles of justice pose a difficult problem that requires that we think about the voices as well as the images that can be seen and heard behind the veil of ignorance.⁵⁸

Notes

1. J. Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971, 274).
2. *Ibid.*, 529.
3. *Ibid.*, 290.

4. *Ibid.*, 275–6. Rawls follows R. A. Musgrave in dividing government into allocation, stabilization, transfer, and distribution branches, later adding a special exchange branch to deal with public funding of public goods (p. 282).
5. J. Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993, 54–8).
6. J. Rawls, *Theory of Justice*, 199.
7. *Ibid.*, 33.
8. L. Gulick, “Notes on the Theory of Organization,” reprinted in *Classics of Public Administration*, Eds. J. M. Shafritz and A. C. Hyde (Oak Park, Ill.: Moore Publishing, 1978, 44).
9. R. A. Dahl, “The Science of Public Administration: Three Problems,” reprinted in *Classics of Public Administration*, eds. J. M. Shafritz and A. C. Hyde (Oak Park, Ill.: Moore Publishing, 1978, 124).
10. C. E. Lindblom, “The Science of ‘Muddling Through,’” reprinted in *Classics of Public Administration*, eds. J. M. Shafritz and A. C. Hyde (Oak Park, Ill.: Moore Publishing, 1978, 206).
11. “The problems of extension” Rawls mentions include health care, particularly for those with special needs, international relations (or what he calls “the law of peoples”), duties to future generations, and the application of justice as fairness to other species and the environment. Extending the theory involves more than simply the mechanical application of Rawls’s principles of justice as fairness to particular policy problems. See Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, 20, 244. For an example of an extension of the theory to health care that Rawls seems to accept, see N. Daniels, *Just Health Care* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).
12. For other references to Rawls, see K. G. Dunhardt, *The Ethics of Public Service: Resolving Moral Dilemmas in Public Organizations* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988); and for other approaches to public administration from a moral point of view, see J. S. Bowman, Ed., *Ethical Frontiers in Public Management: Seeking New Strategies for Resolving Public Dilemmas* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991); J. A. Rohr, *To Run a Constitution: The Legitimacy of the Administrative State* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1986); R. A. Chapman, *Ethics in Public Service* (Ottawa, Canada: Carleton University Press, 1993); and R. C. Chandler, *Civic Virtue in the American Public: Essays on Moral Philosophy and Public Administration* (Kalamazoo: Western Michigan University Press, 1987).
13. Proceedings were published in Frank Marini, Ed., *Toward a New Public Administration: The Minnowbrook Perspective* (Scranton, Penn.: Chandler, 1971).
14. *Ibid.*, 311.
15. H. G. Frederickson, “Minnowbrook II: Changing Epochs of Public Administration,” *Public Admin. Rev.* 49 (1989): 97.
16. H. G. Frederickson, *New Public Administration* (University: University of Alabama Press, 1980, 38).
17. D. K. Hart, “Social Equity, Justice, and the Equitable Administrator,” *Pub. Admin. Rev.* 34 (1974): 3–11.

18. Frederickson, *New Public Administration*, 41.
19. H. G. Frederickson, "The Lineage of New Public Administration," *Admin. and Soc.* 8 (1976): 171.
20. Rawls, *Theory of Justice*, 116.
21. Frederickson, *New Public Administration*, 41.
22. "Now what can be said to the more favored man? To begin with, it is clear that the well-being of each depends on a scheme of social cooperation without which no one could have a satisfactory life. Secondly, we can ask for the willing cooperation of everyone only if the terms of the scheme are reasonable. The difference principle, then, seems to be a fair basis on which those better endowed, or more fortunate in their social circumstances, could expect others to collaborate with them when some workable arrangement is a necessary condition of the good of all." Rawls, *Theory of Justice*, p. 103.
23. Hart, "Social Equity," 8–9.
24. Rawls also considers Supreme Court decisions, at the best, exemplars of "free public reason." See Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, 231–40.
25. Frederickson, *New Public Administration*, 46.
26. "What is essential is that the constitution should establish equal rights to engage in public affairs and that measures be taken to maintain the fair value of these liberties. In a well-governed state only a small fraction of persons may devote much of their time to politics. There are many other forms of human good. But this fraction, whatever its size, will most likely be drawn more or less equally from all sectors of society. The many communities of interests and centers of public life will have their active members who look after their concerns." Rawls, *Theory of Justice*, 228.
27. *Ibid.*, 42.
28. The complex causes for these new sentiments and demands are rooted, I believe, in a changing global political economy. But this is a subject that goes far beyond the boundaries of this chapter.
29. Rawls rejects civic humanism in general, not just benevolence as a political virtue. Civic humanism, he argues, is a "form of Aristotelianism" that requires political participation for achieving the good life. Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, 206.
30. Here, obviously, I am drawing on the work of Michel Foucault, especially *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Pantheon, 1977).
31. See M. Davis, "The Ethics Boom, What and Why," *Centennial Rev.* 34 (1990): 163–86.
32. H. G. Fredrickson and D. K. Hart, "The Public Service and the Patriotism of Benevolence," *Public Admin. Rev.* 45 (1985): 549.
33. *Ibid.*, 549.
34. *Ibid.*, 550.
35. *Ibid.*, 551.
36. *Ibid.*, 552.
37. Frederickson, "Minnowbrook II," 49, 99.

38. D. K. Hart, "A Partnership in Virtue among All Citizens: The Public Service and Civic Humanism," *Pub. Admin. Rev.* 49 (1989): 102.
39. *Ibid.*, 104.
40. H. G. Frederickson, "Public Administrators and Social Equity," *Pub. Admin. Rev.* 50 (1990): 230.
41. *Ibid.*, 536.
42. H. G. Frederickson, "Can Public Officials Correctly Be Said to Have Obligations to Future Generations?" *Pub. Admin. Rev.* 54 (1994): 458. The summary of Rawls's argument here is a bit misleading in that Frederickson fails to emphasize that if the difference principle was simply applied to generations, the result, as Rawls notes, would be a zero savings rate where the first generation is (likely to be) the least advantaged generation. Hence the need for a special just savings principle. See Rawls, *Theory of Justice*, 291. But also see Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, 273–4.
43. H. G. Frederickson, Ed., *Ethics and Public Administration* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1993, 9–10).
44. Rawls, *Theory of Justice*, 20–2, 48–51 and Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, 8.
45. On the subject of moral casuistry and its relationship to Rawls, which comes closer to Frederickson's view here, see R. J. Albert and S. Toulmin, *The Abuse of Casuistry: A History of Moral Reasoning* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988, 285–93).
46. H. G. Frederickson, "Toward a Theory of the Public for Public Administration," *Admin. and Soc.* 22 (1991): 395–417.
47. Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, 13.
48. *Ibid.*, 26.
49. *Ibid.*, 213.
50. *Ibid.*, 217.
51. *Ibid.*, 224.
52. B. Barry, *Justice as Impartiality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).
53. S. Scheffler, "The Appeal of Political Liberalism," *Ethics* 105 (1994): 4–22.
54. Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, 26.
55. *Ibid.*, 225.
56. For an uncritical view of this mediating role, see D. F. Thompson, "Paradoxes of Government Ethics," *Pub. Admin. Rev.* 52 (1992): 254–9. Thompson describes the "main business of government ethics" as an "education of democracy" (p. 255).
57. Dan W. Brock argues that the deliberations of ethics commissions on subjects like euthanasia should not be guided by either deductivist moral theories or particular moral judgments. Instead, these commissions, like other public policy-making bodies, should reach "considered moral judgments" through the Rawlsian methods of reflective equilibrium and public reason. "The task of ethics commissions is often to try to find a common public moral discourse that can yield a consensus on which public policy can be formed among individuals and groups otherwise in disagreement on many important matters." See D. W. Brock, "Public Moral Discourse," in *Society's Choices: Social and Ethical Decision Making in Biomedicine* (Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1995, 238).

58. My own view is that Rawlsian theory does indeed operate as a political education for participants in administrative politics, but it is tone deaf to the ways in which this politics of policy making domesticates and disarms many citizens on the margins within neocorporatist societies. I have discussed the democratic limitations of Rawls's theory and the original position in particular in *Intimacy and Spectacle: Liberal Theory as Political Education* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994).

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RISE OF POSTMODERNISM

VI

Chapter 25: From Positivism to Postpositivism: An Unfinished Journey

All forms of knowledge entail the exercise of power.

Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings*, 1980

Chapter 26: On the Language of Bureaucracy: Postmodernism, Plain English, and Wittgenstein

I do not want my writing to spare other people the trouble of thinking.

Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Understanding Wittgenstein*, 1985

Chapter 27: Postmodern Philosophy, Postmodernity, and Public Organizational Theory

We no longer believe that the truth is true when all its veils have been removed.

Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, 1994

Chapter 25

From Positivism to Postpositivism: An Unfinished Journey

Laurent Dobuzinkis

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Today, the legitimacy of public bureaucracies is more and more often challenged by an increasingly individualistic citizenry and by new political

forces (e.g., the Republican majority in Congress). Public servants in most Western democracies must deal with many new demands and expectations. At the same time, they also face severe financial restrictions. Indeed both the scope and the role of government have become very problematic in the United States and around the world. Original ideas and reform proposals have been advanced in recent years; they reflect a new understanding of policy analysis and public-sector management more suited to the problems of “postmodern” societies. Much-talked-about reforms have been implemented in the United States and other countries. Does this mean that public administration has been radically transformed, or are these changes merely the outcome of yet another fad? Have we really entered the age of postmodern government?

Before answering that question, a few definitions need to be provided. To begin with, the phrase “public administration” is less simple than it may appear. Public administration is both an art and a science. It is a practical activity, with its own rules of professional conduct and criteria of excellence, as well as an academic discipline, with its own theories and methodological precepts. (There are even dissenting voices claiming that public administration is neither a discipline nor a profession, or maybe is one, but not the other (1)). The discipline of public administration is itself composed of two camps: one, centered in political science or sociology departments, which does basic research on bureaucracy; another, centered in professional schools, which is more concerned with problem-oriented research (2). The two sides of public administration do not always match. Thus any generalization about trends in public administration must be examined very critically.

Moreover, the sociocultural context of public administration greatly influences its intellectual content and its tacit values. This chapter is concerned primarily with public administration in a North American context (i.e., the United States and Canada). Within this context there are obvious and not always reconcilable differences between national, state, provincial, and municipal governments. Indeed, even within any single level of government there usually are significant variations among departments, commissions, and so on.

The heterogeneity of public administration being granted, there clearly exist some concepts, values, and goals that cross institutional and disciplinary boundaries. The formative period was marked by a generally positivist understanding of how human organizations function and of the psychology of their members. Now positivism is another vague term that has been rendered almost meaningless by critics who equate it with whatever methodology they reject. But, as a starting point, it can serve as a convenient umbrella for a range of approaches that were (or are still) characterized by (a) their emphasis on objective, as opposed to

normative, analysis — the assumption being that the observer can achieve a critical distance from the observed and independently constituted realities under examination; and (b) the notion that lawlike regularities can be identified for the purpose of explaining and predicting both natural and societal phenomena.

Postpositivist approaches challenge both these assumptions. Postpositivism, however, does not constitute a well-integrated, coherent doctrine. Postmodernism, of which postpositivism is an aspect, is even more difficult to pin down. It included various philosophical currents opposed to the rationalist doctrines that form the intellectual legacy of the Enlightenment. In its most radical expression, postmodernism undermines all hierarchical orderings: there are, according to this view, no foundations upon which either theoretical knowledge or societal structures can be safely grounded. In a less strict sense, postmodernism refers to societal trends that pose a challenge to the set of institutions and cultural patterns we have inherited from industrial society as it existed prior to the emergence of the information revolution (circa 1960). As such, postmodernism encompasses many areas of cultural life that bear little or no relationship to the practical concerns of government officials. However, societal changes and cultural trends do have consequences for policy making and public-sector management.

Although it may not be helpful to speak about postmodern politics or government as if these were factual realities, there is little doubt that public administration is in ferment today. The positivist certainties of a few generations ago no longer provide the solid ground upon which the discipline can grow. Not everything that happens in the world of public administration can be interpreted as an aspect of the emergence of postmodern values, but the term “postpositivism” describes rather well some of the new directions in public administration. And yet the shift from positivism to postpositivism in public administration is neither complete nor entirely evident. This chapter provides a general perspective on the circumstances and effects of this complex dynamics.

Over the course of the last two decades, we have witnessed the emergence of a critical discourse that challenges the idea that objective, empirical models are appropriate for dealing with political and organizational phenomena. Doubts have also been raised about the degree to which actual scientific practice corresponds to the idealized model proposed by positivistic accounts of “the” scientific method. This chapter attempts to show that it would be wrong to describe this evolution as being a simple and unambiguous shift from one paradigm to another. Whether other disciplines (e.g., political science) that also evolved from a positivistic to a postpositivistic stage is a moot point, the hope is to show that public administration has never been unambiguously positivistic

nor has it become wholeheartedly postpositivistic. As far as public administration is concerned, the positivistic discourse never became a coherent and all-encompassing “grand narrative,” as Lyotard¹ would say (3). Here we encounter an interesting paradox: with its partial narratives, its succession of incompletely formulated, or only superficially applied paradigms, public administration has always been standing “on the brink of the postmodern condition” (4).

The first section traces the origins of public administration back to a political and cultural climate that was very receptive to the idea that science could provide answers to the problems of the time. The second section examines the extent, although limited, to which this outlook meshes with the view that organizations are like machines that can be designed and controlled by experts. The third section raises the question of whether efforts undertaken over the last two or three decades to apply the methodology of public choice to the study of bureaucracies mark a qualified return to positivism. The fourth section examines the circumstances that have led to a renewed emphasis on citizen involvement in administrative and policy matters, and on the design of flexible, adaptive organizations. One can discern in these developments at least an echo of postmodernism. The final section examines new currents in scientific thinking which suggest that a more adequate science of public administration can be developed from a postpositivistic perspective.

Disciplining Administration

The 19th century was the age of positivism. Empirical observations and logical deductions came to be seen as the only legitimate sources of knowledge. Science and technology appeared to provide rational grounds for the establishment of a new social, moral, and political order. Auguste Comte, for example, argued that “the development of all sciences followed from mathematics, through astronomy, the physical and biological sciences, and reach their apogee in the rise of the social sciences” (5). Even if Comte coined the term “positive philosophy,” he was certainly not the only thinker who contributed to its development. Most of the social philosophers and pioneers of the early social sciences shared the view that social realities can be known objectively, i.e., that separating facts from values is both possible and desirable. This was true of John Stuart Mill, Herbert Spencer, Emile Durkheim, and Max Weber, to name some of the most important ones, and in a more qualified sense, this was true also of Marx (6).

The practical effects of this new faith were not immediately visible. However, the political and bureaucratic elites in western Europe undertook

to reform their administrative systems early in the second half of the century. For example, in Great Britain the Trevelyan-Northcote report of 1857 marked the first step toward the creation of a professional civil service; by 1870 a politically neutral Civil Service Commission was in charge of recruiting the members of the British professional administrative elite, and a rudimentary system of classification was in place. When Max Weber wrote his classical analysis of bureaucracy, the institutions he was describing existed in most countries of continental Europe. Administrative reforms in North America took a little longer to produce noticeable effects. In both the United States and Canada, the British example inspired many active reformers; books and articles were published on this topic (7). But the practice of political patronage was so well entrenched — indeed, Jacksonian democracy had made a virtue out of political patronage — that it became necessary for the reformers to mobilize political support. While administrative reforms in Britain and in other European countries came about as a result of a top-down process, it was a bottom-up process in the United States as various groups, notably the National Civil Service Reform League, took up that cause. Their campaign for a professional civil service had very practical objectives. Their discourse, however, revealed an underlying commitment to “science” defined less as a specific activity than as a mythical force. In an age when there was still no reason to doubt that science and technology might bring anything other than “progress,” one could believe that technological rationality ought to guide social and political matters.

The momentum toward administrative reforms gathered up speed during the Progressive Era (1896–1920). However, movement in that direction had begun even earlier. In the 1870s and 1880s political pressures and theoretical reflections converged; at both the practical and the theoretical levels, the ideal of a professional public service took shape. It became evidently clear to a variety of interests that the requirement of a modern industrial society in a phase of rapid expansion could be met only by a professional public service dedicated to rational principles of efficiency and nonpartisanship. It was “getting harder to run a constitution than to frame one” (8), as Woodrow Wilson wrote in 1887; Wilson, in fact, was involved in the reform movement. Thus Congress passed the Civil Service Act (Pendleton Act) in 1883, which marked a decisive step toward the implementation of the merit principle in the U.S. government.² Throughout the following decades, the scope of the merit system continued to expand at the federal level as well as in many states. Also, the budgetary process was rationalized by the introduction of line-item budgeting. At the municipal level, many cities adopted the city-manager system; indeed, some reformers tried to push the idea of a state manager as a counterweight to the governor (9).

In this context, public administration emerged as a discipline. Of course, the study of government and the search for scientific principles of administration can be traced back to much earlier times. The term “bureaucracy” itself dates back to 18th-century France when it was first used in its modern sense by Vincent de Gournay (10); he could have had in mind the “Physiocrats” (e.g., Turgot, Quesnay) who had posed some of the very first maxims of rational governance. Classical political economy, as originally conceived by Adam Smith and David Ricardo, further advanced the idea that managing the affairs of the state is something that should be guided by demonstrable principles instead of being left to the caprice of the sovereign. However, public administration as we know it today in North America originated in the last decade of the 19th century and in the first two or three decades of the 20th century.

Woodrow Wilson’s 1887 seminal essay “The Study of Public Administration” is ritualistically cited as the historical foundation of the discipline. According to Paul van Riper, who looked at the citations in the public-administration literature between the 1890s and the First World War, Wilson’s paper actually had little impact at the time it was published (11, 12). Regardless of its practical influence, Wilson’s article eloquently conveys the values that inspired the pioneers of the discipline; they defended and promoted these values in a number of classical texts (e.g., Frank J. Goodnow’s *Politics and Administration*, 1900, or W. F. Willoughby’s *Principles of Public Administration*, 1927). What Wilson did was to provide an application to public administration of the positivist dogma that facts must be separated from values by proclaiming that politics and administration belong to different spheres. From that perspective, the task of public bureaucracies is purely instrumental; it is strictly concerned with the efficient implementation of policies and programs.

The instrumental quality of bureaucracies was also an essential element of Max Weber’s analysis (13). Although references to his writings on the subject now appear in most textbooks, North American scholars were not familiar with them until the mid-1940s. However, despite this chronological discrepancy, Weber’s ideal bureaucracy deserves to be at least briefly mentioned in the context of this discussion of the positivist nature of the foundations of public administration.

The politics-administration dichotomy has long ceased to be embraced as an empirical reality. Middle- and upper-level bureaucrats have become accepted as policy makers in their own right since the 1940s. With the considerable extension of the responsibilities of the state that began in America during the New Deal, elected officials have been unable to compete with the expertise and know-how of their bureaucratic officials. The same holds true for Canada; indeed, in the 1950s it was common to say in Canada that the top-ranking bureaucrats of that

era — the so-called mandarins — were running the country.³ In both countries, the policy-making role of senior bureaucrats has been curtailed in more recent years by political leaders determined to reduce public expenditures and to ensure stricter accountability. But even the achievement of these goals is conditional, in part at least, on the cooperation of senior bureaucrats.

The positivist separation of facts and values resurfaced under a new form with the triumph of strategic planning in the early 1960s. Policy analysis in the age of Planning Programming Budgeting System (PPBS)⁴ was trumpeted as a rigorous, scientifically based exercise in fact finding and program evaluation, while politics was described as irrational and disruptive. This more modern version of the politics-administration dichotomy itself collapsed under the weight of evidence showing that strategic planning has failed in both the private and the public sectors (14–16). As Henry Mintzberg explains (17), the idea that large organizations should pursue strategic goals is not problematic; rather the problem lies in the professional planners' conviction that strategy formation should be the product of a controlled process of analysis and reporting, a "system" that functions independently of the contingencies of the market or of politics.

Thus supposedly revolutionary concepts and methods often turn out to be recycled ideas. To put it in less polemical terms, a historical perspective is too often lacking in public administration, as Guy Adams notes (19). We need to follow an historically informed and perceptive approach in order to evaluate Harold Lasswell's contribution to the discipline, and to appreciate the tradition he represented. On the one hand, his efforts to create new interdisciplinary "policy sciences" (20, 21) often seem to run parallel to the reformulation of the old politics-administration dichotomy into a technocratic politics-policy distinction. The epistemology of the proposed policy sciences shares with the behaviorist social sciences of the 1950s and 1960s a commitment to linear causal modeling using statistical methods. On the other hand, Lasswell insisted that the policy sciences are not simply applied social sciences (22). The positivism inherent in his methodological prescription was balanced by a contextual orientation that took values as an integral part of the analytical process. The policy sciences he envisioned were to be "the policy sciences of democracy." Democracy needs both enlightened leadership and the freedom to engage in critical debates. The Lasswellian scheme achieved a synthesis of both aspects. The policy advisor or public-sector manager who would wish to be guided by it would have to be both priest and jester, to borrow a metaphor from Douglas Torgerson. The priestly function is that of the professional analyst carefully collecting data according to the best methodological rules. Lest he or she confuse these data with the

“real” world (or the many worlds constructed by other actors in the political system), the policy analysis must also take care to answer the jester’s irreverent questions, like “is this perhaps not too neat?” (23).

We can detect here the influence of John Dewey. His thoughts had a profound impact on the generation of progressive social scientists who laid the foundations of public administration. Dewey defended the idea that the scientific methods should be used to solve social problems (24). But Dewey was not a dogmatist positivist (25); he did not agree that facts and values belong to completely different spheres. On the contrary, he maintained that experience can help us sort out values, that the empirical world is where values can be tested. Democratic procedures are precisely the means to that end. Lasswell had been a student of Charles Merriam, and Merriam had been influenced by Dewey, who had been his colleague at the University of Chicago (Dewey in philosophy, Merriam in political science). As Gerald Caiden explains,

[Merriam] encouraged his staff to engage in public controversy and reform advocacy. It was from his department that L. D. White produced the first undergraduate textbook, *Introduction to Public Administration* (...1926), which evidenced less enthusiasm for basic principles and scientific management [than authors like Willoughby] and endeavored to take into account the political environment of public administration (26).⁵

To recap, the first steps toward the creation of a new discipline concerned with the study of public administration were taken at the turn of the century by academics who believed strongly that science and technology could improve the efficiency of state institutions. Moreover, they thought a scientific approach to matters of administration would place limits on the irrationality of the political process. However, they were not dogmatic positivists; they did not subscribe to all the tenets of logical positivism as it was then taking shape in philosophy departments (25). Dewey’s philosophy is of central importance here. This is because of its significant influence on the thoughts of his contemporaries in academe and beyond, but also insofar as it is symptomatic of the ambiguities — or complexities — of pragmatism and the Progressive movement. Science and technology were promoted by the reformers in part because of what they represent in terms of analytical rigor and objectivity. Science was valued by many reformers because they also hoped that by making the political process more rational and less subject to partisan influences, the cause of authentic democracy could be further advanced. In other words, the facts-values, politics-administration dichotomy was itself harnessed to a higher end.

It would be a mistake to think that these values and concerns belong to a bygone age. They reappear in different guises whenever administrative reforms or policy innovations reach the top of the agenda. The next section highlights some of the practical dimensions of these debates.

The Proper Object of a Positive Science of Administration: Mechanistic and Organismic Metaphors

What has been the empirical output of the positivist science of administration? The standard answer to that question can be found in most textbooks.⁶ It is the story of the rise and fall of “scientific management.” This story contains more than a kernel of truth; however, it also glosses over some perplexing complexities.

It has become very common in the philosophy of science to speak about “paradigms” around which knowledge is structured. A paradigm often evolves from a rather simple picture, usually a metaphorical association between two apparently unrelated domains of experience. Mechanical systems are the sources of powerful metaphors that often have guided scientists in their investigations. Newtonian physics, for example, strongly suggests the image of universal clockwork — a machine in which all parts normally move and interact through the force of gravity in an unvarying way. It is also commonly assumed that typical bureaucracies “are designed and operated as if they were machines” (31). Gareth Morgan argues that the machine metaphor is still one of the most “ingrained in our conceptions of organizations” (32). It is ironic that today, when reformers articulate bold alternatives to the bureaucratic model, they often speak of “reengineering” government.

Most historical accounts of organization theory and of its relationship to public administration trace the machine metaphor back to the pre–World War II scientific management movement. This school of thought owed a great deal to the pioneering work of Frederick Taylor, although a few decades later, a translation from the French of Henri Fayol’s major work also made a significant contribution (33). Taylor studied industrial organization at the turn of the century, paying particular attention to the rationalization of manual labor (34). But he thought that the principles he had established — principles that Waldo described as “the inauguration of the positivist, the scientific and objective way of regarding human interrelations” (35) — would be relevant to “management,” a concept that was still relatively new then (36). His ideas were in fact carried over into public administration, with special emphasis on municipal government,⁷ by Morris Cooke (37) and, more generally, by the New York Bureau of

Municipal Research. One of the most important legacies from this period is the city-manager idea (38). Beyond the local level, scientific management provided the impetus for sustained efforts toward the development and implementation of systems of position classification, notably in the U.S. government (39) and in the Canadian federal government.⁸

Taylor's ideas on scientific management were later recast into a more theoretical and systemic mold by Luther Gulick and Lyndal Urwick, the editors of the seminal *Papers on the Science of Administration* (1937). This text is more concerned with public bureaucracies than Taylor's own work, but its underlying philosophy is identical. Mariann Jelinek made the point that modern strategic planning systems replicate at the managerial level what Taylor had started at the level of the factory (40). And today the new, and somewhat unfounded, belief in the revolutionary potential inherent in computers and information-management systems shows that Taylorism continues to resurface in different forms as circumstances change (41).

It is generally assumed that Taylor's model was extremely one-sided. According to Hindy Lauer Schachter's detailed analysis of Taylor's life and work, however, scientific management was actually not as mechanistic or authoritarian as commonly thought. It contained utopian prescriptions that did not coincide with the values of the industrial or bureaucratic establishments of the time (42). Certainly, one can find in Taylor's writings examples of mechanistic thinking that seem to reify works and management alike; after all, the logic of time and motion studies suggests that human beings are the extension of machines. Lauer points out, however, that what he was advocating was the development of an agreed upon (objective) knowledge basis that would make cooperation among all the members of an organization possible. In the context of his time, the organization of industrial production was very haphazard. While this allowed for some degree of autonomy on the part of workers and foremen, it also meant that relations of power prevailed in the absence of any shared expectations. Taylor intended to substitute cooperative relations to the arbitrary use of sanctions. If productivity could be increased significantly, both management and the workforce could share the benefits of the technological revolution. Indeed this idea of a mutually beneficial cooperation mattered more to him than merely improving the efficiency of productive activities. Because increased productivity could be achieved only through better training and scientific education, he stressed, with the development of new skills, workers would find opportunities for personal development. What Schachter very clearly brings out in her analysis of Taylor's work is the idealistic quality of much of what he stood for. Her reading of the reception of Taylor's ideas shows that his contemporaries also perceived that quality in him (43).

The way in which this story unfolds next entails the refutation of the machine metaphor by a series of developments that moved organization theory and public administration in the direction of a behaviorist (and more or less humanistic) paradigm. Mary Parker Follett showed the way in the 1920s (44). But two crucial moments in this evolution were the Hawthorne experiments and the work of Elton Mayo in the 1930s, and, immediately after the war, Herbert Simon's devastating critique of scientific management in his *Administrative Behavior* (45), a book in which he attempted a synthesis of the economic theory of rational choice and the psychology of decision making. Simon and authors with whom he collaborated on different projects or who are intellectually close to him (e.g., James Marsh, Richard Cyert (46, 47)) do not, properly speaking, belong to the Human Relations school. Their approach is developed by social psychologists (48) and management theorists (49–51) in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s. What they have in common, however, is a preoccupation with the study of organizational behavior. To describe the behaviorist perspective, Morgan uses the metaphor of the organization as a biological organism (52). This metaphor is not entirely appropriate in the sense that there are ways of conceiving organisms as machines of a special sort, biological machines, as it were.⁹ Morgan wishes to underline that behaviorist theories focus on the individuals who compose organizations, and they treat these individuals as autonomous persons capable of both rational and emotional reactions to their environment. The organismic metaphor is supposed to convey an impression of openness and adaptability. Efficiency and effectiveness remain essential criteria of administrative performance, but for the behaviorist critics of the mechanistic model, these goals can be achieved through relaxed controls and a less authoritarian leadership style.

The displacement of the machine metaphor by the behaviorist approach was a step toward a more sophisticated understanding of organizational dynamics. It was not, however, a radically new departure. Even if this approach proposed a more subtle and realistic account of the psychology of bureaucrats, it was still predicated on the notion that (a) facts relevant to an analysis of organizational behavior can be ascertained by an objective observer, and (b) reliable predictions can be made about the probable effects of specific measures (e.g., changes in the structures of incentives). If anything, the theories that emerged in the 1940s, 1950s, and the early 1960s were even more clearly positivist than the classical bureaucratic models of the 1920s and 1930s. As George Frederickson writes,

Theorists [like Simon, March, or Cyert] enriched their work with a deep understanding of formal and informal patterns of organizational control, the limits of rationality, and the like,

but [they] have stayed with the original means-end logic growing out of logical positivism. The close similarities between means-end analysis ... and the policy-administration dichotomy of the bureaucratic model [i.e., scientific management] are obvious (53).

This approach did not have as noticeable an impact on public administration as scientific management did. In practical terms, the impact has been far more restricted than it was in the corporate sector. Four or five decades ago, most government agencies did not have the flexibility to allow for much more autonomy, let alone risk taking, on the part of their personnel. The clearest example of a direct application of the teachings of the human-relations school was the introduction of organizational development (OD) techniques in public bureaucracies in the early 1960s (54). (The goal of OD was to use the behavioral sciences as a source of ideas and techniques for improving communications and team management.) OD was not a phenomenal success, but it paved the way for more participatory forms of management that are being implemented now and that are arguably less manipulative.

The impact on public administration by the research of Simon and other critics of the scientific-management approach who worked from a more or less explicit behaviorist perspective is rather more difficult to assess. The prewar orthodoxy was seriously shaken by Simon's demonstration that the famed "principles" proposed by Gulick, Urwick, and company were little more than proverbs. They make sense in a given context, but cannot be generalized, in part because they are often contradictory, and "principles" that are not generalizable are not true principles (55). The search for far-reaching principles of that nature was like putting the cart before the horses. Simon pleaded for the adoption of analytical methods that would (a) enable public-administration scholars to know what exactly happens within organizations and (b) allow them to describe specifically "how [individuals] would behave if they wished their activity to result in the greatest attainment of administrative objectives with scarce means" (56). Then, armed with that knowledge, they could finally attempt a grand synthesis at the level of principles, on the model of what economics has achieved. But that advice has not been very faithfully followed. Today (or not long ago, at any rate) "public administration still lags behind the other social sciences in the application of advanced statistical techniques" (57).

All the authors discussed so far proposed theories and methodologies that are not always compatible. Yet they shared two fundamental assumptions. First, their understanding of the scientific method was consistent with most of the tenets of positivism. They believed that objectivity is

neither impossible nor undesirable when studying human organizations. They tended to favor an inductive, empirical approach to the discovery of causal relationships. Second, their underlying political ideology — for they all had one, regardless of their commitment to objectivity — was, if not statist, at least tolerant of the administrative state and its expanded function in the post–New Deal era. The approach discussed in the next section seemingly perpetuates the positivist tradition. It rests, however, on fundamentally different methodological assumptions, since it follows a deductive logic. Moreover, it has been used not as a means to improve the managerial efficiency of the public sector, but as a rhetorical instrument for undermining the legitimacy of the interventionist modern state.

Public Choice: Positivism Revisited?

The belief that *the* scientific method is synonymous with the use of inductive empirical approaches is simply naïve. Sophisticated positivists join rank with more radical postpositivists in denouncing this fallacy. The unreflexive and largely atheoretical methodology of pre–World War II “scientific management” was scientific only in a rhetorical way. Even if it was not as empirical and factual as it claimed to be, the strictly empirical approach it advocated was misguided. Karl Popper has convincingly argued that science does merely follow an inductive path to truth (58). From Popper’s standpoint, not only are “facts” theory-dependent, but theories can never be proven; at best, they can be proven wrong, and even that entails the use of procedures that themselves are grounded in conventionally accepted, but not proven, assumptions (59).

Economics, which is often said to be the most advanced and methodologically rigorous social science, does not adhere to a naïve form of empiricism. It is founded upon an impressive theoretical apparatus, and it relies heavily on deductive reasoning. The theoretical foundations of economics are indeed so formidable and the deductions derived from them so elaborate that the question arises of whether its methodology is as “positive” or objective as it is supposed to be by authors like Milton Friedman (60). Economists have taken Popper’s lesson to heart, but it seems that, in doing so, they have moved rather far away from empirical methods. As a result, they pay far too little attention to the complexities of the actual decisions made by economic agents in constantly changing circumstances. Herbert Simon has done much to expose the empirical limitations of neoclassical microeconomics, and even won a Nobel Prize for his efforts (61). He has been joined by a growing number of psychologists (62, 63), philosophers, and even a few economists, but their actual impact on economics remains relatively marginal. They have succeeded,

however, in establishing the less than entirely “positive” character of economic research.

The degree to which economics is a more positive science than other social sciences is further complicated by the fundamental axiom according to which economic agents rationally chose among the different alternatives available to them. Although the so-called Austrian school of economic theory, which traces its roots back to the works of Carl Menger and Ludwig von Mises, places far more emphasis on subjective choices than mainstream neoclassical economics (64), most economists believe that intentions do matter.

For all these reasons, the current enthusiasm for economic approaches to politics, i.e., public- or rational-choice models,¹⁰ does not signal a pure and simple return to the positivism of the founders of the discipline. Some critics of rational-choice models have intimated that because such models attempt to formulate universal laws of human behavior, beginning with the basic assumptions that humans under normal circumstances act as self-interested utility-maximizers, these models are just as positivistic, and therefore just as flawed, as earlier empirical approaches (65). However, the situation is more complex than these critics pretend. As I have suggested, the (largely Popperian) epistemology of economics diverges somewhat from positivism, as this term is understood in most social sciences.

Moreover, the application of economic reasoning to nonmarket situations, and to the complex world of public administration in particular, opens up many opportunities for mixing normative assumptions with more strictly empirical observations. For example, advocates of rational choice do not always resist the temptation of drawing an unflattering contrast between the rational behavior of economic agents in competitive markets and the irrational outcomes of political processes like voting. This amounts to an ideologically motivated reduction of rationality to a purely instrumental definition — a definition that ignores the more subtle dimensions of political rationality. Nevertheless, public-rational choice falls closer to the positivist end of the epistemological spectrum than the more explicitly postpositivist approaches I discuss in the next section.

Models used to explain political processes in terms of economic concepts and theories have been used very extensively in political science during the last 10 to 15 years. In fact, Theodore Lowi has described public choice as the “third hegemony” in the discipline, displacing public-policy analysis, which itself had dethroned behavioralist approaches in the late 1960s (66). The term “hegemony” is too strong, for it leaves far too little room for a variety of other approaches that have also had a noticeable impact on the discipline, notably interpretative and postpositivist-postmodern approaches. Yet rational choice clearly occupies a central place in the constellation of methodologies that define the conceptual universe

of political scientists today¹¹ and that of students of public policy or public administration. But rational choice has been unevenly applied to the whole spectrum of issues associated with the relationship between the state and its citizens (67). Public administration and managerial issues in the public sector have received comparatively less attention than voting, electoral competition, interest-group behavior, or legislative behavior. To wit, a recent and controversial critique of the applications of rational-choice theory in political science does not even mention the study of bureaucratic organizations and their role in policy making (68). However, two authors have contributed important works on bureaucracy that have been the object of much discussion: Anthony Downs (69) and W. A. Niskanen (70), Niskanen's study being the one that is the most often cited.¹²

Downs's *Inside Bureaucracy* offers a rather broad and somewhat eclectic range of topics. These topics serve to illustrate the explanatory power of Downs's basic premise that bureaucratic officials are motivated by self-interest. They seek to act rationally, although not in the sense of promoting the rationality of the legal democratic order, as in models derived from Weber's work, but in the sense that they act as utility maximizers (71, 72). This is not a view that all observers of the actual behavior of public servants subscribe to. Steven Kelman, for example, takes exception to the idea — so frequently expressed today — that bureaucratic policy makers confuse the public interest with their own (73). Admittedly, Downs's open-ended definition of the bureaucrat's utility leaves some room for nonmyopic and perhaps even altruistic goals. But this commendable attempt to reject simplistic prejudices is both a strength and a weakness. It is a strength because policy making is a very complex process, and there is a risk in trying to reduce a wide range of motivations to a single dimension. It is also a weakness, however, because the theory lacks focus. Downs proposes many interesting hypotheses on management and control, on the life cycles of bureaucratic agencies (or "bureaus"), on internal communications, and so on. So many, in fact, that one tends to lose sight of what his main objective is. It is doubtful that his theory could provide a workable framework for a coherent research program.

To try to validate, or at least falsify, Downs's theory would be a rather daunting project. He himself never attempted to test empirically the hypotheses he proposed. The literature contains very few applications of the model to concrete historical situations. One exception is a paper by Nancy Lind (74). It offers a test of Downs's prediction that the incentives motivating bureaucrats in newly formed agencies differ from those motivating bureaucrats working in older ones. According to Downs, the older agencies are dominated by "conservers," who are more self-interested than the members of newer agencies, which are composed of a larger number of "advocates" and more narrowly committed "zealots," two groups that

have more-altruistic loyalties. Also, Downs claims that older agencies will be less supportive of innovation than newer ones. On the basis of data collected in six state agencies (two agencies in each one of the following states: Illinois, Oregon, and Tennessee), Lind concludes that “Downs’ theory of bureaucratic decision-making is partially supported by state agency data” (75). Specifically, it appears that older agencies are indeed more resistant to change. Lind found, however, that “conservers” are more likely to be found in new agencies than in older ones. The reason why newer agencies are more innovative is that “conservers” are actually less averse to change than the “zealots” whom Downs thinks would be found in newer agencies but are actually more numerous in older ones.

While Downs’s study seems to lack focus, Niskanen makes it very clear that his own model rests entirely on one central hypothesis: bureaucrats are budget maximizers. More specifically, Niskanen posits that (a) bureaucrats attempt to maximize their budgets, and (b) they are usually successful in achieving that goal because the power relations existing between the elected officials who control the purse strings and the bureaucrats work to the advantage of the latter. The first argument applies to the public sector the fundamental axiom of economic theory that economic agents respond rationally to the incentives facing them. In the case of private firms, profit maximization is the preference that can be reasonably expected. Niskanen argues that budget maximization is the closest equivalent to this objective in the public sector. The second argument reflects Niskanen’s belief that politicians normally find it to their advantage to increase the supply of public goods to their constituents. However, the bureaucrats have a monopoly on the policy-relevant information and can thus extract a sort of rent from the politicians. This inexorably lead to bureaucratic expansion, according to Niskanen (76).

Niskanen’s model has generated much theoretical discussion (77) and inspired other authors in the formulation of their own formal models of bureaucratic processes (78, 79). It has also been subjected to more intense scrutiny than Downs’s theory (80–82). These critical evaluations suggest that budget maximization does not always help bureaucrats to maximize their own interests in the political system. For example, Robert Young has come to the conclusion that “there is no strong empirical support for the view that civil servants obtain higher salary increases and faster promotion when they are in bureaucracies that are growing faster than normal.” Thus it would seem that “in career terms budget-maximizing behavior simply does not pay” (83). Moreover, now that most governments face severe budgetary constraints and carry a heavy debt load, bureaucrats who would insist on increasing their department’s budget would encounter strong opposition from central agencies (e.g., the Office of Management and Budget in the United States, the Treasury Board Secretariat in Canada)

and from the political executive. To pursue a budget-maximizing strategy under such circumstances would be highly irrational. Niskanen himself has admitted that his original hypothesis needs to be revised. He now claims that rather than seeking to maximize the budget as a whole, bureaucrats attempt to maximize their “discretionary budget” (defined as “the difference between the total budget and the minimum cost to produce the expected output”) (84). This was actually a suggestion made some years ago by J. L. Migué and G. Bélanger.

Public choice has brought about more than a methodological challenge to the research methods of public administration. It also compels students of public administration to rethink their a priori and implicit definition of the kind of problems they are (or ought to be) concerned with. Ever since the introduction of reforms in the Progressive Era, public administration theorists and practitioners have attempted to find ways of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of government operations. In the postwar years of rapid economic growth and state expansion, they also became interested in the broader question of how to tackle a wide range of socioeconomic problems, from poverty to environmental degradation. But the underlying assumption remained that the administrative state — especially at the highest level of policy integration, namely, the federal level — not only had the capacity to achieve its goals, but was the only institution capable of addressing fundamental societal problems. In other words, the consensus was that the common good is best served by the instrument of an efficient and interventionist state. It is precisely this belief that most advocates of public choice question, and Niskanen in particular. (Downs’s pluralist outlook, however, does not coincide as clearly with the dominant conservative discourse.)

Public choice functions both as an empirical and a normative theory. Vincent Ostrom has dealt with the normative side in a very forthright manner. For Ostrom, the provision of public goods is not the unique responsibility of government. Under certain circumstances, other agencies, from commercial firms to nonprofit organizations, or other levels of government, can produce collective good and contribute to human welfare better than the centralized administrative state and its legions of professional experts (85). Competition between the public and private sectors, and within the public sector between different levels of government, is an idea that public-choice theorists tend to favor. Some of them argue that decentralized market arrangements will almost always prove superior to majoritarian political solutions (86, 87), prompting equally one-sided criticisms of public choice as a theoretical model and of privatization as a policy option by defenders of the administrative state (88). It is not the intention of this chapter to debate this point, except to note that, regardless of the merits of these respective positions, theories do not exist in a

vacuum. Contrary to the positivist axiom that facts and values belong to different spheres, and that “ought” statements cannot be derived from factual assertions, talk about self-interested bureaucrats has a tendency to become a self-fulfilling prophecy. In any event, there is probably a multitude of defensible positions somewhere between these two extremes. The research program undertaken by Elinor Ostrom, and the network of scholars who gravitate around the Indiana University Workshop on Political Theory, strongly suggests that there are indeed many ways of coordinating the public and private spheres (89–92).

What these controversies serve to illustrate is that the relationships between state and civil society are changing. In the next section, this issue will be considered in a broader political context that is not limited to the opposition between state and markets.

Toward Postmodern Government?

Debates and controversies about fundamental concepts used in academic or professional discourses, the emergence of new social movements, the globalization of international markets, and the shift from an industrial to a knowledge-based economy: these are some of the factors suggesting that profound cultural and structural changes are taking place. For the sake of brevity, the term “postmodern” will be used to describe this new era. What the defining parameters of postmodern government and postmodern public administration consist of is an open question. For every generalization about postmodern trends in government, there are significant exceptions (93). The public-administration and public-sector management literature contain quite a few diverging interpretations of the challenges posed by the new socioeconomic, political, and cultural contexts. In spite of this diversity, which often reflects not only methodological differences, but also sharp ideological cleavages, there seems to be a fair measure of agreement about the two following points: (a) objective analysis by unbiased technical “experts” of the problems facing complex organizations has largely failed (94–97); and (b) hierarchical structures and top-down approaches to policy implementation are inadequate management strategies (98–103). Different authors have developed these themes according to their own leanings and with varying degrees of perceptivity. One of the purposes of the next two subsections is precisely to convey a sense of this diversity, while also attempting to discern the elements of an emerging consensus behind the apparent flurry of new ideas and theories.

In the third subsection, the implications of these new theories for the theory and practice of public administration and policy analysis are

discussed. The positivist credo was that reality can be faithfully represented — mirrored, as it were¹⁵ — by scientific theories; contemporary epistemology, by contrast, stresses the inevitable role of the observer/knower in constructing a relevant image of the world (104). The implication of this perspective for public servants is that their expert knowledge of the “facts” offers only one of many possible windows on the complex problems they deal with. Indeed the very definition of what exactly the “problem” is in the political-administrative environment is a contentious issue (105). The implications for public-administration research, on the other hand, is that there may be more to gain from the use of interpretive strategies than from trying to apply traditional empirical methods more rigorously.

Toward a More Client-Centered Approach

Over the course of the last two or three decades, many groups have demanded greater public involvement in policy formulation or implementation. In responding to these demands, the public-administration community has argued in favor of more client-centered approaches to policy making and program management (106). This goal has not changed, but the specific arguments used, as well as the groups making these demands, have varied. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the priority was placed on the need for democratic participation and the importance of giving a voice to the less privileged members of society. To that end, reformers advocated a more active role on the part of civil servants. More recent reappraisals of the structures and goals of the public service, such as the National Performance Review (107) or Canada’s Public Service 2000 (108), reflect a greater concern for the loss of legitimacy that affects most public institutions today. The political forces behind these reforms are middle-class taxpayers who have become alarmed by the level of public spending, and who are urging more “businesslike” efficiency in government. However, the overall idea remains the same: traditional bureaucratic approaches, or even sophisticated planning systems, no longer offer viable solutions to our problems. In other words, the emblems of reform have changed, but the underlying rationale continues to be that there is no store of technocratic expertise vast enough to resolve our pressing social and economic problems. Several forms and degrees of citizen’s involvement have been proposed as ways out of this impasse. These need to be explored in more detail.

By the late 1960s, public administration was in a state of intellectual disarray. Government had been growing steadily since the war years, but the skilled managers that were recruited in these years had not, for the most part, been trained in public administration; new graduate programs

in public affairs and policy analysis were pushing public administration to the sidelines of the academic world. What was left of public administration as a discipline, with its heavy emphasis on formal structures and routine processes of resource allocation, was regarded by a new generation of students and scholars as irrelevant to the pressing issues of the day (e.g., the war in Vietnam, poverty, and human rights). The “new public administration” emerged in response to this challenge. It originated in the Minnowbrook conference (1968) as a loosely structured group of (mostly) young scholars (108). It is no longer alive as such today, but it was rather central to the discipline for some time, especially during the years when the *Public Administration Review* was under the direction of an editorial team (Dwight Waldo, Frank Marini and H. George Frederickson (109)) that was committed to the movement’s goals.

Not only did the new public administration reject the politics-administration dichotomy, but it insisted that administrators make significant policy decisions. In this case, the question of the moral obligations that administrators must consider becomes crucial. The primary goal of the new public administration was to make social equity the dominant criterion for policy evaluation and implementation. The most radical message of the movement was that civil servants could — and even should on some occasions — act as advocates of the underprivileged groups in society. This recommendation made sense in the politically charged climate of the time, but it betrayed a certain degree of political naïveté. There are obvious limits to the discretionary power of civil servants, not to mention that internal bureaucratic politics often creates obstacles to this kind of proactive stance. Moreover, as Douglas J. Amy notes (110), administrators are often reluctant to pursue strategies that could threaten their image as neutral technocratic experts, since doing so would clearly be against their interest, both within government and vis-à-vis the public at large.

Social equity, however, can be achieved through other and less radical means. It is also consistent with the pursuit of other values, including bureaucratic responsiveness, citizen choice, and democratic participation. The new public-administration movement did not stumble across these values by chance. They have always formed an integral part of American political culture. In modern times, John Dewey devoted much of his life to the pursuit of democratic reforms and to the renewal of democratic theory. As I mentioned already, Dewey argued strongly in favor of the adoption of social scientific approaches to public-policy analysis and implementation, while also insisting on the need for democratic participation. He sensed that emphasizing the former at the expense of the latter would lead to a serious imbalance and would be detrimental to the public interest (111). Although, and rather surprisingly, the advocates of the new public administration make few references to Dewey’s philosophy, it is

clear that they were not so much opening new paths as they were rediscovering an underlying current of democratic thought. In more recent years, this current had meandered through a rather different ideological terrain (112).

The idea of a more client-centered approach to policy development and implementation has not disappeared from the political agenda as the new public administration faded away in the 1980s.¹⁴ However, it is no longer presented in the context of a progressive politics, but as an aspect of the current populist wave of antibureaucratic sentiments (113).

One of the four principles identified by the authors of the report of the National Performance Review as essential to the reinvention of government is “putting customers first.” But in doing so, they were not really breaking new ground. The private sector had been concerned about service quality throughout the 1980s. In fact, North American corporations were responding to the competitive threat posed by Japanese manufactures who, in the previous decade, had invested heavily into quality management, and whose customers reported high levels of satisfaction with the products or services they purchased. The public sector did not turn around until the late 1980s, when the industrialized world was confronted with a serious crisis of legitimacy. It is not immediately evident, after all, that government’s primary role is to deliver services to its “clients” or “customers,” nor exactly who these customers might be (e.g., who are the customers of a prison guard?) (114).¹⁵ But movement in that direction began, first, at the state level (e.g., Minnesota) and then spread to the rest of North America, Australia, and the United Kingdom.

The National Performance Review, which was itself the outcome of a wide-open consultation process, recommended four steps toward the goal of improving customer service: “giving customers a voice — and a choice,” “making service organizations compete,” “creating market dynamics,” and “using market mechanisms to solve problems” (114).

The report of the Service to the Public Task Force of Public Service 2000 (i.e., the Canadian counterpart to the National Performance Review) did not place quite as much emphasis on competition and the market metaphor. Nevertheless, the approach was similar. The report listed three objectives on the way to the creation of a more client-centered public service: the development of an organizational culture supportive of this idea; more open and frequent consultations with clients and other stakeholders; and a more committed leadership style that would make “public servants feel valued, motivated, informed and challenged to put forth their best efforts” (115).

What emerges from these and other recent blueprints for reform is the realization that public administration is not an end in itself nor a uniquely distinctive institution. Public officials must question their basic assumptions

in light of what the public expects of them, and in comparison with what other complex organizations are doing. In other words, they must take a critical look at their own culture and learn to see the world through a multifaceted prism. Problem situations must be defined in partnership with different stakeholders rather than being fitted into rigid patterns reflecting traditional professional standards.

The techniques used to make the public service more client-focused are many and cannot be discussed in detail here. They include public-opinion polls and other market research instruments; the use of new informal communication channels like the Internet; task forces and legislative committee hearings; the organization of small workshops, large-scale conferences, and other means of convening interest-group representatives and public officials (e.g., on environmental issues); freedom-of-information legislation; and the development of new incentives within the public service. Some agencies implement only a few of these measures, other pursue a systematic and comprehensive strategy often known as total quality management (TQM) (116).

Debureaucratization

There is more to the new vision than an awareness that policy making is a multidimensional process that presupposes ongoing consultations, debates, and negotiations. The active search for alternatives to the bureaucratic model constitutes another, albeit related, aspect of the new cultural climate. Managerial hierarchies and rigid control systems are now seen in both the private and the public sectors as outdated structures that need to be redesigned.

According to a classical literature that dates back to Frederick Taylor and even beyond him, the most powerful incentives are monetary rewards. Thus a firm or a public bureaucracy will run smoothly if wages adequately match the amount of effort put into the tasks at hand (e.g., piecework) and, more generally, if work is distributed in a standardized and predictable manner. As we have seen, this mechanistic paradigm has been challenged on a number of counts and is no longer up to date. Nevertheless, its economic rationale retains some degree of commonsensical appeal. The coup de grâce to this theory has been delivered recently by Gary Miller. Using social-choice theory and game theory, Miller shows that “a narrow neoclassical version of organizational economics self-destructs” (117). What this means, in practical terms, is that organizations that do away with rigid hierarchies, and that emphasize innovative leadership and cooperation among employees, are more efficient.

How this transformation can be achieved is a question that has received many answers. Postbureaucratic theory is still a work in progress. It is

clear that the Weberian bureaucratic model is not viable today. When the social and economic environments of policy making are as rapidly evolving as they are today, and when citizens demand quality services, standardized routines and top-down command-style management become largely ineffective. Reformers insist that new postbureaucratic organizations are needed. While no organization can do away entirely with command structures, least of all public bureaucracies, the goal should be to design institutions that are flexible and adaptive. But too much flexibility could degenerate into dysfunctional behavior. Thus the new literature strongly emphasizes the importance of leadership (118). The role of the leader of a postbureaucratic organization is less to issue commands than to inspire a commitment to an integrating and forward-looking “vision” and, ultimately, to encourage the development of an organizational culture that promotes cooperation and innovation.

Practitioners and theorists march to the sound of the same drummer on this question: two of the best-known books on public management analyze a number of experiments that started more or less independently in a number of separate jurisdictions on several continents, and draw valuable lessons from them. Perhaps the most original and challenging of such lessons — and one that has a certain postmodern ring to it — is that in adaptive and successful organizations, the members have the power to make decisions and to represent the organization in their dealings with people outside of it. Empowerment, which is the opposite of the hierarchical principle, has received considerable attention in the reports and publications of both the National Performance Review in the United States and Public Service 2000 in Canada. (It would be a mistake to think that empowerment has become a trend only at the federal level, as more change has taken place at other levels, especially in local governments). Noting that Ralph Waldo Emerson had long ago already celebrated the potential for genius inherent in every individual, the National Performance Review recommended that decision-making power be delegated to the people who do the work. Central controls must be eased so as to permit prompt and efficient delivery of services. Public servants must become more entrepreneurial, within limits imposed by certain guarantees of fairness and openness. The corollary of this move is that accountability should be rethought; the emphasis must now be placed on responsibility for the results achieved rather than for strict adherence to regulations concerning the use of standardized inputs (119). This is reflected in the title of the report itself: *From Red Tape to Results*. Reflecting upon this evolution, P. De Celles has even suggested that the relationship between bureaucratic and political officials should be reverted in some measure. He argues that empowered managers should have more opportunities for deciding what to do, while politicians should be more concerned with

how to do it, since what citizens want and expect has often more to do with issue of process than with the actual goals of public policy (120).

These ideas have not entirely displaced more traditional governance structures. This is partly because of the inertia that exists in all organizations (121, 122). It is also because democratic political processes inevitably create obstacles to the elimination of regulations that may be cumbersome but guarantee openness and transparency in the conduct of public affairs (123). Moreover, the logic of empowerment itself is fraught with intriguing paradoxes. On the one hand, it is predicated on the notion that the politics-administration dichotomy is obsolete and that public servants already do exercise a significant amount of discretionary power, and should be granted more. On the other hand, to fulfill the new mandate that empowered bureaucratic policy makers are (or would be) given, they must also be able to prove to the public that their new responsibilities leave no room for partisan bias. In other words, they would have to prove that something like the old politics-administration dichotomy still makes sense (124).

These are very important questions, but since this chapter is mostly concerned with the epistemological dimension of these transformations, they will not be discussed at any length here. From an epistemological standpoint, the important question is: What kind of knowledge do all these empowered participants in the policy process share, if at all, and how do they communicate their understanding of the problems at hand?

From Explanation to Interpretation

All the theoretical concepts and practical developments discussed above cannot be fitted neatly into a single epistemological mold. It would be tendentious to claim that we are witnessing a typical paradigm shift, because we are often dealing with approaches that make use of a grab bag of concepts and methods. For example, the development and implementation of TQM schemes may require the same kind of rigorous and empirical study of work habits and service delivery as were required for the introduction of classification systems or other reforms inspired by the administrative-science movement in earlier times. Nonetheless, the underlying logic of a move toward more client-focused and decentralized organizations is that there is more than one avenue to efficient management. There are as many potential avenues as there are clients, and/or empowered bureaucrats. Of course, in practice such anarchical diversity is never reached, but the implicit assumption is that there is no such thing as *the* best way of doing things. Strategies and procedures must be negotiated and periodically reevaluated in light of what a multiplicity of stakeholders think. Knowledge claims grounded in experience now com-

pete with professional expertise for hierarchical status. From a theoretical standpoint, this signifies a relaxation of the implicit positivism that still permeates organization theory because, as Thayer argues, there is a close relationship of interdependence between the concepts of objectivity and hierarchy — the latter being required to enforce the former (124). From a more practical perspective, it would seem that skepticism about the technocratic experts' superior knowledge of the "facts" cuts across ideological lines. In the 1960s and 1970s, the liberal Left used to inveigh against the "technostructures" controlling large corporations and government bureaucracies. The neopopulist mood that now prevails in North America (125) is a reaffirmation of "common sense"¹⁶ in areas like education reform (the return to the three "Rs"), welfare reform, and the administration of justice.

J. D. White reminds us that "postpositivist philosophers of science have identified three modes of social research — explanatory, interpretive, and critical" (126). Positivist science is interested in causal explanations. But the realization that the kinds of "realities" that policy makers deal with are multidimensional, and in some respects socially constructed, should make the other two strategies more attractive. By definition, democracy places limits on the power of any single individual or group to impose its preferences. Some groups are more influential than others, but no single interest can determine the criteria for selecting the relevant facts or interpreting their meaning. Social realities are never constituted only of brute "facts" about which one can have different preferences. Values and factual events are constantly rearranged into different strategic positions that social actors pursue in trying to influence each other, or simply in making sense of their own situation (127, 128).

Interpretive research seeks to bring out these relationships. It asks: What meaning do the actors involved in a particular context attach to their own actions and that of others? The interpretive approach, which uses the methodology of hermeneutics, accepts that practically all interpretations deserve equal consideration. The critical approach, by contrast, combines interpretation and evaluation. Inspired by the works of philosophers like J. Habermas, it rests on the assumption that the power structures of capitalist societies systematically constrain certain groups or classes from participating fully into the democratic process. It is precisely because it is constituted as a critique of the obstacles to unrestrained communications that it is known as critical theory or critical research.

Much of the philosophical literature from which the interpretive approach derives its central concepts is rather abstruse. In order to use these approaches, however, policy analysts or managers do not need to use the language of theoretical philosophy. J. D. White aptly suggests that the art of storytelling is an excellent way to put postpositivism into practice:

“through storytelling, interpretation and critique enable social change” (128), and many case studies can be read as such. This advice makes plenty of sense, considering the very effective way in which the National Performance Review has used well-chosen anecdotes to illustrate the important points of its message; this is particularly evident in the September 1994 progress report (129, 130).¹⁷ In the same vein, Steven Maynard-Moody and Marisa Kelly have shown that one of the best ways to understand how managers create meaning is to examine “a set of stories, or folk tales, collected in several state government organizations” (131). Thus while it is customary to lament the lack of methodological rigor and narrow scope of case studies, which the public administration continues to produce in abundance (132, 133), what is really needed are good case studies that combine the critical element inherent in story telling with solid analytical skills and a carefully worked out research design (134).

To what extent has research in public administration been influenced by interpretivist arguments? And to what extent have practitioners become more aware of their own roles as creators of meaning? These questions cannot be answered in a clear-cut manner. There has certainly been a significant increase in the number of studies that make use of concepts like the construction of meaning and emphasize the role administrators play in interpreting policy-relevant information (135–140). However, studies that explicitly incorporate interpretivist elements remain rather exceptional. Much of public-administration research continues to be superficially objective and silent about the criteria from which critical comments or policy recommendations are derived almost surreptitiously. It is possible, however, to discern in their implicit methodology an interpretivist logic. What makes a particular situation or problem interesting is that there is more to it than meets the eye. This often leads the investigator to examine differences in perceptions, values, or judgment. In some instances (e.g., studies on affirmative action, multiculturalism, and the representativeness of bureaucracy more generally, or on the regulation of new technologies, including biomedical research and development) this becomes in fact inevitable. As the problems faced by governments today have become immensely complex, it will become more and more difficult to avoid using interpretive methods for making sense of conflicts over fundamental values, both within government agencies and between government and the citizens.

Postpositivist Science and Public Administration

Self-consciously postmodernist theorists (e.g., Foucault, Lyotard, Derrida, and Rorty) and their followers in the social sciences (141) do not always

clearly distinguish between positivist approaches to scientific research and science itself. Their much-needed critique of technocracy often leads them to adopt a relativistic understanding of all forms of expression, from science to partisan discourse, as rhetorical weapons in a war of words. The flip side of Michel Foucault's well-known pronouncement that all forms of knowledge entail the exercise of power (142) is that power always trumps knowledge. And postmodern critics usually direct their attacks against what they regard as conservative power structures, including science. If this trend were to prevail, public administration, as a discipline, would become limited to the discussions of the politics and questionable ethics of bureaucratic power. As an art, it would become entirely subservient to the logic of political communications and of interest advocacy. Indeed, some movement in that direction has probably taken place already.

The postmodern turn is not limited to the liberal Left. There is also a conservative or populist reaction to technocracy and top-down approaches that is less explicitly relativist but is nonetheless rather inimical to scientific inquiry. Moreover, the advocates of the new public-sector management paradigm could be faulted for skipping too lightly over the differences between the public and private sectors. These theorists promote their own brand of relativism, insofar as they pretend not to see, and would like us to ignore, the fundamental difference between the logic inherent in public bureaucracies (i.e., constitutional and political accountability) and the logic of the market (123). This confusion of values could prove to be damaging to the public interest in the long term.

Yet there is no reason to despair about the future potential of a scientific approach to public administration defined as a distinct research domain or as a unique practice. Science itself has moved far away from positivism in this century. Paradigmatic shifts as momentous as quantum physics, which is already an old revolution but one that is still unfolding, and more recent developments like the sciences of complexity (e.g., chaos theory) have opened new perspectives. These theoretical innovations rest on premises that differ very significantly from the positivist dogmas of the last century. Yet they fall squarely within the realm of science. Postpositivist science shares with philosophical postmodernism some important ideas, including the idea that whatever "reality" exists "out there" cannot be known with certainty and effectively controlled, but these two intellectual currents should not be confused.

The social sciences were slow to acknowledge these transformations. Social scientists have wrongly equated equilibrium models and linear dynamics with the scientific method itself. Equilibrium analysis dominated physics from Newton until it was challenged by quantum mechanics in the 1920s. It no longer defines physics today. In fact, contemporary physics

has little to do any more with classical mechanics. The philosophy of science has taken note of this evolution (143) and has engendered an eclectic literature on evolutionary processes in nature and society (144, 145). Linear equilibrium models, however, still remain central to engineering, much of biology, economics, psychology, and the empirically oriented subfields of sociology and political science.

Rather slowly, the new thinking in the physical sciences is gaining acceptance in the other sciences. A suggestive metaphor first proposed by Karl Popper (145) illustrates this: since the Newtonian revolution, science used to see clocks everywhere, now it has discovered clouds. But clouds are puzzling; they are far more complex than clocks. That is, they are made of elements that enter into unstable and largely unpredictable relationships. Precisely, it is around the notion of complexity that the new scientific thinking converges (146–148). In more technical terms, the new tools of scientific inquiry make extensive use of nonlinear dynamics (and, to a lesser degree, fuzzy logic¹⁸) and are applied to the study of nonequilibrium phenomena. Nonlinear dynamics describes relationships that are self-referential and such that small inputs can produce unexpectedly large outputs, and dissimilar inputs can have similar effects. Situations far from equilibrium are characterized by considerable uncertainty because they are subject to unpredictable and catastrophic phase changes.¹⁹ Complex systems have a sort of virtual existence; they can acquire, depending on the circumstances, one of several potentially realizable configurations. This is like putting the world of classical mechanics — the world that, as positivists used to reason, science was meant to explain — on its head (149).

In addition to the displacement of determinism (or, at least, strict determinism), the new scientific vision also introduces another key concept: autonomy. A complex system becomes autonomous from its environment when it acquires the capacity to be self-organizing, that is, when it can maintain its organizational integrity by producing and reproducing its own structures or by spontaneously rearranging these structures to produce new ones. Self-organizing systems are not controlled by an external operator or even by an internal and functionally specialized regulator. They operate as integrated but acentered networks. Slime molds constitute puzzling examples of this dynamic in the living world. They form as a result of the spontaneous cooperation of up to 100,000 amoebae organizing into a quasi-organism that takes a variety of forms through its short life cycle before releasing spores that will start the process all over again (150). In the social world, free markets are often cited as relevant examples of this process of spontaneous self-organization (151, 152). Democratic political regimes would be another excellent example (153). But how do these examples relate to organization theory and public

administration, considering that bureaucracies are, by definition, centralized and controlled systems? In a sense, it is indeed true that bureaucracies are *not* self-organizing. However, the trends toward a postbureaucratic public administration alluded to in the previous section suggest that this objection may not be irrefutable. Thus the new sciences of complexity can assist theorists and reformers interested in the design of postbureaucratic organizations.

What has been the effect of postpositivist science on public administration research and practice? So far, it has been rather limited. But there is already movement in that direction, and the potential for further progress is encouraging. At present, the literature consists of texts that either try to convince scholars and practitioners that these new approaches are relevant to policy analysis or organization theory (154, 155), or to articulate and explore metaphorical parallels (156, 157), or, closer to the applied end of the spectrum, to illustrate hypothetically how nonlinear dynamics could be used to study administrative behavior and organizational change (158, 159). What we are still lacking, however, are empirical studies using these new concepts and techniques as means to describe or evaluate the effects of actual programs or institutional arrangements.

Why should the members of the public-administration community be impatient to learn about the results of such studies? Because such studies promise to be helpful in assessing the implications of the trends discussed in the previous section without falling into the traps posed by outdated positivist assumptions.

For example, the issue of leadership raises questions that nonlinear dynamics could tackle in new ways. Postmodern culture leads to the dismantlement of hierarchical structures that were originally designed to facilitate the communication of standardized instructions, and to the adoption of more flexible leadership styles. We do not really know, however, whether this is a passing fad or an irreversible change. Nor do we know how much more flexible leadership should become. We need a way to find out why traditional bureaucratic organizations are inoperative as such, regardless of how well-managed they may be. This would entail a demonstration of the impossibility of mapping data describing discrete and nonlinear phenomena onto a continuous and linear space. Using hypothetical data, Douglas Kiel has shown graphically that this appears to be the case. Because organizational behavior is inherently complex, it sometimes results in chaotic variations that cannot be controlled by hierarchical command structures, no matter how efficient and “in control” supervisors appear to be, and even if employees are diligent (159). This is a modest beginning, but certainly a promising avenue of research.

Unfortunately, it may still be too early to carry out this kind of empirical work. To measure realities that are improperly conceptualized sounds like

putting the cart before the horse. More qualitative explorations, using a variety of analogies, metaphors, and other imaginative scenarios, will most probably continue to be the preferred strategy of research for the foreseeable future.

Conclusion

Pressure groups, editorialists, politicians, ordinary citizens, academics, and administrators themselves have given much thought in recent years to the idea of reinventing government. Public administration has been profoundly affected by these developments. The scholarly (and even not so scholarly) literature abounds with new ideas. Administrative reforms have been proposed, discussed, and implemented in capitals around the world, as well as at the local level. Many programs have been reviewed, scaled down, or eliminated.

In the context of profound structural and cultural changes, public administration has become less homogeneously positivist than it was or was believed to be a generation or two ago. Public administration has never completely succeeded in achieving the status of a positive science, as indicated above, nor has it succeeded in becoming a coherent body of professional expertise. Rational/public choice offered the option to public administration of becoming a subfield of economics, a discipline that is presumed to be a positive science by its defenders. However, relatively few scholars agree. (This is not to say, of course, that rational choice is irrelevant to public administration.)

Movement toward the postmodern end of the spectrum has certainly taken place. There is now a sizable literature that discusses the limitations inherent in the experts' "objective" knowledge of policy "facts"; the contradictions involved in trying to control large complex organizations; and the inadequacy of traditional dichotomies like the politics/policy-administration distinction. However, the alternatives are not always carefully thought out. Some of the recent reforms may be, in part, "smoke and mirrors" intended to hide the ruthlessness with which budgetary compressions are carried out. Inversely, some of the new ideas might have been carried out too far, to the point where they blur the constitutionally significant distinction between the rules that apply to public and to private organizations. As these issues are further explored, we should be able to learn to live without the crutch of positivist dogmas and to cope with complexity and multidimensional realities in a sensible manner. The postpositivist sciences of complexity will provide much-needed assistance in this regard.

Notes

1. Jean-Francois Lyotard (3) establishes a contrast between the modern tendency to frame all meaningful occurrences within what he calls “grand narratives,” e.g., either Marxism or market capitalism, and the postmodern condition, which he describes as a rejection of grand narratives and a critique of all foundationalist philosophies.
2. Canada adopted the merit system somewhat later. The first Civil Service Act was passed in 1908, and its scope was expanded to include all federal government employees in 1918. Canada, however, went further than the United States in eliminating political patronage. In the U.S. government, “political executives” still hold thousands of positions at the top of the hierarchical pyramid, but in regular Canadian government departments, all hierarchical levels below the minister, including the position of deputy minister (i.e., the under secretary in the American system), are staffed by career public servants; the heads of several dozens of nondepartmental agencies and public enterprises of the government of Canada (e.g., National Energy Board) are political appointees, however.
3. Prime Minister Trudeau in the late 1960s and early 1970s attempted to strengthen his own control, and that of his cabinet, on the machinery of government and the policy-making process, but paradoxically ended up creating a more complex bureaucracy (16, 18).
4. Originally developed in the Department of Defense under Secretary McNamara, PPBS spread like a brush fire to the rest of the federal government, most of the states, Canada, and several European countries (e.g., France).
5. On White’s contribution to public administration, see Storing (27).
6. Hindy Lauer Schachter surveyed 15 textbooks and found that they all propose the same interpretation of the history of ideas in public administration (28). By and large, the two major Canadian textbooks on public administration tell a similar story (29, 30).
7. This is not surprising, considering that in 1902 nearly 75 percent of nonmilitary public expenditures in the United States were at the local level (37).
8. In the 1920s, the Canadian Civil Service Commission hired the American consulting firm Arthur Young & Co. for the purpose of classifying approximately 50,000 positions (38).
9. Thomas Hobbes proposed a startling analogy of this kind in the opening pages of his *Leviathan*.
10. “Nonmarket economics” is another label found in the literature.
11. According to Donald Green and Ian Shapiro, the proportion of articles published in the *American Political Science Review* that used the methodology of rational choice jumped from about 20 percent in the late 1970s to just under 40 percent in the early 1990s (67).

12. At least two earlier works must be mentioned, even though they did not have the same impact as either Downs or Niskanen's seminal texts: Ludwig von Mises's *Bureaucracy* (71), and Gordon Tullock's *The Politics of Bureaucracy* (72).
13. Richard Rorty has attacked the idea that human knowledge, in the form of either science or philosophy, can ever be just a mirror of the truth (104).
14. In 1988 a second Minnowbrook conference was held. It became clear to the participants that although many of the ideas and goals advocated by the new public-administration movement were still relevant, the movement itself could only be talked about in the past tense (113).
15. According to Michael Barzelay, it is essential to distinguish clearly between real customers and what he calls "compliers," i.e., individuals who are expected to comply with norms and meet certain standards of accountability (114).
16. For at least a decade, the Republicans have appealed to the common sense of American voters in their attacks against the "Washington establishment." This rhetorical posture is not limited to the United States, however. In September 1995, the Progressive Conservative party won a decisive electoral victory in the province of Ontario; Mr. Michael Harris, the new Premier of Ontario, claims that this victory ushers in "the common sense revolution."
17. Can anyone reading the introduction to that report not be impressed, for example, by the efforts made by the Veterans Administration to treat veterans like Len Davis and thousands of others as valued customers and not merely as anonymous cases? Or consider the extraordinary performance of Dan Beard in turning around the Bureau of Reclamation. The bureau used to operate as an unresponsive bureaucracy committed to building more and more dams that the public did not really want, but it has been transformed into a lean and competitive organization offering professional advice to field agencies in touch with local needs and concerns. The Report on Progress of Public Service 2000 also used short case studies, but they are more like little vignettes than stories in the fuller sense of the term (131).
18. Fuzzy logic is a multivalued logic that, instead of distinguishing only between true (1) and false (0) statements, posits that there is a potentially infinite number of truth values, just as there is an infinite range of rational numbers (e.g., 0.246) between the natural numbers 0 and 1. This allows for the formalization of ordinary language expressions like "rather big" or "smallish," etc.
19. To illustrate this phenomenon, James Gleick uses the (now famous) example of the "butterfly" effect: a butterfly flapping its wings somewhere deep into the Brazilian jungle can be the remote cause of a tropical storm thousands of miles away (148).

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Chapter 26

On the Language of Bureaucracy: Postmodernism, Plain English, and Wittgenstein

Robert P. Watson

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As politicians know only too well but social scientists too often forget, public policy is made of language.

Giandomenico Majone

Evidence, Argument, and Persuasion in the Policy Process (1989)

“Bureaucratese,” the Language of Government

“It is a tricky problem to find the particular calibration in timing that would be appropriate to stem the acceleration in risk premiums created by falling incomes without prematurely aborting the decline in the inflation-generated premiums” (1). The previous quote was a statement made by Mr. Alan Greenspan during testimony before the Congress in 1974, years before he would become the Federal Reserve Board chair. A few years after Greenspan’s testimony, President Jimmy Carter proposed new urban policy that was designed “to strengthen linkages among macro-economic sectoral place-oriented economies” (2). The previous quotes, where Mr. Greenspan was discussing economic policy and Mr. Carter was attempting to assist cities, are used as examples of “bureaucratese,” or the doublespeak that often passes for language in government.

In official public discourse and public documents, taxes have become “revenue enhancements” or “user fees,” and dumps are known as “public waste reception centers.” The use of such bureaucratic language is thought to be on the rise and is found not only in political speech but has become the language of bureaucracy (3). Such misuse of the English language occurs at all levels of government in the United States and is found in governments throughout the world.

Yet, despite the widespread use of bureaucratese, there has been insufficient research devoted to the study of the language of bureaucracy, and little is known about its effect. This chapter examines the phenomenon of bureaucratic doublespeak by analyzing the use and misuse of language in public organizations. Theories on public discourse, language, and the meaning of words as well as a model for understanding bureaucratese are presented. Numerous problems associated with the misuse of language in public organizations, including the distortion of meaning and reality, the effect of distancing one from their actions and sense of personal responsibility, and the use of language as a form of deception to misinform and manipulate are discussed.

Many of the problems of public administration are to be traced to, and found in, the language of bureaucracy (4). The language of bureaucracy is not simply a way to articulate the practices of government; language also shapes the thoughts of bureaucrats and frames the nature of public issues. Language shapes our worldview and, as such, the language of bureaucracy has guided the practice and study of public administrations and has informed the development of theories of public organizations. To explore this dilemma and address the problems associated with the misuse of language, a better understanding of language and discourse is necessary. To conceptualize the nature of bureaucratic language, this chapter draws from the writings on language and meaning of the philosopher Wittgenstein and employs a postmodernist critique of the language of bureaucracy. A new language of public administration, one based in plain English and informed by a postmodern language of thought, is a precondition to moving toward a new practice of public administration.

The Use and Misuse of Language in Government

Public bureaucracy plays an active role in the lives of all Americans. Accordingly, there is perhaps no other institution in America that is placed under more media and public scrutiny than government bureaucracy, the federal bureaucracy in particular. It is not surprising, then, that there is perhaps no other institution more maligned than public bureaucracy. Whether this reputation is deserved or not can be debated; however, that

the perception of inefficient, impersonal, and incompetent public organizations exists is beyond question. There are several reasons for the general hostility toward, and mistrust of, public bureaucracy. Yet, one of the factors that is often overlooked by scholars of public administration and public bureaucrats interested in the phenomenon of “bureaucracy bashing” is the language of bureaucracy.

The language of bureaucracy, known as “bureaucratese” or “bureaucratic doublespeak,” has been described by various critics and scholars of bureaucracy as “a strange and somewhat threatening foreign language” (5), “a language which pretends to communicate but really does not” (6), and “the misuse of words by implicit redefinition” (7). Bureaucratic doublespeak has been ridiculed as the art of “talking out of both sides of one’s mouth” (8). As such, it “makes the bad seem good, the negative appear positive, and the unpleasant appear attractive or at least tolerable” (9).

Bureaucratese can be defined as the misuse of language in official public discourse and public documents by employees of government. This misuse is not by coincidence or done inadvertently, but rather, it is employed by design and with the purposes of: (a) distorting or reversing the meaning of a word or proposition so as to confuse the audience into perceiving, for example, failure as success and bad as good; (b) avoiding, minimizing, or shifting responsibility for one’s action to avoid criticism; and (c) limiting thought or manipulating the language of thought in a way that frames discussion of the phenomenon favorably for the government or the particular official in question.

Some scholars conceptualize bureaucratese as but one element of public doublespeak, along with other forms of doublespeak like euphemisms, jargon, and inflated language (10). However, bureaucratese, herein, is considered to be the general misuse of language in the public sector, and it encompasses related misuses of language such as doublespeak, euphemisms, and jargon. It is a hybrid language of euphemisms, jargon, and abstractions that tends toward the meaningless and pompous. In the popular press, various manifestations of bureaucratese have been referred to as “bureauquack,” “bureaucratic officialese,” “legalese,” “Pentagonese,” and more commonly “gobbledygook,” a term coined by former Texas Congressman Maury Maverick after experiencing bureaucratic terminology that he felt made about as much sense as the gobble of a turkey (11).

Table 26.1 offers an illustration of bureaucratic doublespeak that is devoid of meaning, can be used to confuse rather than to communicate, and talks without saying anything (12). The four columns in the table are meant to be interchangeable as one constructs various phrases of bureaucratese.

Bureaucratese has been compared to the “newspeak” used in George Orwell’s *1984* as the language of authoritarian manipulation (13). It has

Table 26.1 Double-Speak in Public Organizations

<i>Column I</i>	<i>Column II</i>	<i>Column III</i>	<i>Column IV</i>
Ladies and gentlemen, Equally important,	the realization of the program's goals the complexity and diversity of the	leads us to reexamine have played a vital role in determining committee's areas of concentration	existing fiscal and administrative conditions area of future development
At the same time,	the constant growth in the quality and scope of our activity	directly affects the development and advancement of	the attitudes of key members regarding their own work
Still, let us not forget that	the infrastructure of the organization	requires the clarification and determination of	a participatory system
Thus,	the new shape of organizational activity	ensures the participation of key members in	new proposals

Source: From Killingsworth, J.R., *Admin. and Soc.* 16, 352, 1984. With permission.

also been likened to the speech of the 18th-century figure Mrs. Malaprop from the Richard Sheridan comedy *The Rivals*, who misuses and destroys the English language (14). Like Mrs. Malaprop, public administrators and public officials confuse and distort the meaning of words and leave the listener or reader confused. Numerous critical and humorous books and essays have even emerged, such as “The Washington Phrasebook” and the “Doublespeak Dictionary” that lampoon bureaucratese and compile lists of words used in public discourse (15).

Bureaucratese is, however, not to be confused with “political correctness” or seen as innocent and overly respectful terminology (16). Whereas bureaucratese is used to intentionally distort meaning or confuse listeners, the use of “physically challenged” in place of “handicapped,” for example, is done neither to distort nor to confuse. The same can be said of using the words “deceased” or “passed away” in place of “dead,” a substitution that serves only to comfort and show respect without distorting meaning. Politically correct terms such as “police officer” instead of “policeman” or “biracial” instead of “mulatto” or “half-breed” likewise fall outside of this definition of bureaucratese.

Hummel offers a model of the language of bureaucracy that is useful for understanding the uses and misuses of language in public organizations (17). In Table 26.2 he contrasts the language of bureaucracy and the language used in society. Hummel sees the use of language in bureaucracy as one-dimensional and, as such, forcing or expecting citizens dealing with government to adjust to what is said to them, as opposed to a more reciprocal, two-way form of communication. Bureaucratese talks at you, not with you. The function of reasoning in bureaucratese is by analogy, in that what is said is bound by the organization and is internal to that organization. Thinking is by analogy, and reasoning is through comparison. Yet, a bureaucrat’s reference point is not the people he is serving or even

Table 26.2 Language Use Model

<i>Speech In Bureaucracy</i>	<i>Speech in Society</i>
One-dimensional	Reciprocal
Acausal	Causal and contextual
Analogous	Concrete
General	Particular
Referential	Experiential
Reality-imposing	Reality-constructing

Source: Hummel, R.P. *The Bureaucratic Experience: A Critique of Life in the Modern Organization*. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994. With permission.

the context or environment in which discourse occurs, inasmuch as the use of bureaucratese imposes an ideal form that emerges over the actual environment and context. Normal communication is contextual in that what one says is given meaning by the context in which it is spoken, and context is based on the shared experiences of both speaker and listener. However, bureaucratese imposes context and a false order or reality on things.

Typology of Bureaucratese

A typology of bureaucratese is developed so that we can conceptualize the nature of the misuse of language in government. This typology draws on the work of William Lutz, a major voice in the “plain English” movement, who offers what can be considered a model of the forms of doublespeak found in the public sector (18). The typology also borrows from Carl Wayne Hensley, a communications scholar, who cautions against the use of bureaucratese and doublespeak in public speaking and identifies common misuses of language in public discourse (19). The following typology frames bureaucratese as four distinct areas of language misuse.

Euphemisms

Euphemisms are words or phrases that serve to soften or distort harsh realities. A euphemism, when used in place of an unpleasant incident or fact, serves to mislead or deceive. The euphemism downplays the actual meaning or intent of the phenomenon. For example, if “arbitrary deprivation of life” is used in place of “killing,” it might minimize the harshness and the effect of the act. It could also confuse the listener or make the act sound as if it is legitimate and acceptable. This can also be seen in the Pentagon’s terminology of “incontinent ordinance” or “collateral casualties,” used to describe bombings that mistakenly kill civilians.

Jargon and “Technical-Speak”

Jargon is specialized language used by members of a profession or those in a select group or organization. While jargon might be necessary for technical communication among members or might be widely understood within the organization, it is possible that it is utterly unknown by nonmembers. It could also function to give a false sense of authority to the speaker. An example comes from the language of security clearances in government. To “run the traps” means to conduct a security clearance, which is also known as a “screening,” a “check,” or “clearing” someone, all forms of bureaucratic gerunds. The bureaucracy, perhaps more than

any other institution, ought to be open and accessible to the entire citizenry. When public administrators use jargon that is unfamiliar to the general public, it might place public services out of the reach of many people by misrepresenting the availability and nature of such services. It could also function to limit civic participation in government.

Jargon can amount to extremely technical and pseudo-scientific terms. Often such jargon has emerged only recently, borrowed from pop culture or new technologies. The problem is that, without a shared history of the word by the producers and consumers of this technical-speak, meaning cannot exist, especially for those unfamiliar with the technology or cultural reference. Examples include words like “interface,” “synergy,” “network,” “download,” and “proactive.” Bureaucratic language often adds “-isms,” “-izes,” “-ations,” and “-ages” to words that could otherwise be stated in their original form and, in so doing, can confuse or alter the original meaning. For instance, stopping work has become “a work stoppage.” Speaking or saying something has become a “verbalization,” and bureaucratic improvements “optimize” resources. The excessive misuse of gerunds often accompanies jargon and technical-speak. A gerund is a word that has the characteristics of both noun and verb. An example is using a verb or the verbal form of a word as a noun by ending it in “ing.” In bureaucratese, a report is a “finding,” using the verb “to find” as a noun. Cliches and acronyms also appear with regularity in bureaucratese. An acronym is a word formed from the first letters of words and is, arguably, one of the most widely used and well-known features of bureaucratic language. To the general public, the language of IGR, OSHA, ADA, GAO, ZBB, and CDBGs sounds like alphabet soup.

Complex Syntax

Syntax is the way in which words are used together to form phrases. A common critique of bureaucratic language is the tendency to use confusing syntax (20). Bureaucratese lacks style and precision and appears to go to great lengths to avoid saying something in a plain, simple manner (21). While it may sound impressive, such language usually overwhelms listeners and leaves them uncertain of what was actually being said (22). Examples of complex syntax can be seen in the quotes used in the opening paragraph of this chapter.

Voluminosity and “Bloating”

Voluminosity and bloating refer to the adding of unnecessary or redundant words to communication that could otherwise be said succinctly and in

plain English. Using “imports into this country” or “foreign imports” in place of simply “imports” bloats the sentence. Dorney and Lutz even define bureaucratese as “the voluminous use of words.” Such language may overwhelm the audience (23).

Bloating is also when a speaker’s use of words is inflated so as to exaggerate the average or make the ordinary seem extraordinary, with the purpose of impressing or confusing the audience. Examples of bloating include referring to janitors or custodial staff as “environmental hygienists” or “sanitation engineers,” or calling a routine trip a “fact finding mission,” or when diplomatic negotiators from the two sides do not agree to meet in the same room, they are said to still be conducting “proximity talks.” Perhaps the best case for depicting the excesses of bureaucratic language can be seen in the federal specifications for a mousetrap that amounted to 700 pages, weighing in at over 3 pounds (24).

Having defined bureaucratese and conceptualized its common forms of usage, there are several problems resulting from the misuse of language in public organizations that need to be addressed.

Distancing Effect of Bureaucratese

A central problem of bureaucratese is that it distances the citizens from their government. The problem of distancing can be seen in four ways:

1. The impersonality of the language, and thus, the very act and exchange become impersonal
2. Removing a sense of personal responsibility for one’s actions because of language
3. Public misunderstanding of the meaning and message
4. The development of a closed society within the bureaucracy

Impersonality

Through the use of bureaucratese, the listener is distanced from the speaker. Communication exists in third person and is governed by the need for uniformity and sterility. Such bureaucratic language reduces the human element of communication (25). Unfortunately, minus the humanness, the nature of bureaucratic language is without human values. The rules of the bureaucracy do the talking or communicating for the individual, leaving the speaker as incidental to the message and reducing the margin of flexibility and reciprocity in the message. While it is thought that the messenger shapes the message, in bureaucracy the speaker is detached from the message and from the act. The message becomes an institutional

message without a “person” “behind” the message. Official public communication and discourse becomes hierarchical and authoritarian.

Removing Responsibility

When “client” or “case” is substituted for “human” or the individual receiving the public service, the speaker becomes distanced from the responsibility of the act. There exists a psychological proximity to the action that is reduced through the use of impersonal language. The same phenomenon occurs in a larger societal sense when a term like “ordinance” is used for “bombs” and “servicing the target” replaces the reality of the act of “killing.”

The institutional message “communicated” from bureaucracy is made sterile so as to be protected from humans and, in turn, public policy actors are protected from the reality and responsibility of the act and the message. This is perpetuated when spokespersons are used to communicate messages. In normal communication and language, what is said is not separated from who said it (26). After all, the purpose of language is usually to convey the speaker’s intentions. This cannot be said about bureaucratese.

Misunderstanding

Perhaps the most obvious problems caused by the use of bureaucratese are that meaning and message are separated and communication is not understood by the public. This may be the intent of the message and the messenger. Even the most rudimentary aspects of communication, such as identifying who is saying what to whom and why, are unclear. The Reagan administration’s use of “negative economic growth,” for instance, to describe the recession the country faced shortly into the president’s first term does not clearly describe the economic situation to the general public.

Development of a Closed Society

Only insiders understand the jargon and technical-speak of their profession or organization. Excessive use of it alienates outsiders which, for the bureaucracy, includes the general public, and could create a fortress mentality among users (27). The open or external systems models that the field of public administration strives for are undercut by organizational language that is inherently inward looking. The elevation of bureaucratese to nearly a secret professional language may also encourage conformity within the organization.

The nature of bureaucracy may be such that it can only respond to well-defined needs or demands. If so, the use of bureaucratese may act to further limit bureaucracy's ability to respond to complex needs and demands because the needs will be inadequately and poorly defined.

Deception Effect of Bureaucratese

Another problem associated with the use of bureaucratese is deception. Three areas of language deception are: (1) misinformation, (2) using language to manipulate the audience, and (3) creating a false sense of credibility by using inflated language.

Misinformation

Misinformation occurs all too commonly in politics, but it is also found in the bureaucracy. Whether overtly or unintentionally, bureaucratese distorts reality. Selective language makes bad appear good, or at least okay. Misinformation fosters suspicion and cynicism, especially when it is overt manipulation, as the public begins to feel that they should believe nothing that is said by public officials. This could breed a crisis of apathy, alienation, and a feeling of animosity toward bureaucracy. An example of misinformation was the official reference of the American military "excursion" or "incursion" into Grenada in the 1980s as a "Caribbean Peace Keeping Force" that simply performed a "predawn vertical insertion" (28). Not only would the public potentially be misinformed about the nature of the "force" and the activity, but there would certainly be less public hostility for this policy than for, say, a military "invasion" of a sovereign state by American forces.

Another example of the use of bureaucratic misinformation pertains to the issue of possible cuts in social security during the 1980s. Some Americans opposed to such a policy suspected President Reagan of favoring cuts. To "clarify" his position and disarm his critics, the president provided the following statement: "I will not stand by and see those of you who are dependent on Social Security deprived of the benefits you've worked so hard to earn. You will continue to receive your checks in the full amount due to you." While such a statement would appear straightforward and clear, when given a bureaucratese spin, this may not be the case. A presidential spokesperson offered "clarification" shortly after the statement was issued that was less supportive of Social Security, by saying that the president's comment meant that he was still trying to determine exactly who was "dependent" on Social Security, who had indeed "earned" the benefits, and how much "full amount due" should be (29). There is

the very real potential that many Americans were “misinformed” by the original official statement.

Manipulation

It is through language that we understand each other. Yet, if organizations and not humans control language, language can be used as a tool to control and influence at a level larger than that of person to person. Such use of language does not permit feedback or questions and limits two-way communication to one-way manipulation. Information does not flow back up the hierarchy, but only down the ladder. Bureaucratese also permits management to interpret meaning in several different ways.

Often, such language is not even noticed, as many forms of bureaucratese have found their way into our everyday vocabulary. It has become an accepted part of our culture. For example, public housing has become “substandard housing,” a term that is both a polite way of describing conditions that often approach a near warehousing of the poor and one that implies society’s acceptance of what is an unacceptable condition of housing. The “poor” have become the “disadvantaged,” certainly a less problematic condition and one that suggests a handicap needing public attention and assistance.

This language of authority can also be seen in the renaming of the “Department of War” to the “Department of Defense.” It is harder, after all, to complain about something when one is not sure what that something is or if the phenomenon appears to be something else. Environmentalists would not be as upset with a forest policy dubbed an “overmature tree harvest” rather than simply a program of cutting old-growth forests. Similarly, if an administration were to announce its commitment to “intensive forest management” — a much less palpable term than “clear cutting” or unmitigated and subsidized timbering — such a policy of “management” would not be as readily understood or opposed. Military “peacekeeping” or “rescue” missions are more popular in this day and age of public support than “invasions” and “acts of aggression” that may compromise international human rights agreements or national sovereignty.

Development of Artificial Credibility

The jargon of bureaucratese obscures meaning for the general public, and technical-sounding terms may serve to legitimize or lend a sense of artificial credibility to something not deserving legitimacy. For example, the prevalence of “straw” polls around election time would seem to those untrained in survey research or political polling to suggest that they are somehow

reliable and scientific instruments for gauging public opinion, despite the possible connection of the word “straw” with that which is less than credible. Similarly, calling a janitor an “environmental hygienist” might lend an inflated sense of importance or credibility to this generally low-paying and unglamorous work.

On Language

A large body of literature exists on the nature of language and discourse. It is too comprehensive to hope to summarize in this chapter, but for the purposes of this work an overview of basic theories of language and discourse is presented. Foundational models of linguistics can be used to guide the analysis of the language of bureaucracy.

Formalist-Functionalist Linguistics Paradigm

Linguistics is the study of the nature and structure of human speech. Conceptually, one can study or summarize the field of linguistics by using the linguistic paradigms shown in Table 26.3 between the “formalist” school and the “functionalist” school of linguistics. The formalist school (30) is similar to, and at times known as, “structuralist” linguistics (31) or “a priori grammar,” (32) and the functionalist school (33) is related to “emergent” linguistics (34) and “interactive” linguistics (35). These two schools make assumptions about the fundamental objectives of linguistic

Table 26.3 Linguistic Paradigms

<i>Formalist</i>	<i>Functionalist</i>
Language as a mental phenomenon	Language as societal phenomenon
Language studied as autonomous system	Language studied as it relates to social functions
Universals of language come from common genetic linguistic aspect of human species	Universals of language come from generalities in the uses and structure of language in human society
Child’s language capability comes from some natural human capacity to learn language	Child’s language capability comes from their communicative and social needs in society

Source: Schriffrin, D. *Approaches to Discourse*. Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1994. With permission.

theory and offer methods for, and approaches to, the study of language and human speech.

The formalist model recognizes that language has social and cognitive features and functions, but it considers these as not having a major impact on or altering the organization of language. In contrast, functionalists argue that society and external features definitely shape the organization of language. Language would then have functions that are apart from the linguistic system itself.

Theories of Language and Discourse

In addition to these two primary models of linguistics, several theories exist that forward notions about the use and meaning of language that are applicable to the study of the language of bureaucracy.

Speech Act Theory

Developed by the philosophers John Austin and John Searle, speech act theory forwards the notion that language is used not merely to describe the world and phenomena, but that it serves many other purposes and actions (36). This is apparent through the actual spoken word or utterance. For example, language can question, request, demand, or promise. Language can perform multiple activities and combinations of the above items simultaneously.

Speech act theory focuses on the underlying conditions necessary to perform the act of speech. To know the literal meaning of words, one must understand the factors that underlie discourse. There are problems associated with speech act theory, such as forms of indirect speech, contextual concerns, and the multifunctionality of language.

Interactional Sociolinguistics

Associated with John Gumperz, interactional sociolinguistics has its roots in anthropology, linguistics, and sociology (37). It asks the question of how people from different cultures can share a basic grammatical knowledge of language yet contextualize language in vastly different ways. As such, there are differing messages and meanings. The interactional school looks at the actual words and language used and the social context of discourse. Interactional sociolinguistics theorist Erving Goffman studies how language is used in certain situations in our social lives (38).

The context and structure of language is important to interactional sociolinguists in that people use different words and speak differently

depending on to whom they are speaking, the relationship of the speaker to the listener, and the environment in which the discourse takes place. Contextual matters even include how the speaker and listener are standing or whether they are facing one another. The theory forwards the notion that interpretation and interaction are related and based on the relationship of social and linguistic meaning.

Ethnography of Communication

Based in the field anthropology, this school seeks explanations of meaning and behavior. Dell Hymes, for example, looks at “communicative competence,” or the cultural, linguistic, social, and psychological knowledge that determines what is considered to be accepted use of language (39). In other words, it studies that which guides the use of everyday language, what constitutes right from wrong usage, and common forms of discourse such as public speaking.

Concepts of communication differ from culture to culture, as concepts of communication depend on cultural values. As such, communication is never completely free of the bounds of culture, values, and beliefs. Other voices in this school argue that grammar reflects culture (40) and that the influence of culture is seen in other forms of communication (41), including even silence (42).

Pragmatic School

This school, which is associated with H. P. Grice, explores the differences in meaning, language, and words and identifies distinctions in types of meaning (43). It analyzes the meaning of the speaker’s words at the level of the actual utterances. As such, the analysis is at the level of the word and sentence itself, rather than the whole text, the language, the culture.

Conversation Analysis

Conversation analysis draws from sociology and the philosophical school of phenomenology and is associated with Harold Garfinkle (44). It considers the ways that people in a society develop a sense of social order and maintains that conversation assists in the creation of this order. Language is believed to both create a social order and social context and, in turn, to be influenced by the social order. The theory looks to make generalizations about social conduct and social order through analysis of language and communication.

Within conversation itself, there also exists a unique structure and sense of order. There is, in other words, an order by which people talk to one another. Even within telephone conversations, for example, there is a specific order and an established etiquette (45).

Variation Analysis

The variationist school, as affiliated with William Labov, argues that linguistic variation is a product of both social and linguistic factors (46). The school uses the systematic analysis of what is known as “speech communities” to uncover the nature of variation in language. The name of this theory derives from the traditional approach of studying different ways of saying the same thing, known technically as “semantically equivalent variants.”

In speech there emerge formal patterns. An interest of this school is how and why this phenomenon occurs and how such patterns are shaped by the narrative or utterance. To determine this, variation analysts separate the text of what is said into sections, and each section is then considered to be a part of the structure that has a certain function.

Through these approaches to the study of language, it is evident that language is multifunctional. Language has many uses and forms, and not only can one word have a variety of meanings, but there are numerous ways to say the same thing. To know the meaning of words and to assess the language, one must examine the culture and context within which communication takes place.

Wittgenstein on Language

Wittgenstein, the Philosopher

Perhaps no philosopher has had such a profound influence on our understanding of language as Ludwig Wittgenstein (47). His work on the meaning and use of language served to refocus the very course of modern philosophic thought in the West away from a theory of knowledge to the study of meaning (48). Wittgenstein held that problems arise in philosophy when the logic behind what is said is misunderstood. He questioned the existing methods of philosophy and thought that his work offered the definitive solution to the problems of philosophy (49). Wittgenstein saw the fundamental problem or illusion that limited our ability to know the truth as one of language. He sought the essence of human language and asked the question: how do sentences and words express what they do? His thoughts and writings on language have found an audience across many disciplines, including religion, mathematics, psychology, and lin-

guistics. However, the originality of his work on the essence of language and his ideas have defied attempts to pigeon-hole him into conventional “isms” or schools of thought, and there remains disagreement among those interpreting his work (50).

Wittgenstein felt that philosophers had historically approached the discipline and problems of philosophy with preconceived notions about how things should be. This subconscious conception guided their questioning and thus influenced the answers to their questions, yet it was often left unexamined. Wittgenstein sought to correct this by looking at the source of philosophic thinking: language. Moreover, he knew that there was a difference between the essence of language and language as we all know and use it.

Wittgenstein, the philosopher, was influenced by Wittgenstein, the man. It has been said that to know Wittgenstein’s work, one must attempt to understand the man (51). With a life nearly as controversial and misunderstood as his philosophy, Wittgenstein’s eccentric and tormented ways served to perpetuate the mystique and misunderstanding that surrounded his philosophy of language. Often retreating to the solitude of some remote location for long periods of time, and hesitant to enter the debate over the concepts forwarded in his seminal work the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein did little to stem the misinterpretation and controversy that his work generated. Moreover, his writing style and lecture style only added to the intrigue and confusion. His prose was very personal, and his concepts were often presented through the use of questions. He was prone to leaving many thoughts unfinished and raising concerns without answering them or asking questions that could not be answered. It would appear that Wittgenstein, at the least, would avoid explaining directly what he wanted to say or, at times, would even try to conceal the very points he was making. He was generally absent and disinterested in the scholarly debate over his philosophy (52). As such, many scholars have supplied the answers to the questions Wittgenstein left unanswered and finished his thoughts for him. This further adds to the misinterpretation of Wittgenstein (53). Wittgenstein scholar J. E. M. Hunter summarizes the problem of understanding Wittgenstein by saying, “Wittgenstein wrote cryptically, and to make sense of his prose is always a challenge” (54). Wittgenstein also did not attempt to do the things that all other philosophers did; namely, offer theories and explanations, or deduce conclusions from data (55).

In the end of the preface of his posthumous masterpiece *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein offers his readers a clue as to why he wrote in such a fashion. He states that he did not want his “writing to spare other people the trouble of thinking,” and that one of his objectives was to “stimulate someone to thoughts of his own.” Not surprisingly, the

students of Wittgenstein find themselves functioning as both philosophers and detectives when studying his works.

As a lecturer, he permitted only the most serious of students — not “tourists” as he called most students — into his classes and was unconventional in his teaching approach. Rather than present material in an organized fashion, Wittgenstein felt that to repeat the points already made by others was antithetical to the very act of philosophizing (56). He would have nothing to do with such, and his lectures at Cambridge amounted to him spontaneously sharing original thoughts as they arose with the approximately 20 students who attended his weekly lecture and weekly discussion (57).

Ludwig Josef Johann Wittgenstein was born on April 26, 1889 in Vienna and was the youngest of nine children. As leaders in the Austrian steel and iron industries, his family possessed great wealth and material comforts. Yet, they would face great sorrow, as three of the five Wittgenstein boys would commit suicide, and another would lose an arm in World War I. Although Ludwig was of Jewish descent, his grandfather had converted to Protestantism and his mother, a Roman Catholic, baptized him into the Catholic Church. Though never an active churchgoer, Wittgenstein would develop an academic interest in religion.

Wittgenstein was educated at home until the age of 14, whereupon he went to school in Linz for three years and then to Berlin to study engineering for two years. He traveled to England in 1908 to study aeronautics and mathematics at Manchester University. While there he read Russell and Whitehead’s *Principia Mathematica* (Principles of Mathematics) and developed an interest in the ideas of Bertrand Russell (58). He was also influenced by the famous University of Jena logician Gottlob Frege, whom Wittgenstein visited in 1911. Taking Frege’s advise, Wittgenstein enrolled at Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1912 to study under Russell. While at Cambridge, Wittgenstein was a student of Russell and G. E. Moore. Russell and Moore recognized Wittgenstein’s brilliance and nominated him to the prestigious and secret society of Apostles. Both would later draw inspiration from their former pupil (59).

Wittgenstein’s studies were interrupted by World War I. He enlisted in the Austrian army in 1914, becoming an officer in 1915, and fighting on both the Eastern Front and later the Southern Front, where he was taken prisoner by the Italian army in 1918. Throughout the war Wittgenstein put his ideas into notebooks titled “Logisch-Philosophische Abhandlung” and mailed them to Russell and Frege. The readers were impressed with their student’s treatise. Russell even encouraged Wittgenstein to publish his work. Wittgenstein, however, failed to follow through and even felt that Russell had misread the treatise. This would seem to be behavior typical of Wittgenstein, for in not trusting most people and

seeing them as intellectually inferior, he would always worry that he would be misread (60). Fortunately, Russell was not deterred and eventually saw Wittgenstein's work published in 1921 under the name *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*.

In the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein believed that he offered the definitive solution for philosophy, but soon after, he lost interest in the formal study of philosophy. Pursuing other endeavors, Wittgenstein attended a teacher's training college and taught elementary school students in Austria from 1920 to 1926. Not surprisingly, Wittgenstein did not enjoy a healthy relationship with his employers or the parents of his pupils and would eventually leave, forced out over charges of excessive physical severity against the students. While there, however, he did publish a German glossary for elementary schools, the second and only other book he would publish in his lifetime. As the *Tractatus* was the only work he considered complete enough to be published, his other works were all published posthumously (61).

Wittgenstein also worked as a gardener in a monastery near Vienna and designed a home for one of his sisters. In 1929 he returned to Cambridge, submitting the *Tractatus* for his Ph.D. requirements under Moore and Russell. After completing his Ph.D., he was selected as a fellow at Trinity College. He would later hold a professorship in philosophy. Although they would not be published until after his death, while at Cambridge Wittgenstein began work on *Philosophische Grammatik* and *Philosophische Bemerkungen* (Philosophical Remarks). He also kept extensive notes from the lectures he gave in 1933–1934 and 1934–1935, which were published posthumously as *The Blue and Brown Books*, respectively, so named for the color of the bound papers.

Another departure from the formal, and what he saw as confining, world of academia that he felt infringed on his time to think (62) took Wittgenstein into self-imposed exile to a primitive hut in Norway. While in isolation, he worked on *Philosophische Untersuchungen* (Philosophical Investigations), which he finished before his death but never published while he was alive. Wittgenstein would periodically return to academic life at Cambridge but spent much of the World War II years working as a medical orderly at a London hospital and later at a clinical research lab in Newcastle. Two years after the conclusion of the Second World War, he once again abandoned academic life, traveling to Austria and then Ireland, where, for awhile, he returned to living a solitary existence in a remote seaside hut in Galway. His final years were spent between Dublin, Austria, Cambridge, Oxford, and the United States, before moving back to Cambridge, where he died on April 29, 1951.

Ludwig Wittgenstein remains as a giant in modern philosophy and an enigmatic figure. Not to deny him his fame or rightful place in the history

of philosophy that he justifiably earned through his intellectual contributions, but part of the allure and mystique of the man would seem to be owed to his eccentricity. Wittgenstein was an impatient individual who could be brutal in his attacks. His personality and intellect made him disliked and feared by many, while a few others followed him with such zeal that they have been described as “disciples” and accused of a dogmatic devotion to his work. In return, he held most of his contemporaries in academia and philosophy in low regard and considered most humans to be worthless. Wittgenstein was suicidal, somewhat uncomfortable with his homosexuality, and possessed what could safely be held to be quirky habits (63). He lived much of his life in bad health and without material or financial comfort, for he had given away the inherited fortune his father left him upon his death in 1912. Yet, the man and his work have been described as “genius,” “inspired,” “passionate,” and “intense” (64).

The Early Wittgenstein

The controversy and misunderstanding that surrounds the philosophy of Wittgenstein is compounded by the fact that, essentially, there are two Wittgensteins: the early Wittgenstein, as understood in the *Tractatus*, published in 1921, and the later Wittgenstein, evident in many of his posthumously published works, most notably *Philosophical Investigations*, published in 1953. Other important works published posthumously include *The Blue and Brown Books*, *Philosophische Grammatik* (Philosophical Grammar) and *Philosophische Bemerkungen* (Philosophical Remarks). There are a number of vivid changes evident between the *Tractatus* and later writings. In fact, on some points Wittgenstein moved 180 degrees from his earlier positions (65). It is even suggested that a reader of the later Wittgenstein might think that the author had never even read the early Wittgenstein (66). Although there is some disagreement as to when and why the change took place, it appears that Wittgenstein started reordering his philosophy sometime after 1929, during his intermediate or transition years 1930 to 1934 (67). His split from the *Tractatus* is also revealed in his lectures at Cambridge in the 1930s. One story on why this transition occurred has a friend and colleague of Wittgenstein’s at Cambridge — Piero Sraffa, an Italian economist — raising questions about Wittgenstein’s logical form theory and stumping him (68).

The fact that there are two Wittgensteins only adds to the mystique that surrounds the man and his work. As one would expect, Wittgenstein himself did little to clarify the philosophic community’s understanding of the nature of this change in thinking or the reasons for the change. To

this day, there is a school of philosophers who regard the early Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* as his triumph and a school who agree with the later Wittgenstein (69). Because of the later change in Wittgenstein's philosophy and his reluctance to interpret his work, in studying Wittgenstein, one must consider: (1) the *Tractatus*, (2) the various interpretations of the *Tractatus*, (3) his later works such as *Philosophical Investigations*, and (4) the interpretations of these later posthumous publications.

In the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein searches for the meaning of a word and examines the relationship between a word and its meaning and the relationship of language to the world. Words, according to Wittgenstein, stand for things and are used in place of the actual phenomenon. Words also represent expressions or sensations. Words "name" objects and have meaning. The meaning of a word is found in the object for which the word stands. As such, they "picture" facts. To picture something is to reassemble it so that it matches reality. Here, Wittgenstein maintained that there is a relationship between words and aspects of the world; a similarity between the form of what is pictured and that which pictures. That said about words, then sentences would be combinations of words that picture the reality of how objects exist. This reasoning necessitates that the logical form of a sentence and the logical form of a fact must match one another. So, in the Tractarian ontology, language depicts the logical structure of facts. Language must be bound by facts.

Wittgenstein also states that words should be used "commonsensically." To him, sentences are either true or false. There should be a corresponding fact to what is said. If a proposition neither denies nor confirms a fact, then it is "nonsensical." A problem with the language of philosophy is that words tend toward nonsense; they are words without meaning. Such words are unintelligible, and most philosophical propositions are thus nonsensical. Metaphysical propositions such as those discussing the existence of God and moral judgments were expressions of emotion and therefore did not meet his verification principle. That is not to say that he viewed such statements as unimportant, however, because certain questions could not be addressed through science and fact and were perhaps best suited to aesthetical, ethical, and religious discourse. In the early Wittgenstein, somewhat of a dichotomy emerges between philosophy and common sense and between values and facts, as he attempts to establish boundaries of what can be said or thought intelligibly. In rejecting metaphysics, Wittgenstein refers to the "inexpressible" as things that cannot be expressed through propositions. One can see that Wittgenstein was attempting to place philosophy on firmer ground. Inherently, the questions of philosophy focused on that which was beyond the factual. So philosophic language and discourse was not based in reality and fact, and therein lies the problem of meaning and the dilemma of ever proving or

disproving philosophical utterances. Metaphysics, to him, was not a solid instrument of analysis, and metaphysical statements were arbitrary and did not possess sense. As such, philosophy should not even try to say what cannot be said.

If a proposition is false, the state of affairs described therein does not exist. Likewise, the realm of fact is devoid of value and focuses on “what is.” Values and ethics belong to the other sphere of the nonlogical, focusing on what “ought to be.” Wittgenstein’s aversion to metaphysics found an audience in many early neopositivists attempting to develop a more scientific philosophy, and he is believed to have influenced the development of logical positivism and the Vienna Circle (70).

Wittgenstein breaks language down into its basic forms. In section 3 of the *Tractatus*, he considers “propositions,” which is when a thought finds an expression that can be perceived by the senses. The fundamental or simplest kind of propositions are “elementary propositions,” which are presented in section 4. The world consists of facts, referred to by Wittgenstein as “atomic facts” or “states of affairs.” Meaningful propositions depict a reality of contingent facts. Each fact is composed of simple objects that can be named. Combining these names and facts produces a simple proposition, or an “elementary proposition.” An elementary proposition merely asserts the existence of a state of affairs. As such, it is reflective of reality and cannot be contradicted by another elementary proposition. So, by discovering the logical form of propositions and identifying elementary propositions, one can discover the logical form or truth of states of affairs. It is through analysis of sentences and language to reveal elementary propositions that allows reality to be discovered. Utterances or philosophic discourse that does not meet these factual criteria are “nonsense” and cannot be expressed.

A dominant feature of Wittgenstein’s early view of language is reflected in what he referred to as the “picture theory” (71). This is discussed in section 2 of the *Tractatus*. Wittgenstein uses the illustration of a person picturing facts to oneself. These pictures are logical; in other words, they are what exists in the world or are “states of affairs,” as he refers to them. A picture is thus a model of reality, where objects of the world correspond to pictures. Language is a picture of facts.

To Wittgenstein, language is basically mental. “Pictures” are mental “thoughts,” and these “spoken thoughts” are expressed in a way that is perceptible to the senses. Wittgenstein speaks of a “pictorial relationship” when referring to elements of a picture being related to objects in the real world. The way or manner in which things are related to one another is reflected in the “pictorial form.” This “form” is connected with reality in that the elements of the picture are related to one another in the same way that things are related in the world. So pictures must be facts.

The Later Wittgenstein

The later Wittgenstein repudiates the basic principles put forth in the *Tractatus*. Perhaps the work that best reflects his mature philosophy is *Philosophical Investigations* (72). *Philosophical Investigations* is difficult to read in that it repeatedly refers to other concepts and moves in a nonlinear manner, but it is held by many Wittgenstein scholars to represent the later Wittgenstein and is important because in it he offers not only a critique of the Tractarian ontology, moving his analysis of language from “thoughts” to “action” and from “meaning” to “sense,” but also offers thoughts on new matters. While the early Wittgenstein was based on truth and falsity and strict, simple rules of language, the later work rejects rules and the notion that by following convention, one can arrive at truths or falsehoods.

His later work recognizes that certain pictures are incomplete or distorted. This led him to abandon his earlier views, which he felt led to the distortion and oversimplification of the multiple ways that language is used (73). Language cannot be summed up by the Tractarian method of “naming,” which is to say that one cannot simply state that words stand for things and, thus, take their place such that one can then simply assign names to things and memorize them. There is not a simple relationship between the name and its bearer. In its place, the later Wittgenstein views a word’s meaning as related to its “practical use.” One cannot know the meaning of words without knowing the environment within which the word is used. He places more emphasis on the study of words as they are used in the everyday sense, where he likened their use to that of a “tool.” Tools are purposive and do specific things, as do words. To attempt to do something with the wrong word — or tool — is difficult. One can know the meaning of the word only if one knows how it is used in practice. As such, language must be considered as connected to real activities, and the Tractarian notion of an ideal language has been replaced by an emphasis on ordinary language. Wittgenstein also uses the notion or metaphor of “language-games” to show the complex and multiple ways words function. Relatedly, he rejects the Tractarian notion of language consisting only of elementary propositions, something that the later Wittgenstein felt restricted language. The use of such metaphors as tools and games by the later Wittgenstein reveals his interest in the larger activities of language, such as how a word is used and what is done with the word (74).

Wittgenstein points out that words have several meanings and that it is not enough to simply know the object that the word pictures, but one must also know the context and meaning by which it is used. A word’s use, and thus its meaning, is contingent on the situation in which it is used. It would be wrong to assume, then, that a word’s meaning is constant and fixed. For example, a word or sentence can be used as a question,

request, command, prayer, a joke, as a greeting, a way to thank someone, and so on. Moreover, the meaning of a word can change when it is used together with another word. Words are used as more than just names. To really know the language, Wittgenstein says that one must know the various language-games that are played.

Language, in the new Wittgenstein approach, is no longer seen as a picture of the world. Language does not have a single definitive element or property that all words, sentences, and propositions must possess to constitute a language. As such, Wittgenstein says that language cannot be defined. His notion of “language-games” illustrates this, as language-games do not have a sole fundamental property in common, as is also the case with different types of games such as ball games, board games, or card games. He does allow for similarities and some common features, which he calls “family resemblances.”

Unlike in the *Tractatus*, the later Wittgenstein forwards the view that facts do not have to have a logical form, and the state of affairs in the world does not have to consist solely of objects and elementary propositions. Whereas, in the *Tractatus* he conceptualized language very simply, looking for the simple and elementary character of language, the later works view language as more complex. Nor is meaning still tied to an objective truth. For example, if everyone agreed that the Earth is flat, that belief would not necessarily make it the truth. If science “proves” that the Earth is not flat, the meaning of “flat” is still relevant and unchanged. The meaning must be studied prior to discussion of the truth.

Wittgenstein entertained the idea, which he ultimately rejected, that one could have a “private language,” a language in which the sense of words would be known only by the user (75). His “private language argument” reasoned that an individual could not express — written or otherwise — her/his inner feelings and experiences in a language that others could understand. Expressions would reflect the individual’s experiences and senses, although it is theoretically possible that the individual could infer the senses of others. Though he doubted the possibility of a private language, he speculated that such a language would be driven by the senses, whereas the language shared by everyone would be governed by a set of rules that are taught to all humans (76). Yet, the internal states of language cannot be separated from external influences, and there is a public dimension to even the innermost private mental states.

Postmodernism: The Vocabulary of Thought

Many of the problems facing the practice and field of study of public administration are made worse by the narrow thinking that occurs within and about the field. Scholars of public administration, politicians, and

bureaucrats themselves routinely bemoan the troubling state of the field. Attention is needed on the language of bureaucracy because not only does language communicate thoughts, but it also shapes our thoughts. Language affects the thought process and shapes our worldview. It is part of an activity and a form of life.

Since its birth, public administration has embraced the experiment of modernity and, consequently, has been wedded to the existing convention of modernist assumptions. As the dominant paradigm, modernity has had its utility. It helped address the problems of public administration and has occasioned professionalism and reforms in the field. It has also produced a body of “laws,” theories, and administrative practices and procedures. As such, a “language” of public administration has emerged, tied to, and embedded in, modernity. This modernist language includes terms like “privatization,” “restructuring,” “empowerment,” and “allocations,” but it is also a way of thinking about the roles, scope, and nature of public administration. This way of thinking is defined by conventional forms of power and the merits of growth as well as such concepts as rationality, reason, specialization, impersonality, and faith in formal, general rules. It also has things to say about human nature and behavior. The experiment with modernity has guided training and education in the field and the practices and growth of bureaucracy. Modernist principles have informed the study of public administration and the methodologies and questioning used by public administrationists. It has also guided reforms in the practicing community.

The development of public-organization theory and the discipline of public administration have been bound by language. A new language of bureaucracy is necessary for a new approach to governing (77). Deconstructing the old bureaucracy and imagining a new practice and study of public administration requires new questions and a new way of thinking about the very nature of bureaucracy. The language of postmodernism can guide this deconstruction and inform any critical rethinking about bureaucracy (78).

The experiment of modernity is visible in the fundamental beliefs and values of Western civilization over the past 300 to 500 years. While identifying just what those core beliefs are is difficult, defining the alternative postmodern paradigm is even more of a monumental task. There exists no single, agreed-upon set of postmodernist doctrine. Perhaps the best way to conceptualize the postmodernist language that could inform a new public administration is to consider what it is not: modernity. Whether a complete deconstruction of modernity or mere reconstruction of the system is necessary, the existing bureaucratic order must be rethought.

The old principles of a day and age of “scientific management” and the “proverbs” of public administration, which have long been summarily

dismissed by scholars in the field, are, if one considers the postmodern critique, alive and well in the form of modernity. The current language of our field reflects biases molded from the forces of scientific management as well as popular culture, capitalism, the mass media, and the political center. One can still see the presence of scientific management and the quest for universal laws or a unifying theory of public administration in the current “facts” or state of the knowledge base in the field. Elements of the post-Gulick and post-Simon era still reflect the language of the heyday of those early voices. This modernist language, for example, still separates facts from moral and value judgments, à la early Wittgenstein, still supports rational decision making, reasoned action by bureaucrats, the principles of efficiency and economy, and private-sector solutions to public problems. One might say that rumors of the demise of the politics-administration dichotomy are, in modernity, greatly exaggerated.

A postmodernist language of bureaucracy would be critical of contemporary thinking in public-organization theory, which is based in notions of power, excessive rationality, alienation, efficiency, order, and narrowly construed concepts of equity, equality, morality, and justness. As such, the tenets of a postmodern language that could be used to guide the field of public administration include: (1) skepticism of applying existing principles of science and rationality to public administration, (2) skepticism of the existing knowledge base — or “facts” — of public administration, (3) skepticism of the ability to develop universal laws or principles to public organizations.

In bureaucratese we witness the possible death of language. Language is communication yet, in bureaucracies, often language does not communicate but only serves to inform. Communication should be considered as a two-way construction of meaning and exchange of thoughts. Information, on the other hand, is one-directional and serves to shape another’s thoughts. This is especially problematic when the language forwards and legitimizes the existing order and dominant system without the public realizing this or having a chance to participate in the exchange. In playing Wittgenstein’s “language-games,” for example, the participants — communicators — must agree on the rules of the game prior to communicating. There must be an agreed-upon understanding of the fundamentals of language. Wittgenstein felt that this common understanding comes from shared experiences and common expressions of behavior that he called *lebensformen* or “forms of life.” Bureaucratese does not draw upon the shared experiences.

Bureaucratese separates the meaning from the message, and in so doing, separates language from meaning by removing the meaning from words (79). It is an attack on formalist theories of language that suggest that words have a determinate meaning. Yet, neither does it fall into the category of deconstructionist linguistics: the notion that a word’s meaning

varies from reader to reader, person to person. In the language of bureaucracy, it has to be wondered if one can ever even assume that meaning is communicated at all. A new language of bureaucracy is necessary.

Plain English

That bureaucratese is plagued by excessive use of jargon, slang, cliches, and acronyms is obvious. This form of “language” is in danger of becoming institutionalized within public organizations — if it already has not — and an accepted part of popular culture. What is needed as an alternative is the adoption of accurate, plain, simple words and sentences: in short, plain English. To allow for maximal participation by the public in its government and understanding of public discourse and documents by the citizenry, the following criterion or question should be applied. Can the particular public communicate in question be stated or written in a more concise, direct, and understandable manner?

Statements need to be shortened and organized as “subject-verb-object” whenever possible. Many basic principles of plain English could be adopted to improve public communication, such as avoiding using nouns as modifiers. This is the practice of running several nouns together, as in “the conference program committee recommendations.” Another practice that should be limited is the constant use of verbs as nouns when not necessary, such as “to offer some assistance” in place of “to assist,” or adding repetitive words to nouns, as in “the color blue” rather than simply saying “blue.” Yet another problem with not using plain English is that much of the cliches, jargon, and technical-speak of bureaucracy is based in current or pop culture. Such words or phrases typically have short life spans of use, and their meaning is likewise often short or at least either unstable or not universally agreed upon. As terminology changes, so does meaning. Without a common historical or cultural grounding or context, the meaning of words change.

Public agencies are beginning to use plain English in written reports, publications, and public documents in response not only to complaints from the American public and criticism from plain English advocates, but in an effort to improve internal communications (80). Historically, the move toward such public accessibility can be traced to the consumerism movement and open-government reforms of the late 1960s and 1970s. These reforms called for government to operate “in the sunshine” and to make public documents readable and accessible to the general public (81). From President Richard Nixon’s initiative in 1972 to have information in the *Federal Register* written in “layman’s terms” to President Jimmy Carter’s 1978 executive order mandating that federal regulations and the IRS revise documents so as to make them simpler and easier to understand,

there has been the effort to reduce the use of bureaucratese (82). Likewise, several states have passed legislation requiring that public documents be made shorter, easier to understand, and written in a style of writing that the general public can understand (83).

Numerous organizations have emerged challenging the current language of bureaucracies. The Washington, D.C.-based Document Design Center, for example, is an advocacy organization that proposes technical-writing courses and training for those who draft public documents and for students preparing to enter public service (84). Belatedly, there is a role for educators, especially those teaching English and those in communication and public-administration programs, to encourage and train students in the use of plain English. Some universities are emphasizing a return to the basics and requiring writing-intensive curricula. Several states have passed laws specifying a minimum amount of writing in certain college courses. Professional and academic associations, English programs, and English faculty are also active in this issue. NCTE, a professional association of English teachers, has, since the 1970s, formally condemned the improper use of language in public discourse and writing public policy (85). The Committee on Public Doublespeak has likewise served as a watchdog critical of the use of bureaucratese. The committee identifies abusers in politics, government, and the military and, since the mid-1970s, has presented awards such as the Orwell Award for outstanding contributions in public discourse and the Doublespeak Award to the worst abusers of bureaucratic-speak. Published by the Committee on Public Doublespeak, the *Quarterly Review of Doublespeak* was started in 1974 and chronicles examples of public doublespeak. There is also a monthly newsletter titled *Simply Stated* dedicated to the use of plain English in writing and other forms of communication.

A viable plain-English movement has been working to end the use of bureaucratese, requiring in place of it the use of plain English in official public documents. The academic disciplines of English and communication are in the forefront of this campaign. It is time for the field of public administration and public administrators to commit themselves to plain-English reforms.

The benefits of using plain, straightforward English in public documents and in public communication, both internal and external, are many. There are obvious savings in costs, time, and human resources resulting from less paperwork, repetition, and supervision and lower levels of confusion and mistakes. Research now suggests that people learn better with the use of simple, plain language (86). Whereas bureaucratese is written from the perspective of the organization and is authoritarian in nature, plain English benefits the citizen, the voter, the public employee, and the client or recipient of public services because it uses their words and language.

Toward a New Language (and Practice) of Public Administration

A new language of public administration, one based in plain English and borrowing conceptually from postmodernism and Wittgenstein's later philosophy of language, would allow public-administration scholars and bureaucrats alike to ask the new questions, rethink the old problems, and reorient the very nature of public service in a manner necessary if government is to respond to new challenges facing it and rid itself of the old failures plaguing it.

This "new" paradigm must watch for the subtle and subconscious ways that the present language of public administration still implies a "science" of administration, conceptualizes a separation between politics and administration, and embraces the private-sector notions of economy, efficiency, and a narrowly construed framework for defining effectiveness and productivity. Postmodern critiques of the dominant mindset in public administration assists in deconstructing the existing "facts" and knowledge base in the field. It permits the field to ask new questions and rethink the dominant paradigm by developing of a new "vocabulary" of thought.

Farmer, for instance, advocates the application of postmodernism to address several needed reforms in the field (87): (1) to move the study and practice of public administration toward deconstructing what are believed to be "truths" and "facts"; (2) broadening existing narrow disciplinary interests that limit the field; (3) replacing the academic preoccupation with scientific methods and a "science" of administration with multiple frames of analysis including ethics, values, and moral philosophy; and (4) expanding the study of public administration beyond the current emphasis on local government and the American experience, which he sees as "particularism," to a global focus. All of this can be aided through the development of a new language or way of thinking about public administration.

Wittgenstein can assist our exploration of the use and misuse of language in public organizations and the examination of its meaning. Although the early Wittgenstein separated metaphysical language from factual language, a new language of bureaucracy would encourage the use of values and ethics in the bureaucratic vocabulary of thought. While Wittgenstein would have referred to such language as "nonsensical," his separation between the metaphysical and the factual is useful in that so much of the present language of bureaucracy is unintelligible and not founded in the factual "state of affairs." Rather than "picture" or mirror reality, the words used in bureaucratese do not correspond to reality but impose a false order of affairs. Wittgenstein's later emphasis on a word's meaning being known through its practical use speaks to the

need to base official public discourse and documents on plain English. To know the meaning of a word, one must know the environment and context within which it is spoken. The functions and practices of government must be spoken and written in the words and language of the public it serves.

A “mindset” of bureaucracy emerges through use of a language that is deceptive and distancing, impersonal, and meaningless. The use of a doublespeak vocabulary may produce what could be described as a doublespeak mindset. This is evident in such standard bureaucratic statements as “department policy requires me to....” The “governmentality” that is believed to be entrenched in public organizations and is the source of so much of the “bureaucracy bashing” in the press, by politicians, and from the general public may be better understood by an examination of the language of bureaucracy.

The language of bureaucrats does not just depict issues, but it constructs them, frames debate about the issues, and influences the way the public, bureaucrats, and politicians perceive the issues. Public access to, and understanding of, government programs and services are contingent on clear communication. The academic study of the public sector is shaped by the language of analysis and the language of thought. So too are organization policies and practices bound by language. Problem solution, after all, depends on problem construction.

Notes

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5. G. Roche, 1988, 14.
6. W. Lutz, 1988, 40.
7. E. S. Herman, *Beyond Hypocrisy: Decoding the News in an Age of Propaganda*, Boston: South End Press, 1992, 1.
8. D. G. Kehl, “The Two Most Powerful Weapons against Doublespeak,” *English Journal* 77 (1988): 57–66.
9. W. Lutz, *Doublespeak: From “Revenue Enhancement” to “Terminal Living”: How Government, Business, Advertisers, and Others Use Language to Deceive You*, New York: Harper and Row, 1989, 1.
10. W. Lutz, 1989; W. Lutz, “Notes toward a Description of Doublespeak,” *Quarterly Review of Doublespeak* 13, (1987): 10–11.

11. R. F. Dolle, "Gobbledygook, or Turkey Talk," *J. Environ. Health* 52 (1990): 262.
12. J. R. Killingsworth, "Idle Talk in Modern Organizations," *Admin. and Soc.* 16 (1984): 346–384.
13. R. F. Dolle, 1990; D. G. Kehl, 1988; W. Lutz, 1989; or see G. Orwell, 1984, New York: Signet Books, 1949; G. Orwell, *Politics and the English Language*, G. Orwell, *A Collection of Essays*, New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1946.
14. R. F. Dolle, 1990.
15. L. H. Lapham, "Washington Phrasebook," *Harper's Magazine*: 287 (1993): 9–12.
16. W. Lutz, 1989.
17. R. P. Hummel, *The Bureaucratic Experience: A Critique of Life in the Modern Organization*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994.
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19. C. W. Hensley, "Speak with Style and Watch the Impact," *Vital Speeches of the Day*, 61(22), (1995): 61.
20. J. M. Dorney, 1988; W. Lutz, 1989, 1988.
21. C. W. Hensley, 1995.
22. W. Lutz, 1989.
23. J. M. Dorney, 1988; W. Lutz, 1989, 1988, 1987.
24. As described in G. Roche, 1988.
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27. R. F. Dolle, 1990.
28. As described in W. Lutz, 1989.
29. As described in W. Lutz, 1989.
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31. For structuralist linguistics, see D. Hymes, "Models of the Interaction of Language and Social Life," in *Directions in Sociolinguistics: The Ethnography of Communication*, Eds. J. Gumperz and D. Hymes, New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1972, 35–71.
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34. For emergent linguistics, see Hopper, 1988.

35. See D. Schriffrin, *Approaches to Discourse*, Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1994 for Interactive linguistics and for an overview of the major schools and theories of linguistics.
36. J. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962; or Searle, 1989, 1969.
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Chapter 27

Postmodern Philosophy, Postmodernity, and Public Organization Theory

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This chapter has the difficult task of defining that which, on the basis of principle, resists definition; postmodernism, postmodernity, and the relation of these to public administration and its affairs. Those whose philosophical musings have been labeled postmodern often resist that category. Moreover, there is a confusion between the more inclusive category, postmodernism, and the term more local to French intellectual history, poststructuralism. Although postmodern philosophy contributes in a broad sense to what we distinguish as the postmodern condition, portions of it can also be regarded as simply descriptive. Finally, the effects of the postmodern problematic on public administration/affairs probably lie more in the future than in the present and the past, which calls for a more speculative approach than might be appropriate for other contributions to this handbook.

We recommend and instruct those who read this chapter, in light of the unfamiliarity to most public administrators and public administrationists about these matters, particularly the first two sections, with a suspension of disbelief — or better, with sense of intuition activated — in order to grasp concepts that we admit we have difficulty expressing in the already-familiar language of day-to-day conversations.

We will proceed as follows: first, we broadly define what we take to be the main themes of postmodern philosophy; second, with some unavoidable overlap, we will provide sketches of the contributions of the major names generally considered to be postmodern thinkers; third, we define the distinction between postmodernism and postmodernity, or what we also call the postmodern condition; finally, we speculate about the effects of these matters on governance.

Major Themes of Postmodern Thought

An elementary grasp of postmodern thought requires understanding of the following interrelated problematics and how a postmodern reacts to them:

1. Anti-foundationalism and the “canon”
2. Incommensurability, the “other,” and multiculturalism
3. Language, the text, and decentered subjectivity.

Anti-Foundationalism

Perhaps the most important and common aspect of postmodern thought is its rejection of what in the history of philosophy has been variously termed universalism, essentialism, ontological realism, and metanarratives. These various terms connote views that affirm the existence of absolute ahistorical truth: immutable truth good for now and all time past and future. Richard Rorty (1), one of our postmodern philosophers, has usefully depicted such positions as “God’s eye” views. In French intellectual circles, “totalization,” or “totalizing,” is similarly employed. They have also been, in epistemological discussions, called “Archimedean standpoints.”

Universalism/foundationalism may be fruitfully compared to theological positions. If one embraces one true omnipotent omniscient God who founds the universe, one can simultaneously assume an absolute of sufficient fixity to organize truth and reality claims. One may not be exactly sure of truth and reality in any particular case, but one is sure that there is one to be sought; there is the possibility that one will be found. Particular truths can be deduced or traced back to The Truth of God. Whether the One True Word comes to us through revelation, faith, or the exercise of God-given reason can, and has been, vigorously disputed — sometimes with unfortunate life-depriving consequences for those found to be on heretical sides of such arguments. Bottom line: what is, and what is true, is because God decrees it.

Enlightenment and “modern” thought (modern philosophy can be traced back to 17th-century philosopher René Descartes) has a similar form to divine foundationalism except that God is marginalized, removed, or replaced by some other first principle. Chief among these is science and, behind it, the power of human reason. The Enlightenment presented the optimistic prospect of the universe as an enormous clockworks operating according to knowable laws. Such was the influence of the work of Galileo, Copernicus, and Newton. The accomplishments of science fueled the optimism (or in retrospect arrogance) of modernity. The French encyclopedists (e.g., Voltaire) believed that the human sciences of governance and political economy would soon achieve the exactitude of Newtonian physics. To be sure, intellectual history is not a lock-step linear progression, but at a high level of abstraction it is possible to identify an overall mood of modernity against which postmodernity can be defined. That mood is one of attempting to identify lawlike (God’s eye) generalizations from which might be deduced explanations of all else. This is why the French postmodernist Lyotard (2) refers to modernity as dominated by metanarratives and metadiscourse: “I will use the term modern to designate any science that legitimates itself with reference to a metadiscourse ... [that makes] explicit appeal to some grand narrative.” The (at least vulgar) Marxist view that an inexorable materialist economic

dialectic channels all history into predictable concatenations of class struggle is one such metanarrative. The liberal bourgeois view that all history has been teleologically directed to the present capitalist regime is another. Yet another is the aspiration of positivist and analytical philosophy of science to develop a universal language of scientific explanation — a logic of all logics or a language of all languages.

Now it is true that none of these competing modern aspirants to universalism (including the theological ones) completely displaced any of the others for even a moment in the hearts and minds of their opponents. So its not so much a matter of some particular all-hegemonic foundationalist point of view prevailing, as it is the attempt to have one at all. What is called by postmodernists “the Western canon” is not a particular substantive dogma but the dogma embodied in the endless permutations of logic and disputation dedicated to finding a fixed dogma. “Canon,” of course, denotes unquestionable lawlike rules. Implied too is an affective connotation of God-given ecclesiastical laws. In particular the Western canon is thought to be logocentric (having an a priori bias favoring cause-and-effect deductive logic) by postmodern authors. Jacques Derrida especially is identified with the critique of logocentricism. Privileged status is denied to cool logic, rationalism, the cogito (“I think therefore I am”), and the bourgeois Western males prone to practice them. Given equal legitimacy are other human proclivities and talents that get marginalized by logocentric privileging. This Western canon, then, is “deconstructed” by postmodern thought. Laid bare are its delimiting, truncating, and arrogant visions and its bias toward a hegemonic Western bourgeois class, male gender, and white race versus all thereby marginalized different “others.”

Postmodernists, congruently, reject not only specific solutions to the quest for universal metanarratives; they reject the quest itself as well as the logical, cultural, and philosophical imperatives that drive it. Think about it this way: imagine you are a child with a mansion-sized sandbox and play area. You leisurely explore all the nooks and crannies of this territory perfectly content in the belief that this is the universe of possibility. Suddenly someone comes along and creaks open a gate to reveal a whole new universes of possibility that you had not imagined could exist. After having figured and charted all possible permutations of known ground, someone comes along and shows the limitations, nay perversity, of one’s knowledge of the ground — and more importantly brings into doubt the universality of the ground itself.

The abandonment of foundationalism, universalism, essentialism, metanarratives, totalizing, Western canon, and more importantly the absolute abandonment of the project to find or establish same, is enormously significant. Foreshadowed by Nietzsche’s declaration of the death of God,

what follows from this abandonment is perspectivism (called relativism by detractors) in epistemology and philosophy of science. The veracity of contradictory truth claims cannot be adjudicated against some monolithic conception of “The Truth.” There is not even an ambiguous Constitution, as in American jurisprudence, to constrain competing interpretations within manageable boundaries. Similarly in ethics, relativism or (some would go so far as to say) nihilism follows from the demise of the canon. Without a firm foundation, or even the hope for one, no eternal standard of right behavior can be adduced; ethical judgments lose their ability to claim alignment with eternal verities. At the very worst, ethical assessments become nothing more than matters of taste (3). Murder or chocolate, take your pick.

Incommensurability, the “Other,” and Multiculturalism

Another important theme of postmodernism, one following directly from anti-foundationalism, is what might be called incommensurability. Putatively, incommensurability happens in a situation of multiple paradigms, each of which is incommensurable with the others. The term “paradigm” suggests a broad band of definitions. It can mean particular esoteric points of view at one pole, while at the other a more grandiloquent understanding of paradigms as the dominant hegemonic assumptions of an epoch — what Foucault (4) calls an episteme and the Germans a *Weltanschauung* or worldview. Centered between these poles is the standard grasp of paradigms as scientific formations as influentially promulgated by Kuhn (5). The thing about paradigms is that they vary and shift; or as Kuhn would have it, they are subject to revolutions whereby one paradigm is completely overthrown by its successor.

One can see that such a view comports with anti-foundationalism because what is counted as truth varies by paradigm, or, understood in the grand sense, the epoch in which a paradigm is hegemonic. In Kuhn’s depiction, science advances by way of paradigm revolutions. During periods he calls “normal” science, scientists in like-minded disciplinary clusters clear up contradictions and search out problems that follow from the explanatory laws held dear within a particular paradigm. In the end, the paradigm will be unable to account for anomalies found at its own nether borders. As inexplicable anomalies accumulate, newer generations of scientists will develop alternative paradigms based on entirely different fundamental explanatory principles.

There follows a period of paradigmatic struggle until finally the new paradigm replaces the old — as for example happened in the move from particle physics to quantum physics. Science advances, in other words, not by evolution, but by a series of paradigmatic revolutions. Revolution

is necessary because paradigms are incommensurable. Older generations of scientists are, as it were, trapped in the paradigm in which they were trained and are unable to see in terms of the new paradigm, or to recognize the phenomena that it explains. The revolution is consummated when the older generation of scientists dies off to be replaced by the newer generation who inhabit a new paradigm.

The point is that one does not ordinarily inhabit more than one paradigm, cannot see through the lenses of alternative paradigms. No argument developed in terms of one paradigm can be telling to those who argue in terms of an alternative one. Inhabitants of different paradigms are like ships passing on a moonless night without running lights.

The upshot of all this is that not only do we lack an absolute truth against which competing truth claims might be adjudicated, we also cannot see truths congruent with the explanatory schemes developed by a paradigm inconsistent with our own. We belong, as it were, to disparate paradigmatic tribes. The truths held so fervently by, say, Branch Davidians simply cannot be unpacked by followers of the Dalai Lama. "Others" cannot be converted; short of elimination, they can only be let alone. A similar argument is made by the influential contemporary philosopher Alisdair MacIntyre (6). MacIntyre, although a practicing Catholic, affirms Nietzsche's point about the death of God in the sense of the demise of a universal set of ethical truths by which people can order their lives. The only hope that MacIntyre holds out is community standards based on more local practices. There can be no assurances that intercommunity standards will be compatible.

As foreshadowed above, postmodernism celebrates the "other;" other, that is, than Eurocentric, logocentric, phallogocentric, and bourgeois. Others are those whose voices and ways of being have been neglected or even occluded by the Western canon: women, people of color, prisoners, the so-called mentally ill, persons with disabilities, cultures south of the equator and east of the Urals, and people associated with nonmajoritarian sexual preferences. Given that a firm foundation of the Western canon becomes increasingly difficult to defend under the assault of postmodern thought, those previously occluded and marginalized voices should now find purchase. This is the theoretical basis of what is now known as multiculturalism, or as voices on the Right label it: "political correctness" (7). Thus does an oral history related by a "not conventionally" literate aboriginal South American woman become a relevant part of the curriculum at elite universities. Thus can a student major in "queer studies."

Put another way, multiculturalism is at least a partial reparation for the imbalance of power that is associated with the hegemony of the Western canon. It follows from the main thrust of the work of Michel Foucault.

Foucault's tremendously influential work collapsed the previously distinct categories of knowledge and power. If there is no independent fount of truth, then what establishes any particular concatenation of truths is power. Conversely, knowledge is knowledge of the status quo and supports it, making it power. Denial of the truths of the status quo is powerfully and pejoratively rendered as ignorance, to the detriment of "others."

Language, the Text, and Decentered Subjectivity

Levi-Strauss, Wittgenstein, and the Linguistic Turn

To situate the closely related postmodern themes of language, the text, and decentered subjectivity, the works of Claude Levi-Strauss and Ludwig Wittgenstein need to be discussed as exemplars of the philosophical context within which these themes developed. Postmodern thinkers, especially the French (Derrida, Foucault, Lyotard, and Lacan) are often lumped together under the label "poststructuralists." The most direct meaning of that term is that these thinkers, although still influenced by structuralism, have had their major works reach prominence after the 1950s flirtation with structuralism.

But what is structuralism? The most direct answer to this question is that it is the theory of French anthropologist and philosopher Claude Levi-Strauss. Intellectual historians trying to make sense of the Parisian cauldron for American audiences divide postwar French thought into three more-or-less chronological (although often existing side by side) periods: existential Marxism, structuralism, and poststructuralism (8). Structuralism can be, albeit without nuance, thought of as a reaction to the existential Marxism of Sartre and his colleagues. This was perhaps inevitable as Sartre, driven by the logic of his philosophy of consciousness, took what is now generally regarded to be an extreme voluntaristic stance in regard to individual human freedom. To passively accept one's fate, even in such extreme situations as prison camps, was to Sartre "bad faith." Rather than proclaim pure and passive innocence, one could always choose to project one's thoughts and thereby change one's essential being elsewhere.

Against this radical free-will view of individual human agency, Levi-Strauss proposed an equally radical determinism. Particular individual human consciousnesses are naught but articulations of a deeper and all-encompassing structure, a structure thought to control and determine all human variables. This structure manifests itself in primarily linguistic ways. Levi-Strauss's project was to find the expressions of this structure in the myths of diverse cultures. These myths were thought to be synchronic or (to borrow terminology from the similar view of Carl Jung) archetypal: variations on common universal themes (9).

The exact ontological status (where exactly can this structure be found?) of Levi-Strauss's structural order was never established. It was more an a priori metaphysical assumption; however, if the evidence proved out and all social variables could be explained by such an assumption, one would be able to claim scientific status at least as justifiable as economics or quark physics. A notable effect of this structural determinism is (in the jargon of structuralism) its synchronic collapse of diachronic historical differentiation. That is to say, myths of aboriginal cultures are not different in kind or content from religions or ideologies of contemporary society. Any belief in historical progress is thereby ruled out. Projects to improve the human condition, such as politics, are chimerical.

This conservative effect of structuralism is largely retained by post-structuralism. There is in all of this what Habermas has called a performative contradiction. If all thought is simply variations and repetitions of primordial sources, what could be the status of structuralism itself? How would it know itself as an independent science of myths if its proponents were as determined by structure as it held all humans to ineluctably be? The difficulties of a determinant structuralism relates to the story being told here because the structuralist metanarrative is what Jacques Derrida set out to deconstruct.

If Levi-Strauss (10) was influential in turning the minds of what would become known as the poststructuralists to semiotics (the science of signs) or more generally linguistics and philology, his structuralism and its deterministic excess were not the only contributory to the great river of philosophy with its linguistic turn. Influential everywhere was the Viennese cum Cambridge philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein. Wittgenstein was a brilliant logician, originally pursuing tasks set for him by the logical positivist/atomist context within which he wrote (11).

Now, logic and linguistics can be associated with one another if language contains within itself universal logics or if logics are expressions of linguistic universals. The positivist/atomist project of working out a logic of all logics was at the same time a project of working out a language of all languages or a grammar of all grammars. From a post-modern point of view, such optimistic and even arrogant projects are the signature of modernity. Such projects amount to totalizing by thought all which it surveyed.

In his early work, Wittgenstein was thought to have filled out, as well as any genius could do, this logical/grammatical project. At the furthest extension of it, he concluded that the project could not be accomplished. Instead of the logic of all logics, Wittgenstein turned to more localized logics: the logics of what he called language games. Turning from meticulous logical analysis of terms, Wittgenstein began to tell stories, relate anecdotes, and put forth aphorisms. To demonstrate

what? There can be no logic of logics: there can only be language, signs, significations within the context in which they are being used and, in effect, reciprocally codetermined by the context of that language game. Now rejected by Wittgenstein was any correspondence theory of truth. Signs, words do not, point by point, denote ontologically independent objects or facts. Rather, they are part of (possibly incommensurable [see above]) language games.

Text

One should not conclude that Wittgenstein's analysis of language games caused, in some linear geometrical sense, the subsequent postmodern emphasis on text and textuality. But all of the seeds of the textual orientation are there. Language games are an important type of text. In the postmodern lexicon, text needs to be understood in its widest possible sense (12). Whole languages can be a text, as can particular writings and particular readings of writings. Regional cultures, like "the South" can be a text, as can the myth structure of a Brazilian tribe. The interpretation of texts is of course the main industry of English departments, which in the American scene were the most hospitable to postmodern intellectual tendencies. In the disciplines gathered up by the Modern Language Association, the analysis of a multitude of texts has gained influence over the interpretation of the intentions of famous authors. Authors' own intentions are denied primacy or privilege. The story of, say, a feminist reading of *The Great Gatsby* is a text of presumably equal status to an autobiography of F. Scott Fitzgerald. (See previous discussion of the "other.")

Similarly, a political culture can be regarded as a text, as can, for instance, the commonly held explanatory assumptions that underlie what is called "public administration" (13). The effect of regarding any social formation as a text or narrative is to reduce it to a story. Deconstructed thereby is, among other things, the distinction between fiction and non-fiction. All stories are equally privileged or nonprivileged. Accordingly, multiculturalism is substantiated by the emphasis on textuality and language games.

Decentered Subjectivity

There is a sense in which the Cartesian cogito (I think therefore I am) has dominated modern Western thought. Privileged in such a formulation is individual consciousness. It is the primacy of consciousness that allows the feeling that each person has agency, autonomy, free will, and self-

determination. The cogito supports the privileging of authorship. Of course, the cogito (and the metaphysics on which it is based) is one of those totalizing universals confuted by anti-foundationalist postmodern philosophy. In its place postmodernism emphasizes signs, significations, linguistic structures, paradigms, and texts. This much of Levi-Strauss's deterministic structuralism remains influential: individual human beings are seen more as particular articulations of a text than authors of it. Individuals must use the languages and signs that precede them. A Serb cannot at the same time express the Chinese text and be a Serb. To put it in a phrase: it's not so much that Faulkner writes about the South, it is rather that the South writes Faulkner.

Lost in the scheme of postmodernism is a robust centered self. Less are we unique individuals inventing ourselves, as existentialists would have it. More are we playing out a script among the few that are available to us. X is the script of a white bourgeois male who was expected to go to college and for whom that possibility was vouchsafed. The Y script is about a black male made dysfunctional by lead paint, improper nutrition, and affection deprivation. Script Z is of a Chinese female infant abandoned so that room in the truncated family decreed by state policy could be made for a male. The script "I think therefore I am" seems but a comfortable illusion.

Postmodern Philosophers

For postmodernists, the self is not subjectively determinant. If it has stability at all, it comes from being embedded in language games not of its own making. This doubt about the individual's ability to author her own life's script repeats the persistent theme in postmodern thought, the theme of doubt. As Jean Baudrillard put it, "We no longer believe that the truth is true when all its veils have been removed" (13). Neither believing nor believing that we believe are any longer believable. Such mischievous apostasy makes postmodernists mutinous agitators in the eyes of the defenders of the Western canon.

Exactly who deserves the invective/approbation "postmodernist" is not a settled matter. We will include Jacques Lacan, Michel Foucault, Jean-Francois Lyotard, Richard Rorty, Jacques Derrida, and Jean Baudrillard as the portraits in our rogues' gallery of postmodernists because we believe that they have important things to say to public administrationists, whether or not they qualify as postmodernists in every commentator's lexicon. Perhaps Jean Baudrillard is the most apocalyptic postmodernist of them all, and we have reserved our discussion of him until last, since he has articulated and described with illustrations the phenomena of hyperreality,

simulacra, and the postmodern condition in general. We will lead with Lacan, the most tenacious in linking the self to language.

Lacan, Poststructuralism, and Discourse

Jacques Lacan is a French poststructuralist whose emphasis on language led to his characterizing the unconscious itself as a discourse. “What can I know? Reply: nothing in a case that doesn’t have the structure of language; whence it follows that the distance I can go within this limit is a matter of logic” (15). Lacan argues that language has its own level of determinacy; it produces social effects and is tightly linked to the unconscious. This argument that language has effects is similar in form to structuralist arguments; for example, the argument that class structure is causal. But for Lacan, social structure dissolves when encountered by the preeminent effects of language; what appears as class structure is potentially conditioned by language. This is true of social institutions in general.

Social institutions (broadly conceived as social practices) are systems of relations discursively ordered, oriented toward activities such as the production of legal documents, literature, film, or the implementation of public policy. Beyond some institutional structure there is no practice. Lacan has no patience for those (like Foucault below) who would treat institutions as if they were imposed on us for the purpose of our torture, and are not of our own making. After all, institutions provide venues for critique of institutionalized practice (such critique is itself an institutionalized practice). And institutions imply even more: There would be no language and no speech, since words themselves are instituted in a culture through repetition. Hence we are more implicated in institutions than we have thought; they are as likely to be manifestations of freedom as restraints against it. Institutions are social spaces in which already-existing antagonisms are played out, where interests are denied or fulfilled, and values are upheld or denigrated (16).

Yet institutions cannot be reduced to outcomes of prior intersubjective struggles, for institutions themselves have determining effects that make them stable as well as malleable. Institutions carry within them the unconscious dimension of the subject. The individual is not an ahistorical subject with fixed preferences and a will to power, but is a subject at odds with itself, possessing among other things a desire not to know. There is no centered, unified self; rather there is a subject that is split between the conscious and the unconscious. An institution’s meaning, as well as its complex failures of meaning (its accidents) coincide with the subject’s split between conscious and unconscious.

Knowledge exists in the unconscious, Lacan claims, but only a discourse can articulate it. Reality has to reveal itself to us through this

discourse. Lacan probes the unconscious not as something underneath discourse, but as an effect of everyday speech or such mental phenomena as works of art or dreams. In his probes, Lacan is fascinated by those instances where expression seems impossible. An encounter with the impossibilities mulling about in the unconscious — where the primal repression of those incongruities occur — is also an encounter with reality. This reality is not an objective, external reality, but a reality within the discourse of the unconscious that results from its impasses. Lacan's real is like Freud's trauma: the hole in discourse. This impasse-reality is the trouble in our lives, the irresolutions that present themselves when the impasses are confronted.

Foucault, Power, and Docile Bodies

For Foucault, this structure of discourse, action, institutions, and belief is a system of knowledge that is interconnected, nay identical, to the system of power. Suspicious of any socialization process, Foucault writes about the regime of power behind all systems of knowledge, and perhaps his most scandalous claim is that knowledge itself is controlled in every society through mechanisms of power. Knowledge and power are linked; they enable each other. This notion cuts against the mainstream sentiment that knowledge is something we all ought to be able to accept; that it is neutral and empowering for everyone who acquires it. Foucault is not only saying that “knowledge is power” but more importantly, that “power is knowledge.” This is not news for anyone who is not of the dominant white culture. Women, Native American Indians, and African-Americans may well have experienced this aspect of knowledge, aware that knowledge they receive through established institutions reflects the status quo form of power.

Knowledge is composed of institutional rules (that is, norms that guide recurring human practices) and of discourses that function through rules of exclusion or inclusion that leave some people out of the conversation. The deviants are excluded; criminals are out. Drug users are removed from political and social life. The mad and insane have been marginalized, and so have been the young, the old, the infirm, and the working class in general. Power is expressed in the way that knowledge includes or excludes. Knowledge functions through rules of exclusion; who may speak, about what, for how long, and in what settings and contexts.

Foucault describes the process of exclusion in *Madness and Civilization*. With increasing rationalization of the world, the mad began to be shut away into asylums where conditions were at first brutal, but were eventually “humanized.” Foucault has a special disdain for the word humanism, since he sees it as a word of exclusion. The Enlightenment

reformers, those who would cure madness, created a whole new program for the mad that included observation, drugs, analysis, more analysis, and review. This “social-worker liberalism” formed a new mechanism of control, more totalitarian than before, that amounts to nothing more than therapeutic policing.

Foucault views every social institution as an equally unjustifiable knowledge system that structures domination. There is an inner connection between the domination of nature through knowledge and the domination of man through knowledge. Knowledge is a strategy of power, a discourse of power. He shows in *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prisons* how interlocking systems of knowledge and power function. The book begins by describing, in 18th-century France prior to the hegemonic rise of a “liberal humanist” episteme, how the body of a condemned man, Damiens the regicide, was drawn and quartered: Flesh was torn from his breasts, arms, thighs, and calves with red-hot pincers, then boiling oil and sulfur poured onto the exposed flesh, then horses were attached to his limbs to pull him apart, and during the ritual the condemned man kissed the crucifix that was held out to him as he asked forgiveness. By the end, the power of the king and the church had totally humiliated and destroyed “the body of the condemned,” thereby expressing the king-killer Damiens as a criminal transgressor.

But the whole thing was a circus, “the spectacle of the scaffold.” The criminal stole the show and turned out to be the star of the production. (In Damiens’s case, extra horses had to be brought in to pull his legs off.) As Foucault (17) put it, “the posthumous proclamation of the crimes justified justice, but also glorified the criminal. That was why the reformers of the penal system were soon demanding suppression” of the printed posters that announced the spectacles. Reformers decided that this practice was not healthy, that the wrong people were being celebrated.

So in modern times, those defined as criminals undergo “generalized punishment,” which includes a depersonalized surveillance that creates docile bodies. The warehousing of prisoners is a heroless public-works program for local economic development. Inmates are renormalized and discharged back into the social body, rather than celebrated at punishment festivals. Inside the prison, the micropower of observation is a way of controlling movement of the prisoner, who no longer has to kiss the crucifix; he merely accepts being a docile member of the social body, accepts the rules of the prison. Humanists want normal, docile bodies, Foucault complains, whether by incarceration, lobotomy, or Prozac. The point Foucault makes is, of course, not only about prisons. He believes that the entire society is composed of docile bodies under surveillance. Women are surveilled with that existential gaze, and not only when walking past construction sights. Behavior is surveilled. Probationary fac-

ulty are surveilled. Students are surveilled. Workers are surveilled. Politicians' sex lives are surveilled. Hollywood celebrities are surveilled in tabloid newspapers. Society is its own carceral reformatory.

Lyotard, Postmodernity, and the Condition of Knowledge

Jean-Francois Lyotard has studied the condition of knowledge in highly developed societies, and characterizes that condition as postmodern. Scientific knowledge has become a major force of production but has in the process been reduced to commodity status. He describes and affirms a movement away from scientific knowledge (which sets out conditions of empirical and logical rigor that serve as legitimating devices) and toward narrative knowledge that does not give primacy to its own legitimation, but rather “certifies itself in the pragmatics of its own transmission.” Of narrative knowledge, one might simply ask: Does it ring true?

The fact/value dichotomy found in the philosophy of science is one of the first targets of Lyotard's critique. The pursuit of logic and facts corresponds to the aspirations of positivist social science for discovering universal truths. Such an epistemology seeks to find a universal language of all science, a universal logic of scientific explanation. Society is imagined as an objective reality, a unified totality, as it is in structural functionalism. However, when it becomes apparent that society is not an integrated whole — there are haves and have-nots, owners and workers, exploiters and exploited — the second half of the dichotomy is interposed. Critical, reflexive, or hermeneutic approaches are needed to sustain the otherwise one-sided fact-logic realism because, unlike positivistic approaches, these are capable of reflecting on values and aims. Lyotard cannot abide this dichotomizing tendency, with objectivity on one side and subjectivity on the other.

His demur is both astute and multifarious. Part of the problem of scientific knowledge as practiced is that it has become subordinated to the prevailing powers and made into an instrument of them. With Foucault, Lyotard sees knowledge and power as two sides of the same coin. Who decides what knowledge is, and who knows what needs to be decided — these are matters of political struggle.

Lyotard would revoke the licensing of the special procedures of scientific investigation that authorize science, and only science, to make knowledge claims. In the legitimation and proof process, science becomes a force of production, a moment in the circulation of capital. The production of proof is not only about truth; it is also about the best possible input/output equation. It is about “performativity.” Indeed, higher education itself is held to performativity criteria as it supplies the economy with its needs. Innovation is under the command of the system and is used to

improve its efficiency. Science, like any other hired hand, must perform. Power produces the knowledge that affirms it.

Science is a culture that first isolates its narrators (scientists) to give them a privileged status. Then science asks of the narrator what right he has to recount what he recounts, and the narrator legitimizes his recounting according to the norms of science. The narrator thus relinquishes the authority for his narrative over to the metanarrative of scientific objectivity. But, protests Lyotard (18), “The narratives themselves have this authority.” Lyotard is one of the main sources for affirming an egalitarianism of stories.

Narrative knowledge would be seen by traditional scientists as “savage, primitive, under-developed, backward, alienated, composed of opinions, customs, authority, prejudices, ignorance, ideology” (19). Lyotard, for his part, would prefer to rid the world of metanarratives like “science” (the ideology) and allow legitimacy to reside in first-order narratives.

The narrative approach of Lyotard would not fit the cybernetic, technological models of contemporary science. Instead of dichotomies following from the Cartesian metaphysical bifurcation of spirit and matter (objective/subjective, mind/body, or facts/values), Lyotard emphasizes both agonistic language and social bonds. Agonistic in ancient Greece means “to contend.” The adversary may be some other person with a different worldview who ascribes a different meaning to a particular speech act. In contrast the adversary may simply be the accepted connotation of a word used differently. Whether the game is highly competitive or one that is not necessarily played to be won, it is a game that cannot be played by the preprogrammed cyborgs of postmodernity. They merely go through the prearranged motions, unable to participate in interactive, agonistic discourse. Nor can cyborgs engage in the social bonding implied in language moves envisioned by Lyotard. Formal bureaucrats and scientific cyborgs respond to informational cues, rules, and regulations.

Lyotard’s emphasis on narratives has been criticized on the grounds that this approach risks suspending the critical sense. For his part, Lyotard steps back from cultural and political evaluation. He instead accepts a thoroughgoing indeterminacy — utterly beyond ideology, values, and judgment — of cultural products and practices as the distinctive signature of postmodernity. Any standards against which to judge an argument are themselves but narratives. Thus narrative pragmatics advocated by Lyotard are incommensurable with the language game known as legitimacy. Narratives just do what they do.

Of all of our hall-of-famers, Lyotard is the most doggedly anti-foundationalist. He critiques as “totalizing” even such metanarratives as “emancipation,” even though these metanarratives would introduce standards against which distinctions between deception and authenticity can be

made. He would go so far as to abandon the liberal politics of the Enlightenment to avoid universalistic metanarratives. Not so Richard Rorty.

Rorty's Liberal Public Society

Richard Rorty is not as intent on giving up the canons of the Enlightenment as are his European counterparts, but neither does he believe in any foundation or goal — religious, scientific, or otherwise — shaping society. Compared with poststructuralist European philosophers, Rorty is an upbeat American who hopes good things will become possible when we get out of the “dilapidated house of Being,” a rather direct barb aimed toward Heidegger and Heideggerians. It is hard to tell where Rorty would take us with his deconstructive writing, but given his pragmatism and nonrevolutionary incrementalism, it would be in a direction a bit different from modernity's, but not radically so.

With knowledge and science biased toward the regime of the status quo, Rorty's philosophy is particularly fitting for those in applied fields such as public administration:

If we ever have the courage to drop the scientific model of philosophy without falling back into a desire for holiness (as Heidegger did), then, no matter how dark the time, we shall no longer turn to the philosophers for rescue as our ancestors turned to the priests. We shall turn instead to the poets and the engineers, the people who produce startling new projects for achieving the greatest happiness of the greatest number (20).

Rorty applauds pragmatists such as Dewey who “turn away from the theoretical scientists to the engineers and the social workers — the people who are trying to make people more comfortable and secure, and to use science and philosophy as tools for that purpose” (21). Dewey would subordinate theory to practice, especially that nomothetic, predictive theory that “attempts to have an a priori place prepared for everything that might happen” (22). Positivists and analytical philosophers implicitly claim to have already read the script that we are currently acting out, or at least they aspire to being able to make that claim. Through such criticism, Rorty opposes his colleagues who advocate analytical philosophy, the logic-chopping variety of Anglo-American philosophy that is maternally related to positivism in social science (23). He claims that they are captives of a particular understanding of the mind as a great mirror. Rorty opts instead to tell stories, like Lyotard above, and to construct narratives, which is to put his claims in a context rather than appropriating universal validity for them.

Truth, says Rorty, is but our vocabulary. Truth is what understandings of truth are understandings of. Are there better understandings of truth? To establish a criterion to answer that question is to make a power move. Power-truth assertions provoke Rorty's anti-foundationalism and lead also to his critique of the essentialism that drives that sort of truth-trumping inquiry, which, when applied to human affairs and moral/political reflection, has never been fruitful. So instead, Rorty invites us to try something new without actually specifying what the new possibilities would be. Impressed by the distinctive human ability to accomplish feats of social engineering, Rorty envisions a cultural movement away from philosophy and science and toward literature and language, which is one reason that pragmatic philosophy — Rorty's version of it — is useful for such social innovation. Pragmatism has always concerned itself with anti-essentialist interpretations and practice-oriented understanding, along with the utility of language and vocabularies in achieving human desires.

Consistent with the project of the Enlightenment, Rorty himself uses a vocabulary of private self-creation and a vocabulary of public praxis, the latter of which is concerned with the alleviation of oppression: "The point of a liberal society is not to invent or create anything, but simply to make it easy as possible for people to achieve their wildly different private ends without hurting each other" (24).

This vision for philosophy indicates the need for a simple, prosaic moral vocabulary that is intelligible to all (not just philosophers), hence enabling public discussion of issues and possible compromises in an arena of common discourse. A similar ambition underlies the enticement to discourse of Fox and Miller in *Postmodern Public Administration*. This sort of moral identity/vocabulary is called for in the public sphere only. Rorty vigorously defends the liberal distinction between private and public realms in the face of, say, feminists and gay activists who would erase that distinction in order to make their claims and problematics part of the public discourse.

For Rorty, private identities are, or should be, a separate matter. Only those who refuse to divide the public from the private realm, he warns, dream of a "total revolution" for society. Dreams of total revolution inspire counterdreams of anarchy. By separating the private from the public sphere, Rorty affirms the notion of a "limited government" that respects individual rights.

At the same time, Rorty is attentive to public things, and takes care to acknowledge the public contributions of trade unions, meritocratic education, the expansion of the franchise, and cheap newspapers. These institutions have allowed him to imagine a "communicative community" where citizens of democracies are willing to say "us" rather than "them" when they speak of political entities beyond their immediate (neotribal)

associates. This sort of willingness has made religion progressively less important in the self-image of that citizenry. One's sense of relation to a power beyond the community becomes less important as one becomes able to think of oneself as a part of a body of public opinion, capable of making a difference to the public fate (25).

Given that the Romantic poets and rationalist revolutionaries of the Enlightenment have already conspired to slay God the Father, there remains but a mop-up operation to be completed in that revolution. And once the standards used by the rationalists and Romantics to slay God are themselves unfrocked, the task of modernity will be complete. For Jacques Derrida, that day has arrived.

Derrida and Deconstruction

The term “deconstruction” originates from Heidegger's deconstruction of metaphysics, a project he undertook so he could construct an ontology of “Being.” In digging through and underneath the notion of Being, he wanted to uncover its hidden history. In the process he called into question its tie to any stable present. As Heidegger's deconstruction progressed, “Being is _____” remained a difficult blank to fill in. No matter how many times someone offers something with which to fill in the blank, the matter is never settled. Jacques Derrida observes that the blank cannot be filled in. Why not?

Derrida's take on the makeup of language is that it is full of meta-physical moments. It is the makeup of language that it is not constituted by reference (denotation). In a radical reconsideration of words, he is saying that words are necessary only when there is not something there. In everyday conversation, words are presumed to be more or less denotative. For example, one might use the words “wedding ring” to refer to a ring on someone's finger. The words stand for something, the actual wedding ring, which itself stands for something, say a husband–wife love bond; this is the mainstream representational view of words.

But for Derrida, words do something different: they stand in for things that are radically absent. Words are antirepresentational. The term “wedding ring” is a matter of convenience; we do not have to present the reader with a wedding ring to write about one. We do not need to have a husband or wife present to communicate about the love bond. The wedding ring gets its meaning from the absence of the husband or wife, not their presence. The immediate absence of the husband–wife love bond is what makes the wedding ring, or the usage of any symbols or words, interesting. Absence of the object is one of the constitutive features of symbolic language. The different possibilities for further interpretation

are dazzling: Perhaps the wedding ring is there to mask the radical absence of a husband-wife love bond.

Just as reference to an object cannot account for meanings of words, neither can the intentionality of the speaker. This deconstructs both sides of the objective-subjective dichotomy. Meaning is not necessarily what the speaker intends, unsettling as that might be to enthusiasts of the cogito and subjective idealists of all kinds. We are accustomed to the idea that there can be a right answer; multiple choice tests are like that.

But Derrida claims there is no such thing as the correct interpretation. He does not believe that “every reading is a misreading,” but he does believe that every text may be interpreted in different ways. Even the speaker of an utterance may not have the “right” interpretation; slips of the tongue, for example, have long been thought of as windows to the unconscious, unintentional but revealing speech acts. Words are never perfectly denotative or representational (i.e., a mirror image of the speaker’s intention or the object).

What is represented in the re-presentation is but a presentation. We never can find the word in the dictionary that fits exactly to the object or relationship we are discussing. Words are not that denotative. If they were, a word would have to say the same thing across usages (over time, in different situations, in different places). Words do not retain such constancy; they are but historically and culturally conditioned utterances, the relevance of which is determined by that context. Words as abstractions do not have their own existence, but depend on the possibility of repetition.

Of-repeated words might especially be mistaken for the thing itself. These oft-repeated words are but human constructions grounded in historically contingent circumstances, though they are often taken (mis-taken) for immutable things. Avoiding such reification, Derrida emphasizes fallibility, contingency, and finitude in his writings. Further, both understanding and mis-understanding are constituent aspects of language. Words can mis-refer as easily as refer. Derrida here applies grand Hegelian dialectics to a kind of microdialectics of each sign. Even when we ask the store clerk for “that one,” we sometimes have to add, “no, not that one, that one.”

The point is that there will be no ultimate, correct interpretation. The attempt to hook words definitively to the external world has failed. This does not mean we cannot talk about things. But it does leave a meaning vacuum that needs to be filled, a vacuum that gets in the way of being able to reduce meaning into self-evident codes that lie beyond vagueness and ambiguity. There are no unambiguous codes of meaning that are unvarying across all situations and all contexts.

If that is the case, why not teach multiple meaning systems in the universities? If there are no unvarying codes of meaning, why settle only on the meaning codes of dead white European males, analytical philoso-

phers, and positivist social research? This language is as metaphorical as the next (although its poetry may be less aesthetically pleasing). White mythology is okay, but no more okay than women's mythology, Native American Indian mythology, or African-American mythology. This insight of Derrida's opens up the road for many other mythologies to speak with equal right, and has been termed multiculturalism and multiperspectivalism. This radical ambiguity of meaning is the signature of the postmodern era.

Cruising through Hyperreality with Jean Baudrillard

Jean Baudrillard continues this line of thinking and concludes that discourse is no longer simply vague or ambiguous, but indeterminable. Multiple interpretations present themselves, and there is no way to stabilize meaning. He made this point repeatedly in his popular account of the Gulf War, which he believes was more a war against reality than anything else. Baudrillard described it as a technological extravaganza, and proclaimed TV's role in it to be "social control by collective stupefaction." In *The Gulf War Did not Happen*, he wrote, "Whom to believe? There is nothing to believe. We must learn to read symptoms as symptoms, and television as the hysterical symptom of a war which has nothing to do with its critical mass." (26) Media is no longer a "mediating" power between reality at one end and perception at the other; there has been an implosion of the two poles: the medium is the message. CNN is what's happening. For meaning, this is a catastrophe.

The liquidation of meaning understood in power terms may represent the power to manipulate the masses, or, contrarily, it may represent alliance with the masses as they destroy the meaning structure of the status quo. Perhaps media manipulates in all directions at once. Perhaps the strategy of the masses is to reflect meaning without absorbing it. For whatever reason, political participation takes place against a backdrop of spontaneous indifference. Apathy is adaptive in the face of technological simulation.

Sorting out the simulations brought to us by technology is more troublesome than was the search for the essential Being. The business of drawing the line between the real and the hyperreal has become a moment-to-moment life-world problem; the essential Being could at least wait until tomorrow. This anxiety is more profound than Cartesian anxiety about relativism; it is a radical doubt about the very ground beneath our feet, like living in a perpetual earthquake.

For Baudrillard, the term "hyperreality" describes this shaky condition. To understand hyperreality, one must also understand simulation and simulacra. The dictionary definition of a simulacrum is image, representation, or an insubstantial form or semblance of something. The definition of simulation is feigning, counterfeiting; a simulation is an imitative rep-

resentation of the functioning of one system by means of the functioning of the other. A Baudrillardian image might help here:

Suppose, as sometimes still happens to inmates, that a prisoner is handed a representation of Jesus so that he may find solace in religion. Religious redemption is simulated with, say, a plastic Jesus figurine that was made available. Does this Jesus simulacrum really re-present divinity? The straightforward interpretation is yes, it truly does. But then again, maybe not.

Perhaps the truth is that this simulacrum (i.e., the plastic Jesus) effaces God, who is unspeakably glorious. In that case it is best to destroy the images, as the iconoclasts (who sought true value rather than mere reflections) sought to do with icons. But this possibility brings on the appearance of a third, a destructive, annihilating truth — deep down God never existed, was never anything more than his own simulacrum.

So what to make of this plastic Jesus? Baudrillard (27) offers a four-part all-purpose interpretation:

1. It is, in fact, the reflection of a profound reality.
2. It masks and denatures a profound reality.
3. It masks the absence of a profound reality.
4. It has no relation to any reality whatsoever: it is its own pure simulacrum.

This set of interpretations begins with a straightforward, denotative interpretation. A word or a symbol is a mirror of reality. Then, reinterpreted, we suspect that the word/symbol profanes the actual. How can the glory that is God be represented by a plastic Jesus figure? It does not; the plastic Jesus debases God. Thirdly, we can see that the word covers up for the fact that there is no there there. After his visit to Disneyland, Baudrillard pronounced it a simulation of the third order (the one masking the absence of a profound reality): Disneyland hides the fact that it is the “real” America. Disneyland is presented as imaginary in order to make us believe that the rest is real. However, the America that plays in Disneyland is no longer real, but hyperreal, existing in a regime of simulation. By concealing the fact that the real is no longer real, Disneyland saves the reality principle.

Finally, when the reality principle is exposed as fraudulent, we reach hyperreality, the fourth-order interpretation where words and signs displace reality. “The scandal today is no longer in the assault on moral values but in the assault on the reality principle ... the odium lies in the malversation of the real, the faking of the event” (28).

Hyperreality is a world of simulacra. If a thing cannot be simulated, it is not really real. Hyperreality is more real than real. “Osmos” is virtual-

reality art that is more real than real, and not only because we saw it on television; put on the headset and you can walk among the flora, go beneath the soil to see root structures, hang a left and go inside a leaf. The map is more real than the territory it represents. The burning house on TV (in some faraway city) is more real than the burning house next door, an event not filmed for the 6 o'clock news. The simulations on the news have become more real than reality itself.

Lost in the process of simulation is the "charm of abstraction" and gained (if hyperreality can be regarded as a gain) is a blurring of the line between reality and image. Reality is that which can be simulated, xeroxed, copied, represented. The real no longer needs to be rational, because there are no reality criteria to measure it against. The real is no longer anything but a technical operation. Hyperreality is produced from a synthesizing, assimilating technology (e.g., VCR tapes, Xerox machines, computer files, page scanners, spreadsheet programs, or Warhol's Campbell's Soup) and located in a social hyperspace. The "authentic reproduction" is more real than real. Technological reproducibility has become an affirming reality check.

Still, there remains a curiosity over what a genuine experience would be like if we could have one. Attempts to satisfy this hunger for authenticity have led to further incongruities, however, such as the anthropologists' appeals to the Philippine government in 1971 "to return the few dozen Tasaday who had just been discovered in the depths of the jungle, where they had lived for eight centuries without any contact with the rest of the species, to their primitive state" away from anthropologists, ethnologists, and other manifestations of modernity (29). The anthropologists had already seen indigenous people disintegrate upon contact with outsiders. Science loses valuable assets when the Tasaday are put out of reach, but the object (that is, the Tasaday) will be safe, intact in its "virginity." "It is not a question of sacrifice (science never sacrifices itself, it is always murderous), but of the simulated sacrifice of its object in order to save its reality principle" (30). So instead of a genuine experience, for anthropologists, savages are indebted to anthropologists for allowing them to remain savages in a simulacrum of life before anthropology—exhibits in a closed-off area of the museum.

If the Inquisition sought an admission of evil, science seeks from its objects (rats and frogs, but also the Tasaday) an admission of objectivity. Confessions of rationality and objectivity are needed because it is of this very principle that science secretly despairs.

[N]ever would the humanities or psychoanalysis have existed if it had been miraculously possible to reduce man to his "rational" behaviors. The whole discovery of the psychological, whose

complexity can extend ad infinitum, comes from nothing but the impossibility of exploiting to death (the workers), of incarcerating to death (the animals), according to the strict law of equivalencies: so much caloric energy and time—so much work power; such an infraction—such an equivalent punishment; so much food—optimal weight and industrial [turkey factory] death (31).

Fatal Strategies is a book about how people attempt to avoid banality under these postmodern conditions. Consciousness-raising will not help us, since there is already an overproduction and regeneration of meaning and speech; this overproduction is the hallmark of the system. Our virtual has definitively overtaken the actual, and we must be content with this extreme virtuality, which deters any movement toward action. Political nihilism portends the destruction of the era of meaning. This is postmodernity, where we neutrally observe, accept, assume, and analyze. But eventually, even nihilism is impossible because it is still a theory, a worldview of catastrophe where meaning still means something. Nihilism, it would seem, is for those who think life is supposed to have meaning (32).

Hope for meaning vanishes; the cybernetic system is steadfast. Everything can be poured into indifference. All that remains is fascination for the operation of the system of replication that annihilates us. Baudrillard's dark verdict contains some erudite advice. We need to learn to live with uncertainty and the giddiness of hyperreality, and to be wary of the overquick reduction of complexity. Rather than be despondent, we should realize that America is the utopia that everyone dreamed of. It may be mournfully trivial, but in spite of this, the end of the world is an opportunity. What is "the world" anyway but a category of domination?

Postmodernity as an Era

The previous two sections on themes and players concentrated on postmodernity: essentially philosophical developments occurring within a text whereby a rough agreement exists as to what the important questions are. Writers primarily have each other as their mind's-eye audience. We want now to entertain the notion that we are in the process of transition from one era to another, from modernity (understood as an historical period like the Renaissance, not as a synonym for "contemporary") to postmodernity.

To mark out historical periods is always an assuming and controversial task. This is especially true when those who attempt it live on the cusp between two of them, standing as it were with one foot in each era.

Drawing a line or band of demarcation between eras is especially difficult in relation to modern and postmodern because it requires a distinctly modern god's-eye platform so firmly eschewed by postmodern thinkers. As a final demur, even those who claim to recognize an epochal shift have different names for the newer one: postindustrialism, information age, third wave, and high modernism. In what follows in this section, we first explore the meanings of "post," and then explicate the aspect of postmodernity most important for public affairs, i.e., the transformation of the mode of production and the accompanying shift to hyperreality.

The "post" in "postmodernity" has two senses: "after" and "over against." In its "after" aspect postmodernity follows modernity. Modernity, in turn, refers to that period of time corresponding roughly from the Enlightenment (18th century with, in philosophy, the breakout figure being 17th-century philosopher Rene Descartes). This is the period of the Industrial Revolution, the triumph of science, the spread of capitalism, and the consolidation of nation-states. It may be seen as reaching its high tide in the decade following World War II.

Postmodernity obviously emerges (periods do not happen overnight) after that. In intellectual history, it may be traced back to Nietzsche and perhaps the American pragmatists. Antinomian to modernity, it corresponds to the postindustrial/information revolution, a sense that science as the conquest of nature may have overreached, the triumph of transnational or international capital and the advent of the disintegrations of empires and nations.

In the "over against" aspect of the postmodern condition, centrifugal or entropic historical-cultural forces play off modernity's centripetal forces. The series of oppositions listed in Table 27.1 are illustrative.

Expressed in manner reminiscent of Parsonian pattern variables, we get (modernity on the left, postmodernity on the right):

Integration versus disintegration
Centralization versus decentralization
Centripetal versus centrifugal
Totalization versus fragmentation
Metanarratives versus disparate texts
Universalism versus relativism
Newton versus Heisenberg

The most important element of the transformation from modernity to postmodernity for those concerned with public affairs is the economic/production one. It is associated with the widely noted move from an industrial to a postindustrial society; from an economy based primarily on the production of material goods to one based primarily on informa-

Table 27.1 Oppositions

<i>Problematic</i>	<i>Modern</i>	<i>Postmodern</i>
Mode of production	Mass assembly, factory	Postindustrial, information
Organization	Weberian hierarchy	Adhocracy, devolution
Sociology	Nuclear family	Fragmented households
Philosophy of science	Logical positivism	Methodological anarchy, narrative, ideography
Philosophy	Search for universals	Anti-foundationalism
Psychology	Integrated authentic self	Decentered self
Ethics	Utilitarian, deontological, syllogistic	Situational, contextual
Media	Print linearity	Video, montage, MTV, channel surfing

tion technologies, services, marketing, credit, and consumption. To be sure, this transformation, like the earlier move from agricultural production to industrial production, is one of dominant tendencies or ideal-typical profiles. Of course we still produce agricultural and industrial commodities, but as the paradigm case of farm labor was replaced by the paradigm case of the assembly line, the paradigm case of work today is an office where symbols (words, numbers, computer icons) are analyzed and manipulated.

This paradigm case increasingly includes declining wages, denial of medical and retirement benefits, and temporariness as opposed to career engagement with the employer. This development has also been heralded as the advent of the information age. Toffler (33) and Newt Gingrich (in his public performances) make a similar point about first (agricultural), second (factory industrial), and third (information) waves.

The main implication of the production metamorphosis to be teased out for an understanding of public affairs is the theory of hyperreality, or what we call *self-referential epiphenomenalism*. Analysis of the postmodern condition finds that words, symbols, and signs are increasingly divorced from direct life-world experience. Part of this results from the switch from a society based primarily on production to one based primarily on consumption and information.

Production requires group activity and communication based on the manipulation and processing of physical objects; there is a rootedness based on the direct interface between humans and material; symbolic meanings are similarly rooted. To the contrary, in the consumptive economic mode

of postmodernity, symbols float away and procreate with other symbols, leading to what Jameson (34) calls “the free play of signifiers.”

As the design of products to which symbols are attached becomes too complex for the consumers to master, symbols lose their mooring lines. Marketers take advantage of this and manipulate the symbols and attach them to other symbols. Thus do machines become sexy, cleaning fluids repair dysfunctional families, and to purchase a particular brand of colored carbonated water is to signify membership in a generation. Some articles of clothing are favored precisely because their manufacturer’s name is prominently displayed; wearing, say, “Nike” signifies lean, fit, graceful, sexy, Michael Jordan — much more important than a shirt. The logo or symbol becomes more important than the functional product. Similarly in politics, symbols, often purposefully misleading, replace deliberation over policy.

As more and more signs detach themselves from life-world elements that they were presumably designed to denote, they enter a realm that postmodernists call hyperreality. Once a sign takes up permanent residence in hyperreality, any kind of reality that can be called empirical loses influence over it. Better, hyperreality has a life of its own outside and hovering above the experiential reality of day-to-day life. Celebrities, Michael Jackson, television sports programs, and much of electoral politics exist therein, with only the most tenuous relationship to the phenomenological reality of daily life. Moreover, hyperreality or hyperspace is extremely volatile and thin.

The subjective expression of the same thing is the lament about America’s nanosecond attention span. It is also the case that exactly what gets paid short attention to is random and arbitrary. Which of hundreds of children’s need for an organ transplant becomes publicized depends on whether Bosnia, Somalia, or a congressional vote has hogged hyperspace for that moment. Finally, although there may well be logics to the ascension of symbols to hyperspace (e.g., white Bosnians over black Rwandans), there is no consistent logic that might be unpacked for analysis and correction.

If the postmodern thesis is correct, the result would be the loss of a certain concretized rationality. Rational will-formation becomes increasingly difficult when language loses its ability to communicate the discrete work-a-day reality of public-policy implementation and organizational life. Worse, symbols interacting in hyperspace without benefit of mooring in work-a-day reality can only come back around to distort any reform of that reality.

Implications of Postmodernity and Postmodernism for Governance

If it is true that we are on the cusp between eras, the effects on all aspects of life will be incalculably immense. Three problematics for governance emerge from our cloudy “crystal” ball:

1. Irrational systems steering
2. Power and domination
3. Simulacra or virtual bureaucracy

Irrational Systems Steering

To the extent that hyperreality slips underneath work-a-day reality, the steering capacity of government is eroded. When bumper-sticker policy analysis based on anecdotal narratives guides policy, policy effectiveness is likely to suffer. At risk, for instance, is sane environmental policy. If, as has been proposed, the Environmental Protection Agency is abolished or slashed based on horror stories of burdensome overregulation, have we not, even after admitting a certain ham-fistedness at EPA, thrown away a valuable policy tool? Is it rational to render prisons into nursing homes, imposed by the symbolic resonance of “three strikes and you’re out,” with expenses to be wrung out of education and infrastructure? Is the unproven neologism that “welfare causes dependency” a good guide to child-sustenance systems?

There are in public administration already a plethora of impossible jobs in case work, regulatory work, and financial management work. Until some way is found to tether wildly fluctuating affective signs, one can only look forward to the jobs becoming more impossible.

Panopticon

Another possible implication of postmodernism/postmodernity relates to the internal dynamics of organizations. If postmodernists (especially Foucault) encounter domination in all social institutions, bureaucratic hierarchical authority is the epitome of the theme. Organizational structure is not only a structure of discourse/action/institutions/belief; it is also a system of power. Institutional norms, which guide recurring human practices and their related discourses, function through rules of exclusion or inclusion that leave some people out of the conversation. Power is expressed in the way that institutional practices include or exclude: who may speak, about what, for how long, and in what settings or contexts.

Every social institution, it would follow, structures domination. Organizational actors are themselves implicated in the daily re-creation of bureaucratic institutions, which, for all the complaints about domination, also enable the sorts of discursive associations that the expression of professional competence requires. Bureaucratic institutions are social spaces in which antagonisms are played out, factional interests are denied or fulfilled, values and aspirations of coalitions of players are upheld or disparaged, and a discourse of power and domination happens.

In public administration, for example, knowledge institutions (especially MPA programs) explicitly endorse the system of hierarchical domination, most obviously by socializing (for example) city managers who sit at the apex of systems of domination. Institutions are cages, social spaces where conduct is disciplined, where individuals are under surveillance, and where institutional practices favor the regime of the status quo. It is not anticipated that even the autocratic, bullying city manager will be displaced by revolution among the city employees.

Unlike the emancipatory doctrines of modernity, revolutionary movement away from status quo practices is not anticipated by postmodernist thinkers. Continued surveillance and repetition are more likely than revolution, and neutral indifference is the best attitudinal response available to the inmates.

Simulacra

Analysts, bureaucrats, and managers surveil their charges as they count their variables: Name? Social security number? Phone number? Have you ever been on AFDC? What is your monthly take-home pay? We need a urine sample. But, surveillance is not personal, it is aggregate. It is not John Doe qua John Doe that interests the for-hire data analysts; it's his credit rating, the statistical profile within which he fits, a series of binary ciphers in cyberspace.

Institutions themselves are also under epiphenomenal surveillance. Actual performance is no longer the criterion against which institutions are evaluated; they must produce simulacra of performance, paperwork that indicates performance has occurred. Simulacra of performance have displaced performance as the criterion against which institutions are evaluated. The proof is in the computer records, and available in hard copy or on disk. Is the indicator replicable, countable, verifiable? Do graduates of the school score well on standardized tests? What is the bed ratio at the local hospital? What is the clearance rate of the police department? What is the bacteria count at the restaurant that may be shut down by the public health department? Should students learn, or should course evaluations scores be high? Should clients be assisted, or should

cases be processed? Should public order be maintained, or should convictions of those arrested be attained?

Even the Alabama chain gangs are only simulating real chain gangs. There is no industrial need for smashed-by-hand rocks when big machines can accomplish the same task far more efficiently. Sufficient staffing with bull-whip, shotgun-toting uniformed officers is too expensive to enforce “hard labor.” Chain gangs in postmodernity are for media consumption, the TV-authenticated simulacra of the newest and latest “get tough on criminals” motif.

Yet even in the face of postmodern hyperreality, there is the possibility of optimism (35). Organized public action indicates the need for a common, principled vocabulary that is intelligible to all, hence enabling public discussion of issues as well as the development of possible rapprochement in an arena of common discourse. This ambition to discourse calls for a common identity and vocabulary among society’s many subgroups—subgroups that may have quite separate languages for their private lives. A common ground is needed if the public conversation is to be a shared temporal one.

Our depiction of postmodernity leads to this fork in the road: With Baudrillard, we might forge an armor of neutral indifference as a sensible strategy for fending off degenerated hyperreality in which words and signs have become estranged from meaning; or, with Rorty, we might, in the face of this same hyperreality, commit to communal development of a democratic discourse of action — “what should we do next?”

Notes

1. R. Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1979.
2. J. F. Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. G. Bennington and B. Massumi, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984, xxiii.
3. We do not think that anti-foundationalism necessarily leads to nihilism. Actually, in our view, only disappointed or nostalgic foundationalists make such claims against postmodern views. If postmodernists, including on this issue phenomenologists, pragmatists, nominalists and so on, are correct about the questionable ontological status of absolutes, then absolutes have never really anchored judgments in the ways that those who embrace absolutes suppose. Thus to now claim that the kid who recognized that the emperor has no clothes is at fault for the disrobement seems to us fatuous. See C. J. Fox and H. T. Miller. *Postmodern Public Administration: Toward Discourse*, Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1995, chap. 4.
4. M. Foucault, *The Order of Things*, New York: Vintage, 1994.

5. T. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd. ed., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970.
6. A. MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 2nd ed., Notre Dame, Ind.: Notre Dame University Press, 1984.
7. C. J. Fox and H. T. Miller, "Public Administration: A Short Treatise on Self-Referential Epiphenomena," *Administrative Theory and Praxis*: 15 (1993): 1–17.
8. M. Poster, *Critical Theory and Poststructuralism: In Search of a Context*, New York: Cornell University Press, 1989.
9. We are troubled here by the dilemma of oversimplification versus explanation tangential to this forum. The problem of deep structure was willed to philosophy by the Kantian distinction between phenomena (that which human minds grasp) and noumena (things in themselves). Kant and any philosophical stance that can be called neo-Kantian holds that only phenomena can be apprehended. But what, so to speak, unites the phenomena of human minds? Kant argued that it is the universal (to human minds) categories of time, space, and causation, which allow for intersubjective validation of, say, scientific truths. It is but a short step from this to neo-Kantian theories that attempt to moderate or improve on Kant's categories. We are concentrating on the French versions of these, but the work of Noam Chomsky on deep structures of grammar, preprogrammed (or wired, as it were) in human minds is an allied tendency. Similarly derivative of this Kantian problematic are such metaphysical constructions as (to give the main French referent) Durkheim's collective unconscious. Depth psychology, Jungianism, psychoanalysis, and even some of the more idealistic variants of phenomenology (e.g., Schutz's interpretation of Husserl) posit similar loci for unifying human minds. An accessible overview of Kant and how his Continental successors dealt with his legacy is W. T. Jones, *A History of Western Philosophy*, Vol. IV, *Kant to Wittgenstein and Sartre*, 2nd. ed., New York: Harcourt Brace and World, 1969.
10. For a more complete program of players, see E. Kurzweil, *The Age of Structuralism: Levi-Strauss to Foucault*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1980. To those who want the whole story, please note the enormous influence of Saussure and his followers in the French context and such pragmatic (pragmaticist) thinkers on the American scene as Charles Peirce.
11. Again, to those who want to pursue a more fulsome story, it is necessary to understand the projects of the Vienna Circle and the problematics of Moore and Russell's *Principia Mathematica*. See, for an overview, C. J. Fox and H. T. Miller, "Positivism," in *International Encyclopedia of Public Administration*, Ed. J. Schafritz, Denver: Westview, 1998.
12. D. J. Farmer, *The Language of Public Administration: Bureaucracy, Modernity, and Postmodernity*, Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1995.
13. J. Farmer, *The Language of Public Administration: Bureaucracy, Modernity, and Postmodernity*, Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1995.
14. J. Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, trans. Sheila Faria Glaser, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994, 77.

15. J. Lacan, *Television*, trans. D. Hollier, R. Krauss, A. Michelson, and J. Mehlman, Ed. J. Copjec, New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1990, 36.
16. J. Copjec, "Dossier on the Institutional Debate: An Introduction," in Lacan, *Television*, 1990, 49–52.
17. M. Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan, New York: Vintage Books, 1979, 68.
18. J.-F. Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984, 22.
19. J.-F. Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984, 27.
20. R. Rorty, *Essays on Heidegger and Others: Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991, 26.
21. R. Rorty, *Essays on Heidegger and Others: Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991, 9.
22. R. Rorty, *Essays on Heidegger and Others: Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991, 11.
23. C. J. Fox and H. T. Miller, *Postmodern Public Administration*, 1995.
24. R. Rorty, *Essays on Heidegger and Others: Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991, 196.
25. R. Rorty, *Essays on Heidegger and Others: Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 2, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991, 171.
26. J. Baudrillard, *The Gulf War Did Not Take Place*, trans. Paul Patton, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995, 41–2.
27. J. Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, trans. Sheila Faria Glaser, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994, 6.
28. J. Baudrillard, *The Gulf War Did Not Take Place*, trans. Paul Patton, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995, 76.
29. J. Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, trans. Sheila Faria Glaser, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994, 7.
30. J. Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, trans. Sheila Faria Glaser, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994, 7.
31. J. Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, trans. Sheila Faria Glaser, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994.
32. J. Gray, *Straw Dogs: Thoughts on Humans and Other Animals*, London: Granta Publications, 2004.
33. A. Toffler, *The Third Wave*, New York: Bantam Books, 1981.
34. F. Jameson, *Postmodernism or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1991.
35. C. J. Fox and H. T. Miller, *Postmodern Public Administration*, 1995.

TWENTY-FIRST- CENTURY ALTERNATIVES

VII

Chapter 28: Neoliberal Economics, Public Domains, and Organizations: Is There Any Organizational Design after Privatization?

Economics is a discipline obsessed with, and exalting, a cult of *least-cost* efficiency which ignores the legitimacy of ends over means; over-focuses on costs of operations rather than looking for innovation; and, thirdly, links myths of markets to putative efficiencies by ignoring macro-measures of wastage of human and capital resources in business failures associated with distorted market mechanisms actually operating.

A. Kouzmin and N. Korac-Kakabadse,
Administration and Society, 1997

Chapter 29: Public Entrepreneurism: A New Paradigm for Public Administration?

We must turn bureaucratic instructions into entrepreneurial institutions, ready to kill off obsolete initiatives, willing to do more with less, eager to absorb new ideas.

David Osborne and Ted Gaebler, *Reinventing Government*, 1992

Chapter 30: The Multicratic Organization: A Model for Management of Functional Interdependence

Social purposes in modern societies increasingly exceed the capacities of complex organizations, and call instead for action by multiorganizational complexes.

James Thompson, *Organizations in Action*, 1967

Chapter 31: Virtual Program Evaluation: A 21st-Century Approach

For public sector managers program evaluation constitutes: (1) the primary means of determining whether programs succeed or fail; (2) whether programs should be continued or discontinued; and (3) the level of program responsiveness to particular problems or communities.

N. Henry, *Public Administration and Public Affairs*, 1995

Chapter 32: Twenty-First-Century Philosophy and Public Administration: Refocusing the Lens

The rational, male, technocrat, quantitative, goal-dominated, cost-benefit driven, hierarchical, short-term, pragmatic, materialistic model must give way to a new kind of leadership based on different assumptions and values.

Charles Garofalo, *Leadership and Ethics*, 1996

Chapter 28

Neoliberal Economics, Public Domains, and Organizations: Is There Any Organizational Design after Privatization?

Alexander Kouzmin and John Dixon

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Introduction

At a time when the Bretton Woods institutions are increasingly concerned about “reinventing” governance and building institutional capacities, the new millennium is an appropriate moment to refocus public discourse and policy-making debates about the complexities of market-state dependencies and emerging public-private partnerships. Building social solidarity, trust, and political legitimacy is a new priority in many developed and transitional polities (World Bank 1997). The emerging willingness to reassess the instruments and practices of economic liberalism in different political milieus also raises many significant questions about the limits and enhanced capabilities of the state, let alone the business corporation, to be an effective manager of the public interest (Schultze 1977; Kettle 1994; Kouzmin 2002).

The last 20 years have seen the fundamental restructuring of many public sectors. Policy makers have increasingly looked to markets to overcome political conflicts triggered by the perceived increase in the scarcity of resources. The “hollowing out” of the Keynesian welfare state and the widespread acceptance of the idea of “less state and less taxes” raises serious policy questions of social resilience and the governance capacities in these diverse jurisdictions (Boyer and Drache 1996). Conventional wisdom about the convergent effects of economic globalization gives further weight to these, especially in light of the fact that significant differences in public-policy responses tend to be ignored. This neglect of apparent divergence in policy outcomes and expenditure practices — especially in labor market strategies — underscores the need to audit

critically, in comparative and sectoral ways, systematic differences in the management of market failure and the social distortions flowing from enlarged markets (Berger and Dore 1996; Dixon and Kouzmin 1994a; Dixon, Dogan, and Kouzmin 2002).

Research will need to be guided and informed by a double hypothesis: the first is the emergence of a markedly smaller state, but one with more-complex functions for the 21st century (Kouzmin and Jarman 1999, 2002). The possibility for the emergence of new policy capabilities for different market economies is a primary research question. Our thesis is that this important research can only occur with strategic changes in the functioning of the state — the need to become a “smart state” consisting of institutions that learn, that effect long-term and strategic change, and that create high-quality and crisis-sensitive models of policy reasoning (Kouzmin 1988, 2002; Kouzmin and Jarman 1999, 2002).

A second and closely related issue that bears directly on policy making is the future role of the public domain in different market economies. No state should underestimate the importance of the social dimension to economic growth and development. The reason is that it is one of the resources relied on by government to minimize social dislocation when markets expand beyond the moral and political boundaries within which they are necessarily constrained to operate (Dertouzos, Lester, and Solow 1989; Boyer and Drache 1996). In optimal conditions, public domains define the institutional capacity to bring about consensus and achieve equity and protection while creating opportunities for entrepreneurship. They refer to assets that are held in common but cannot be brought and sold in the open market. They cover a range of economic activities that the private sector cannot deliver or can only partially effect.

The main thrust of major research undertaken in contemporary public administration will be to build on this cornerstone concept of public domains in order to audit putatively shrinking public domains and policy capacities in an age of globalization and strategically downsized governments (Kouzmin 1998). Because public domains and spending practices of national and regional authorities differ markedly both within western European countries and between these countries and their Anglo-Saxon counterparts (Kouzmin and Scott 1990), they need to be empirically tracked, as this diversity necessarily frames public-policy debate in significantly important ways.

Defining the Public Domain

In the “new world” order, conventional measures of government intervention often fail to capture the complexities of mixed economies and,

particularly, underrepresent the strategic role of the public sector within the public domain. More importantly, these measures ignore the contribution of this “wider public domain” in maintaining political stability and economic growth in the face of significantly expanded markets and declining regulatory measures (Albert 1993; Kouzmin 2002).

Mainstream economics identifies the public domain merely with the consumption of public goods. The difficulty is that public expenditure structure is but one aspect, even if the most significant from a public-finance perspective. What is often overlooked is that the public sector has always been interpreted in a variety of ways and includes budgetary transactions, public enterprise, public regulation, and similar kinds of concerns (Musgrave and Musgrave 1984; Stiglitz 1986). If a narrower view is taken, it is possible to measure the size of the public sector. However, an examination of GNP share, shares of national income, and shares of transfer payments to a person’s income are important measures for many purposes. But these quantitative measures are all narrowly related to the concept of efficiency and are only one way to grasp the essential difference between private goods and the public sector.

What makes the concept of public goods limited is that it undervalues the intricacies in the creation and consumption of such goods to all citizens and stakeholders. Since these “social goods” belong to all members of society in theory, their benefits are to be shared by all, irrespective of private need. If this is so — and it is — the efficiency conditions of Pareto optimality simply do not apply or, at least, apply only in limited circumstances (McKee 1980). While many economists do, in fact, believe that equity issues are part of economics, public-distributional questions need their own theoretical reiteration.

It is for this crucial reason that it is important to recall that the public-domain notion derives from an older view of the market economy, one premised on the idea that markets are not all-encompassing and that civil society involves a critical nonmarket sector, part private and part public. In civil society, not all goods and services may be bought and sold (Perroux 1950). Some assets, by their nature, cannot be transferred from one owner to another. These include intangible social, collective, and political goods deemed to be nonnegotiable, and nontransferable public freedoms, human rights, government transparency, and public accountability (Perroux 1962). In the public domain, citizens not only consume collectively these non-commodifiable goods, but also attribute utility to the social well-being these goods provide.

The challenge, after 20 years of “reforming” and restructuring in Anglo-American economies, is to review what remains of a legitimate and effective public domain, especially in light of frequent crises with macro-economic management (Hirst and Thompson 1996). Reinventions of gov-

ernment require a close scrutiny to understand the new opportunities as well as the hidden costs of reorganization. In other political economies, the viability of public domains is also under threat from public disinvestment practices. This, too, demands rethinking the framework of the public domain and its role and relationship in highly contrasted, market-driven settings (Huntington 1993; Dixon, Dogan, and Kouzmin 2002).

The “New World” Order: Divergence or Convergence?

Modern states have long recognized the socially binding importance of maintaining strong public domains (Esping-Andersen 1990). The emergence of the welfare state, especially in post-Second World War Europe, is the most well-known expression of this. However, the intention to improve people’s lives significantly required specific adaptations of social policy to meet the unique needs of individual countries. Public domains have underpinned social and economic development (Fallows 1994), as evidenced by the influence of Beveridge and Keynes in the United Kingdom, the conspicuous involvement of the Nordic states in their economies, the social markets of France and Germany, the American adaptation of Keynesianism in President Johnson’s Great Society, and the strategic involvement of government in the “tiger” economies of Asia (Jun 2001).

For many experts, the public domain is not seen in these terms and is confused with the drive to *reduce*, in stark ways, the public sector — specifically, the demand to reduce public expenditure and to limit perceived increased government regulation of the economy. Public policy is, thus, driven by the view that if one reduces rent-seeking behavior within government bureaucracies (Kouzmin, Leivesley, and Korac-Kakabadse 1997; Johnston and Kouzmin 1998), then competitive advantage will accrue to industries and, consequently, to the economy. Within a globalized economy, it is argued that such “corporate welfare” (Kouzmin 1998: 391, 2002: 25) will be further enhanced by a dramatically smaller state presence (Bergsten 1996; Rosencranz 1996).

Such a policy position, within a globalized world, ignores important evidence that the public domain is becoming more significant and is, in fact, being redefined by forces over which public authority has little control (Dilulio 1994; Ruigrok and van Tulder 1995). States are having to confront a range of intractable issues; the result of the social consequences of globalization. For society to function smoothly, public authority will be increasingly under pressure to exercise its supervisory role “when there are no other strong social values to compete with that of money and wealth” (Albert 1993: 104). If Albert’s (1993) principal assumption is valid, public authority will be hesitant about transferring many of its

prerogatives to the private sector. Indeed, there are many pressures forcing states to rethink the balance that society must strike with the market. Among these are:

- The local significance of globalization will require devolution of decision making and the delivery of services. The degree of devolution, the forms such devolution take, and its limits remain unexamined questions (Putnam 1993).
- The accommodation of the information communication technology (ICT) revolution, and associated problems of access, has raised the expectation that information flows will be readily accessible for the general public. Complex regulatory practices will need to be developed in the provision of utilities, communications, and food standards (OECD 1997).
- Environmental degradation and pressing issues of sustainable economic growth are creating political tensions of some proportion. The public increasingly looks to government to exercise its fiduciary responsibilities and protect the environment from the risks and needs of short-term wealth creation (Santos 1995; Macdonald 2002).
- The magnitude of the job-creation and growing income disparities are threatening the legitimacy of many governments. In light of volatile financial markets, flexible and mobile manufacturing strategies and “social dumping” by corporations, these new circumstances will require states to develop proactive policy responses to manpower planning and labor market practices (OECD 1994; Kouzmin 1998, 2002).
- The politically vulnerable issue of maintaining sovereignty over cultural and identity issues in a “borderless” world has hardly been addressed (Held 1995). Transparency in government activity needs to coincide with redefinitions of active citizenship. The redefinition of citizenship in many domains to that of passive, consuming clients of state services distorts democratic expectations and obligations in serious ways. Increasingly, electorates are critical of government’s failure to reform its practices and address the costs of social exclusion (Dahrendorf 1995; Hutton 1996; Haque 1998; Ventriss 2002).

In the struggle between states and markets, it is not, therefore, a foregone conclusion that markets have regained the upper hand. Indeed, it appears that the public domain — the nontradable social-good sector that exists in every society — is ready to make a comeback (Hertz 2002). Still, there is much that needs clarification and empirical verification regarding the relationship between the public domain, state practices, and markets (Cable 1995; Strange 1995). For this additional reason, in the “new

world order,” public domains need to be empirically studied because this diversity necessarily frames public-policy debate in four critical ways.

Area 1: The Constituent Elements of Public Domains in Contrasting Jurisdictions

The decline of civic capital has been a growing concern in many societies — a concern not readily addressed in economics-dominated public-policy circles (Putnam 1993; Dahrendorf 1995; Kouzmin, Korac-Kakabadse, and Jarman 1996; Kouzmin, Leivesley, and Korac-Kakabadse 1997). The first order of business would be to establish a methodology for empirically tracking institutions and core competencies remaining within the public sector. In this case, restructured public sectors are seen to be the most direct and empirically sensitive index for measuring the scope of public domains.

One hypothesis is that the public sector, as commonly understood, comprises, among other elements, government program expenditures and transfer payments, and thus the number of public employees remains an effective measure of the ongoing existence of the public domain. Yet, much administrative reform is ad hoc, incremental, or a mixture of both. Governments often do not have a comprehensive sense of what has been changed, privatized, or outsourced, or of what the core, residual functions of government should be. Still, many public-policy experts have little sense of whether administrative reform has gone far enough, too far, or is about right in establishing new benchmarks of public-policy undertakings (Peters and Savoie 1995). Taking stock of what remains is a priority to clarify, both empirically and conceptually. Auditing the “residual” public space and domains in the North-South polarization of a globalizing world (Kouzmin 2002) will also require looking at the emergence of public domains in economically developing jurisdictions.

The first priority is to develop common definitions and measures given the cross-disciplinary concepts involved and cross-jurisdictional differences in empirical and statistical methodologies associated with mapping administrative reform. Part of this problem is the existence of multiple and sophisticated databases from such international bodies as the OECD, ILO, the World Bank, IMF, and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). These need to be accessed and reevaluated rather than necessarily embarking on new surveys.

The principal aim would be to determine the extent of the “shrinking” or “expanding” state during a time of declining sovereignty. Another outcome would be the development of the concept of public domain as an analytical category and as a term for useful comparative public analysis.

Area 2: Optimal Sizes For Governments and the Issue of Divergence

Monetarism, in its many different forms, has been adopted as the policy fundamental for governments in surprisingly diverse political contexts (Williamson 1994). Economic globalization underscores the importance of deregulation and the alleged costs of compliance attributed to government intervention. Arguably, these shifts have gone too far (Hutton 1996; Howe 2002; Kouzmin 2002).

Strategies of administrative reform have been used to bring about the commercialization of many government services in laissez-faire economies. As well, public enterprises have been put on a private-sector footing or have been fully privatized. This has occurred in European social market economies as well. Also, there has been considerable outsourcing of some government functions (Johnston and Kouzmin 1998). Much rhetoric prevails with these controversial initiatives (Kelsey 1995). Research needs to chart to what extent privatization and outsourcing have shaped the current public domain (Egon and Streeck 1991).

A second, but related, area is to investigate what public policy officials have learned about the functionality and dysfunctionality of cutting back government services and state functions (DiIulio 1994). For example, in the information-technology domain in Australia, whole-of-government approaches to outsourcing IT requirements for the national government was hotly debated in terms of capacity and vulnerability of state functions rendered dependent on external provisions of IT capability (Hilvert 1997). While this may be an extreme example, it raises the significant and larger issue of defining and measuring appropriate core functions of the state in social market economies, in the laissez-faire Anglo-American model, and in the “tiger” economies, including Japan (Dixon and Kouzmin 2001a, 2001b).

Outsourcing can be constructed as a form of “deskilling” the public sector (Johnson and Kouzmin 1998). The question is, is this the case, or does it presage the redesign of a smaller but “smarter” state? Finally, the strategic question to address is optimization issues for the restructuring of state capabilities with regard to learning and innovation. One of the aims of research is to identify institutions appropriate for the “smart” state (Kouzmin and Jarman 1999, 2002).

The divergency issue raises some very interesting questions about the speed with which monetarist policies were adopted in the cases of Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. Special research needs to be commissioned to explain the mechanisms of policy transfer and ideas to these jurisdictions (Williamson 1994; Kelsey 1995; Dixon and Kouzmin 1994b; Dixon, Kouzmin, and Korac-Kakabadse 1998; Johnson and Kouzmin 1998).

Area 3: The New Architecture of the State — The Economic Sovereign and the Political Local

Research needs to explore the capacity and confidence of national policy to decentralize and devolve policy-making authority and resources to the local at a time of large-scale pressures. It will also track and give further evidence to the opportunities and challenges these changes afford for devolution and subsidiarity (Santos 1995).

One measure of decentralized decision making is to identify divergent practices in state policy, market behavior, and public domains in the face of convergent economic fiscal pressures to reduce state spending. This part of the research could concentrate on determining whether there are significant differences in the way markets, states, or other institutions operate and have a significant impact on economic outcomes and public policy at the regional or local levels (Streeck 1991; Kouzmin 1998).

Regarding devolution, in a global context, the degree of devolution, the forms such devolution take, and its limits remain unexamined questions in many jurisdictions (World Bank 1997; Gupta 1999; Haque 2002). Research should try to answer the question as to which of these decentralized arrangements, if any, help to create new institutional capacity for macroeconomic policy and the micromanagement of change. The international scope of such research affords genuine comparative study in contrasting qualitatively different markets and outcomes. For example, is the European social market, which underpins effective social welfare provisions, more effective in utilizing its public domains toward decentralization than the *laissez-faire*, liberal, U.S. market, which is more aligned to regional job-creation policies (Warrian 1999; Ventriss 2002)?

The research here would explore comparative experiences in macroeconomic management with the opportunities for policy learning in mitigating local impacts of globalization. A reliance on sectoral analysis and case material in such areas as the information economy, social policy, labor market, and job creation would be prominent aspects of this research area.

Area 4: Risk and Citizenship — Policy Wickedness in a Global Age

Globalization exposes public domains to new sources and levels of risk, especially in the environment and standards setting. It also creates expectations and capacities for regulation and monitoring of such risks in the context of integration (Anderson and Blackhurst 1993; MacDonald 2002). The globalized risk-society (those capable of handling complex risks) discounts futures in significant ways, and part of an effective public domain is a growing expectation of active citizens being involved in the determi-

nation of intergenerational costs and benefits. This research would map the impact of globalized trade blocs and agreements such as NAFTA, EU, and the WTO on regulatory functions of the state in very specific domains relevant to risk management and citizenship expectations regarding the environment, health standards, and government accountability (Appleton 1994).

The first task would be to identify whether, and to what degree, new trade arrangements impact on key policy areas of risk management and citizen rights. The second would be to develop a cost-benefit analysis of investors' rights juxtaposed against citizen expectations and rights. Thirdly, states will be increasingly subject to a *double regime of accountability* (Boyer and Drache 1996): on the one hand, supranational agencies or trade agreements, and on the other, domestic electorates. This capacity to be transparent and accountable is, arguably, an integral part of the public domain. The question is how will these conflicting requirements be met and accommodated, if at all, by governments in a divergent world? Changes in the policy process and, possibly, changes to electoral processes that will flow as a result of double regimes of accountability are issues largely ignored by conventional paradigms. Special analysis needs to focus on these theoretical, as well as practical, problems.

Such identified research would be strongly interdisciplinary, focused on strategic and complex comparative public-policy issues. Of necessity, it would require the innovative involvement of internationally oriented research from, at least, the areas of political science, economics, international political economy, public management, and law. Unfortunately, to date, few of these paradigms prevail, and even fewer confront the dominance of economism in policy frames and solutions to "wicked" problems (Rittel and Webber 1973) that need to be resolved.

Dogma and Ideology in Economism

From the early 1980s, the Hawke Labor government and subsequent Labor and Conservative governments in Australia sought to radically reform the Australian Public Service (APS) and, under the influence of economists, the dominant professional group in the APS executive management adopted "economic rationalism" as its rationale and "managerialism," "commercialization," "deregulation," "corporatization," "privatization," "downsizing," and "outsourcing" as its key reform strategies (Pusey 1988, 1991: 64–7; Mascarenhas 1990a, 1990b; McInnes 1990; Whitwell 1990; Emy and Stone 1991; Hamburger 1991; Blandy 1992; Kouzmin, Dixon, and Wilson 1995). By so doing, Australia followed, albeit somewhat idiosyncratically, the path of public-sector reform first articulated, under the influence a

rapacious private sector in search of new opportunities, by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in Britain and President Ronald Reagan in the United States and repeated, in various shades, in Canada, New Zealand, and elsewhere (Considine 1990; Mascarenhas 1990b, 1993; Pollitt 1990; Caiden 1991; Gregory 1991; Rehfuss 1991; Sherwood 1992; Schwartz 1994). From where did “economic rationalism” come, and why did it take hold so pervasively around the Anglo-Saxon world?

Economic rationalism embraces the philosophical position that truth and knowledge are attainable through a priori reasoning rather than thorough experience (empiricism) and postulates a worldview premised on the reductionist principles of neoclassical economics, with its focus on scarcity and its concern for efficiency; the elegant cornerstone of which is Pareto optimality:

The Pareto optimum is usually described as a production or an exchange situation, or some combination, where no further improvement can be made to the position of one participant without harming that of another, and the movements towards it are termed “efficient” (McKee 1980: 366).

The Pareto-efficiency principle or criterion is, thus, that a society’s welfare will be enhanced if, at any time, an individual can be made better off without reducing the well-being of another individual. A somewhat weaker form of this principle is the potential Pareto principle, which allows a redistribution that increases net welfare when, in Mishan’s (1973: 14) words, “gainers can (through costless transfers) fully compensate all the losers and remain themselves better off than before.” Subsumed under Pareto optimality are conceptualizations of “productive” or “technical” efficiency (that is, configurations of resource utilization patterns that maximize production) and of “exchange” efficiency (that is, configurations of consumption patterns that maximize utility or satisfaction), which, together, determine an array of Pareto optimal resource-consumption configurations (economic efficiency). From this Pareto optimality paradigm — which conforms to the requirements that a paradigm be both a universally recognized line of scientific thought, evidenced by its inclusion in standard textbooks (Kuhn 1970: viii, 1, 10, 43) and “an article of faith, rejected only when it loses its potency following the occurrence of a quasi-religious conversion experience” (Georgiou 1973: 291–2) — the following inferences can be drawn:

- That a society’s welfare is conceptualized as the aggregation of its members’ welfare, but only in terms of economic welfare or well-being (measured by the monetary value of goods and services produced and exchanged). How this conceptualization is, or should

be, integrated into broader social welfare paradigms is not considered by economists to be a question for economics as a positive (as distinct from a normative) form of inquiry (Blaug 1993).

- That, in the Hobbesian tradition, human nature conforms to the precepts of “predominant egoism,” whereby, according to Kavka (1986: 64) “self-interest motives tend to take precedence over non-self-interest motives in determining human actions” and that the pursuit of self-interest, through the satisfying of wants, is to the good of society (see, for example, Buchanan 1975: 36; Margolis 1982; but also Olson 1971: 2; Quiggin 1987) because individuals are the best judge of their own well-being, allowing for the need to compensate those who suffer a loss of well-being as a by-product of that self-interest, or to seek payment from those who also gain well-being as a by-product of that self interest (the so-called free riders) (Hollis and Nell 1975: 5).
- That individuals are rational, being desirous, calculating, consistent, and self-interested and, thus, have a known and consistently ordered set of preferences (constituting, respectively, the closure and transitivity axioms of decision theory) that allows them to allocate their scarce resources to maximize their well-being (“utility”) (Hogarth and Reder 1987: 1–3), on the basis that it is rational for an individual to prefer more to less (Rawls 1971: ch. 7), by deducing a choice that will produce the best (optimal) outcome for them, given that they have complete and certain knowledge of, and the ability to compute, the consequences of alternative diverse and heterogeneous courses of action.
- That society is seen as a collection of individuals, the net welfare of whom is increased if any increase in some individuals’ economic well-being is greater than any losses in economic well-being experienced by other individuals — irrespective of the distributional impact or equity considerations, either block equity (equity amongst interpopulation segments) or segmented equity (equity within an intrapopulation segment) (Blanchard 1986), which is not a question for economics as a positive form of inquiry — unless that loss of well-being experienced by the losers, itself, impacts on the well-being of the gainers (Hochman and Rodgers 1969).

Neoclassical economists have argued, somewhat arrogantly, that the Pareto optimality; is an unexceptionable ethical proposition because, in the words of Buchanan (1954: 125), “it is one which requires a minimum of premises and one that should command wide assent.”

Pareto optimality is grounded on the epistemological tenets of neopositivism and scientific naturalism, the heirs of logical positivism (Alex-

ander 1982; Halfpenny 1982). It promises that technically sophisticated, apolitical, value-neutral “engineers” use value-free criteria and methods to find ideal solutions to socioeconomic and political problems.

Reductionist (Pratt 1978) neoclassical economics is intellectually satisfying and analytically elegant (Seligman 1971) because it uses logicity, a narrow concept of rationality (Wisman 1987: 90), to deductively explore the logic of maximization:

- By presuming the quantification of empirically unmeasurable concepts, so as to achieve definitiveness, preciseness and rigor
- By adopting a priori premises and invoking *ceteris paribus* clauses, so as to permit conclusions to be drawn (Russell 1967: 46–51)
- By accepting the dubious, if not specious, fact-value dichotomy (Rein 1976) and, thus, the objectification of reality (Berger and Luckman 1967)
- By being unwilling to discourse on value assumptions (Bernstein 1978; Rothschild 1993) and by depending on “economic man” (with his perfect rationality) as the appropriate ideal type (Tisdell 1987: 44; Leibenstein 1976), ipso facto denying the models of “normative man” (Parsons, 1951), “political man” (Lipset 1959), “emotional man” (Flam 1990a, 1990b), and even Simon’s (1957a: 186) “administrative man,” with his “bounded rationality” (Simon 1957a, 1957b, 1982; Williamson 1985; Bartlett 1988)

Neoclassical economics is notorious for using what are little more than *metaphysical* concepts devoid of operational content, such as utility, which, according to Bentham (1789/1970), is provided when human experiences produce “benefit, advantage, pleasure, good and happiness” or prevents “mischief, pain, evil or unhappiness.” In these circumstances, empirical testing of neoclassical economic theory, with its syllogistic arguments, is problematic (Polanyi 1957; Robinson 1977; Wisman 1978; Eusepi 1987), for it can always be argued that “the *ceteris was not paribus*” and cannot be depended upon “to distinguish economic truth from economic falsehood” (Wisman 1980: 137–8, 1987: 96). Economists are engaged chiefly in improving the rationality (logicity) of their theory much more than knowing whether these theories conform to the reality of the present world. They would deny the appropriateness to neoclassical economics of Kahn’s (1974, 489) proposition that “the mill of science grinds only when hypotheses and data are in continuous and abrasive contact.” Neoclassical economics cannot be considered to have the attributes of scientific “elegance,” as that term is defined in the context of the philosophy of science, which requires that: “not only should theories be capable of serving as the basis of accurate prediction, but they should also be

important, parsimonious and comprehensive” (Goodin 1976: 6–7; Kellow 1988: 713–4).

Moreover, neoclassical economic theory does not describe the *actual behavior* of those studies; rather it posits rational choice — choices made by individuals with stable preferences who act rationally to maximize their welfare — as a “method of analysis” (Becker 1993: 385–6) subsumed under “methodological individualism” (Arrow 1994:1). Posner (1981: 1) explains that “the economist’s basic tool for studying markets is the assumption that people are rational maximizers of their satisfaction. The principles of economics are deduced from this assumption.”

Indeed, Becker (1993: 402) asserts that in explaining behavior, “no approach of comparable generality has yet been developed that offers serious competition to rational choice theory.” Neoclassical economics uses this behavioral premise to describe the behavior of individuals in a group (Becker 1993: 386, 402), acknowledging that the group may, itself, influence individual decision making through utility-function interdependence. This means that a group achieves ipso facto an optimal outcome when it reaches a “crisis agreement” (Taras 1991), perhaps as a consequence of the group having a norm of “no criticism” or “no conflict” or having a high level of cohesiveness, or because of the group leadership style or the lack of member vigilance, even though it would seem to an outside observer that the agreement is contrary to the self-interest of some, or even all, of the group members.

Neoclassical economists, ever conscious of their need to be objective, derive their worldviews by imposing their models of rationality on the world they seek to explain and improve on the premise that the behavior of the economic world can be simulated by deductive reasoning. It is extraordinarily difficult to prove that the theory is correct. Economists, in general, have shown a surprising lack of insight into the way they approach economic phenomena by assuming that deductive reasoning is the only appropriate approach (Popper 1972; Carney and Scheer 1980; Giere 1984; Baird 1992; Copi and Cohen 1994). As Torgerson (1986: 40) observes: “it becomes apparent that the narrow, positivist conception of reason has fostered an intellectual style which is insensitive to its own nature and context — which is, in a word, irrational.”

In essence, neoclassical economics is preoccupied with determining allocatively efficient means for arriving at exogenously determined goals, involving what has been described as the “instrumentality (means-ends) mode of rationality” (Habermas 1968, 1971; Tribe 1972, 1973; Wisman, 1980: 145, 1987) within an economic system conceptualized as being independent of, rather than integrated into, the total social fabric (for a critical perspective see Krabbe 1987), preferring to exile the issue of what those goals should be (and how they might best be changed) to the

domain of the unscientific. This is done on the ground that goals involve values, which, by their very nature, are noncognitive and, thus, not susceptible to empirical or rational testing. Hence they involve, in Friedman's (1953: 5) words, "differences about which men can only ultimately fight." Values are thus considered by economists to be beyond the scope of economics to address (Coates 1964; Meyer 1975; Robinson 1977).

Claims to value-neutrality are supported by the assumption that behavior reveals preferences, disregarding the fact that individual preferences reflect a society's values, culture, and power structure. Illustratively, the presumptions behind "consumer sovereignty" reflect the value system inherent under mature capitalism (Etzioni 1991: 77). Indeed, the neoclassical economist conforms to Strauch's (1976: 134) perceptions of a quantitative analyst, who:

takes no personal responsibility for his conclusions, since they are not of his making but are inherent in the nature of things. All he has done is uncover them and made them visible for all to see. In the sense that he is perceived as not personally involved with his conclusions; he is like the natural scientist or, perhaps, the priest who serves only as a conduit to the gods. He disdains the "merely qualitative" and often speaks pejoratively of "subjective judgment".

The predisposition of economic rationalism for instrumental (technical or means-ends) rationality, with its notions of value neutrality (Rothschild 1993), sits comfortably with the rational-behavior assumption that underpins much of public policy, with its need for verifiable knowledge capable of demonstrating, after alternative courses of action have been systematically examined and weighed, the most efficient means of pursuing socioeconomic goals and its preference for passing value judgments back to policy makers (Brennan and Walsh 1990). On this predisposition, Dryzek (1990: 5–6) critically lists his damnation:

Instrumental rationality destroys the more congenial, spontaneous, egalitarian and intrinsically meaningful aspects of human association.

Instrumental rationality — and the political institutions in which it is manifested — is ineffective when confronted with complex social problems.

Instrumental rationality makes effective and appropriate policy analysis impossible.

Wisman (1980: 145) observes that:

Orthodox economic science treats humans as objects and provides legitimation for the control and manipulation of the social order. By reducing all economic questions to technical or engineering problems, economists buttress a “cult of the expert” in which values are increasingly seen not only as irrational, but irrelevant as well. Accordingly, society’s economic problems are viewed, not as political (and therefore social), but as technical. The implicit prescription is for rendering more authority to the technocrats, less to politicians. In this manner, economists become mere social engineers; the handmaidens of whatever powers might be (Benveniste 1977; Wisman 1979; Zinke 1987).

Thus, as Fay (1975: 50) concludes, “efficiency becomes the criterion by virtue of which the merits of various political measures will be assessed.” Nelson (1977: 43–4) goes further and suggests that by stressing their “efficiency” arguments, economists “have been able to take over the discussion on how decisions should be made. The consequence has been a partial co-optation of the normative structure of public administration by economists” (Thomas 1984; Wilenski and Goodin 1976; Jay 1989; Zorn 1989). In so doing, neoclassical economists seek to remove, at least in part, public decision making from the inefficiencies of a tumultuous, even anarchical, and certainly imperfect polity to the domain of putatively scientific, dispassionate inquiry, which would see a withering of those ideological differences that cause policy disagreements and political conflicts. According to Stokey and Zeckhauser; (1978: 261):

Policy disagreement would lessen — and perhaps vanish — if we could predict with certainty the safety consequences of the breeder reactor or the cost of annual upkeep of clay (tennis) courts, or whether a special shuttle bus for the elderly would be heavily used.

Denhardt (1981: 631, 633) has drawn the conclusion that such policy analysts typically apply technical rules to the solution of immediate problems. Under such circumstances, technical concerns would displace political and ethical concerns as the basis for public decision making, thereby transforming normative issues into technical problems. What is most troubling is the possibility that only those policies will be entertained that are amenable to solution through the standard techniques of positivist social science. The result is a new consciousness in which the world is viewed in terms of technique (Tribe 1972).

Neoclassical economics draws upon the Benthamite view (Bentham 1789/1970) that society is a collection of individual actors, each trying to

pursue their own self-interest in the most efficient way under any given circumstances. Each rational actor is characterized by an endowment of resources, a set of possible actions that modify this endowment, and a set of preference relations between different resource endowments that can be captured by a utility function. The presumption of neoclassical economics is that economic, social, and political reality can be reduced to the interaction of rational actors (Granovetter 1992; Rowley 1993a, 1993b; Hollis and Sugden 1993). Nowhere is this more clearly demonstrated than in the fiction of the marketplace as the idealized economic model (in a simplifying reductionist, rather than a moral, sense), giving rise to Adam Smith's "invisible hand." This is, of course, at the ideological heart of economic rationalism. The marketplace is considered to be an efficient and impersonal distributor of a society's resources, despite the reality of market failure (most notably caused by the existence of imperfect competition, public goods, and externalities) because of:

- The inherent imperfections of democracy, for neoclassical economists have long been able to demonstrate, in theory, that it is impossible for any fair collective choice (constitutional choice) process (voting rule) to enable rational social choices to be made on the basis of a consistently provided set of appropriately ordered individual utility preferences that would resolve any interpersonal differences (Arrow 1963, 1967)
- The inherent limitations of government supply and policy implementation (Wolf 1979; Weimer and Vining 1991: 131–8)

The Imperialism of "Public Choice Theory": Economic Rationalism Beyond Markets¹

Public-choice theory was, at first, a "brew" distilled in far away pockets of generally inaccessible intellectual terrain (Buchanan 1954), but gradually its distribution network expanded to serve main intellectual and power centers, including the treasury, finance, and other bureaucratic agencies contaminated by it, and came to displace other rival brands of social and political theory in such markets, especially globalizing markets. Then there is the gleeful participation in the profits yielded to the private sector, which reaps dividends from its boutique distillations: "contracting out," "downsizing," "rightsizing," "outsourcing," and so on!

One can only marvel at either the naïveté or the impenetrable arrogance of such standard positions as Mueller's (1980) on public-choice theory. Mueller (1980, 1) boldly defines "[p]ublic choice as the economic study of *non market* decision making or, *simply*, the application of economics

to political science” (emphasis added). There are no questions asked about whether economics can legitimately undertake such a role or whether the universe neatly dichotomizes into market/nonmarket decision making! Mueller simply relegates that to other works for justification, including those of Downs (1957), Buchanan and Tullock (1962), and Riker and Ordeshook (1973), a sort of justification by his own externality, all of those cited being notably 1950s to early 1970s works.

Public-choice theory claims the subject matter of political science, namely the theory of the state, voting rules, voter behavior, party politics, the bureaucracy, and so on — but its methodology is that of economics. One might expect an epistemological justification for its choice of methodology, but economics does not often experience the need for such a nonpositivist-based discipline.

Of course, says Mueller (1980), political science conventionally sees man the voter or politician differently from the assumptions of public-choice models; he acknowledges that they inhabit, in conventional political science, an institutional richness far beyond that implicit in abstract models. In fact, he says, to such political science, “Public Choice models seem but a naive caricature of political behaviour” (Mueller 1980: 5). But, his answer, as a public-choice theorist, is that of age-old economists when challenged on their simple (simplistic?) models of economic behavior: “The use of the simplified models of political behaviour is justified so long as they out-perform the competitors in explaining political behaviour” (Mueller 1980: 5). According to Mueller (1980), the degree to which economic models of democracy offer superior explanatory power is still in doubt. Nevertheless, like all unredeemed positivists, Mueller (1980: 5) claims that much effort has gone into testing various aspects of the public-choice theory of democracy, and an appraisal of its relative merits should *soon* be possible (emphasis added). In positivist organization theory (Donaldson 1985), for example, the same claim is made, but the *Parousia* always seems to be delayed in the so-called positivist sciences for various reasons (Kouzmin 1983: 242–51; Leivesley, Scott, and Kouzmin 1990: 375–83).

The intellectual arrogance of such positions is breathtaking, even if it were restricted to economics. Economics, or indeed public-choice theory, if it claims to be some sort of science, might be expected to justify itself at least on its own positivist grounds, but reflexive epistemology appears to be either too arcane or altogether unnecessary for such elegant simplifiers as public-choice theorists. If reality does not fit the public-choice model, so much the worse for reality. “Institutional richness” or “distinctive competence” (Selznick 1957) does not fit into supply-and-demand curves and can be disregarded until the limiting conditions of public-choice theory become an embarrassment. And, although Mueller (1980) does not appear to recognize that he is employing a form of instrumentalist justification

for public-choice theory, he is, nevertheless, submitting himself to the critique that instrumentalism invites. Simplified models of *economic* behavior (public-choice theory) outperforming other economic models may be one thing, though the necessary argument here should not be forgone; but simplified models of *political* behavior done in an economic (public choice) mode that permits only predetermined, model-fitting economic outcomes is quite another. Tautological formulations in any so-called science are *simply* aggravating, not aggregating!

What is apparent as a *leitmotiv* in Mueller's work is his concern with "big government." He cites gross measures (Mueller 1980: 6–7), disclaiming any special interest of his own (or of public-choice theory) in the phenomenon. In other sections on so-called positive public choice, there is reference to the size of government being too large (Mueller 1980: 149, citing Tullock 1959) by virtue of log-rolling and the serving of special interests under majority rule. Even if this refers only to the oversupply of public goods, it expresses a judgment, a value, an interest. Mueller (1980: 17) also notes that "state intervention leads to increased asocial behaviour requiring more state intervention!" Nobody wants a totalitarian Leviathan; ergo, "big government" and state intervention are bad. Often unstated is the underpinning ideology of individual freedom or individual autonomy. To the public-choice theorist, these are axiomatic values requiring no justification.

There are, of course, less dogmatic treatments of public-choice theory than Mueller's (1980), for instance McLean's (1987), which at least considers other possibilities for solving collective-action problems — altruism, anarchy, cooperation. There is a recognition in McLean that the Pareto frontier has been accorded godlike status (McLean 1987, 182). McLean can chide those public-choice economists who slide into the value judgment that redistribution is wrong by assuming that the only social changes that are justified are moves toward the Pareto frontier. McLean (1987) sees this position as an extreme conservative viewpoint. He also recognizes the very meager assumptions on which public-choice theory is built — a blessing and a curse — but claims that, on the "curse" side, public-choice theory may have cut itself off from redistribution questions such as "should the able-bodied be taxed for the benefit of the disabled, and if so, how heavily?" or perhaps that it may even say "no" to the question without any argument. McLean (1987) also recognizes that most real-world choices are between Pareto-incomparable options, that is, options that make some better off and others worse off, and that the Pareto principle is not helpful when the issues are those of distribution. But, more important for the ideological tincturing in the public-choice "brew," is McLean's (1987) recognition that Pareto — incomparable situations involve value judgments. This moves one presently to the heart

of the utilitarian foundations of public-choice theory and to the ideological infrastructure of such theory.

There are in public-choice theory at least strands of anti-idealism and a deep suspicion about democracy. Riker (1982), employs a fairly complex theory of logrolling, disequilibria, and cycles. McLean (1987: 184–8), draws a conservative, normative conclusion that populist democracy cannot possibly live up to many of the claims made for it, specifically that the will of the people ought to be sovereign. Riker (1982) pronounces: “What the people want cannot be social policy simply because *we* do not and cannot know what the people want” (emphasis added) (Riker 1982: 238). Riker’s (1982) only alternative is liberalism, a form of heavily manipulated democracy with entrenched rules to prevent the “tyranny of the majority” (McLean 1987: 187). McLean sees Schumpeter (1954, ch. 20–23) as echoed in Riker (1982): both conservative theorists view populist democracy as the road to tyranny; the disease stemming from Rousseau (1964). The “will of the people” sought by participatory democratic theorists is for both Riker (1982) and Schumpeter (1954) a “will o’ the wisp” (McLean, 1987: 187). While the superstructure of public-choice theory frequently appears value-sterile, the infrastructure is ideologically driven: state intervention is intrinsically a public bad; public sectors are inherently illegitimate.

The Economic Perversion of Organizational Complexity

Neoclassical economics has acquired the classical Benthamite distaste for the public sector (Bentham 1789/1970). It is constantly under suspicion of being inefficient, wasteful and, thus, not giving value for money, because the absence of any automatic disciplining mechanism permits rent-seeking behavior by bureaucrats, their clients and politicians who govern them, perhaps even with a Machiavellian flair (Terrell 1993). This presumption of the supremacy of the marketplace is based on an adherence to the values of individualistic utilitarianism (Frey 1984; Bromley 1990), which has been under extensive attack in the field of moral philosophy (Smart and Williams 1973; Gorovitz 1977) because of, among other things, its lack of a moral dimension (Blaug 1993) and because it defines a “good action” only in terms of the way it makes one feel, hence its inability to distinguish among competing values and preferences (thus placing preferences for honesty on a par with a taste for peanut butter (MacPherson 1984: 243)).

Since the behavioral presumption of neoclassical economics is that the rational actor on the economic, social, or political stage is “a maximizer

of some value and who acts to obtain it in a purposeful and nonrandomized manner" (Simon 1982; Hogarth and Reder 1987; Doran 1992: 359), he/she will always be self-serving, even deceitful and dishonest, whenever he/she has the incentive and opportunity to do so, which means that altruism, like heroism, is recast as a complex expressions of self-interest (Hirshleifer 1977; Margolis 1982). This presumption is a fundamental tenet of the neoinstitutional economics (in contradistinction to the new institutional economics with its acceptance of bounded rationality), which defines an organization as "a stable collection of inter-related incentives and rules" (Dunsire 1988; Weimer 1992: 375) and postulates a theoretical framework for institutional design in terms of contracting between parties, the governance of such contracting, and the conferring of property rights (Arrow 1985).

The epistemological roots of the neoinstitutional economics lie in transaction-cost theory, which explores the problem of market transactions not being costless (Coase 1937; Williamson 1971, 1975, 1985; Telser 1980; De Alessi 1983), and in agency theory, which explores the principle-agent problem within an organization (Alchian and Demsetz 1972; Ross 1973; Jensen and Meckling 1976; Harris and Raviv 1978; Holmstrom 1979; Shavell 1979). Transaction-cost theory sees an organization as an information-gathering and information-processing mechanism created to obviate the need to renegotiate, continually, market-transaction contracts that are unavoidably incomplete due to environmental uncertainty (Williamson 1985; Maser 1986; Heckathorn and Maser 1987; Bryson and Ring 1990). Agency theory sees an organization as a governance mechanism oversighting the hierarchical contractual relationship between the "principal" (such as an owner or, in the public sector, a politician (or even multiple principals who may have conflicting and unstable political demands (Moe 1984, 1987)), who is the risk taker in an environment with exogenous uncertainty (Jensen and Meckling 1976; Fama 1980; Fama and Jensen 1983a, 1983b) and who delegates decision-making discretion to an "agent" (such as a manager), who controls access to information, creating the potential for organizationally inefficient information asymmetry, which arises when some members of an organization have information they can withhold from others (Vining and Weimer 1988).

This is especially significant for public-sector organizations where the nontransferability of ownership discourages specialization in their ownership by the principal (a politician), resulting in less effective monitoring of their management (De Alessi 1983; Lott 1987). Emerging from these conceptualizations of an organization is a concern about "opportunism" in public administration (that is, self-serving [rent-seeking], even deceitful and dishonest, behavior by bureaucrats, their clients and politicians) created either because environmental uncertainty makes contracts incomplete

or because “principals” cannot effectively monitor the behavior of their “agents,” who do not have identical interests and who have information that is not accessible to them. As Weimer and Vining (1991: 132) observe:

The Principal faces the task of creating organizational arrangements (incentives, sanctions and monitoring) that minimize the sum of the costs of the undesirable behaviour of Agents and of the activity undertaken to control it.

It seems that neoclassical economics is unable to proceed without assuming a rational agent seeking to find the optimal means to a well-defined end. It would appear that, throughout the economist’s *couture*, ash cloth and wigs certainly constitute accepted mufti for its acolytes. Such vestments, it could be argued, are inappropriate, perhaps even somewhat incongruous, “like finding Falstaff dressed in a bikini!” (with apologies to Panitch, as quoted by Metcalfe and McQuillan (1979: 268)).

Under the influence of the ideology of neoclassical economics, bureaucracies are conceptualized as amorphous, instrumental, rational-legal forms of hierarchical organizations (indeed, an ultra-Weberian ideal-type) administered by rationally self-interested officials, who, according to Tullock (1965: 29–30) can be normally treated “as if [they] were behaving out of selfish motivation” (Downs 1967; Niskanen 1971, 1973, 1975, 1978, 1994; Jacobs 1981: 18–30; Terole 1986; Laffont 1990; Perry and Wise 1990). These public officials, akin to the archetypal traditional bureaucrats (Gregory 1991: 307–8), are inherent utility maximizers motivated by the desire to maximize their own utility functions that are clearly self-serving (by embracing power, income, perks, public reputation, prestige, patronage, ease of making change, ease of management, convenience, and security), although not exclusively so (by allowing for organizational loyalty, mission commitment, professional pride, and serving the public interest and agency output) (Downs 1967; Niskanen 1973).

The result is the inherent tendency for such bureaucrats to be deceitful, or even dishonest — by distorting information communicated upward so as to promote their own self-interest, by making decisions that are consistent with their own self-interest, and by implementing policy decisions in such a way as to promote their own self-interest (Downs 1967: 77–8) — which ultimately means maximizing the size of their agencies (Tullock 1976: 26–35) in terms of personnel (Noll and Fiorina 1979), budgets (Niskanen 1973: 22–3, 1994), or discretionary budgets (defined as the difference between the budget received and the minimum cost of producing the required outputs) (Niskanen 1975). This creates a bureaucracy that is perpetually expanding and that requires a hierarchical authority structure (Hayek 1960; von Mises 1944) — based on rational rules and

held to be legitimate by all members — to achieve cooperation (Downs 1967: 162), even though the capacity for top-down control diminishes as bureaucratic size increases, to the point where large organizations can never be fully controlled or even coordinated (Downs 1967: 143; Breton and Wintrobe 1975; Conybeare 1984). Bureaucratic failure is, thus, inevitable; the bureaucratic solution to which, according to Perlman (1976: 76), is usually:

to create another bureau to oversee those who have lapsed into sin. Bureaux are piled on bureau and the bureaucracy grows on (Downs 1967: 148).

This process of ever-expanding vertical and structural control is a response to the need for a governance mechanism that minimizes the cost of any mismatch between controls and tasks by making bureaucracies responsible for the tasks they perform. Thus, a situation is created where monitoring bureaus become increasingly involved with the minutiae of administration and, thus, have a growing demand for control-oriented information. Hence Downs's (1967: 150) observation that:

The quantity and detail of reporting required by a monitoring bureau tends to rise steadily over time, regardless of the amount, or nature, of the activity being monitored.

The neoconservative ideology of economic rationalism underscores the linking of the productive and allocative efficiency of government to managerial ability, authority, and accountability: managerialism (Hensher 1986: 158; Golembiewski and Kuhnert 1994) or “the managerial meta-myth” (Adams and Ingersoll 1990: 285), which now pervades public administration in Western countries (Lane 1985; Ingraham and Peters 1988; Pollitt 1990; Hede 1991; Mascarenhas 1993; Caiden 1994; Peters 1994; Kouzmin, Leivesley, and Korac-Kakabadse 1997). It has been defined generically by Pusey (1988: 15) as:

a body of problem-solving and organizational skills that are equally applicable to anything and everything that is normally done in large formal organizations, employing great numbers of people. Management skills are context-free and value-free and, indeed, management is really a rubric for what are touted as “universal” skills.

Managerialism, thus:

- Places emphasis on policy management and implementation rather than on policy development and design in public administration
- Stresses efficiency, effectiveness, and quality, as against process and equity, in the management of public resources (involving goal setting, performance benchmarking, performance definition, performance measurement, performance feedback, and performance-enhancement incentives))
- Prefers to maximize the use of competition:
 - within the public sector to produce “competitive public administration” (Rehfuss 1991)
 - between the public and private sectors
- Advocates the use private-sector management practices in the public sector
- Seeks to diffuse responsibility and to devolve authority, with the establishment of corresponding management responsibility and public-accountability structures
- Shifts the public-accountability focus from inputs and process to outputs and outcomes

The Managerial Meta-Myth

Managerialism fosters the concomitant proposition that “good government and good organization results from deliberate intentions, detailed plans and consistent decisions” (Prasser 1990: 194). The politico-administrative task of government is, thus, conceptualized as responding as efficiently and as effectively as possible to the claims made by its various constituencies, using a rational-comprehensive model of policy making, involving depoliticized, goal-oriented strategies (Simon 1957a, 1957b; Groewegan 1990), chosen after comprehensive instrumental-rational (means-ends mode) analysis, and routinely implemented by compliant, decentralized, yet hierarchically controlled and accountable public agencies. Such agencies are viewed systemically as problem-solving and program-delivery mechanisms, conceptualized as production units (open systems) within which measurable “inputs” are used in a “production process” (generating “activities”) to produce measurable “outputs” that have an “impact” (produce “costs” and “benefits”) and, thus, generate measurable objective-related “outcomes” that allow performance to be measured against given and known “organizational objectives” that are compatible with given and known “government policy objectives” (Breton 1974). The management of the public “production process” is, thus, best decoupled, as far as possible, from political structures and processes and best left not to self-seeking and empire-building bureaucrats (Kaufman 1981), but to cognitive,

goal-oriented, problem-solving, decision-making, and interventionist technocrats (Flam 1990b: 225):

- Who would always prefer to use information as an aid to joint problem solving, rather than distorting it to promote their own narrow self-interest, such as “organizational gangsterism,” as described by Kobrak (1992), or to use it as a resource in an intra- or interorganizational struggle (Wilensky 1967)
- Who would use advanced analytical techniques to determine which programs will (and do) best achieve their desired objectives, rather than judging merely on the basis of self-interest
- Who would adopt private-sector business practices to create the appropriate structures, processes, culture, and incentives to deliver those programs most efficiently and more economically, operating within an outcome-centered budgetary and public-accountability system, rather than adopting administrative practices aimed at maximizing their span of control, their overall subordinate personnel, or their budgets

Self (1977: 34) has characterized the economic rationalist’s ideal-type administrator thus:

It might be said that the final aim of the administrator should not be the realization of any prescribed objectives, but the maximization of the net satisfaction (for example total benefits – total costs) of all those persons whom his decisions affect. The administrator, or policy-maker, then becomes like a market entrepreneur, choosing between alternative mixes of resource allocation according to his ultimate calculation of the net benefits conferred, not only upon his direct clients but upon all individuals who are significantly affected by his decision (Caiden, 1991: 197 ff.). The administrator’s own profit is the salary society pays him for his skill in anticipating and meeting social wants; and the “goal-matrix” or relevant public policies becomes primarily a short-hand guide to those measures which have been found (on the whole) to maximize net consumer satisfaction in the past.

In this setting, publicly provided services would be delivered with more “productive efficiency” (by increasing productivity) and with more “exchange efficiency” (by maximizing the utility derived from those services by supplying only citizens who derive the highest utility from them [i.e., have the greatest need for them], which is achieved by altering

consumer behavior through education, regulation, and economic incentives). This would make government programs and, indeed, government, both more “cost-efficient” and “cost-effective” in the use of resources, which would maximize community satisfaction (Simon 1957a: 186), maximize public confidence in government (Wholey 1993), and maximize the quantum of resources available to the private sector (Horton 1987; Fellow and Kelaher 1991).

This managerialist perspective, with its presumption of the superiority of “scientific knowledge and of progress over democratic process and outcome” (Finer 1941/1966; Friedrich 1940/1966; Rosenthal 1990: 400) and with its neoconservative inclination toward technocracy (a situation where professional career public servants more fully control the public policy than do politicians), has, however, a *missing* link. Private-sector decision making, with its self-correcting dynamic feedback loops (automatic disciplining mechanism), is difficult to replicate in the public sector for three reasons. First, authority in the public sector is much more dispersed, reflecting pluralistic pressures. Secondly, political decision makers do not always share common goals, objectives, and values. Finally, they may have neither the required expertise nor the willingness (or ability) to learn from the outcomes of past decisions. Indeed, policies and political process are the product of, in the words of March and Olsen (1983: 292), “incremental adaption to changing problems with available solutions within gradually evolving structures of meaning.” Thus, as Prasser (1990: 194) remarks, “intentions are changed, plans become irrelevant and consistency becomes an impediment to the day to day management of issues, crises and problems.” The process of governance is, in Waldo’s (1984: 128) words, a “seamless web of discretion and action” that is integrally bound to the evolution of civilization (Marini 1993), the management of which requires the art of “statecraft” (Borins 1992; Peters 1994) and respect for what Goodsell (1989:161) describes as “administrative ritual” (repetitive, staged, and time-specific rites, cyclically repetitious formalistic processes, and expressive programs), which he considers “can foster the community spirit that is essential to holding together and governing a civilized society.”

While economic rationalism has been used to justify the need for radical bureaucratic change in Australia and elsewhere, its contribution to reform implementation has been, fortunately, overshadowed by those, in the spirit of the postprogressivists (Stever 1993), who argued that public-sector agencies must not only be efficient producers, but also have the capacity to fully develop the creative potential of their members, thereby developing the tolerance for ambiguity and paradox needed to operate in a postmodernist world of immense complexity, hyperdiversity, and self-referentiality (Marshall and White 1990; Miller 1994). In addressing the

inadequacy of bureaucratic performance, organizationally naïve neoclassical economists have little to prescribe beyond their faith in the disciplining power of market forces (Winter 1964; Domberger and Piggott 1986; Tomlinson 1986; Porter, Freebairn, and Walsh 1987; Ahrne 1990), which only enables customers, service recipients, and employees to change their organizational allegiance by exercising Hirschman's (1970: 4) "exit option" (Barry 1974; Birch 1975) in the belief that this will empower them sufficiently to have their wishes met and their expectations realized.

Rather than management theory finally coming to terms with its inherent proclivity to ideological expression, much of current legitimation depends heavily upon an *expansion* of this ideological proclivity flowing from the "supremacy" that economic metaphors currently exercise over the managerial and administrative domain. So much so, in current Anglo-American economies and, especially in public sectors, it could be argued that organizational and administrative agendas have been intellectually and epistemologically "highjacked" by a virulent strain of positivist "science" — economic rationalism.

Simplistic Functionalism in Regressive Organizational Design

The highly bureaucratic management model, as evolved from the manufacturing industry, has dominated management and administrative philosophy this century (Kouzman 1980: 1983) and, at same time, facilitated organizational growth based on high-volume, low-cost strategies for more than 50 years.

In the United States, for example, big business preceded, or at least coincided with, the welfare state (Adams 1992). Unionism, job security, and worker participation were strenuously opposed. The artificial separation of "thinkers" from "doers" resulted in lower quality and productivity, chronic absenteeism, and indifference (Reich 1989, 1993). In an attempt to upgrade management as a means of increasing productivity, Anglo-American praxis adopted concepts of quality circles, work groups, encounter groups, and teams, without, however, fundamentally changing underlying organizational assumptions. These attempts were exemplified by *Theory Z*, or how American business could meet the Japanese challenge (Ouchi 1982), and how-to books in the "best" U.S. tradition (Pascale and Athos 1981). However, these adaptations could not meet operational praxis while business was dominated by professional managers indoctrinated with traditional coercive management theory (Kouzman 1983).

Two major categories of management practice and institutional arrangements are instrumental in producing functionalist outcomes

favored by management: on the one hand, practices and arrangements that affect the social organization of production; on the other hand, practices and arrangements that, at the same time, give rise to particular labor-management relationships (Nurse 1988). The former deal with the structural organization of production: departmentalization; hierarchy; the establishment of job boundaries, work roles, and rules; the use of different kinds of technology; production methods; and so on. The latter deal with the organization of labor power itself and the features of an organization's internal and external labor market, performance-evaluation and promotion policies, supervision and systems of discipline, compensation structures, and management.

Organizational theorists, of course, differ in terms of their assessment of the nature of, and rationale for, the use of such mechanisms and praxis, but economists *do not*. Such differences in outlook are not the product of idiosyncratic thought. They reflect the influence of the fundamental assumptions that structure is contingent and complex and informs social theory and research. Functionalist organization and management theory and research constitute a distinctively dominant intellectual enterprise when contrasted with work located within other paradigms. This body of work is concerned with "functional rationality," disciplined permanence, efficiency, and profitability. As such, it views managerial action in a highly instrumental fashion (Kouzman 1980; Nurse 1988; Reich 1993). It assumes that the task of managing can best be accomplished if organizational roles are appropriately "engineered," allocated, and coordinated. To effect these outcomes — and as a means of promoting disciplined performance — structural patterns, institutional arrangements, rules, procedures, and administrative practices all are said to work toward a least-cost goal accomplishment. These practices and institutions constitute the basis of organized action and, at the same time, act as obstacles to innovation and learning. They are the *sine qua non* of organizing activity in a functionalizing economic rationalism.

Organization action that is geared toward managerial outcomes is theorized in purely functionalist and increasingly economically rationalist terms. Functionalist theorists argue that the forms it takes are both indispensable and inevitable, as they are seen as being limited by the size of the organization, the nature of its technology, vertical and horizontal configuration, and the need to manage the "business of management" (Kouzman 1980; Nurse 1988; Reich 1993). Such an approach to organizing and, by inference, such a concept of management's role, leads organization analysts to theorize the structural and internal labor-market features of organization in terms of contributions to goal accomplishment (Georgiou 1973), organizational stability, and rationality, albeit technical rationality (Kouzman 1980, 1983).

For example, one of the more enduring myths of organizational theory is that a formal hierarchy of authority is indispensable for coordination (Kouzmin 1983: 237). The assumption that hierarchy is a functional and technical prerequisite for organizational complexity (Wilson 1975) still persists today. Possible irrationalities attributable to hierarchical control are looked upon as inevitable costs of complex organization, ones that can be considerably reduced through the rhetoric of delayering, outsourcing, and reengineering, but not eliminated (Kouzmin 1983; Korac-Kakabadse and Kouzmin 1996; Kouzmin, Korac-Kakabadse, and Jarman 1996).

Growing numbers of academics and practitioners recognize that this functionalist, and now increasingly economic, legacy of prescriptive, engineered, and consensus-oriented rationalistic administration does not conform with empirical reality. Nor does it sit easily with the ideological canons of liberal, participatory democracy (Urban 1978, 1982; Thompson 1981; Rosenthal, Hart, and Kouzmin 1991). The organizational design advantages of complexity, redundancy, duplication, overlap, and conflict (Kouzmin 1980b; Lerner 1986; Kouzmin, Korac-Kakabadse, and Jarman 1996) have now been extensively elaborated, and the notion of polycentrism is not only being tolerated, but increasingly being insisted upon as a realistic alternative to centralist and coercive bureaucratic administration (Chilsum 1990; Kouzmin and Scott 1990).

Under functionalist perspectives, actors employ a particular brand of metaphor and language of discourse that speaks of the need for regulation, order, integration, and stability (Wilson 1975). The *machine* and *organic* metaphors structure modes of inquiry into organizational phenomena. The manager's role is cast in terms of either a "structural" or "social" engineer, or both. Work structures and practices are regarded as rational, objective means for attaining highly valued organizational and social goals, independent of the structure, ownership, or control issues in wider society. These structures and praxes are assumed to constitute universal principles of globalizing organized action. Functionalist and economic organizational perspectives assume a largely passive role for employees and highly proactive ones for managers. The role of the former is determined by the latter.

Structural-functionalist and, lately, economic approaches to organizational praxis introduce many kinds of assumptions, concepts, and models for describing a social system that often has never existed and is not likely to come into being (Dahrendorf 1968). Changing a legacy of positivistically inclined functionalist administrative theory requires shifting paradigms, and shifting these paradigms means fundamentally changing the epistemological assumptions and ontological values that lie at the center of contemporary managerialism today. Contrary to long-shared hopes that organizational and administrative theory have, at last, witnessed

conceptual plurality — an epistemological tension — under economic rationalism, such theory has yielded, it seems, to the globalized economic imperative of a “new functionalism,” gleefully and opportunistically peddled by consultants and other organizationally naïve or illiterate specialists under the rubric of “reengineering” and “downsizing” (Micklethwait and Wooldridge 1997).

Economic models in which productivity inherently assumes a manufacturing connotation of the low-cost production of physical products may not have the same relevance in the information age, where the focus is not on the low-cost production of information but its transmission and interpretation (Kouzman 1998). The critical scarce resource is knowledge — composed of information, intelligence, and expertise. Unlike capital, knowledge is most valuable when it is controlled and used by those at the front line of the organization, i.e., at the grassroots levels. In the 1990s, knowledge is the primary resource for individuals and for the economy overall, while the traditional economic factors of production become secondary (Drucker 1990a, 1990b). Many corporate leaders perceive that the challenge lies in harnessing the power of data processing when it really lies in understanding IT’s potential for developing and defusing knowledge as a source of competitive advantage. They manage information the way they manage capital, as a scarce resource, collected, stored, and allocated arbitrarily (Bartlett and Ghoshal 1995).

The economist’s demand to conceptualize complex organizational design issues merely in terms of organizational “black boxes” interacting with informational and cost influences (transaction costs) (Williamson 1975), underscores vulnerability to economic dogma, especially unfettered in nonroutine management and risk-assessment contexts. Organizations are more than asymmetrical, least-cost, information-seeking entrepreneurial units. As in governance, so too with issues of complex organizational and interorganizational capabilities, new paradigms require that knowledge and information join capital and labor as core factors of production.

From Organizational Illiteracy to Policy Ineptitude in Economics

Political parties are striving for new paradigms of governance suited to the demands of an information society and economic globalization — new paradigms that acknowledge that knowledge has joined capital and labor as a core factor of production. At a time when economics has so overwhelmingly dominated the public-policy and public-management dis-

course, the conspicuous inability of economics to theorize about the strategic emergence of knowledge as a central variable in increasing information-driven contexts is particularly startling. As Drucker notes (1993:167), “so far, there are no signs of an Adam Smith or a David Ricardo of knowledge.” Quite remarkably, new pools of knowledge are regarded as outside the parameters by which economic growth is modeled within conventional theories of economics. The fact that information technology (IT) companies, which generate employment multipliers of 20 times that of heavy industry (Latham 1998: 52), can be ignored in economic policy, as is the ongoing role of government in fostering economic growth, is of policy concern to many. Public policy needs to focus on the deficiencies of the conventional assumptions of economics as much as on the deficiencies of that “church” of economics, called public-choice theory, which drives “small-government” rhetoric and posturing, seeking to further diminish the strategic role of government, not only in economic growth, but in wider social-capital requirements of maintaining integration and equity and also facilitating economic inclusion in the face of neoliberal attempts to impose wider tolerance levels for strategic economic exclusion.

One of the more challenging epistemological issues of today is how to account for the successful economic attack on the public sector — culminating in “small government” rhetoric (Kouzmin, Leivesley, and Korac-Kakabadse 1997) that has led to the dismantling and hollowing-out policies that render competent public sectors deskilled and outsourced, merely responding to the increasingly strident demands of global capital. Neoliberal-driven economic rationalism argues that the role of government resides in reducing the cost burden for business or, more strategically, in a rent-seeking way, that the role of government is to furnish business welfare subsidies and protective policies for industry rather than “dysfunctionally” facilitating the welfare provisions demanded by the increasingly socially alienated and economically excluded citizenry. How is it that the disciplines of public policy, political science, and public administration have succumbed to the “political correctness” that economics demands of us — namely, that social and political choices can only be understood in terms of the maximizing, egotistical actions of individuals and that transaction costs in such behavior should dominate the evaluations of effectiveness and efficacy of social, political, and institutional behavior?

Hirschman (1970, 1991, 1995) long ago reminded the reader, inclined to interdisciplinary sensitivities, of the dangerous misunderstanding of the limits of economics with regard to “exit,” “voice,” and “loyalty” in analyzing institutional behavior. Galbraith (1995: 51) provocatively observes that in Anglo-Saxon societies, Adam Smith is the intellectual breeding ground for the young, whereas in Europe, Marx is more widely read, resulting in the

associated “lurking notion that the state is in the service of the economy — now a [globalizing] capitalist economy.” One of the curiosities, Galbraith (1995: 51) observes, in modern economic history “is that countries where those who do read Marx have, in recent times, had a stronger economic performance than those still subject to classical economic fictions that exclude the state from any substantive role because the economy is believed to be systemically self-ruling.” Any Weberian scholar of sorts would need little reminder as to the functional nexus between state and economy that has been the central hypothesis of 20th-century social science and that runs counter to recent public-choice-theory-driven small-government rhetoric.

The most important debate required in the sweep of conventional failings in economic policy in the face of globalization pressures is that of the failure of economics to handle long-term unemployment and its failure to recognize the central importance of developing *human capital* in a postindustrial age. The litany of omission in economic mythology is in stark contrast to the enormity of the policy response required to create new and spatially distributed skill formations, necessitating renewed government intervention at national and regional levels to mediate the impact of socially irresponsible mobile capital.

But, how is the “dismal” science of economics to respond to such public-policy challenges provided by its naturally “footloose” capital? Factors of technology and management, even in mainstream economic analysis, are conventionally disregarded as “externalities” (Marglin 1971) — an epistemological device known only to the discipline of economics, as it assumes away the complexities of industrial, increasingly corporatist, economies. The discipline suffers a “physics-envy” complex (Hirschman 1995: 136) with its pretensions to being an “exact” science, and it has not accommodated any kind of paradigmatic debate over its commitment to simplistic equilibrium notions and positivist methodologies that are drawn from the natural sciences.

Economics is a discipline obsessed with, and exalting, a cult of least-cost efficiency that ignores the legitimacy of ends over means; overfocuses on costs of operations rather than looking for innovation; and links myths of markets to putative efficiencies by ignoring macromeasures of wastage of human and capital resources in business failures associated with the distorted market mechanisms that are actually operating (Kouzman and Korac-Kakabadse 1997).

This is the same discipline that projects the rent-seeking behavior of private-sector entrepreneurs and corporate board members and managers onto altruistic public-sector officials. Such projections, when combined with agency and control issues, equally drawn from business failure, give rise to the ideological edifice of the need to instrumentally subordinate

and fiscally control public-sector agencies while, at the same time, seeking to reduce or eliminate public-sector mandates along the way. This is the same discipline that associates “business confidence” with rent-seeking opportunities and maintenance of privilege (industry welfare) — where any business failure is a problem of inadequate governance and economic mismanagement by government. This is the same discipline that preaches the dogma of “revealed preferences” to methodologically overcome the embarrassment of “empirical reality” not matching the ideological assumptions underlying “methodological individualism” (Kouzmin, Leivesley, and Korac-Kakabadse 1997: 26). This is the same discipline that, in supply-side economics, believes that it has finally surmounted the 20th-century “problem” of the cost of labor while losing the plot regarding the strategic importance of investment in human capital, knowledge-based industries, and research and technology development. This is the same discipline that underpins the neoliberal political repositioning of global elites and buttresses the politically contentious interventions of Bretton Woods instruments of globalization (IMF/World Bank) (Caulfield 1998), so dysfunctionally brought to partial account with recent and ideologically misplaced interventions into the economic and political sovereignty of Asian economies (Jun 2001).

Notwithstanding, economic rationalism and economics-dominated public policy in Australia and elsewhere witnesses a smaller, weaker, hollowed-out, outsourced, and deskilled public sector very much under “capture” from rent-seeking business interests and unaccountable management consultants imposing “reengineering” and “downsizing” strategies through “template” consulting (Micklethwait and Wooldridge 1997) designed, arguably, to capture declining public-sector revenues as *appropriate rents*. If the “disease” of reformism in Anglo-Saxon economies is a form of rent-seeking behavior by global consulting firms, and if neoliberal elite repositioning is seen to correlate, the outcome is very much a dismantled public sector as a requirement of further globalization, at least in that aspect that seeks to reduce policy capacity in the context of possible expressions of economic nationalism and sovereignty.

Contrary to fiscal crisis arguments of the state, a dismantled state will eventually need to be “reinvented” as “a smart state” concerned with a shrinking public domain and with the need for the strategic development of human capital at the very time when the state’s revenue base to perform these functions and sustain related costs are at a minimum. This central contradiction of a future “smart state” mitigating “footloose” global capital will hopefully not depend so slavishly on the current epistemological limitations of economics as its source of policy inspiration. Democratic choices and political action, freed from economic myths and transaction costs, might see that way forward.

The Dilemma of Privatized Public Services

Over the last 25 years, business communities around the world, in their never-ending search for profit, have happily accepted the wisdom of neoclassical economics and latched on to the neoliberal managerialist metamyth surrounding public-sector reform. Business communities found intuitively acceptable and attractive the managerialist “common business sense” proposition that “good government and good organization results from deliberate intentions, detailed plans and consistent decisions” (Prasser 1990: 194). With the whiff of new profit opportunities in their competitive nostrils, business entered tender battles over profitable public services. The enticing targets were nationalized railways, public utilities, and mandatory pension provision (Dixon and Hyde 2001; Dixon and Kouzmin 2001a, 2001b) as well as health and education services. Unfortunately, but quite predictably, some found their performance slipping, with their only safety net under the control of fickle politicians.

The dilemma that has now emerged for both business and government is that there is a gap between the managerialist-inspired aspiration for the profitable privatization of public services and the financial and political realities. This *implementation gap* is a source of frustration to those politicians and business people who see the profit-driven private sector as a provider of intentional and instrumental action that can enhance the performance of public services to their mutual profit. Such frustration has its origins in the conflicting perspectives held by politicians, members of interest groups (such as trade unions and environmental groups), and service recipients in the privatization of public services. The conflicting and competing values, beliefs, and attitudes held with regard to the privatization of public services is a product of perceptions about how the world works and how other people behave. Underpinning these competing worldviews are competing philosophical predispositions about what constitutes valid knowledge (true beliefs) and what gives rise to human actions. There is, therefore, an imperative for a philosophical exploration of the competing perspectives on business and increasing its engagement in the provision of public services.

Debate needs a conceptual framework offered by the philosophy of the social sciences to explore the competing philosophical dispositions that give rise to conflicting perceptions on the privatization of public services. Such debate would have four objectives. The first is to enunciate the managerialist perspective on the provision of public services. The second is to identify the conflicting perceptions on the role of business in the provision of public services derived from people’s epistemological and ontological predispositions. The third is to identify the epistemological and ontological challenges facing managerialists seeking to gain public

support for the privatization of public services among people who do not share their philosophical perspectives and values (Vickers and Kouzmin 2001). The final objective is to establish that the managerialist approach to the privatization of public services is philosophically flawed. In this case, if we are to achieve improved outcomes from the provision of public services, then we will need to adopt an approach that draws insights from the epistemological and ontological syntheses that have emerged within contemporary social theory.

A Philosophical Framework for the Analysis of the Privatization of Public Services

People have selective screens through which they receive knowledge of how the world works and how other people behave. These provide the value-oriented means by which people order events so as to give clarity of meaning to what would otherwise be an anarchic stream of events. They “operate through inclusion and exclusion as homogenizing forces, marshalling heterogeneity into ordered realms, silencing and excluding other discourses, other voices in the name of universal principles and general goals” (Storey 1993:159). They have both cognitive-rational (objective meaning) and communicative-rational (normative meaning) components, which intermingle to produce an assumptive world: a “cognitive map of the world out there” (Young 1979: 33). This is the structure of hierarchically arranged sets of beliefs, information, values, and norms that people construct as a result of their interaction with their environment and can be categorized as immutable core values, adaptive attitudes, and changeable opinions (Parsons 1995: 375).

How people interrogate the social world, and build their assumptive world, depends on epistemological predispositions (relating to propositions about what is knowable) and ontological predispositions (relating to propositions about the phenomena to which causal capacity may be ascribed) (Dixon and Dogan 2002a). The epistemological dichotomy — the objective and the subjective (Hollis 1994) — gives rise to two competing epistemological approaches: naturalism and hermeneutics. Naturalism contends that knowledge of the world is grounded in material forces and can only take the form of either analytical statements derived from deductive logic or synthetic statements derived from inductive inference. Hermeneutics contends that such knowledge rests on interpretations embedded in day-to-day expressions or forms of life derived from cultural practice, discourse, and language (Winch 1990) and is generated by acts of ideation that rest on intersubjectively shared symbols or typifications that allow the reciprocity of perspectives (Schultz 1932/1967). This pre-

acquaintance is active, and the indexicality or context-dependency of social life requires a reflexive interpretation to ensure an appropriate contextualization of meaning (Blumer 1969; Garfinkel 1967).

The ontological dichotomy — the external and the internal dimensions of human behavior — gives rise to two competing ontological approaches: structuralism and agency. Structuralism's central proposition is that "social structures" ("the ordered social interaction or the recurring patterns of social behaviour that determine the nature of human action" (Parker 2000: 125)) impose themselves and exercise power upon agency. Social structures are regarded as constraining in the way they mold people's actions and thoughts and in that it is difficult, if not impossible, for one person to transform these structures (Baert 1998: 11). Thus, social action derives from social structures. Agency's central proposition is that "individuals have some control over their actions and can be agents of their action (voluntarism) enabled by their psychological and social psychological make-up" (Parker 2000: 125). Thus, social action derives from individual intention.

These epistemological and ontological dichotomies give rise to four methodological families. These embody very particular combinations of consistent epistemological and methodological assumptions and give rise to a set of philosophically coherent inquiry agendas and methods (Hollis 1994: 19). They determine how investigations are conducted, how evidence is assessed, and how to decide what is true or false. They underpin people's assumptive world and enable them to frame appropriately the social world they encounter, thereby becoming the prisms through which the social world can be perceived and analyzed. These methodological families are captured in Table 28.1.

Threats from Contending Perspectives on Privatized Public Services

The array of methodological families summarized in Table 28.1 poses questions about how managerialists, with their naturalist-agency dispositions, can manage, if not reconcile, the contending perceptions on privatized public services. These tensions, generated because of the incompatibility of contending assumptive worlds that are founded on contending epistemological and ontological dispositions, give rise to two possible forms of politico-administrative dialogue on the privatization of public services: an unresponsive dialogue or a "dialogue of the deaf" (Hirschman 1991).

The unresponsive dialogue is where one voice — support of privatized public services — dominates the privatized-public-services discourse, but

Table 28.1 Epistemological and Ontological Configurations for the Privatization of Public Services

		Epistemology	
		Naturalism	Hermeneutics
Ontology	Structuralism	<p><i>Naturalist Structuralism:</i> Presumes an objective social world, knowable by the application of the scientific method, in which structures exercise power over agency, which makes human behavior predictable. "They decide what I should think." Desirability of privatizing public services determined on the basis of relative cost-effectiveness. Public interest to be protected by regulatory mechanisms that include community-service obligations to be satisfied as businesses' contribution to the "public good."</p>	<p><i>Hermeneutic Structuralism:</i> Presumes a subjective social world, knowable only as it is socially constructed, with people's action being determined, and made predictable, by their collective interpretation of this reality. "We decide what we will think." Privatization of public services undesirable, but if it does happen, then business must be held strictly accountable to society for its performance, mediated through stakeholder groups, by means of full and effective public disclosure. Sectional interests to be protected in the public interest by means of an explicit set of community-service obligations to be satisfied, enforced by strict regulatory mechanisms.</p>
	Agency	<p><i>Naturalist Agency:</i> Presumes an objective social world, knowable by the application of the scientific method, in which people are agents of their actions, with their behavior made predictable by their unconstrained self-interest. "I decide what I shall think." Desirability of privatization of public services determined on the basis of relative profitability. Performance accountability is to customers. Any community-service obligations specified should be fully funded by state.</p>	<p><i>Hermeneutic Agency:</i> Presumes a subjective social world that is contestably knowable as what people believe it to be, with agency constrained by their subjective perceptions of social reality, which makes human behavior unpredictable. "They decide what I must think." Indifferent to whether public services are privatized. The powers-that-be will use their coercive power to do so if they see fit. Public services, however delivered, are indifferent to peoples' needs and that cannot be changed.</p>

Source: © Dixon and Dogan, 2002

it talks only to the converted. Once a threat to managerialist hegemony over the privatized public services becomes evident — manifested, perhaps, as calls for imposition of particular unfunded community service obligations — managerialists would seek to suppress, retrench, and abate any discourse on possible remedial reforms to privatized public services by blinkered recourse to simplified problem definitions and solutions. They would be inclined to secure their politico-administrative support base by denying, with increasing vehemence, any arguments that suggests their strategies are fundamentally inadequate and do not protect the public interest. They would be particularly disdainful of any argument for the imposition of community-service obligations based on hermeneutic knowledge, deontological moral arguments, or naïve notions of sororal and fraternal cooperation. They would also grab at any evidence that supports the apportioning of blame for any inadequacies in the privatized provision of public services on bad luck or rogues in the marketplace. They would, in essence, deny any causal link between market practices and inadequacy in privatized public services.

These hardened responses would, of course, exacerbate popular dissatisfaction with privatized public services. This, in turn, would offer a ray of hope to those within the politico-administrative structures, and their supporters outside who do not share the managerialist's worldview, that they might win over enough public opinion to build pressure for remedial reform by government. The resultant battle for public opinion would incite further popular disillusionment with privatized public services. The end result would be that managerialists would have maintained control over privatized public services but at the cost of a diminished level of popular support for them. The risk for business would be that, in the event of government measures — perhaps in the form of new, underfunded community-service obligations, designed to diminish popular dissatisfaction with privatized public services — government would not provide subsidies to assuage any financial costs generated, intentional or otherwise, by government.

The alternative is a “dialogue of the deaf” (Hirschman 1991), where many voices can be heard in the privatized-public-services discourse, but no one is listening or engaging. This, ultimately, leads to the polarization of contending perspectives in the never-ending battle to win over public opinion. Induced by increasingly intransigent responses and counterresponses from both supporters and opponents of privatized public services, the contending explanations for any service inadequacies become more extreme, as do the remedial reform measures demanded of government. Such a public affray can only lead to public disillusionment with privatized public services, gradually making them untenable. This would pose a serious threat to managerialists, who would have to shore up their politico-

administrative support base. They would thus deny, with increasing vehemence, arguments that their strategies are fundamentally inadequate and unable to protect the public interest, and they would accept any evidence that supports their preferred apportioning of blame.

These managerialist counterresponses would, in turn, solicit escalating counterresponses from opponents. The result would be that both sides become even more convinced of the “rightness” of their solutions. The inclination on both sides, then, would be to become increasingly more insistent that they, and they alone, have the “right” solution. Each would thus become increasingly more polarized and more isolated, seeking to relocate the discourse on public-services provision in a way that makes their simplified “solutions” more attractive in the battle to win over public opinion. This would, of course, exacerbate popular disillusionment with privatized public services, thereby empowering those within the politico-administrative structures, and their supporters outside who do not share their worldview, to bring pressure to bear on government to initiate remedial reform. Thus, managerialists, who would find themselves under siege, would have simultaneously reduced their control over privatized public services and diminished whatever popular support they had achieved for privatized public services. The risk for business again would be that, in the event of government measures intended to diminish popular dissatisfaction with privatized public services, government would not provide subsidies to assuage any financial costs generated, intentional or otherwise, by government.

The threat facing businesses as providers of public services is that if they do not gain the support of all those affected, then they face the risk that government will seek to placate those who remain disillusioned about, or dissatisfied with, privatized public services by imposing underfunded community-service obligations or more drastic remedial reforms upon them. The coercive power of the state is, indeed, a twin-edged sword; it can ensure both the profitable implementation and the unprofitable termination of any privatization initiative.

This gives rise to an enormous challenge for those businesses: how to extend the appeal of privatized public services by refocusing their attention on how to achieve a “better” performance, as perceived by their shareholders, their strategic stakeholders, and those with power and influence in the politico-administrative system. This has profound implications for corporate governance (Cutting and Kouzmin 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002; Dixon 2002; Dixon and Dogan 2003). To minimize the risk that government will use its coercive power to impose profit-threatening remedial reforms on privatized public services requires corporate governance mechanisms to acknowledge that privatization success, in contradistinction to market success, means satisfying the needs of strategic

stakeholders with whom they have no contractual relationship, including those within the politico-administrative system, and with whom they may share no common beliefs, values, and attitudes, simply because they have political influence or power. Thus, the imperative is to understand the needs of strategic stakeholders, how these needs are changing over time, and which are, strategically, the most important to satisfy. Only then can business determine an appropriate corporate direction with respect to the provision of public services — forecasting, planning, and deciding the corporate future — and establish an appropriate mode of internal regulation: organizing, coordinating, controlling, and commanding the work of people in a way that identifies, prevents, and corrects deviations from an agreed standard of performance in the provision of public services.

Governance Issues for Avoiding Unprofitable Terminations

Appropriation of public services by the marketplace makes imperative the design of sociopolitical governance mechanisms that require and support the building of corporate structures and capacities that make market providers capable of “high reliability” (La Porte 1996) performance and, thus, of surviving through “inter-generational infinity.” This obliges public regulators to have long-term horizons (Goodman 1973) (30 years or more for current public–private partnerships [PPP] franchise agreements) and to gain *learning* capacities that enable them to provide corporate sanction and steering that go well beyond the putative market discipline of organizational termination, which, effectively, permits the abdication of contractual responsibilities.

Thus, the key governance questions are:

- What is the best way of creating an enabling market environment that will foster adequately profitable, but socially and politically acceptable, market provision of public services, both in the distant and the near future?
- What multilevel political, administrative, and regulatory structures, culture, and processes are needed to protect the “public interest” in a privatized public-services environment?
- How should suboptimal provision by market providers be dealt with in a market environment?

Whether “public interest” becomes subservient to “private interests” depends crucially on whether the state is willing and able to design, implement, and administer a set of regulatory arrangements that require

market providers to deliver their promised public-services outputs when contracted to do so (Dixon and Kouzmin 2001a: 60; Johnston and Kouzmin 1998). This raises, as the key governance policy issue, the following questions: What administrative and financial constraints (if any) should be placed on market providers to permit the effective sociopolitical governance of:

- Investment risks, which relates to contracted market providers' inability to provide their promised or expected benefits because they achieve a lower rate of return than anticipated due, perhaps, to exogenous downturn in the capital market, to management inefficiency, or to corporate or management malfeasance
- Corporate risks, which relates to contracted market providers' inability to provide their promised or expected benefits because of organizational termination, which may result from corporate bankruptcy; from deliberate boardroom business strategy decisions, such as undertaking a business rationalization because of the emergence of new, more profitable, business opportunities; a hostile corporate takeover or market providers legally abdicating from their full contractual obligations because of organizational termination

Whether “private interests” can subvert the “public interest” depends on the design features of the regulatory regime in situ (its structures, culture, requirements, and processes) that determine the degree of risk of governance failure due to:

- Asymmetrical information flows, when the regulated market providers distort or withhold from regulators the information they need to regulate effectively (say, information on financial product commission rates; management incentive and bonus payments; actual administrative costs; actual profit margins; proposed or likely business rationalization measures; corporate mergers or takeovers to achieve their “private interest” ends)
- Agency capture, when the regulated market providers manipulate the regulators (by, perhaps, strategic agenda setting or compromise bargaining at the political or administrative levels) to achieve their “private interest” ends

These sociopolitical governance imperatives are central to the building and maintaining of public trust and confidence in, and support for, mandated market provision of public services. That there is a need for a regulatory regime that ensures that the interests of future beneficiaries do not become incongruous, incompatible, or even subservient to the “private

interest” goals of market providers is clear. There is, however, little reason to be confident that the state can resist the appropriation of the public interest by the marketplace, for any sociopolitical governance failure may well encourage the specter of government subsidization (Johnston and Kouzmin 1998).

Achieving Tenable Privatized Public Services

Social theory suggests that the achievement of tenable privatized public services requires an approach that accommodates hermeneutic and structural imperatives. In essence, the businesses involved would have to be willing to engage in discourses that accept, for example, the expertise and legitimate authority of the state, the hermeneutic knowledge of all those affected by public services, and the importance of deontological imperatives and notions of sororal and fraternal cooperation that are premised on constraints being in place on agency to promote positive freedom (that is, the capacity of people to do, choose, or achieve what they wish). Philosophically, this suggests a move to the fifth methodological position, a combination of the *critical realism* and (post) *structuration* syntheses.

Under the influences of this philosophical disposition, the social world is perceived as one in which events or processes actually exist, albeit only unreliably and contestedly observable; and structure and agency can only have properties that are manifest in, and reproduced or transformed through, social practice. The knowledge so gained can be used to generate hypothetical causal explanations for the observed events or processes, for which empirical corroboration can be sought. The discovery of an intransitive generative mechanism becomes, itself, a new phenomenon that needs to be explained. Progressively, deeper levels of explanation of the social world are thereby generated by this methodology.

When applied to privatized public services, this methodology progressively facilitates deeper levels of understanding of (a) the needs of customer, strategic stakeholder, and those in the politico-administrative system who remain uncommitted to privatized public services and (b) the processes that can be used to satisfy those needs. This permits more-subtle explanations of those needs and their satisfaction and facilitates the enhancement of organizational learning through the reflexive capacities of those it empowers.

In seeking to understand the causation of these needs, critical realists would accept that needs-creating phenomena exist, but they would be skeptical of any empirical generalizations about their causation derived from naturalist methods, which they would treat only as preliminary working hypotheses. They would search for a deep understanding of the

underlying causation mechanisms or imperatives that give rise to these unsatisfied needs. This would require them to engage with all relevant actors in acts of reflexive interpretation of the relevant needs so as to ensure that they have an appropriate contextualization of meaning. This would involve the application of hermeneutic methods that would enable them to identify perspective reciprocities that result from acts of ideation that rest on intersubjectively shared symbols of privatized public services. This cumulative process of hermeneutic-based, imaginative, privatized-public-services model building involves transitive knowledge being used to postulate hypothetical causal mechanisms that, if any can be demonstrated to exist, would explain the relevant intransitive phenomenon. This would then involve a search for empirical corroboration. If such confirmation is possible, then a new intransitive generative mechanism would have been discovered which, in turn, become new phenomena that need to be explained. Critical realism thus leads progressively to deeper levels of explanation of events or processes surrounding the provision of public services, thereby permitting more-subtle explanations of relevant needs.

In a social world perceived through the critical realist/(post) structuration lens, business leaders would be advised to accept the following general propositions:

1. There are no “correct” (or failure proof) ways of addressing any of the perceived needs associated with privatized public services, merely suppositions.
2. Not all such needs may be met, but they all must be managed.
3. A “good” way of addressing a particular need is an essentially contested concept, one that can only be clarified through constructive and inclusive discourse.
4. Constructive discourses on unsatisfied needs, rather than being a threat to the power and authority of business leaders, are creative opportunities for people with disparate perspectives on privatized public services to find solutions to threatening unsatisfied needs.
5. Business leaders must learn to comprehend and evaluate the intended meaning of the arguments based on a diversity of methodological perspectives.
6. Conflict is normal and necessary, with a degree of tolerable conflict determined by the willingness and ability of more-flexible adherents to competing perspectives on privatized public services to join together to deflect and resist any conflictual responses of the more intransigent.
7. The best outcomes that they can expect from constructive discourses are sets of achievable needs-meeting goals, implementable strategies, and a tolerable level of conflict, because goals and

strategies derived provoke the greatest acquiescence from the more-flexible affected parties and the least hostility from the more intransigent.

8. Establishing how best to address the unsatisfied needs associated with privatized public services is an iterative process that involves learning-by-doing and learning-from-experience about what is the right thing to do and how to do things right.
9. The essence of what constitutes the best way of addressing those needs is in their contestation.

Conclusion

From the original Berle and Means (1932/1991) provocative thesis about the increasing unaccountability of professionalized managers to shareholders of corporations to the imposition of principal-agent prescriptions on altruistic and competent public officials, the issue of who actually engages in “rent-seeking” behavior in increasingly globalizing economies is remarkably undiscussed. With the original critique of rampant rent-seeking within private-sector governance structures, the “slur” of rent-seeking has found its way, via ideological projection, onto the shortcomings of bureaucratic processes and public officials operating under competing fiscal and complex rationalities.

An historical and ideologized projection of such dysfunctions within the public sector writ-large has occurred namely in the hands of neo-classical and public-choice economic theorists. Yet such a portrayal of public sector bureaucratic rent-seeking may be just convenient and convincing rhetoric to mask the ultimate rent-seeking behaviors of other powerful actors and groups. Governments have clearly been persuaded by the rhetoric, as is evident in their promulgation of strategic policies related to enhancing global business opportunities that seemingly benefit elite capitalists to the exclusion of just about everyone else. The neo-classicists, by condemning their public bureaucracies as the cause of inefficiency and rent-seeking, set governments along destructive paths of action that reduce state capacity and open up traditional government activities to the private sector.

Highly controversial assumptions are the basis upon which a remarkable edifice of small, impotent, and deskilled governance has been “reinvented.” The ungovernability thesis is an effective way of linking both an economic and libertarian wish to reduce government, but rent-seeking assertions underpinning privatization and outsourcing rationales continue to ignore the pressing questions about the structure of organization and the pathologies of managerial prerogatives — an ignorance that severely distorts organizational and interagent partnership complexities confronting

the requirements of “smart” reregulatory governance imperatives in globalizing and vulnerable economies (Kouzmin and Jarman 2002).

Framed within a hermeneutic structuralism, outsourcing and public/private partnerships — as the newer legitimization for downsizing, deskilling public-sector competencies, and reducing agency mandates — should be construed as a form of long-term *capture* of the public sector by both corporate and management-consultant interests alike (Johnston and Kouzmin 1998). Conflict of interest requirements on behalf of politicians and senior bureaucrats apart, partnerships might be construed as asset-stripping — a form of fiscal “corruption” in the hands of oligarchs within the private sector who remain prime beneficiaries of such arrangements and, more disconcertingly, by public-sector oligarchies now pressed into the legitimization services for such “corrupt” practices — all in the name of effecting putative efficiencies in globalized public sectors.

If, as one primary example of rent-seeking, “privatization robs the state of the chance to be a model employer and increases the power of private capital *vis-à-vis* the state” (Kingdom 1991: 469), then the future for a smaller but “smarter” state (Kouzmin and Jarman 2002) indeed looks grim. To illustrate such concerns, in the U.K., the Public Accounts Committee recently had identified 24 cases in the new executive agencies where public money had been squandered or wasted. As it then warned some time ago, the state is regressing to a system of patronage and privatized “carelessness” with public money, such as existed prior to the Northcote-Trevelyan reforms of the late 19th century (Hutton 1995: 5). One has been warned about going “forward into the past,” and hostile terminations of low-risk, high-yield, and mismanaged PPPs, for example, will loom large on public-policy horizons and in growing literatures dealing with managerial and corporate failure.

As Kuttner (2002: 22) pointedly reminds one, “Americans, at least, are getting a vivid if painful education about the limits of the market place and the salutary role of government. It will be a very long time before anyone can say with a straight face that markets always work better than governments.” Kuttner (2002: 22) continues by observing that “market fundamentalism has been so ascendant for so long — politically, culturally, financially — that this is only the very beginning of an ideological sea change.” Regulation is not a one-time action but an ongoing process, and after the Enron and other corporate scandals of the year 2002, one needs to be reminded that the mixed economy itself needs to be rehabilitated and market fundamentalism disgraced. “The market fundamentalists who insist on the deregulation and privatization of particular industries have been responsible for the entire set of free-market era claims that are urgently due for scholarly reappraisal and broad political [and epistemological] challenge” (Kuttner 2002: 26).

The state's role in the 21st century will not only be strategically redefined — as its budget-funded public provision role is cut back in the face of burgeoning budget deficits — but will also become more complex as its regulatory and reregulatory role increases to ensure that the accommodation of off-budget provision by the private, NGO, and state corporate sectors achieve desired public-policy goals. This important repositioning can only occur if, at the political level, policy decision-making institutions and, at the administrative level, budget-funded public agencies are both required and able to design, implement, and evaluate long-term and strategic changes compatible with the way they manage the achievement of public-policy goals.

In any discussion of correcting market failure, the focus needs to be on the inability of open markets to allocate collective costs of economic adjustment, especially in terms of dislocation and social and environmental costs. “Markets are without a mechanism for assessing the cultural, social and national imperatives by which public sector intervention is frequently deemed desirable” (Valentine 1996: 3). Market failures, such as ownership concentration, factor immobility, and lack of transparency in pricing, involve high social costs, and the state has a well-defined role to play in the political management of such costs, as recently and dramatically shown with corporate and governance scandals in Anglo-Saxon economies.

Governance capacities in globalizing contexts raise significant concerns about the vulnerability of national governments, the appropriateness of free-market rhetoric, and the role of self-interest in new global economic orders. Economic change and the strategic competence of government have not been widely discussed, nor has the proposition that public sectors can be, and are, strategically deskilled in a putative process of administrative reform, but, more likely, processes of hostile restructuring and privatization of public domains and their explicit assets. Crisis management and global risk encompass an awesome agenda, not the least of which involve the vital area of sustainable development and intergenerational utility. Within a smart-state context, interjurisdictional capacity is one of the least-researched areas of policy and implementation vulnerability in many, too many, privatizing governments around the world.

The autogamous nature of economics and its putative value-neutrality renders economic reasoning outcomes increasingly incapable of tackling “wicked issues” and insensitive to the social/political consequences of such reasoning (Kouzmin, Dixon, and Korac-Kakabadse 2001: 1). In the extremities of public-choice theory, claims made on behalf of efficient, privatized managerial action and the new public management's complicity in the socioeconomic costs of downsizing and reengineering need to be confronted urgently. As corporations and privatized agencies begin to recognize and count the long-term damage inflicted by rampant manage-

rialism, the question is raised: Has the cost/benefit analysis been carried far enough in an age when managerial elites participating in the “slash and burn” (or, more politely, the “increasing shareholder value”) regimes might be asked to justify individual complicity in the economic exclusion experienced by many under neoliberal political and neoclassical economic dogma? An epistemological audit of economic rationalism may help to precipitate and accelerate such an appropriate reckoning. A search for more sophisticated managerial voices, more prone to reflexivity about economic dogma, may also help.

Notes

1. This section relies heavily on arguments previously published by Kouzmin, Leivesley, and Korac-Kakabadse (1997).

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Chapter 29

Public Entrepreneurism: A New Paradigm for Public Administration?

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We must turn bureaucratic institutions into entrepreneurial institutions, ready to kill off obsolete initiatives, willing to do more with less, eager to absorb new ideas.

David Osborne and Ted Gaebler, *Reinventing Government*

Introduction

Scholars in the field of public administration have long struggled to define a theme that unites them. The search has led public administration from the initial focus on neutral competence first articulated by Woodrow Wilson in “The Study of Administration” to criticisms of neutral competence based in a concern for the political aspects of public administration. The latest episode in the quest to establish a paradigm for public administration is the emergence of the public entrepreneurship movement.

Like its theoretical predecessors, the public entrepreneurship movement has enriched the debate over appropriate principles for public administration in the United States. Proponents of public entrepreneurship, such as Osborne and Gaebler, aspire to usher in a new paradigm of public-administration scholarship and practice. Entrepreneurial theories of public administration promise to resolve value conflicts arising around issues of institutional design and public-administration practice that earlier theories could not resolve.

The analysis presented in this chapter argues that entrepreneurial theory provides an inadequate basis for a new paradigm of public administration. Entrepreneurial theory does, however, make an important contribution to public-administration theory and practice by rendering a previously overlooked perspective on the reality of public organizations. In particular, it highlights the importance of competitiveness as a value for public administrators that rivals more familiar values such as responsiveness and technical competence.

This chapter explores the role of entrepreneurial theory in the development of a paradigm for public-administration theory, reform, and practice in the United States. In discussing this subject, four topics are explored. First, the historical context of public entrepreneurship is examined. The public-entrepreneurism movement traces its origins to the development and intersection of two theoretical traditions: entrepreneurial theory and public-administration theory. An investigation of evolving themes in public-administration literature and trends in governmental reform demonstrates how the principles of entrepreneurial theory satisfied expectations of government that were not satisfied by the principles supporting earlier theories.

Second, the content of the theory and practice of public entrepreneurship is examined. A key aspect of entrepreneurial initiatives in the public sector is the application of the principles of entrepreneurial management, as presented in the works of Peter Drucker as well as in Osborne and Gaebler's *Reinventing Government*. The tenets of entrepreneurial management and efforts to get government agencies to adopt them are explored here.

Third, the rhetoric of public entrepreneurship is evaluated on two fronts. An exploration of the meaning of the key concept, "entrepreneurial management," shows how nebulous this term is. As a result, it is difficult to identify public entrepreneurship as a clear set of principles or practices for public administrators. Even if one can identify who a public entrepreneur is and what he or she does, it is unclear what the utility of public entrepreneurship is.

Public entrepreneurship promises an increased capacity for productivity and a shift in who controls public organizations. In assessing the utility of public entrepreneurship, one must ask "how much capacity for whom?" and not simply "how much capacity?" This assessment explores the opportunities and problems that entrepreneurial theory presents for technically oriented public administrators known as public professionals. While trying to enhance an organization's capacity to serve all of its constituents creates conflicts for all public administrators, such conflicts are particularly acute for public professionals.

Fourth, the contribution of entrepreneurial theory to public-administration theory is reconsidered. If the marriage of these two theoretical traditions does not lead us to a new paradigm of "the entrepreneurial state," then what has it led us to? The answer is that entrepreneurial theory provides us with one more piece in the puzzle known as normative public-administration theory.

Each of the prior attempts to establish a normative theory of public administration rests on a particular principle that reflects the interests of some constituencies over others. The 19th-century emphasis on loyalty and partisanship favored control of government capacity being in the hands of political parties and elected officials. The subsequent movement toward technocracy and "neutral competence" reflected the public administration community's value for deference to scientific claims of knowledge.

Proponents of public entrepreneurship place a value on competitiveness in a changing environment. Political responsiveness, professional competence, and competitiveness are all desirable qualities for public agencies in a democratic system. A question remains, however, about whether these values can be achieved concurrently. If not, public-administration theorists and practitioners are left to complete the puzzle of how to reconcile the divergent norms of public-administration theory.

Historical Development of Public Entrepreneurism

The story of the development of public entrepreneurship as a theoretical and practical concern is an account of the meeting of two theoretical traditions. The first is a tradition of normative public-administration theory, which has sought to prescribe an appropriate set of values to guide the evolution of the bureaucratic state. The second is a tradition of entrepreneurial theory, which aims to identify and describe the factors that make markets dynamic.

The marriage of these two traditions reflects a pair of acknowledgments. Scholars of public administration and entrepreneurship alike have recognized that the public sector, like the private sector, is a dynamic and competitive environment. Thus, these scholars spotted an opportunity to apply principles of economic theory to the empirical study of political institutions. Both groups also recognized a void in normative theories regarding political institutions. Specifically, political actors and organizations must understand how to negotiate their changing environments to attain goals and govern effectively, yet there had been no focused discussion in the public-administration community regarding the value of entrepreneurship as an administrative value.

To understand how these two theoretical streams converged, one must trace the discussions regarding public-administration norms and entrepreneurship up to the point of their intersection. An examination of the values inherent in public administration and entrepreneurial theories prior to the public-entrepreneurism movement illuminates the void in each that needed to be filled. This examination also demonstrates how the public entrepreneurship movement has attempted to fill these voids.

Normative Theories of Public Administration

Early American scholars' conceptions about the role of public administrators stem from the works of Max Weber. Public bureaucracies, according to Weber (1), grew in reaction to the complex changes taking place in modern society, such as the development of money-based, capitalist economies, the expansion of public-sector activity, and the transition from agrarian to industrial society. These changes led to increases in political and economic power for many who previously could not make demands on the state. The state responded to new demands by turning over much of the task of governance to bureaucrats. Because bureaucracies are staffed by technically trained specialists and structured hierarchically so as to make them accountable to politicians, the state was able to harness the power of the latest technological advances for its own uses. Weber argued that the primary end of government is to maintain power, and toward

that end bureaucracies help governments to address the various demands of constituents.

The Weberian model of bureaucracy as scientific, impartial, and obedient to popular will was attractive to the proponents of the Progressive reform movement of the late 19th century and early 20th century. Progressives were troubled by the prospect that the United States might not be immune to the problems associated with industrialized European countries (2). They attributed a declining U.S. economy and morality to the growth of populism in general and to the governance of cities by political machines in particular. Progressives promoted bureaucratic organization as a means for improving a system of government that was becoming increasingly incompetent and corrupt. By applying science to the process of administration, experts with “proper” training would be entrusted with the responsibility of resolving factual disputes and introducing “morals” back into the political process.

Reformers were generally concerned with promoting rationality and morality in all aspects of society (3). They assumed that individuals could perfect themselves through knowledge. In a society of knowledgeable individuals, factions dissipate and a public interest can be identified. In “The Study of Administration,” Woodrow Wilson proposed that an administrative science was needed to help public bureaucrats pursue the public interest (4).

Wilson defined the role of bureaucrats according to their relationship with elected officials. He recommended a separation of labor between elected and administrative officials along the fault lines of a “politics-administration dichotomy.” According to Wilson, elected officials represent the popular will by making policies that reflect the values of their constituents. Once values were incorporated into policy, questions remained regarding how to implement policy as to best reflect the values of their electorate. Wilson saw this task as a factual proposition, and he prescribed that administrators were to act as legitimate arbiters of factual controversies.

In performing this function, public administrators have to be responsive to both their hierarchical superiors as well as to the communities served by their agencies (5). While Wilson was not the only Progressive reformer to make this distinction between political and administrative officials, he is credited with being the first scholar to propose a separate discipline devoted to the study of public administration (6).

During the early years of public administration’s development as an area of scholarship, leaders in the field, such as Louis Brownlow, Leonard White, and Luther Gulick, built an academic community based on the natural-science model. By marketing their research as “impartial and objective,” public-administration scholars could investigate controversial policy issues without opening themselves up to criticisms of political

bias (7). Early public-administration organizations, such as the Public Administration Clearing House and the Social Science Research Council's Advisory Committee on Public Administration, were vulnerable to such claims, largely because of their ties to the philanthropy of the Rockefeller family. The emphasis on scientific research meant that public administrators were expected to be accountable to scientists as well as elected officials and communities.

As the idea of the politics-administration dichotomy gained acceptance among scholars and practitioners, another idea took hold: adherence to scientific principles and the professional norms they generate enhances the capacity of public organizations. This idea was legitimized by the report of the President's Committee on Administrative Management (8), also known as the Brownlow Commission. In particular, the commission argued that administrative executives could rely on scientific expertise to free themselves from the ill effects of political control. The theme of professionalism as a capacity-building force was echoed 12 years later by the First Hoover Commission, which recommended an increase in professional management.

As the number of governmental agencies grew in response to the perceived need to respond to changing conditions and citizen demands, an already well-established fear of bureaucracy began to grow (9). The report of the First Hoover Commission reflected the changing mood. Recommendations revealed an attempt to reconcile increased capacity with increased political control through lines of command that linked public agencies with the president through cabinet-level officials (10). Though few of its recommendations were accepted, the Second Hoover Commission went even farther in its attempts to constrain the public bureaucracy (11).

Both the "neutral competence" and "political responsiveness" models of public administration rested on arguments about what kind of government official is best equipped to represent the will of the public regarding administrative matters. By the late 1960s, many scholars of public administration began to question whether government officials, either elected or appointed, had lost touch with the public. These scholars, united by their advocacy for more-democratic public administration, referred to themselves as the "New Public Administration" movement.

Proponents of the new public administration refocused the discussion of public-administration theory away from the question of who should act on behalf of the public to how bureaucratic organizations could increase public involvement in civic life. The new public administration movement's normative emphasis was on "*the reduction of economic, social, and psychic suffering and the enhancement of life opportunities for those inside and outside the organization*" (italics in original) (12). Rather

than being beholden to the dictates of elected officials or professionals, “new” public administrators would play a distinct role in advocating for the interests of minorities who are not adequately represented by elected officials (13).

The social and economic problems that fueled the urgency of the new public administration message ultimately led to the movement’s demise. Key scholars in the movement offered a new role for public administrators in the lives of ordinary citizens, calling for organizations that address “relevant” issues and build an awareness of their interactions with clients (14). However, growing impatience with the seemingly intractable problems of poverty and urban violence led to a decrease in confidence in the political system. A series of “national disgraces” during the 1970s contributed to the mood: protracted U.S. military involvement in Southeast Asia, the Watergate scandal, the oil crises of 1973 and 1979, the taking of American hostages in Iran. Whereas trust in political executives was once the plug that held in the dike of a growing agenda and expanding policy commitments, without widespread trust in the system, politicians were left without a defense against the public’s disappointment in government’s insufficient capacity to handle its commitments.

In this climate of decreasing expectations of government competence and increasing public discontent, the focus of public-administration theorists swung from the issue of control to the issue of capacity. Politicians, and public administrators themselves, needed a new rhetoric to convince the public that it still needed government. However, the new rhetoric could not call upon the public to trust or give responsibility to government. Entrepreneurial theory was able to provide politicians and the public-administration community with the foundation for an attractive new rhetoric.

Entrepreneurial Theory

Though public entrepreneurship did not gain wide popularity until the 1980s, its theoretical basis goes back to the early 1800s. J. B. Say defined an entrepreneur as someone who combines the agents of production, namely land, capital, and labor, into an organized venture (15, 16). The concept of “entrepreneurism” was first incorporated into a systematic theory of economics by the Austrian School of economists, such as E. A. Hayek and Ludwig von Mises. According to the Austrian perspective, the key features of an economic system are the mechanisms which bring about disequilibrium.

Economists define equilibrium as the state that occurs when all parties involved in a transaction receive the highest possible net benefit, and thus have no incentive to execute the transaction with another party. The

Austrians' focus on the disruption of equilibrium was developed in response to the Anglo-American theoretical tradition, and the works of Adam Smith and David Ricardo in particular, which emphasized the development of a theory of equilibrium states (17, 18). The importance of the shift in emphasis is that the Austrian economists were the first to suggest that changes in prices were the central activity in market institutions.

Prices change, and thus disequilibrium occurs, when either the buyer or seller receives new information about a good. For example, if a seller discovers resources that make the production of a particular good less expensive, then he or she may lower the price to become more competitive in the marketplace. If buyers and sellers do not receive new information about goods, then market exchange becomes a mechanistic exercise in which goods are exchanged routinely by the same people for the same price. The Austrian economists made economic theory more realistic by introducing a key individual: one who organizes new market activity by obtaining, sharing, and acting upon new information. This key individual is the entrepreneur.

Joseph Schumpeter further analyzed the role that entrepreneurs play in making markets dynamic. Schumpeter's analysis highlighted the features of the entrepreneur that were distinct from those of other participants in the market. As a prerequisite for organizing various agents of production in new ways, entrepreneurs must be able to spot opportunities for innovation. They must also be bold enough to take advantage of the opportunities when they are present and have the charisma necessary to convince others to invest their resources in the innovation. Entrepreneurs also invest their own resources, namely their vision of innovation and expertise in organization (19).

Schumpeter indicates that entrepreneurial resources are distinct from the resources of those he or she organizes. In particular, Schumpeter makes a distinction between the entrepreneurial and capitalist roles in the market. The entrepreneur identifies and seizes an opportunity for an innovation that would provide an enterprise with a competitive advantage. The capitalist's role is to provide capital for the venture and, therefore, assume the risk of failure. While entrepreneurs can play other roles in market transactions (either simultaneously or in succession), the other roles cannot be characterized as entrepreneurial. Schumpeter argues,

If providing the capital is not the essential or defining function of the entrepreneur, then risk bearing should not be described as an essential or defining function either, for it is obviously the capitalist who bears the risk and who loses his money in case of failure. If the entrepreneur borrows at a fixed rate of interest and undertakes to guarantee the capitalist against loss

whatever the results of the enterprise, he can do so only if he owns other assets with which to satisfy the creditor capitalist when things go wrong. But, in this case, he is able to satisfy his creditor because he is a capitalist himself and the risk he bears he bears in this capacity and not in his capacity of entrepreneur (20).

Schumpeter also made a distinction between entrepreneurs and managers. When entrepreneurs successfully organize innovative enterprises, they engage in acts of “creative destruction.” Uncompetitive forms of organization become outmoded and perish in the market as they are succeeded by new, more competitive forms. Entrepreneurs are responsible for the introduction of innovative organizations into the marketplace, but they have no interest in ensuring their survival, at least in the form in which they were created. Like entrepreneurs, managers are entrusted with coordinating various elements of production. However, managers are responsible for the maintenance of organizational stability and, therefore, have an interest in protecting the status quo.

Israel Kirzner developed a revised definition of the entrepreneur in which the entrepreneur’s roles are distinct from those of other market participants, but also entail the assumption of risk (21). Kirzner depicts entrepreneurs as individuals who affect the choices of others by obtaining and sharing overlooked information regarding resource (e.g., the prices associated with production technology) and goals (e.g., the inherent worth of consuming the good).

Whereas Schumpeter claimed that the entrepreneurial role requires special skills, Kirzner argues that anyone can be an entrepreneur. All that is required is the fate of being privy to an opportunity. Since anyone can be an entrepreneur, the competition to reap the profits of entrepreneurial activity is more fierce than for any other type of market activity.

As Kirzner writes, “whereas the market participation of asset owners is always to *some* extent protected (by the peculiar qualities of the asset possessed), the market activity of the entrepreneur is *never* protected in any way” (italics in original) (22). Since entrepreneurs are especially exposed to competition, they risk the security they would be more likely to have if they were asset holders.

Theories of Public Entrepreneurism

Political scientists have borrowed the concept of entrepreneurship from economists to describe and explain the dynamic nature of political transactions. Just as private entrepreneurs affect the choices of individuals in the marketplace, public entrepreneurs can shift the preferences of policy

actors by providing new information regarding political ends and means. Also like their private-sector counterparts, public entrepreneurs organize resources in new ways and produce and distribute new products (23). In the public sector, the entrepreneurial function creates profits for a variety of actors in the political system (e.g., new service delivery systems), as well as for the entrepreneur (e.g., enhanced power base, desired policy outputs or outcomes) (24).

Political scientists have varying views as to whether entrepreneurs have special attributes. Many analyses of public entrepreneurship, particularly those based on case studies, depict the entrepreneur as a heroic figure who forges an organization in his or her image by force of charisma and intelligence (25–27). Other political scientists hold the Schumpeterian view that entrepreneurs are otherwise ordinary people endowed with special skills that allow them to identify and seize opportunities for innovation (28–31). In *Public Entrepreneurs*, Schneider, Teske, and Mintrom share Kirzner's view that anyone can be entrepreneurial (32).

Scholars of public entrepreneurship also disagree about whether entrepreneurship is risky (33). Nancy Roberts sides with Schumpeter in arguing that risk taking is strictly a function of the capitalist (34). In Roberts's model of the policy process, the equivalent of a capitalist is a "policy champion." Roberts describes "policy champions" as being "involved in both the design and implementation phases ... of the innovation process. In the case of legislated innovation, they could be governors, administrators, or legislators who participate in the various design steps either to initiate a proposal, set the agenda, or to carry the bill through enactment" (35). In doing so, champions use their own resources to put the idea into operation.

A number of other scholars argue that entrepreneurship is inherently risky (36–38). Entrepreneurs face the threat of failure, and even when they succeed, they are confronted by competitors looking to emulate their success. Competition has the effect of cutting into entrepreneurial profits by "turning the entrepreneur's unique insights into routine products or commodities" (39). Schneider, Teske, and Mintrom argue that entrepreneurs often invest ample resources into promoting a new idea, but that the level of personal profit rarely makes the investment worthwhile. However, they do not specify what alternative role the entrepreneur could play that is less risky.

Political scientists have also described and defined the activities that entrepreneurs perform in the political arena. Rational-choice theory depicts the public entrepreneur as someone who organizes and maintains interest groups for the purpose of ensuring the provision of public goods. Public entrepreneurs secure participation in the group, and thus contributions to the public good, through several organizational activities: communication,

administration of selective incentives (40), administration of collective goods, structuring member interactions, and cultivation of external resources (41). Each of these activities shapes individuals' perceptions about the benefits and costs of group membership (42).

This model of public entrepreneurship suggests that there is consensus regarding the desired ends of policy: the resulting allocation of goods or services should yield the greatest utility for each individual involved in the transaction. The role of the entrepreneur is to discover new resources, technologies, or ideas that will maximize utility when public goods are allocated and consumed. Because this conception of entrepreneurship focuses on transactions, it has been termed a "transactional" model of entrepreneurial leadership (43, 44).

Whereas the transactional entrepreneur relies on appeals to individuals' economic welfare, the heresthetic entrepreneur's appeal is emotional. A heresthetician promotes an issue by associating it with another. By linking issues together, entrepreneurs can broaden the appeal of supporting them. The risk involved with linking issues is that some individuals will be repelled by the association. The heresthetician's goal is to find a linkage that attracts a coalition powerful enough to sustain any political challenge.

Like the "transactional" leader of rational-choice theory, heresthetic entrepreneurs can organize and maintain groups on the basis of a cost-benefit calculus. However, they also use symbols that evoke alternative conceptions regarding the ends of policy, as well as alternative conceptions about how to best achieve a given end (45). Herestheticians can be "transformers" as well as "transactors."

Both the transactional and heresthetic conceptions of entrepreneurship are based on an economic model of politics that focuses on the efficient aggregation of individual choices. Other analyses of public entrepreneurship have emphasized the relationship between entrepreneurs and institutions.

Entrepreneurial behavior can entail shaping institutional structures by imbuing them with new purposes (46), or creating new institutions by coordinating the efforts of various political actors (47, 48). In these instances, entrepreneurs act as transformational leaders, because they promote ideas regarding the meaning of the institution and its role in the policy process, rather than ideas that are solely about policies themselves. Public entrepreneurship can also involve avoiding constraints imposed by institutional value systems (49). In playing this role, entrepreneurs behave as strategists who identify institutional settings that are hospitable settings for reform.

The activities of market entrepreneurs were characterized by Schumpeter as "creatively destructive." Public entrepreneurs also create innovations that contribute to the destruction of old policies, service-delivery systems, missions, and organizations. The political-science literature is

largely silent regarding the question of the respective roles of managers and entrepreneurs in the policy process. Nancy Roberts includes a place for entrepreneurial administrators and executives in her theoretical framework, but she does not indicate whether they fulfill the entrepreneurial or managerial function when they act on behalf of their agencies' long-term interests (50).

Political theories of entrepreneurship have given us insight as to how the principles of entrepreneurial theory apply to the making of public policy. Yet these theories have had little influence on the theory or practice of public entrepreneurship in the public-administration community. The public-entrepreneurism movement in public administration is mostly influenced by management theory. This body of literature applies the themes articulated by economists, such as Say, von Mises, Hayek, and Schumpeter, to a theory of management that applies primarily to private firms. The following section outlines the themes of the management literature and the entrepreneurial movement in public administration and describes the connections between them. The subsequent section explores the deficiencies of a public entrepreneurship movement that is not informed by a specifically political theory of entrepreneurship.

Bringing Entrepreneurism into Public Administration

The most influential figure in the public entrepreneurship movement is someone who has written about private-sector management for decades: Peter Drucker. It is Drucker who provides a bridge between economic theory (and, specifically, the work of Schumpeter) and messengers of the public-entrepreneurism movement, such as David Osborne and Ted Gaebler. The popularity of so-called management gurus like Drucker, W. Edwards Deming, Tom Peters, and Robert Waterman, Jr., in the early 1980s spilled over from the business world into the public sector. Since then, the concept of entrepreneurship has gradually become a part of the discourse in public administration.

How did a scholar of management, such as Drucker, become influential in an entrepreneurship movement? After all, Schumpeter made a distinction between the entrepreneurial and managerial functions of the market. The entrepreneur organizes elements of production in new ways, and the manager maintains the organization. Entrepreneurism is characterized by creative destruction; management is distinguished by preservation.

Drucker combined these two elements of Schumpeterian theory into a phenomenon he calls "entrepreneurial management" (51). An entrepreneurial manager uses innovation as a tool for exploiting change to the advantage of his or her organization. Like Schumpeter's entrepreneur,

Drucker's entrepreneurial manager combines elements of production in new ways to create either a different type of product or a new mode of production. Entrepreneurial managers also perform specific market functions, such as identifying opportunities for innovation, understanding the needs and values of consumers, and successfully exploiting change as an opportunity to improve productivity. Unlike Schumpeter's entrepreneur, however, the entrepreneurial manager is not endowed with exceptional talents or skills; almost anyone can perform these functions. An even more significant departure from Schumpeter for Drucker's entrepreneurs is that they perform their functions to further the interests of a particular organization.

During the 1980s, Drucker was only one of a number of management scholars to encourage service organizations to become more innovative. Aside from Drucker, Peters and Waterman's work on "excellent companies" and Deming's total-quality approach were notable in their popularity and impact on management practices (52, 53). The management literature on entrepreneurship was aimed primarily at managers of private corporations; however, Drucker stated explicitly that the principles of entrepreneurial management applied to any service organization, private or public. What set Drucker apart from other proponents of "entrepreneurial management" was his attempt to base his theory on concepts introduced by economists, such as Say and Schumpeter.

In *Innovation and Entrepreneurship*, Drucker declared that entrepreneurial management was an important development in corporate America, leading to changes in the way that companies are organized and run. Seven years later, David Osborne and Ted Gaebler made a similar statement about government organizations: "There is a new model of government emerging in the U.S. and it is *entrepreneurial* government" (54). Citing Drucker as a major influence, Osborne and Gaebler outlined a management theory for public administrators based on examples of agencies that coped with change through innovative programs. Each entrepreneur they describe "uses resources in new ways to maximize productivity and effectiveness" in a public-sector organization (55). As with Drucker's entrepreneurial manager, creative destruction is encouraged for the purpose of preserving the organization.

Both Osborne and Gaebler's argument and the examples they use to illustrate it echo two themes often heard in the complaints of bureaucracy bashers. First, public bureaucracy is rigid and, thus, ill-equipped to cope with the rapid pace of change affecting most U.S. communities; second, the public sector cannot provide goods and services in an efficient manner. These themes illuminate two of the larger concerns of many Americans during the 1980s and into the 1990s: our capacity for solving problems cannot keep up with the onset of new problems, and the United States's

status in the world community is diminished because of decay in our political, economic, and social systems. Both concerns represent a pessimistic view of the future of the United States. The former implies that the reasons for our demise are out of our control, whereas the latter implies that our national character is at fault. Osborne and Gaebler provide a set of principles that addresses both concerns.

Reinventing Government (now commonly known as *ReGo*) lays out its program in ten principles. Osborne and Gaebler acknowledge that their principles are consistent with those presented by prior champions of entrepreneurship, Deming being mentioned specifically (56). However, they argue that they are going beyond Deming's total quality management to construct a set of principles that integrates entrepreneurial values with concerns (e.g., promoting community ownership) that are not addressed by entrepreneurial theory. Osborne and Gaebler do not argue for government that is entrepreneurial at the expense of all other qualities, but rather government that is more adaptable and efficient.

Still, *ReGo* does not address the issue of the compatibility of entrepreneurial values with other values, such as political responsiveness and neutral competence. When Osborne and Gaebler acknowledge the importance of nonentrepreneurial values, they cite anecdotes to demonstrate how entrepreneurial and nonentrepreneurial values intersect. For example, they believe an entrepreneurial health-care reform could achieve greater competitiveness and social equity.

An entrepreneurial government ... would encourage enterprising behavior by health care institutions, making them survive in a competitive (although carefully structured) marketplace. And it would structure that marketplace to meet social needs. Simply by requiring that insurers and prepaid plans take all comers, for example, it could end the current practice of competing for the business of low-risk patients and dumping the rest on the public sector (57).

What the authors do not address is how an entrepreneurial government can "structure the marketplace" to achieve these dual aims without "structuring out" political responsiveness. Recent attempts at health reform at national and state levels have failed to require insurers to provide universal coverage. Is this a failure of policy makers to be more entrepreneurial, or is it a failure of entrepreneurial theory to account for the limited capacity of elected representatives to legislate all desirable structural reforms? Osborne and Gaebler sidestep these questions.

What *ReGo* does contribute is a framework for enabling public administrators to implement entrepreneurial principles. Though the authors claim

to be promoting a program that goes beyond entrepreneurship, *ReGo* does not provide public administrators with guidance on how to promote democratic, organizational, or professional values or how to balance these with entrepreneurial values. In fact, all nonentrepreneurial values are condensed into a single category: bureaucratic values. Implicit in Osborne and Gaebler's emphasis on entrepreneurship is an assumption that public administrators do not need any further guidance in promoting "bureaucratic" values; these are already too ingrained in most public organizations.

The absence of a discussion of potential value conflict in *ReGo* makes entrepreneurial theory an even more attractive guide for reform. As it is presented in *ReGo*, entrepreneurial management is a means for achieving more efficient service delivery and more flexible organizations. The riddle of how to improve government capacity for problem solving without making government bigger is solved. Because no competing values are presented, the benefits of entrepreneurship are apparent, while its costs are not discussed.

Osborne and Gaebler also omit one other important element from their discussion of entrepreneurial management: a description of the entrepreneurial manager. They outline entrepreneurial principles and describe innovative programs and agencies, but they do not characterize the public entrepreneurs themselves. Levin and Sanger add to Osborne and Gaebler's theory of public-sector entrepreneurial management by analyzing how public executives and managers perform the entrepreneurial function for their organizations (58).

Levin and Sanger derive their definition of entrepreneurial management inductively, by learning from their observations of managers in innovative organizations. Nonetheless, the characteristics they identify are consistent with some of those delineated by Say and Schumpeter, such as the capacity to organize and find opportunities. Other facets of Levin and Sanger's definition of entrepreneurship appear to be borrowed from Kirzner, such as risk-taking and the absence of special entrepreneurial skills or talents.

Entrepreneurial activities took place in the public sector long before *Reinventing Government* was published, and as a movement, public entrepreneurship was picking up steam before Osborne and Gaebler reported on it. However, *ReGo* presented proponents and scholars of public entrepreneurship with a common frame of reference; it defined the phenomenon for a larger public.

At the national level, both the Clinton administration and Congress have spawned their own reinvention efforts. Vice President Gore oversaw the execution of the National Performance Review (NPR), a federal initiative that identified inefficiencies in the federal bureaucracy. The NPR report recommendations included substantial reductions in the number of staff positions, abolition of the *Federal Personnel Manual*, new perfor-

mance measures, and the establishment of laboratories of innovation (“reinvention labs”). Most significantly, the NPR report called for a redefinition of the role of government from service provider to coordinator of public and private service organizations (59, 60). On the opening day of the 104th Congress, led by Speaker Newt Gingrich, the House of Representatives passed a series of rule changes that weakened its powers and decentralized decision-making activity (61).

State and local governments also followed the reinvention trend. In 1993, the National Commission on State and Local Public Service published its first report. Though the commission makes no specific references to entrepreneurship or reinvention, the report’s language is influenced by the entrepreneurial management literature.

Recommendations include creating a “skills package” for public administrators consisting, in part, of “1. the ability to shape a persuasive message for a particular audience and 2. the ability to understand what the audience thinks and wants” (62). The former is a prerequisite for organizing productive resources. The latter is analogous to the ability to understand the meaning of value to a customer, an ability that Drucker identifies as an important entrepreneurial competency. The report also recommends that public managers “champion” the innovative ideas of employees. Peters and Waterman use the term “champion” to describe individuals who volunteer to play the entrepreneurial role in an organization (63).

Entrepreneurial theory has influenced public-administration literature and practice because it provides an explanation of how to increase organizational capacity for productivity without building up the organization itself. In translating the meaning of entrepreneurship from the market context to the public-administration context, some of the concept’s clarity has been lost. Is there such a thing as an “entrepreneurial manager,” as Osborne and Gaebler discuss, or was Schumpeter right to claim that managers kill the entrepreneurial spirit? Is entrepreneurship as desirable in public administration as it is in the market, or are there instances in which other organizational values should be privileged? In assessing the contribution of entrepreneurial theory to a normative theory of public administration, it is necessary to clarify the meaning of entrepreneurship in a public-administration setting and determine the appropriate scope of entrepreneurial behavior in public organizations.

Assessing Public Entrepreneurism

At the center of the entrepreneurship movement (both public and private) is a desire to cope with change in a way that makes society better off. Other positive organizational traits, though not central to any theory of

entrepreneurism, are also associated with entrepreneurship, such as “empowerment,” “holistic thinking,” and “learning organizations.” Though it is less often discussed, entrepreneurship also has a darker, tougher side. The rhetoric of the entrepreneurial movement promises “leaner, meaner” organizations that do not tolerate waste and promote a culture of competition. Although the aspects of entrepreneurial theory that emphasize quality of the work environment are central to the theory’s appeal, the focus on increased efficiency and capacity is at the core of the entrepreneurial approach. Efficiency and capacity are values that were critical to early entrepreneurial theory and are essential to the appeal of public entrepreneurship as an antidote to the modern ills of government.

The privileged position of efficiency and capacity among the many entrepreneurial values mirrors the preoccupation of the American media and public with the economic decline of the United States. An important part of the American myth is that the United States is a country of unlimited economic potential. This is a myth fueled by the postwar stretch of economic growth, the duration of which is unprecedented in recorded history (64). An important test of whether the public-entrepreneurism movement is moving the United States into a new paradigm of public administration is whether it can change the public’s assumptions regarding the purpose of government. Because entrepreneurial themes have been used to evoke a new faith in government’s ability to get better results with fewer resources, the test for entrepreneurial theory requires entrepreneurship to deliver on its promise to increase public-sector capacity for productivity and efficiency.

In addressing this issue, two questions persist. First, how do we know entrepreneurship when we see it in public organizations? Political scientists have documented entrepreneurial behavior in the political arena, but have paid little attention to the special case of administrative entrepreneurship. The political-science literature makes no distinction between bureaucratic entrepreneurs and nonbureaucratic entrepreneurs, but the distinction is important because of the mutual exclusivity of the managerial and entrepreneurial functions in Schumpeter’s model. Second, even if public administrators can reconcile the managerial and entrepreneurial functions, does public administration need a new paradigm to account for the lessons of entrepreneurial theory? Do entrepreneurial values transcend all other norms?

Reconciling the Managerial and Entrepreneurial Functions

Public administrators commonly understand entrepreneurship as it has been described by Drucker, as a particular type of management. According to Schumpeter, management is an organizational function that is incompatible

with entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurism requires boldness, independence, and energy, whereas management requires a conservative, thoughtful approach. Schumpeter even blamed the growing stature of managers for the decline in entrepreneurship he observed in his lifetime (65).

Much of *Reinventing Government* was based on Drucker's theory of entrepreneurial management, yet Osborne and Gaebler have more to say about entrepreneurial governments than entrepreneurial managers. Because their focus was on organizational behavior and structure rather than leadership, they were able to skirt the issue of the entrepreneurial manager paradox. None of the entrepreneurial theorists, including Schumpeter, argued that entrepreneurs could not also be managers, but that managerial and entrepreneurial functions rest on different principles. Over the long run, every organization must confront change, and change may require that the organization radically change its mission or cease to exist. At this point, the entrepreneurial manager must choose one role over the other.

Public-health agencies provide a good example of this phenomenon. Rapid change in the structure of health-service delivery systems, largely driven by fierce competition, is forcing many public-sector health agencies to enter into partnerships with private and not-for-profit organizations. Specifically, public-sector health agencies are competing for a share of the growing managed-care market, in which various providers form a partnership and sell their services as a package with one price. Historically, the mission of public-sector agencies has been to provide preventive, population-based services to the public, with a special focus on providing services to the medically indigent.

These agencies are now forming partnerships with other providers, some of which place an emphasis on providing individual-based, curative medical services. Because administrators rather than health professionals make and enforce policies in managed-care organizations, monetary profits and not medical criteria are often the criterion for organizational decisions. Thus, when directors of public-sector health agencies enter into managed-care partnerships, they often must compromise their organization's mission to do so.

If public administrators are looking toward entrepreneurial theory to provide them guidance for coping with a rapidly changing world, then they need a theory stronger than that provided by Drucker, Osborne, Gaebler, and Levin and Sanger. In the economics and political-science literature, entrepreneurship refers to a distinct role that is critical to market and political transactions. In the management literature, the fact that the entrepreneur exists in the context of a transaction is ignored. Because this context is removed, the role of the entrepreneur is not defined in terms of his or her relationship to other participants in a transaction. Thus, the

management literature embraces nearly any human agent of change as an entrepreneur. Ultimately, any theory of entrepreneurship based on such a loose definition is misleading, because nonentrepreneurial functions, such as management, are characterized and promoted as being entrepreneurial.

Schneider, Teske, and Mintrom's discussion of entrepreneurial city managers provides a basis for a stronger theory of administrative entrepreneurship. In this model, the incentives for entrepreneurial behavior lie not in the administrator's own agency, but in the rewards that are independent of the organization. Schneider, Teske, and Mintrom cite the opportunity to find "a higher salary, more resources to control, more autonomy, and greater prestige within the profession" in another agency as a set of incentives that induce administrators to become entrepreneurs (66).

They also note that "managers are also motivated by the desire to achieve specific policy goals, by the desire to solve problems, and by the desire to serve the public" (67). These bureaucratic entrepreneurs use a combination of hierarchical controls and leadership skills to build support and cooperation for proposed initiatives and to discourage shirking or free-riding. They coordinate actors in the political marketplace for the purpose of implementing an innovative idea and yield political capital for those willing to invest. In performing these functions, the bureaucratic entrepreneur acts on his or her own behalf rather than as a manager of an agency or as an advocate with political capital.

A theory of administrative entrepreneurship that is explicit and tied to theoretical concepts provides a better guide to public administrators trying to cope with change. This does not imply, however, that such a theory would provide a desirable set of guidelines for organizational behavior. The concerns of entrepreneurial administrators (e.g., career advancement, promotion of specific policy initiatives) need to be balanced against the concerns of the organization, the concerns of the community being served by the organization, the concerns of the professions who supply the organization's work force, and the concerns of the elected officials who oversee the organization. If public administration is heading toward a new paradigm, it must be a paradigm that accounts for the values that undergird the concerns of each of these groups.

Reconciling Entrepreneurism with Other Norms

Assessing the impact of entrepreneurship on administrative capacity is complicated, because there are numerous criteria for assessing organizational capacity in the public sector. The discussion of organizational capacity in the public-administration literature evokes an image of a pie to be distributed among various constituents. However, the various constituencies of a given agency expect to receive different "pies" rather than

different slices of the same pie. The rhetoric of public entrepreneurship promises a more productive government but does not ask *what kinds* of marginal benefits are produced and who benefits from different kinds of increases in productivity. Entrepreneurial theory, as it has been applied to public administration, ignores the political implications of productivity. When public agencies are viewed as venues for political conflict, the question regarding the impact of public entrepreneurship becomes, “For whom is productive capacity used?” rather than, “How much productive capacity is there to use?”

Expanding Capacity versus Different Capacities

The national political agenda of the last 15 years has been dominated by concerns about American productivity and affluence. Elected officials’ attempts to enhance the productive capacity of the public bureaucracy has been part of a strategy to allay concerns about declining affluence. The rhetoric of public entrepreneurship rests on the claim that government agencies forced to compete for revenues will be more efficient and responsive to taxpayer preferences, thus producing “more bang for the buck.”

However, the entrepreneurial approach to public-sector reform should not be framed as a return to an emphasis on developing capacity-building structures. While entrepreneurial reforms do privilege capacity-building over political control, ultimately agency executives, such as those described by Osborne and Gaebler, adopt entrepreneurial initiatives not for the purpose of enhancing capacity, but rather to enhance organizational stability over the long term. Entrepreneurial reforms produce incentives for agencies to provide goods and services that are responsive to market demand, regardless of whether the array of goods and services provided enhance productivity over time or address salient policy problems. Public entrepreneurs choose between different types of capacities, which coincides with serving the preferences of different constituencies. The choice of a particular type of capacity to be built is largely driven by the probability of organizational survival being enhanced.

Because public administrators serve multiple constituencies with divergent interests, any decision that responds to the values of one constituency will eventually neglect the values of other constituencies. The nature of this tension varies for different kinds of public administrators. The following analysis focuses on public administrators with specialized, professional training. These public administrators, who will be referred to as “public professionals,” have obligations to a number of different constituencies, including the members of their own professions (68). A focus on public professionals is warranted due to their plentiful numbers among the ranks of public administrators and their special obligation to their professions.

Capacity-Building Choices for Public Professionals

Normative theories of public administration have prescribed different roles for public administrators over the years. Since the Jacksonian era, there has been some expectation that public administrators will be held accountable to the electorate through elected officials. Progressive-era reforms advanced scientific expertise and neutral competence as desirable values for public administrators. The entrepreneurial movement renders a model of the public administrator as a competitor in the marketplace. Public professionals are expected to emulate each of these models. As government employees, they are expected to answer to elected officials; as professionals, they are expected to be accountable to the norms of their professions; as public officials, they are expected to be responsive to citizens; and as providers of goods and services, they are expected to respond to the market and be competitive.

Because each successive model of the public administrator does not supplant its predecessors, public professionals are expected to balance the values inherent in their roles as government employees, professionals, public officials, and providers of goods and services. These roles correspond with the partisan, technocratic, stewardship, and entrepreneurial models of public administration, respectively (69). Balancing the values inherent in these models entails trying to respond to four different sets of constituencies. In attending to each of these constituencies, public professionals are attempting to integrate the components of an idealized system. Elected officials provide the values. The professions provide the expertise on how to convert the values into an implemented policy. Citizens comprise the community served by the organization, thus providing the mission. Market competition puts the organization in a better position to survive over the long term (even if the entrepreneur is not part of the organization's long-term plans), thus protecting its capacity for pursuing its mission.

If each of the four types of constituencies can be satisfied simultaneously, then one can determine whether entrepreneurship allows public professionals to expand their capacity to serve all of their constituents. However, each set of constituencies requires a different type of relationship with the public agency. Public professionals have assimilated each of the four normative role models, but the relationships they have with each type of constituency are based on a singular principle. Certainly, elected officials may espouse that public professionals should play an entrepreneurial role, or public professionals can themselves acknowledge their responsibility to the community or their profession. However, when the principle undergirding one of the relationships comes into conflict with another principle, constituent groups will expect that the principle supporting *their* relationship with public professionals will have primacy.

What are the principles that support each of the normative models for public administrators? Each model rests on a vision of what constitutes responsible behavior. Both the partisan and stewardship models rest on a conception of responsibility that values commitments to favored individuals or projects. The concept of neutral competence is supported by the principle of responsible action being guided by human rationality. The entrepreneurial model stresses the fundamental importance of productivity, or alternatively, the maximization of individual net profit. These three principles are consistent with three types of moral claims (partiality, deontology, and consequentialism, respectively) that have been staked out by political philosophers for centuries (70).

In some instances, public professionals can successfully integrate the principles that underlie each of the models. The needs of particular individuals or projects (e.g., voters in the community) may coincide with the dictates of rationality (e.g., vaccinating children to prevent disease) and promote the maximization of welfare according to some criteria (e.g., Pareto optimality). More often, however, these principles are in conflict. The consequentialist principle, which underlies the entrepreneurial model of public administration, can resolve conflicts regarding the allocation of goods and services as long as there is consensus over which individuals or projects should be favored and which policies represent a rational approach to serving the needs of those favored. Only in rare instances are both of these conditions met (71, 72).

The problem with viewing entrepreneurial theory as the foundation for building the capacity of public organizations is that, in most cases, there is uncertainty as to whom capacity is supposed to benefit. Even in cases where the “public interest” might be identified, the entrepreneurial approach to serving it is often not the same as the scientific approach. Under the neutral-competence model, if there is consensus over values, dialogue tends to be restricted to the realm of resources or means. In this context, a public administrator has an incentive to think and behave like a technocrat, because claims of factual knowledge are not likely to be challenged (73). However, entrepreneurs focus on how to modify ends and means as a way to hone their competitive edge. The entrepreneurial approach to serving the public places a higher premium on knowing and responding to public preferences, rather than referring to professional norms to decide what is best for the public.

The rhetoric of entrepreneurial theory equates responsiveness to stated public preferences with capacity for serving the public. What this rhetoric ignores is the possibility of serving the public interest through attention to issues that the public itself does not put on the political agenda. Osborne and Gaebler’s aforementioned example of health-care reform provides an example. An entrepreneurial public administrator’s main

concern regarding this issue is that his or her agency finds a niche in a rapidly changing industry.

The entrepreneur's key strategy is to package a product attractively for the public (e.g., through new pricing mechanisms or the integration of previously decentralized goods and services). Whereas the technocrat considers alternative means for improving community health status (e.g., preventive versus curative strategies). The public, or segments of the public, is more likely to contribute to the debate over how they want to pay for services than to decide what types of services would best promote community health status.

Nonetheless, the latter approach to agenda setting and problem solving does consider the public's interest.

Reconceptualized Public Entrepreneurism

Entrepreneurial theory is insufficient as a foundation for a definitive set of normative values for public administrators. This is not due to any relative deficiency of entrepreneurial theory as compared with any other normative theory of public administration. The entire quest for a single normative theory of public administration is misguided. The "public" nature of public administration requires that many different constituencies need to be served. The "professional" nature of many administrative positions further complicates the demands on public bureaucracy. In addition to sorting out the competing demands that citizens and elected officials pose, public administrators need to satisfy professional standards and safeguard the future of their own organizations.

Whereas the public-entrepreneurism movement has been framed as an attempt to expand the capacity of the public sector, it is really the latest argument in a debate over which principles should guide administrative behavior. Reforms that gave elected officials greater control over public agencies were justified by the partiality principle. The deontological principle helped to justify reforms that loosened political control of the bureaucracy in the name of neutral competence. The introduction of public entrepreneurship as an alternative role model simply brings the consequentialist perspective into the debate. Specifically, the public-entrepreneurism movement has produced an integration of utilitarian theory, which has long been recognized as a critical value in democratic theory, with the existing body of public-administration theory.

If entrepreneurial theory, like other theories, represents a single thread in an eclectic normative public-administration theory rather than a guiding principle, then what role does normative theory play? Normative theories can play two important roles in public-administration theory. First, theories

with competing principles collectively provide public administrators with an ideal for which they can strive, though rarely hope to attain. Though instances are rare where the values of elected officials, professionals, citizens, and organizations can be served simultaneously, it is desirable to satisfy each of these interests if it is at all possible.

Second, and more importantly, normative theory provides public administrators with insight into their empirical world. Each model proposed in the public-administration literature implies a set of undesirable consequences that will occur if the model is not adopted. The “spoils system” warned against elitism; the Progressives cautioned us against the perils of incompetence; new public administration raised awareness of the prevalence of irrelevant and unjust solutions to social problems; and the public entrepreneurs alerted public administrators to the dangers of being uncompetitive. Normative theories are very useful for informing both practitioners and scholars of the empirical realities of public administration. Far from providing an overarching paradigm, each theory presents a different, yet equally valid, perspective.

Thus, the main contribution of entrepreneurial theory to public-administration theory is that it provides one more perspective on the realities that public administrators face. In an ideal state, public administrators are aware of the importance of competition in addition to being technically and politically competent and having a moral vision. Public-administration theory does not address the question of how administrators integrate these perspectives into a coherent system. If there can possibly be a comprehensive normative theory of public administration, it would need to explain this.

There are already the beginnings of a debate over this question. One recent trend in management literature and practice has been strategic management (74–77). Like much of the written work on entrepreneurship, the strategic management literature advises organizational leaders on how to position their agencies to be competitive in the long run. Strategic-management theory is distinguished by its holistic approach and futurist orientation: preparing for the future by determining the direction in which managers want their organizations to move, “scanning” environments, and taking in and assimilating as much information as possible. Issues are identified according to their impact (as a threat or an opportunity) on their organization’s ability to meet its objectives; these are called “strategic issues.” The aim of environmental scanning and strategic-issue analysis is to gain control over a dynamic ecology by identifying “stakeholders,” determining the impact of strategic issues on them, and reconciling differences when conflict over strategic issues arises. The impact of the political process is, at best, seen as a strategic issue to be manipulated, and at worst, completely ignored.

Robert Behn provides an alternative to strategic management. He suggests that managers experiment with different ways of achieving objectives to see what works and what does not rather than set a course based on a “master plan.” Behn terms this managerial approach “Management By Groping Along” (MBGA) (78). The “groping” analogy may be useful in helping public administrators to understand how to integrate numerous pieces of information about their empirical environment without setting up unrealistic expectations about their own performance. Public administrators can try out different models in different situations and observe how well they work in pursuing various objectives.

Conclusion

The public-entrepreneurism movement has made an important contribution to normative public-administration theory. It has alerted the public-administration community to a set of concerns and interests that can no longer be ignored. By raising awareness of the importance of entrepreneurship as a core value of public administration, the public-entrepreneurism movement has already made the noteworthy accomplishment of shifting discussion away from the tired theme of the politics-administration dichotomy.

However, the public-entrepreneurism literature has perpetuated the debate over capacity and control as competing values for administrative reform. If entrepreneurial theory is to have a lasting place in the public-administration literature, it needs to be understood as a framework for enhancing a particular kind of capacity. Adoption of the entrepreneurial perspective does not settle the capacity-control debate. It merely establishes a norm stating that having the capacity to compete is a necessary but insufficient condition for successful public administration.

Entrepreneurial theory does not provide us with a new paradigm for understanding the American administrative state. However, it brings our old ways of understanding the administrative state into question. As communications networks become faster and more widespread, technologies change more frequently, and the diversity and severity of demands on the public sector increase, we can no longer afford to view institutional reform as a matter of tweaking. Marginal modifications to enhance control or capacity are unlikely to be effective means for coping with rapid change.

At this stage of world history, the ability of government to cope with rapid change has to be considered a critical value for public administrators in any regime. At this stage of U.S. history, the American public-administration community must grapple with the importance of entrepreneurship as a public-administration value. These values compete with concerns for

a government that is responsive to majority and minority interests and effective in program implementation. A new vision of public administration is needed, yet it is needed at a time when there are so many different visions of what constitutes good public administration. The current challenge requires public administrators to grope their way through this unfamiliar territory until they have mastered the delicate balancing act of managing a public organization.

Acknowledgments

The author wishes to thank Vincent Marando, Mary Beth Melchior, Thomas Oliver, Ulf Zimmermann, Michael Gusmano, and J. P. Singh for their contributions toward many of the ideas presented in this chapter.

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Chapter 30

The Multicratic Organization: A Model for Management of Functional Interdependence

Richard A. Narad

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Kouzes and Posner (1) ask if there is any organizational design after privatization. There is, but combinations of public and private organizations, as well as joint efforts among public organizations, will require new theoretical approaches to organizational design.

From the time of self-aware study of organizations, the focus in mainstream organizational theory has been on individual or “focal” organizations and intraorganizational issues. The bureaucratic form of organization emphasizes the focal organization’s internal operations and generally ignores its relationships with other organizations. Other organizations were viewed as either suppliers, customers, or competitors. In general systems theory, they are viewed as part of the organization’s environment. Modernly, organizations will refer to their “partners,” implying a voluntary, mutually beneficial relationship that preserves the autonomy of the participants.

However, these characterizations of the relationships among autonomous organizations fail to describe the relationships that may be forced onto organizations in order to accomplish public-policy objectives. Instead, most *interorganizational* theories focus on the relationship of a focal organization to its environment and to other organizations within that environment. These approaches view relationships among organizations as problematic.

Increased awareness that public-policy objectives can be accomplished by methods other than by direct provision of services has increased the number and variety of multiorganizational activities. James Thompson stated that “social purposes in modern societies increasingly exceed the capacities of complex organizations, and call instead for action by multiorganizational complexes” (2). Echoing this, Wise predicted that “public service configurations are destined to become more rather than less complex” (3).

Despite the benefits found in multiorganizational activities, organizational theory has not suggested a way to rationally design a system that combines multiple autonomous organizations for community benefit. The increase in functionally interdependent systems — consisting of multiple, autonomous organizations with high degrees of interdependence in their

technical functions — to fulfill social purposes results in increased interdependence among organizations. Communities must find ways to appropriately manage interdependence in these systems to ensure efficiency and accountability to the public interest. The need to coordinate the delivery of public services within functionally interdependent systems transcends public-private sector boundaries.

Organizational Sovereignty

The focus on individual organizations in mainstream organizational theory presumes the concept of organizational sovereignty. Dependence on the environment is viewed as a negative that must be minimized; the organization must be buffered from such dependencies. The view of organizations as sovereign impacts both their voluntary participation in multiorganizational activities and their resistance to externally designed multiorganizational activities.

“Sovereignty” in organizational theory might best be defined as “capable of self-determination.” Under this definition, organizations are sovereign to the extent that they are free from external constraints beyond those generally found in society. Thompson implied that any coordination entails some loss of the organization’s sovereignty (4). By participating in multiorganizational complexes — either voluntarily or through coercion — organizations lose some degree of sovereignty.

The desire to preserve or extend organizational autonomy is seen in resistance to participation in multiorganizational efforts (5–7). The benefits of coordination, including increased efficiency and effectiveness, occur on the system level and are beneficial to the community, while the costs of coordination, particularly loss of autonomy, are placed on the organization itself.

Despite the costs of coordination, organizations will cede some of their autonomy and agree to participate in multiorganizational activities. According to Van de Ven, reasons for coordinating organizational activities include a need for resources and a commitment to an external problem or opportunity (8). Thompson’s belief that the domain or domains of any single organization always fall short of a complete technical matrix would preclude complete avoidance; resource dependence, therefore, means that no organization is ever fully autonomous (9). Unless external intervention, including funding (e.g., a grant program) and coercion (i.e., a regulatory program), exists, voluntary cooperation resulting from commitment to an end implies that the loss of autonomy is accepted altruistically and could account for the emphasis in the literature on coordination of government and human-services programs, rather than private ones.

Organizations may also choose to participate in multiorganizational complexes as part of Thompson's buffering process — creating a “negotiated environment” (10). Use of committees to manage sequential interdependence across department lines equally explains the use of interagency coordinating committees among organizations (11).

Finally, an organization may opt to surrender some of its autonomy to expand its market or receive other direct incentives. The decision to participate may be part of the organization's choice of domain, and loss of autonomy may be prospectively considered in making this decision (12).

Functionally Interdependent Systems

A functionally interdependent system is one that consists of multiple, autonomous organizations with high degrees of interdependence in their technical functions. The system includes ongoing relationships in day-to-day activities, excluding those intended to result in a specific, one-time project or end product. The functionally interdependent system differs from uniorganizational systems in that the relations exist among multiple organizations rather than among divisions within a hierarchical structure.

While specific activities of the functionally interdependent system might include pooled, sequential, and reciprocal interdependent actions, the concept of team interdependence — “no measurable temporal lapse in the flow of work” among participants — is most appropriate (13).

Despite their legal and structural separations, organizations within such a system are tightly coupled functionally. Any conflict caused by a tendency toward protection of autonomy or sovereignty can have the same suboptimizing impact as conflict among divisions within a single organization. To prevent such suboptimization while maintaining the structural separation and autonomy of the participants, a formal coordinating entity is needed to fulfill the integrating role of management in a uniorganization. The type of coordinating structure required depends on both the need for coordination within the system and the resistance of the organizations to coordination efforts.

Multiorganizational complexes can be created for implementation of specific projects or for ongoing coordination. The literature includes many models for multiorganizational coordination, which are summarized in Table 30.1.

While each of the models provides a framework for cooperation among multiple organizations, they differ greatly. Reticulating organizations are temporary relationships, formed for a specific project. The meshing organization and the framework-modular constellation create an independent organization, separate from the participants. Except in the framework-modular constellation, the participants maintain their sovereignty.

Table 30.1 Multiorganizational Models

Structure	Formality of Linkages	Degree of Permanence	Forms of Bargaining	Power
Reticulating organization	<i>Ex-officio participation of individuals from agencies</i>	<i>Project specific, repeated for similar projects</i>	<i>Dyadic between implementers on specific projects</i>	No independent entity; power stays with participants
Networking organization	<i>Participants from separate agencies; not always ex-officio</i>	<i>Continuity in membership independent of particular projects</i>	<i>Simultaneous bargaining over definition of goals between separate agencies</i>	Control through peer pressure, trade-offs
Meshing organization	<i>Independent bureaucratic entity</i>	<i>Permanent</i>	<i>Dyadic between meshing org. and separate agencies</i>	Independent, but power stays with separate agencies
Bureaucratic model	Components are merged into hierarchy	Permanent	Hierarchical authority	Components lose all autonomy/sovereignty
Framework-modular constellation	Modules participate as entities in framework	Temporary, but ongoing	Dyadic between controlling entity and modules prior to participation	Participants lose control and autonomy to the extent of participation

Source: Categories and cell contents in italics are from Rubin, H. J., *Administration and Society* 16 (1984): 222.

If interdependencies are minor and resistance to coordination is low, an informal, ad hoc reticulating organization could work. If participants resist specific coordinating efforts but the need for coordination is minor enough to permit negotiations, a meshing organization that could independently negotiate with the participants would be sufficient. If formal coordinating mechanisms are needed, but all participants recognize the need for such coordination, a network organization could work. Finally, if the system's interdependencies are so powerful that coordination is vital, but the participating entities resisted coordinating efforts, an external entity with regulatory power is needed.

Approaches to Management of Functional Interdependence

The combined output of a functionally interdependent system may be a merit good that benefits the community beyond the level that would occur through marketplace or other naturally occurring influences (e.g., altruism or mutual benefits). The affected community has an interest in influencing or manipulating the relationships among the organizations (regardless of ownership or autonomy) in order to optimize the system's output.

Once a functionally interdependent system has been identified, a community has five potential approaches to its management, varying according to the aggressiveness with which the system is approached. The typology below moves from total decentralization, where the organizations are fully sovereign, to total centralization, where the organizations lose all sovereignty.

Laissez-Faire

The most decentralized approach to management of functional interdependence accepts organizational sovereignty and does not attempt even voluntarily implemented coordination efforts. However, since a decision to ignore the system's interdependence does not change the functional relationships, the laissez-faire system has a high probability of interorganizational conflict and of suboptimization of the joint output. Thus, consciously or not, the community accepts any suboptimization that will occur.

Voluntary Cooperation

Most theories of interorganizational relationships consider any active relationships among organizations as voluntary. The four coordinating mechanisms examined by Rubin, for example, were described as "non-mandated" (14).

Ongoing coordination among organizations could include adhocratic interactions or might be provided through some type of network organization — a formal mechanism for ongoing coordination and establishment of a common framework for interactions. In areas with higher resistance to coordination, the voluntary approach will have only a marginal impact. Coordinating entities without regulatory powers are effectively limited to areas that are not part of the organization's protected core unless they are able to provide some desired resource to the organization (15).

External Coordination

This response maintains the sovereignty of the participating organizations and continues to rely on voluntary participation. It differs from the purely voluntary approach by the addition of an organization external to the participants to promote the interests of the system itself.

Structurally, this level resembles Rubin's meshing organization — a permanent entity that, because it is independent of the organizations to be coordinated, can establish its own agenda. It plans for system optimization separately from the interests of the participating organizations and then negotiates dyadically with the organizations to induce them to satisfy the requirements of the plan. Significantly, Rubin stressed that the meshing organization is intended to "encourage coordination" among organizations while not "seeming to threaten their autonomy" (16). Because compliance with the external plan and participation in a consensus-seeking process is still voluntary, the external-coordination model suffers from the weaknesses of voluntary cooperation.

Framework Organization

Mott suggested that "one way of exploring the hierarchical alternative to the council mechanism is to consider how a powerful 'czar' set up in its place would change the situation" and that perfect coordination would require "drastic centralization" of authority (17). Warren called for suboptimization of individual organizational interests and noted that "optimal cross-agency allocation does not always coincide with the specific needs of individual agencies" (18).

In the approaches described above, the sovereignty of the participating organizations is maintained, allowing them to seek self-optimization to the detriment of the combined system output. In this model, the system itself becomes sovereign. The coordinating agency is variety-reducing toward its participants and can even choose its participants.

Such a system-controlling organization resembles Toffler's framework-modular constellation — a "frame-like holding company that coordinates

the work of numerous temporary work units” (19). It is able to react to changes in the environment by adding or eliminating modules, as needed. To the extent of their participation in the constellation, the modules lose their autonomy. The permanent organization is limited to an essential core that determines organizational goals and procures, coordinates, and monitors ad hoc attached modules, which perform line functions (20).

Bureaucracy

The final approach to management of the functionally interdependent system also removes the sovereignty of the participating organizations but does so completely, rather than only to the extent of their participation in the system. The bureaucratic model eliminates interdependence among organizations by merging them into a single hierarchy under the control of a central management (21). Litwak and Hylton appear to have viewed this as the teleological end of strong interdependencies and posit that “high interdependency leads to the merger of organizations with coordination taking place intraorganizationally” (22).

While this approach ensures the availability of hierarchical controls to manage interdependence, it fails to consider situations where interdependent services can be provided more efficiently by an organization that also provides other, non-interdependent, services. Full incorporation of these interdependent organizations could result in tighter coupling with resulting externalities. In contrast, partial integration will not impact the other functions and may increase efficiency by allowing the system to benefit from the economies of scale provided by participation of larger organizations.

Finally, placing the participating organizations within a hierarchy to manage the interdependencies begs the issue stated by Thompson — the inability of individual organizations to fulfill increasingly complex social needs and the need for increased action by multiorganizational complexes (23). How large must an organization grow to include the entire technical matrix? In a highly complex field, the organization might have to grow very large, perhaps producing other inefficiencies.

Multicratic Organization

The “multicratic organization” is a model for management of functionally interdependent systems. A “system lead agency,” external to any of the participating organizations, is responsible for overall planning of the joint activities. The model forms a continuum between the “external coordination” and “framework organization” approaches described above. These

include external coordinating entities, but they vary in the relative degrees of sovereignty between the lead agency and the participating organizations.

In the multicratic organization, the lead agency:

- Develops an overall system plan that assigns roles and responsibilities.
- Develops policies and procedures to ensure standardization in areas of interdependence.
- Promotes mutual adjustment among the system participants by managing relationships among them.
- Provides a systemwide quality assurance and evaluation process to monitor the actions of system participants. This might include some monitoring of internal processes, but primarily focuses on outputs and on areas of interdependence.
- May provide infrastructure whose usage is common to the participants or that assists in the process of procuring adhocratic modules.

This model differs from existing models of inter- and multi-organizational activities in that it focuses on the roles of and relationships among the participating organizations instead of their individual operations. In its extreme form, the lead agency can control participation in the system. Rather than seeking voluntary participation by providing resources or by limiting coordinating activities to nonthreatening areas, the lead agency is variety-reducing toward the system participants and will seek to sub-optimize their individual outputs when necessary to optimize the total system's output. Thus, the permanent framework, rather than the modules, becomes sovereign.

In the delivery of public services, the multicratic model provides a structure that allows maximal use of performance contracts, competition among multiple providers, and private-sector provision of services. However, it mimics the Weberian hierarchy by maintaining the centralized planning process and by seeking to centrally coordinate system activities.

Functionally, the multicratic organization resembles a multiorganizational matrix organization whose members are housed in different, sovereign organizations rather than in functional departments of a single organization. It provides hierarchical controls over the entire system without eliminating the benefits of organizational autonomy. The role of the multicratic lead agency strongly resembles the central management function of a unitary organization. Thus, unlike the normal definition of organization found in traditional theory, the entire system should be considered as, and function like, a centrally managed organization with multiple functional divisions.

In Toffler's framework-modular constellation, the modules contribute to the whole of the framework organization, but their interdependence appears to be only pooled, and they continue to function independently from each other. In the multicracy, however, the team interdependencies of the participating organizations are not only recognized, but accepted as necessary for the synergism of the system's whole.

Degrees of Sovereignty

Interdependence among participating organizations in functionally interdependent systems and the need to manage these interdependencies exist regardless of the level of effort toward system optimization. Multicracies vary primarily in the degree of sovereignty held by the participants and the lead agency and thus in the amount of control each has over the other.

In the extreme, the participating organizations lose their sovereignty to the extent of participation in the system; they are able to maintain it for other activities. The lead agency is able to maximize system efficiency by seeking improved economies of scale for each portion of the operation and can elect to provide critical services itself. Mott warns, however, that coordination is increased by hierarchical controls, but the coordinating entity will then also "possess the disadvantages as well as the advantages of hierarchical structures" (24).

Where the network organization is a creature of its members, the multicratic lead agency is an independent entity and is able to exert control over the participants. This ranges from the planning function and dyadic negotiation described by Rubin (25) to adhocratic procurement of line entities recommended by Toffler (26).

Role of the Lead Agency

The primary function of the multicratic lead agency in the extreme application is to plan the system, to adhocratically procure participating organizations, and to manage their relationships similar to the way that the management of a hierarchical organization integrates organizational parts. In this way, interdependencies are managed and suboptimization of the system is minimized. Although the lead agency views itself as accountable for the ultimate system output, it is responsible, in Ostrom's words, for establishing "the terms and conditions for making choices" about services rather than for providing the services directly (27). The lead agency plans and perhaps finances the service, but it looks to others for production. The multicratic lead agency, like Toffler's framework organization, must directly maintain only those functions that are necessary

for centralized planning and policy making and for coordinating and monitoring the activities of the participating organizations.

Planning Role

The lead agency establishes a framework that might resemble the planning for a project team within a traditional matrix organization. Participants' roles and responsibilities are determined and interdependencies managed through planning, standardization, and establishment of communications channels to facilitate mutual adjustment. The first two could occur in the procurement of the modules, but the latter may require day-to-day involvement in their activities.

Management Role

Because the operating core of the functionally interdependent system includes multiple organizations, the lead agency must overcome protective measures in order to standardize the joint technical core. Standards established by the coordinating entity will ensure that the processes and individual outputs of the modules are integrated appropriately. The system plan establishes the roles and responsibilities of each module, determining how they relate to each other and to the system's output.

The steps undertaken by the lead agency to fulfill its role do not differ substantially along the continuum, although the agency's ability to implement its program varies, based on its degree of authority. Control mechanisms could include marketplace-style mechanisms, including franchises, contracts, and other incentives; as well as unilateral regulatory approaches.

Dealing with a contracting or regulated organization, not just as an independent entity, but as a participant in a broader system, requires that the lead agency perform management functions for the system. Its operational role should, however, be limited to "framework" functions, including perhaps provision of infrastructural items that are either common to the modules or that provide flexibility in module procurement.

Unlike Rubin's meshing organization, the multicratic lead agency must be involved in ongoing operational issues, not just single-occurrence decisions. While, in its planning role, it will establish an independent vision of the optimal system, it will negotiate both dyadically and multilaterally with system participants. The existence of the external plan may be used to facilitate the consensus process, but it will prevent the possibly collusional nature of agreements developed under a fully voluntary process.

Multicratic Leadership

Management has been defined as “getting things done through people” (28). Multicratic management takes this a step further by getting things done through other organizations. In Peters’ words, the manager’s role is to “manage networks of relationships” (29). System leadership requires a unique management function — providing a service in which the manager has no direct control over system participants. This creates a high degree of uncertainty for the manager (30).

While the day-to-day functions of the multicratic leader are similar to those of other managers, the multiorganizational relationships and the lack of direct control over system participants makes it more challenging. Providing economic incentives to the other organizations or regulating them in a traditional manner is closer to the orthodox role of public agencies and their managers. The multicratic leader, however, must leave this safe role and attempt to make system-level improvements, challenging organizational autonomy even where no direct authority exists.

The “primacy of planning” (31) among management roles applies even more to the multicratic than to uniorganizational; it occurs, however, mainly on the system level — among organizations rather than within them. Because the multicratic leader is managing organizations rather than people, coordination is more indirect. There is a higher possibility of conflicting values and interests among system participants than would be found within most uniorganizational.

Application: The Emergency Medical Services System

Aiken and Hage concluded that interdependence found among health and welfare organizations is “more binding” (32). The types of interdependence found among participants in the emergency medical services (EMS) system and the nature of emergency responses make this statement particularly applicable and makes it a suitable example of the functionally interdependent system to demonstrate the multicratic model (33).

An EMS system is “a coordinated arrangement of resources (including personnel, equipment, and facilities) organized to respond to medical emergencies, regardless of the cause” (34). Regionalized EMS systems provide for vertical and horizontal integration of necessary services within natural patient catchment and service areas. These areas can be identified by patient flow patterns, overlapping provider areas, and other regular interactions. Participants in the system include autonomous or quasi-autonomous ambulances services, fire departments, law enforcement agencies, hospitals, and other organizations that operate with high degrees of day-to-day interdependence.

Functional interdependencies within the system range from the need to standardize radio frequencies so that an ambulance can notify a hospital of incoming patients to the simultaneous care provided to patients in the prehospital stage by members of multiple organizations. Because of these interdependencies, optimization of the system requires some type of external planning and coordinating entity.

While early system models called for a delegation of system management authority to the lead agency, actual delegation has been both rare and limited. Direct coordinating authority may exist for parts of the EMS system (e.g., a city manager's authority over the police and fire chiefs), but the participants in most systems include representatives of the public, private, and nonprofit sectors and of multiple political jurisdictions. It is rare that any external lead agency exists with full authority over many, let alone all, of the participating organizations, and creation of a bureaucracy that includes the entire system is unlikely at best.

Numerous studies of EMS systems concluded that the coordinating entity's lack of power limited EMS system development (35–38). The American College of Emergency Physicians has called for a lead agency with “assigned authority for the integration of all components” (39).

Despite their interdependence, participating organizations are, as a rule, “coordinated” without challenge to their basic sovereignty. The role of existing EMS system lead agencies in most states, and their authority over system participants, has been limited. In fact, depending on authorizing legislation, the entities that have been established to serve as EMS system lead agencies have either attempted to coordinate system participants through voluntary efforts or have served as traditional regulatory agencies.

Application

Under the extreme application of the multicratic model, the EMS system is viewed as a framework organization. Adhocratic modules (e.g., ambulance services, training programs, specialty critical-care centers) are attached as necessary, with the necessity determined solely by the needs of the system. The interests of the modules would be suboptimized, as needed, to optimize the entire system. The system lead agency would coordinate their interactions through constraints set during the procurement process and by day-to-day operating policies.

First, a comprehensive plan must be developed to define the optimal system, based on external standards and the community's values and desires. The plan determines the roles and responsibilities of system participants and establishes a process to monopsonistically procure providers to fulfill the roles established in the plan. The lead agency must provide the framework policies and procedures, infrastructure, and sup-

port services for operation of the system and must view itself as the day-to-day manager of the system.

Most important, the plan, and its implementation, should allow for optimization of the system rather than of its component organizations. Provider agencies cannot be viewed as sovereign, at least in terms of their role within the system; hospitals and public-safety agencies will maintain an independent existence regardless of their role in the EMS system, but whatever EMS role they are assigned should be based on system needs rather than on the desires of the organization. Regulatory programs (possibly including exclusion from the system) and, potentially, funding will be required to overcome resistance to external control over the organization's technical domain.

Despite the prevalent maintenance of organizational sovereignty by participating organizations, existing EMS coordinating entities may have some multicratic functions. These include system planning; procurement of some provider modules through mechanisms such as ambulance franchising and designation of critical-care centers; direct operation of framework activities, such as operation of a dispatch center and a centralized quality-assurance process; and day-to-day coordination.

The lead agency's role changes with greater powers to enforce the roles and responsibilities assigned by the plan and to manage day-to-day relationships among participating organizations. At one extreme, the lead agency is limited to working with the existing providers and must persuade them to perform activities and behaviors that optimize the system over the participants. At the other extreme, the lead agency is able to fully design the system and procure adhocratic modules to fulfill the system plan.

Research Agenda

As Wise posited, public administration must consider "what configuration of organizations, public and private, is needed and what arrangements between them provide the most effective relationships to perform a needed function" (40). The multicratic organization model is one method of achieving this, but it opens up several areas for additional research in organizational theory and the policy sciences.

The bureaucratic model, with its focus on the organizational level of analysis, has been the reigning paradigm for both public and private sectors. The numerous types of relationships that are possible among organizations preclude the development of a single theory of multiorganizations with as broad an impact as Weber's ideal type of bureaucracy. Because patterns of multiorganizational dependence and power do not fit the bureaucratic

model, we must understand how they differ and determine the various types of control and communications that will be appropriate.

The EMS system, with its large number of autonomous but highly interdependent organizations, is an obvious candidate for the multicratic approach. The number of multiorganizational complexes is increasing. Other social systems, too, might benefit from improved coordination mechanisms.

Future research should examine methods of evaluating the benefits of multiorganizational approaches that go beyond normative arguments regarding public- versus private-sector production. In determining the feasibility of this approach, transaction costs to achieve coordination must be considered along with potential savings within specific activities.

Another area for research is within the operation of functionally interdependent systems. What specific coordinating mechanisms work, and under which circumstances? A similar question is the degree to which a dependence on an outside resource and a commitment to an external goal (Van de Ven's system-change model [41]) are appropriate and effective.

Drawing the line between coordinating activities among organizations and interference in the organizations' internal operations is difficult, and situational guidelines are superior to attempts at absolute rules. Nonetheless, there are numerous specific activities that do allow for coordination without losing the benefits of decentralization. The competitive process for selecting system participants, based on performance standards, is an obvious example.

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Chapter 31

Virtual Program Evaluation: A Twenty-First Century Approach*

Peter L. Cruise and Thomas D. Lynch

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* In 1997, a portion of the literature review for this chapter appeared in a chapter by Peter L. Cruise in *International Journal of Organizational Theory and Behavior*. A portion of this chapter is also based on a conference paper presentation (by Thomas D. Lynch and Daryl S. DeArmond) at the American Evaluation Association 12th Annual Meeting in San Diego, California, in 1997.

An earlier version of this entire chapter was presented at the International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration (IASIA) 2001 Annual Conference in Athens, Greece, 7–13 July 2001 for Working Group I: “Education and Training Programs in Public Administration.”

Introduction

As the study of public administration approaches the millennium, many of the challenges the field faced at the beginning of this century are poised to continue into the next. For example, earlier in this century, debates regarding the appropriateness of various epistemological perspectives (or “ways of knowing”) consumed the field.¹ Beginning in the 1970s, the dominant logical-positivist perspective gradually gave way to alternative views of what constituted knowledge-building methodology appropriate for the public sector. Finally by the early 1990s, proponents of nonpositivist perspectives began to incorporate aspects of postmodernism into the debates.² For example, according to Fox and Miller, the postmodern perspective presents significant practical implications for both public-administration study and public-administration practice, with its “some-talk” program and policy networks creating virtual communities of interest around particular issues.

An outgrowth of the postmodern debates can be seen in aspects of the ongoing public-sector organizational change brought about by the information age. Under the rubric “New Public Management” (or NPM), this movement is widely recognized as a “bundle or shopping basket” of measures and innovations, with the implicit assumption that the public sector can take on global challenges using private-sector management tools, with the central focus on entrepreneurial responses to customer-driven markets and demands.^{3,4,5} The NPM approach also presumes a replacement of traditional command-and-control organization hierarchies with a series of networked relationships both inside and outside public-sector organizations.

While the NPM approach brings to public administration and the public manager many entrepreneurial problem-solving techniques, a number of individuals suggest that NPM also presents potential operational and ethical problems. For example, both O’Toole⁶ and Cope⁷ have discussed the potential problem of political nonresponsiveness in such public-sector networked relationships, with responsiveness levels potentially dependent upon the values and actions of public managers who must serve democratically elected decision makers. Lynch and Lynch⁸ argue that at a time when public administration most needs a higher sense of morality and values, the twin trains of postmodernist logic and newly developing NPM-based networked organizations are together creating a serious problem for the public manager by (1) eliminating previously acceptable “sign posts” or professional values (such as efficiency) and offering nothing in return, and (2) reducing the sense of individual accountability or responsibility for actions. Finally, H. George Frederickson, in his book *The Spirit of Public Administration* suggests that our inability to think “governmentally and to be governmental” are leading to increasing problems with

governmental corruption and with the ethics of public managers.⁹ Fredrickson even argues that the propensity for unethical behavior increases as (1) organization and structure moves from the (traditional) governmental model to the (networked) enterprise model and (2) more and more public managers are privately, rather than civically, inclined.¹⁰

As outlined above, the potential operational and ethical questions facing the public manager in a NPM environment are formidable. Another aspect of these questions regards the tools and methods by which public managers have used in the past to develop useful information and to be responsive to elected officials. In particular, one of public administration's most visible, most useful, and arguably most successful tools over the past several decades has been program evaluation. According to Henry,¹¹ for public-sector managers, program evaluation constitutes: (1) the primary means of determining whether programs succeed or fail; (2) whether programs should be continued or discontinued; and (3) the level of program responsiveness to particular problems or communities. As NPM-driven entrepreneurial enterprise-driven networks gradually supplant command-and-control public-sector organizations, and as individual accountability and responsibility are reduced in networked organizations, can tools (like program evaluation) used successfully in the past assist the public manager of the future?

This chapter will first examine the rich history program evaluation in the public sector, showing its continuing acceptance of many alternative perspectives as evaluators were presented with new problems and the changing needs and values of society. In particular, the use of various evaluation criteria will be highlighted as key to the success of public sector program evaluation. The chapter will then examine aspects of New Public Management, the growing insular nature of public sector networked organizations, and the potential ethical dilemmas presented by such configurations. In such organizations, the public manager will need to rely even more on tools that can provide useful information developed from a variety of data sources in both actual and virtual configurations, as well as strong steering mechanisms under which to act responsibly and be responsive. At a time when current and future public managers should look to the study of Public Administration for the tools, information and skills necessary to cope with the challenges ahead, the field is trapped in an intellectual box created by the proponents of postmodern logic. The chapter will explore aspects of postmodernism and its potential for mischief if it is viewed either as a tool to provide useful information for the public manager or as a steering mechanism helpful for the public manager to act responsibly or be responsive in networked organizations. Lastly, the chapter will discuss several key issues when public-sector managers attempt program evaluation in virtual-networked organizations.

The Growth of Program Evaluation in Public Administration

An examination of the literature relating to the growth, wide use, and utility of program evaluation in the public sector reveals that the decade of the 1960s provided the social and political climate for evaluation research to begin as a formalized endeavor. According to Palumbo,¹² although government programs had been evaluated prior to the 1960s, they had not been evaluated in a formal sense. For example, intellectuals, politicians, bureaucrats, journalists, and others frequently studied the efficiency or effectiveness of government programs, but program evaluation could not be considered a formal field of study until the 1960s.

In 1967 a landmark book by Edward Suchman appeared, marking the starting point for what has been since an ever-expanding body of literature in the field of program evaluation.¹³ In *Evaluative Research*, Suchman advocates that evaluation be viewed as a generic field of study, i.e., that evaluation research and practice be studied in a separate context distinct from its applications. Suchman points out that evaluation includes a number of applicable methodologies for operationalized research or ongoing program assessment; and that evaluation is a professional field of study with conceptual, methodological, and administrative dimensions that must be continually reassessed and developed.

Joseph Wholey¹⁴ and others focused not on the methodological issues confronting evaluators but on the administrative problems encountered by public officials overseeing them. The authors based their recommendations on a study of evaluation procedures in federal agencies that administer domestic programs. The study prompted important improvements in federal evaluation procedures, especially in its call for formalizing, systematizing, and improving evaluation in the public sector.

Alice Rivlin¹⁵ used practical examples to assess the use of a planning, programming, and budgeting system (PPBS), cost-benefit analysis, performance measurement, program evaluation, survey research, and systematic experimentation in analyzing social programs. She analyzed what had been learned about various social program outcomes as a result of these evaluation and policy-analysis techniques and asserted that evaluation was able to measure “who wins and who loses” but unable to answer questions like: What types of programs do the most good? How can the relative effectiveness of similar programs be measured? How can bureaucrats be held responsible for producing better services and responding to the communities they serve? Focusing principally on issues and lessons learned in the Great Society programs of the Johnson administration, she saw evaluation as a significant force in effecting positive change but recognized that methodological and administrative difficulties were considerable.

Carol Weiss's seminal work provided an ordered and balanced assessment of methodological questions including purpose, structure, research designs, and measurement questions involved in the evaluation of public-sector social programs. The activities necessary in evaluating such programs sometimes require the evaluator to compromise scientific methods, for "evaluation uses the methods and tools of social research but applies them in an action context that is intrinsically inhospitable to them."¹⁶ Weiss provided an excellent description of the political context of evaluation as she discussed a number of issues involving the dynamic environments of programs and the politicization of evaluation results. She concluded that evaluation had not yet achieved its potential, but that the potential was strong.

After the publication of these three benchmark books, a series of works focused on the recognition that political, methodological, and administrative issues are intertwined and that generic evaluation must address various issues in all three areas if theory and practice are to advance. Harry Hatry¹⁷ and others published a "how to" guidebook for evaluation applications for state and local governments. The authors discussed in depth who should shoulder the evaluation burden, how evaluation relates to local government management practices and policy decisions, and what are appropriate federal and local government roles in evaluation. The authors, through a case study in which they evaluated solid-waste collection in the District of Columbia, developed many of the results of the work.

Orville Poland¹⁸ was one of the first significant public-administration scholars to advocate that evaluation be incorporated with theory and practice. Chapter contributors to Poland's symposium examined how evaluation was practiced in: federal government agencies,¹⁹ the Office of Management and Budget,²⁰ state legislatures,²¹ and the U.S. General Accounting Office.²² Poland wrote the last chapter in the symposium on the relationship between evaluation and administration, addressing three principle themes: (1) evaluation problems in social experimentation and objectives definition, (2) problems with evaluation in cost-effectiveness analysis, and (3) the lack of a theoretical framework for systematic management of evaluation efforts. The central thrust for Poland, however, remained the integration of evaluation into administrative practice.

Once political, methodological, and administrative issues were intertwined and evaluation began to address various issues in all three areas, problems and complexities arose. Although Suchman²³ had identified the potential for such problems earlier, it was rearticulated by Aaron Wildavsky.²⁴ In this chapter Wildavsky describes obstacles to evaluation as organizational problems. Evaluations emphasize change while organizations seek stability, therefore organizational managers would naturally (or politically) resist evaluation efforts. Weiss²⁵ would build on the political

problem described by Wildavsky. In her chapter, Weiss reviewed several studies of evaluation projects and concluded that the primary causes of failure were various organizational constraints that impeded the evaluator's ability to apply results, but were the responsibility of the evaluators to rectify.

All of these chapters and books reveal the focusing of evaluation issues across categories, i.e., political, methodological, and administrative. What remained to be accomplished for the evaluation literature was the production of a major volume that could accommodate a number of significant theoretical viewpoints and speculations on political, administrative, and methodological problems. Guttentag and Struening²⁶ produced such a work. With this publication, evaluation had been fully developed as a functional or generic concept, much as Suchman had advocated a decade earlier. Since 1975, the public-sector evaluation literature has mainly focused on more professionally representing the specialized needs of a number of evaluation subfields (i.e., administration, legislative oversight, policy analysis) and the reemergence of substantive evaluation for various fields of concern to the public-sector manager (i.e., health, education, law).

As the public-sector evaluation literature had also been discussing how the federal government was generally setting the pace in program evaluation efforts, the subfield literature now turned to program evaluation activities in state and local governments, as these entities were becoming more interested in improving their productivity and efficiency. Jarrett²⁷ noted in a 1980 survey of state governments that, while most states did not have comprehensive, formal productivity improvement programs, there was considerable interest in program evaluation. Brown²⁸ also noted that by the mid-1980s legislatures in 35 states had expanded existing agencies or had created new ones charged with the evaluation of program effectiveness and efficiency. Poister²⁹ and others conducted a study in 1984 of all 50 states that indicated that, while much remained to be done in the way of program evaluation, much progress had been made toward incorporating program evaluation efforts. For example, ten states had centralized productivity improvement programs, a precursor to more comprehensive program evaluation activities. Most were located in the state budget offices or departments of administration and focused on upgrading technology (especially computers and word-processing capabilities) and employee-motivation systems (such as merit pay, performance appraisals, and quality-circle programs). Also noted in the study was the overall assessment of state-centralized productivity improvement efforts was one of a "lack of stability ... an 'up and down' pattern."³⁰

In one state in particular, Florida's evaluation and program review unit (or PRE) was highlighted in a chapter by Polivka and Stryker.³¹ In that chapter, the authors discuss how the PRE integrates successfully with the

state policy-making process by: (1) having evaluations done by a unit organizationally close to key decision makers, (2) having key decision makers actively involved in the selection of evaluation topics and formulations of research designs and evaluations, and (3) having evaluations designed to address only significant policy issues with a variety of methodologies (qualitative or quantitative) appropriate to the timely resolution of the policy issues.

This successful approach to evaluation discussed by Polivka and Stryker highlighted several important points developing within the literature in the 1970s and 1980s. First addressed by Weiss³² and later by Patton³³ and Alkin, et al.,³⁴ were issues relating to utilization of evaluation results. Weiss notes that even the best evaluations are of no use in program improvement if those policy makers who have the ability to initiate change ignore them. Patton further refines this concept by arguing a number of points: (1) utilization of results are the driving force in evaluations; (2) the utilization question must be answered before an evaluation is actually begun; and (3) evaluations should be “user-oriented,” meaning that stakeholders and key decision makers must be personally and actively involved in making decisions about the evaluation.

Alkin, et al.,³⁵ was to further develop the concept of increasing the utilization of evaluation results by arguing that an alternative perspective on evaluation should now be considered, that of naturalistic research methods. In the past, much of the mainstream evaluation literature had concerned itself with debates surrounding methodology issues in program evaluation (i.e., the experimental vs. naturalistic approaches, qualitative vs. quantitative methodologies). For example, Campbell and Stanley³⁶ along with Cook and Campbell³⁷ continued to promote the experimental paradigm in evaluation. In the classic experimental design, the treatment is manipulated in a controlled setting, where subjects are randomly assigned to the experimental and control groups, variables are objectively measured, and experimental results are precisely analyzed with rigorous statistical methods. The merits of other designs or methods, such as quasi-experiments or preexperimental designs, are usually judged by the degree to which they approximate the experimental design.

In contrast, the advocates of naturalistic approaches proposed that qualitative or ethnographic methods serve best in doing evaluations. According to Alkin, et al.,³⁸ Patton,³⁹ and Lincoln and Guba,⁴⁰ these approaches are superior to the more structured approaches usually involved in quantitative studies because the research format of naturalistic inquiry can be relatively free or fluid. In the naturalistic approach, trained observers record behavior in natural settings, and researchers analyze the resulting information with due regard for the humanity of the subjects and the desires of the program operators, administrators, and other stake-

holders. With these approaches, the full complexity of human behavior is thus given due attention, free of constraints imposed by research designs of the positivist and logical-positivist approaches.

It is probably natural to expect that out of the debate over which methods are most appropriate to use in program evaluation, a synthesis of both major schools of thought would develop. By the mid-1980s, a number of authors^{41,42,43,44} began to advocate the use of multiple methods when undertaking program evaluation efforts. As Williams⁴⁵ suggests: "No single inquiry method will suffice for all evaluation needs." Smith⁴⁶ also advocates the use of a combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods whenever possible. This would occur, according to Smith, when a complete description of the evaluation is necessary, when circumstances indicate that the evaluation results of a qualitative study can be generalized, when a combination of methods might enhance validity, and when qualitative feedback might be successful in influencing the behavior of stakeholders. With this approach, the author argues, the best of the qualitative and quantitative approaches can be placed in one evaluation.

These major evaluation perspectives have made many important contributions to the development of program evaluation over the years and have also led to the development of another trend in the literature: the theory-driven perspective. According to Chen,⁴⁷ the program-evaluation debates discussed earlier rely too heavily upon methodological discussions and arguments as cornerstones of their approaches. In doing this, the debates have also contributed to a neglect of program theory in doing evaluations. The movement now is to shift program evaluation from method-oriented evaluations to theory-oriented evaluations. Program theory can provide guidelines for identifying which issues are most important in an evaluation, determining what method or methods are most relevant to address these issues, and suggesting how to apply the best method or methods for dealing with these issues.

According to Chen and Rossi,⁴⁸ advantages of the theory-driven approach to evaluation include: (1) specifying the underlying theory of a program within an evaluation allows that theory to be tested in a way that reveals whether program failure results from implementation failure or theory failure; (2) specifying a program theory clarifies the connections between a program's operations and its effects; (3) specifying a program theory can be used to determine intermediate effects of a program that might become measurable before final outcomes can be manifested; and (4) developing a program theory can be the best method of informing and educating stakeholders so that they can understand the limits of a program.

Even though the theory-driven perspective as described by Chen⁴⁹ is an important issue discussed in the program-evaluation literature, many of the issues raised by Chen and others in this school of thought have

been discussed previously in the program-evaluation literature. Much earlier, Weiss⁵⁰ suggested that the utilization of evaluation results would be greatly enhanced if, among other things, an evaluation included an analysis of the theoretical premises of a program. Of additional interest, Browne and Wildavsky⁵¹ discussed the connection between implementation and evaluation, a position also supported by Chen and Rossi.⁵² According to Browne and Wildavsky, implementation and evaluation are the opposite sides of the same coin, implementation providing the experience that evaluation interrogates, and evaluation providing the intelligence to make sense out of what is happening. Implementation must, according to these authors, generate the program errors that evaluation must detect and, if possible, correct.

Implementation, then, is a key factor in developing data essential to program evaluation efforts. Whether evaluation is methods-oriented or theory-driven, we can look to program implementation generally, and to its specific implementation components (such as the various evaluation criteria), to ground program evaluation in the field of public administration. It is also through the application of various criteria that public-sector managers found program evaluation most useful.

Program Evaluation Criteria: Constituency Satisfaction and Goal Attainment

Based upon Suchman's pioneering health-program evaluation research, Nakamura and Smallwood⁵³ have stated that the work of program evaluators is integrated into the policy process by means of the different criteria they can employ to appraise the performance of policy makers and implementers under different implementation scenarios. The five evaluation criteria are: (1) goal attainment, (2) constituency satisfaction, (3) efficiency, (4) clientele responsiveness, and (5) system maintenance. Two of these criteria (constituency satisfaction and goal attainment) have proved very useful for public-sector program evaluation in the past two decades and will be examined in more detail.

Policy makers are often concerned with promoting and maintaining the satisfaction, or at least reducing the dissatisfaction, of those individuals or groups they represent, as such actions tend to expand and maintain the power and position of the policy makers. According to Nakamura and Smallwood,⁵⁴ policy makers adopting this perspective tend to view program evaluation in terms of constituency satisfaction. They solicit, or anticipate, feedback from the constituency groups on which they depend for support in an effort to gauge those groups' satisfaction with various programs. A key evaluation strategy under this perspective takes the form

of monitoring constituency attitudes towards programs (e.g., the citizen perspective in the public sector or market satisfaction in the private sector). Instead of attempting to use quantitative indicators to measure specific outputs or to appraise efficient performance, this perspective assumes that the success or failure of a program can be measured in terms of its acceptance or rejection by the relevant constituency. The focus of this evaluation perspective is not on a program's adherence to strict policy objectives, but on the ever-shifting goals of a constituency group. The ultimate measure of success under this perspective is whether policy makers have been able to maintain a broad base of constituency support for the programs they are sponsoring.

Morgan and England⁵⁵ discussed the citizen group perspective in evaluating a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. In their study, the authors reported on a comparison of the results of a citizen's advisory group evaluation of an Oklahoma CDBG with two other simultaneous evaluations of the same program by city staff and city council members. Among other things, the authors concluded that citizen groups that are closely involved with certain urban programs, such as a CDBG program, might be able to provide more-useful evaluations of program performance.

Although a number of aspects regarding the constituency-satisfaction criterion in evaluations have been discussed in the literature (e.g., their structure and function, their usefulness, their level of representativeness, the extent to which they have been dominated by external groups), Kamieniecki and Clarke⁵⁶ were some of the first researchers to attempt to discuss the effectiveness of this perspective. Effectiveness here was defined in terms of the value placed upon the recommendations of such bodies by the advisees. In developing a model to assess the effectiveness of citizen advisory bodies, the authors theorized that levels of visibility, legitimacy, community resources, and the internal conditions of an organization influence its ultimate effectiveness.

Wildavsky,⁵⁷ in the second edition of his seminal work, *The Politics of the Budgetary Process*, applied the constituency-satisfaction perspective in evaluation within the federal government as he explained how agencies adopt various budget strategies. According to Wildavsky, the continued financial well-being of agency programs depends on maintaining the good will and support of the congressional appropriations committees. One way in which members of these committees learn about a program is from the clients and others who have first-hand dealings with it. Agency officials assist and may orchestrate such clientele activities in front of congressional committees and may even then offer to fulfill the demand it has helped to generate. The successful agency will have "passed" its congressional committee "evaluation" if its appropriation is approved.

A variation of Wildavsky's theme is the increasing role of constituencies in evaluating federal public-health agencies and programs, particularly dealing with HIV/AIDS, and has been noted by Herring.⁵⁸ According to him, the federal agency primarily responsible for disseminating public-health information about the HIV/AIDS epidemic (the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, or CDC) has been successful in mobilizing such diverse constituencies as grassroots groups both affected and infected by the epidemic as well as established scientific organizations to promote its services through increased governmental appropriations and positive media programs.

According to Nakamura and Smallwood,⁵⁹ from the goal-attainment evaluation perspective, a program is a focused and organized if its effort is devoted to achieving specific goals. Also, from the same evaluation perspective, a program's accomplishments or goals should be measurable in terms of objective indicators. These indicators should encompass measures that have value and credibility. The most credible measures are those that can be quantified and counted. Levy, Meltsner, and Wildavsky⁶⁰ have distinguished various classes of program effects produced by governmental action. One effect discussed by these authors is a program output; an output being the easiest of the classes of program effects to measure quantitatively. It is basically a service rendered or an action occurring on an immediate or short-term basis. Examples of output measures would be the number of people served by a program or the miles of road built in a given locality.

The goal-attainment evaluation perspective has been the most prevalent perspective in public administration. There is a large body of literature that stresses goal attainment in program evaluation. Pressman and Wildavsky⁶¹ had this type of evaluation in mind when they wrote their seminal work about the trials and tribulations of the Oakland, California, Economic Development Administration (EDA). This work, a detailed case study, reported on the major obstacles encountered by the EDA in its efforts to head off urban unrest in Oakland by providing financial assistance for public works and business development.

The goal-attainment evaluation approach appears in public-administration literature throughout the 1980s. Thompson,⁶² presented a case study of the secret bombing of North Vietnam. He discussed how the program was begun, measured, and ended. According to the author, the military viewed the ongoing mission via a series of goal-attainment reviews. When reconnaissance evidence revealed that one goal was not being achieved, another goal was developed instead, and the bombing continued.

Epstein⁶³ developed a handbook of performance measures for local government managers and, according to him, performance-measurement techniques allow decision makers to take a systematic look at government

services and community conditions without having to be everywhere at once. He sees the two most important forms of performance measurement as effectiveness and efficiency. Efficiency measures include measurement of specific goals developed for various municipal services (e.g., tons of refuse collected) and a comparison of those goals to the resources (e.g., labor hours) used to produce it.

Flynn⁶⁴ reported on the development, during the 1970s, of New York State's Performance Measurement System or KIRS — key item reporting system. This system, adopted after earlier, more elaborate reporting systems failed, focuses on programmatic goals and objectives and explanations of measures to determine if goals have been achieved. For example, according to Flynn, workload measures focus on work done — a goal-attainment measure — and are not effectiveness measures, outcome measures, or accomplishment measures.

Brown and Pyers⁶⁵ discussed methods for “putting teeth” into the efficiency and effectiveness of public services. The authors described the development by the City of Wooster (Ohio) of a cost-measurement system using unit cost measures. The measures used must be goals that are measurable, objective, verifiable, and selected by the individual city department. The measures are included in the city's annual financial audit, which, according to the authors, puts it in a different (i.e., more favorable) light than if they had been reported in a long, complex narrative annual report.

Finally, the movement toward management by objectives (MBO) in the public sector throughout the 1980s can be linked to goal-attainment criteria in evaluation. Collamore⁶⁶ discusses a four-element framework in a successful public-sector MBO program. In the planning and management framework of the MBO program, according to the author, specific goal statements that are quantifiable and easily measurable are an essential component. Progress toward meeting these goals is monitored and reported on a regular basis. Managers being reviewed under this system are given latitude in determining how to best meet these goals because, as the author notes, managers achieve goals; organizations do not.

The history of program evaluation in the public sector has been long and fruitful. Time and again, this tool has provided public-sector managers with (1) information useful and even essential for their own agency's operation and (2) data by which to allow their elected leaders to be responsive to the public. Both goal attainment and constituency satisfaction have been discussed as two most often used criteria by which public managers evaluate programs. As NPM spreads throughout public-sector organizations, can program evaluation continue to provide information that is both useful and responsive? The potential for such an outcome seems to be great, especially as networked organizations can retrieve and analyze program information at rates never before achieved and then

distribute the results of evaluation to numbers of users never before possible. In fact, as early as 1972, Weiss discussed lack of dissemination of the results of evaluation as one of the greatest problems facing the then relatively new field of evaluation research. Perhaps potential NPM-related problems for program evaluation may lie within the nature of the networked organization itself and within the value perspectives adopted by individual public managers.

On Being Responsible and Responsive in Networked Organizations

According to O'Toole,⁶⁷ a crucial institutional arrangement for the successful operation of government in action is some version of a network. In this sense, networks are structures of interdependence involving multiple organizations. They exhibit some structural stability and include, but extend beyond, formal linkages. In such networks, the reach of public managers is expanded, but not their ability to take decisive or unilateral action. Managers in networked arrangements, rather than relying on positional power or on the formal organization, must adopt a new set of skills by which to "manage." These skills include negotiation, inspiration, facilitation, visioning, information sharing, and even alteration of the network's membership to achieve a desired action or response.⁶⁸ In this new entrepreneurial environment, with the traditional bureaucratic command-and-control structure less relevant, managers may be involved in such activities as interagency cooperative ventures, intergovernmental program management structures, complex contracting arrangements, and public-private partnerships. Specific examples could include service-delivery systems reliant on clusters of providers in the public and private sectors. However, facing public managers in a complex and reciprocally interdependent network relationships is the potential problem of lapses of responsible action. In such cases, according to O'Toole, public managers may not be able to ascertain the impact of their own actions. Moreover, networked arrangements offer contexts in which both causality and volition can be perceived as so limited that even responsibility itself disappears.⁶⁹

In networked arrangements, enterprise and entrepreneurship are increasingly valued as desirable characteristics for the public manager. Citizens are now called customers. Incentive systems are in place to allow managers to streamline organization activities and retain a portion of any budgetary savings resulting from such action. Whether discussed as reinvention, privatization, bureaucratic reform or just "less government," the successful public manager in this environment increasingly is viewed as

one who has adopted the operating principles most associated with the private-sector business manager.

However, as Cope⁷⁰ has succinctly described, responsiveness to customers is different from responsiveness to citizens. If one is responsive to customers, one should provide a product that is desirable, well made, and as inexpensive as possible. It is not necessary for all of the customers to like, or even approve of, the product because its purchase is voluntary, and in most cases there are competing products from which a customer may choose. To be responsive to citizens, one should perform a service or produce a product that the majority of citizens want and approve through the political process, since in many cases citizens are not buying the product voluntarily but are paying for it through taxes, which they are required to pay on penalty of fines or imprisonment. According to Cope, this creates a special responsibility for government not only to satisfy its immediate customers and operate in a cost-efficient manner, but also to deliver services that its citizens have requested through their votes and their elected representatives.⁷¹

Ultimately, as suggested by Cope, the danger is that the entrepreneurial public manager may not recognize the difference between customer and citizen and will adopt practices that support the former at the expense of the latter. In such a scenario, political responsiveness of the entire network is reduced or eliminated. H. George Frederickson⁷² has gone even further with the themes of responsibility and responsiveness when governments move closer to the enterprise model and governmental employees attempt to become more privately inclined. As governments adopt more entrepreneurial approaches to service delivery — particularly reducing the direct carrying out by government of such services — the propensity for corruption and unethical behavior increases. As more and more public managers (who are more inclined to the practices of the business manager) are in evidence, then more and more cases of nonresponsiveness to elected officials and corruption will occur. The conclusion, according to Frederickson, is that by attempting to adapt governmental practices to business, we pay a considerable price in ethics. Moreover, says Frederickson, there is little direct evidence that using business practices or hiring people with strong private-sector inclinations makes governmental services any more efficient or economical.⁷³

The question posed at the beginning of this discussion concerned the ability of program evaluation to provide useful information to the public manager and, in turn, increase his or her responsiveness to elected officials. With NPM creating networked organizational relationships, and with no clear optimizing direction for public managers to follow, a steering mechanism must be present to address the potential problems highlighted in this section and for program evaluation to “work” for public managers in

these networks. It is at this juncture that the study of public administration could provide such a steering mechanism, but due to the rise of the postmodern perspective in the field, it may not be able to respond.

The Postmodern Perspective

According to Lynch and Lynch,⁷⁴ the creation of networked organizations increases the importance of the presence of ethics and morality at the critical decision nodes in those networks. At a time when morality and ethics dedicated to proper management and democratic ideals should be available to the public manager of the future, the study of public administration at colleges and universities is embracing the postmodern perspective, with its focus on the relative nature of ethics. In brief, the postmodern perspective criticizes all that modernity cherishes: the accumulated experience of Western civilization, industrialization, urbanization, advanced technology, and the nation-state. It also challenges modern priorities: career, office, individual responsibility, bureaucracy, liberal democracy, detached experiment and even program-evaluation criteria.⁷⁵ Two concepts are central to postmodern thought. First, *deconstruction* is used as a postmodern method of analysis. Its goal is to undo all constructions. Deconstruction tears a text apart and reveals its contradictions and assumptions; its intent, however, is not to improve, revise, or offer a better version of the text. For example, in public administration, postmodernism has deconstructed the professional value of efficiency and replaced it with nothing.⁷⁶ Second, *discourse* is offered and continually encouraged as a method of communication (as in the discourse examples of “some-talk, few-talk, many-talk” discussed by Fox and Miller⁷⁷). Postmodern discourse can be described as all that is written and spoken and all that invites dialogue or conversation. In NPM networked organizations, however, postmodern discourse offers no specific direction and contains no guidance component. Without such a steering mechanism, for example a strong professional value base for the public manager, this approach to communication cannot address the problems of responsibility and responsiveness discussed earlier. In the study of public administration, a number of scholars are promoting the postmodern perspective. They seek to redirect thinking about public policy and administration. They require that bold steps be taken away from well-worn paths. They assert that many cherished presuppositions will be debunked.⁷⁸ For the public manager, postmodernism says that there can no longer a “right” policy or superior guiding wisdom, no shared assumptions, no appropriate ethical approach to decision making or even criteria appropriate for program evaluation because of the impossibility of modern truth or theory or ethical frameworks other than relative or situational ones.^{79,80}

At a time when the information age and NPM have enabled organizations to break out of established hierarchies into networked relationships crossing jurisdictional and even national boundaries, the public manager will be faced with even greater demands for data and information. This information has been successfully provided by public-sector program evaluation for over 30 years. The ability of program evaluation to provide useful information continues and is even expanded through networks, but only if the public manager recognizes the potential problems of responsibility and responsiveness in NPM-networked organizations. The search for solutions to these potential problems for the public manager is compounded with the rise of the postmodern perspective and its promotion of relative, rather than professional, values for the field.

At this point, an additional question should be posed: can public-sector program evaluation survive the twin challenges of postmodernism and virtual-networked organizations? The program-evaluation literature has revealed a remarkable adaptation of the field as it has accepted diverse views and alternative perspectives over many decades. However, it cannot accept a perspective that would deny the public manager the use of evaluative criteria by which to assess programs and policies. It would find distracting and confusing deconstruction activities that would decompose programs and policies but would not allow for assessments of the pieces remaining, or, if assessments were permitted, no one view would be more “valid” than any other. One can surmise that the very activity of “evaluation” is not compatible with postmodernism, as it implies that one answer will be reached or one conclusion will be drawn or one result will be achieved. However, other threats to effective program evaluation exist. In the next section of this chapter, we discuss several key issues that must be addressed if effective program evaluation is to take place in virtual-networked organizations.

Key Issues in Virtual-Program Evaluation

It is undeniable that organizations face change in virtual-networked relationships. Therefore, education and training for public-sector managers is needed so that they will not only accept the change, but also channel its influence in a positive manner to enhance the quality of public service. Education can create a basis for the acceptance of change, while also providing the means to implement the desired change more intelligently. The proper use and implementation of virtual-web organizations will allow for change to be ushered in with less discomfort than might otherwise be expected. However, we must recognize that the concept of the virtual-networked relationship will be somewhat discomfiting. Moreover, a firm

grasp of the underlying values and ethics of the people supporting the institutions affected by the changing environment will be a necessity for the successful conversion from pyramidal bureaucracies to the flatter, more informal virtual-networked organizations.

Education and training are necessary on where to access relevant data for program-evaluation efforts. One of the most fascinating effects for the information age is the overwhelming amount of information that is available to anyone who wishes to avail himself or herself of it. There will be almost no practical limit to the type and quantity of data one will be able to access from heretofore unknown or inaccessible locations. For example, patients with diabetes can access incredible amounts of data about their disease with the touch of a button on their home computer. The information available today is in much more user-friendly forms than traditional medical texts. The patient can learn about the latest advances from a large number of books, journals, and other reference works that are on-line. Now you do not have to live in an area proximal to a medical school library. This is also true when considering program evaluation in virtual formats. No longer will the evaluator need to be proximate to program sites. Data can be gathered with a touch of a button on their office or home computers. This ease of data acquisition presents some dilemmas. Although data availability and accessibility are important, we must also understand what the information tells us.

To continue the medical example, for the uninitiated among us, to read a full medical text about diabetes may only serve to confuse and even scare us. However, with the help of the World Wide Web, we can ask others all over the world to help us learn. As Reich⁸¹ and others have noted, self-help organizations, doctors, health-care paraprofessionals, and other diabetes patients can be there, online, ready to answer our questions and calm our fears. This can also be true in program-evaluation efforts. To be successful, we must be able to educate each other inside and outside our organizations and share our expertise at all levels. Self and group education is vital to the progression of the information age and its benefits. In our diabetes example, we see how easily information can be shared. A similar level of accessibility to information should be available to public-sector managers as they go about their duties. The ability to share ideas and critique proposals should be possible and welcomed at all levels inside and outside of the organization. Here again, the ability to distinguish between useful, needed information and the “noise” of perhaps well intentioned, but essentially useless, data must be discernable by those directly involved in using the data.

Martin and Kettner⁸² point out that program evaluation and its use of performance measures has the potential to improve management and affect resource allocation, and for better or worse, it may be a forced

choice. Improving management with performance measures is becoming almost tautological, as pointed out by Osborne and Gaebler.⁸³ For example, merely publishing the gathered measurement data can cause organizations to respond in positive ways. The effect of performance measures on resource allocation is still somewhat cloudy, but recent studies hold out hope for a positive result.⁸⁴ Some major forces promoting performance measurement in the U.S. government include: (1) the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993, (2) the National Performance Review, and (3) the service efforts and accomplishments (SEA) reporting initiative of the Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB). These combined efforts are substantial and are influential reasons we can expect to see performance measures incorporated into any government enterprise in the future.⁸⁵

Accountability to higher political leaders requires the use of performance measures by entrepreneurial managers in networked organizations because these measures serve to provide the means to see that all areas of the government are working efficiently, economically, and effectively. This includes program-evaluation support units that provide information critical for managers to use to determine if programs are working or not. These sometimes-costly program-evaluation support units must be able to prove what they can and do accomplish with accurate performance measures of inputs, process, and especially outputs and outcomes. With hard data from their parent organizations, budget officers, and potential outside-web customers, program-evaluation support units must be able to show that past successes are reproducible activities and not just fortuitous happenstance. Only with reproducible results will evaluation-support units keep current customers and even gain new customers

Increasingly, postmodernism leads us to say that morals at both the individual and organizational level are inappropriate subjects for policy and management judgments, decision making, and, of course, program-evaluation efforts. Postmodernism tells us that morals cannot have a universal component and at best they can be applied only within a given regime. With postmodernism, standards of inquiry — and indeed morality and ethics themselves — are no longer relevant given the relativistic character of those notions. Morality is what you can get away with in a given situation. If we agree with postmodernism, ethical codes and ethic commissions governing employee behavior can only address questions of sense and nonsense within a very narrow individually defined paradigm that can shift depending on circumstances.⁸⁶ And, as noted earlier, postmodern program evaluation may be the ultimate oxymoron.

Democratic responsiveness and morality under virtual-web organizations are different than traditional command-and-control organizations. Virtual-networked organizations are replacing old-style command-and-

control hierarchies with network relationships that have a remarkable implication to democratic responsiveness and morality. O'Toole⁸⁷ argued that the evolution toward network organizational relationships in public organizations means that the relationship between democracy and administration needs reconsideration. He raises the question: "How responsive are administrative arrangements likely to be in network contexts?" Pinchot⁸⁸ argues that information-age organizations are becoming less hierarchical and function by using weblike networks of partnerships and other alliances. Reich⁸⁹ argues that at the key nodes of the web structures are symbolic analysts or brokers that create the connections of the 21st-century organizations. There are no longer clear lines of authority in this horizontal marketplace of units, and this gives symbolic brokers the potential of ignoring their responsibility to democratically selected leadership.⁹⁰

In network relationships, responsibility is complex and problematic because both causation and volition are difficult or impossible to determine or individualize. Public managers face an array of obligations from the network with no clear optimizing direction; thus, overall guidance to symbolic brokers is unclear and depersonalized. This gives maximum discretion to those increasingly important network symbolic brokers due to such factors as agency socialization, multiple systems of authority, and objectification of those others in the network. Individual managers can easily feel that they are less capable of decisive influence and, therefore, question why they should act responsibly to elected officials. Complex and reciprocally independent patterns of networked actions can be prone to serious defections from responsible actions.⁹¹

To the network symbolic brokers that have a high sense of morality, network relationships are going to be enhanced. Administrators can help others in the network be aware of their special obligations by pointing out critical causal paths and consequences to their associates. They can also show other symbolic brokers that responsible options are available and focus them on their obligation to tell the truth, keep promises, and treat program needs and interests seriously. Such people can create stable networked patterns that enhance program-evaluation efforts even where authoritative state decisions are absent.⁹²

The array of responsible actions is much wider with network organizations stemming from virtual-web organizations. The potential exists for closed and intensely self-interested alliances. Clearly, the network array of interests and perspectives is differentiated, diverse, and complicated. Given this setting, the potential also exists for responsible behavior given the complex pressures and relative lack of clear accountability mechanisms, but only if the symbolic brokers have an inner vision of responsiveness shaped by a clear understanding of morality. Thus, under network structures in countries around the world, public-sector managers will

increasingly act responsibly if they apply a clear understanding of morality to their actions. However, regardless of the morality they have, public managers will not be peripheral factors in society, especially in terms of democratic governance, but rather their actions will indeed determine whether virtual-program evaluation is possible or not.⁹³

Notes

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Chapter 32

Twenty-First-Century Philosophy and Public Administration: Refocusing the Lens

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Introduction

This chapter argues that public administration uses philosophy as a lens of understanding, and the current lenses that are available to us are inadequate for the 21st century. Possibly the metaphor of glasses that we use to enhance our eyesight is the best means to explain the argument in this chapter. When we are young, we may be lucky enough not to need glasses, but many of us soon have to get them to bring our eyesight up to a standard that permits us to function in our environment. As we grow older, our prescription often needs to change as we change. This chapter argues that humankind has also grown older; and as that aging process occurred, humankind needed to and did change its prescription to adapt to its changed circumstances. The 21st century is an extension of that evolution process of humankind, and the various prescriptions, called philosophy, are again inadequate, especially in the area of ethics and morality. We need an enhanced or improved prescription to help us live our lives in the 21st century.

In 1991 Joseph Rost in *Leadership for the Twenty-First Century* argued that the world is experiencing a radical transformation, which futurists claim is changing the basic values of the present industrial era. Professor Garofalo predicts that the “rational, male, technocrat, quantitative, goal-dominated, cost-benefit driven, hierarchical, short-term, pragmatic, materialistic model must give way to a new kind of leadership based on different assumptions and values” (Garofalo). There is a pervasive sense that our fundamental perspectives on life are changing radically and that any new values or perspectives built on the industrial paradigm are not adequate for the next century. “We are becoming rootless, a culture of the crowd, not the community. Our civilization is unbalanced, with our material culture far ahead of our ethical, moral, and spiritual culture. We honor independence and personal liberty and ignore the need for cooperation” (Garofalo).

This chapter makes the case for a fundamental change in perspective, or a “lens change” in the vocabulary of the metaphor. This chapter also explains the basics of that desired change. The first section after this brief introduction explains why we need to rethink philosophy and especially its role in our lives. The first section also critiques modernist and post-modernist philosophy and makes the case for not using the fundamental assumptions that underlie those philosophies. The next major section describes the changing circumstances of the beginning of the 21st century

and asserts that these changes cannot be resisted. Change is part of the cycle of history. An illustration of that cycle is presented along with the implications of that change on human activities such as public administration. The last major section argues that we need to rethink philosophy. A new lens prescription is needed, especially in the area of ethics. Public administration and all aspects of humankind need to create a global ethic with a new prescription. The conclusion explains the imperative and summarizes the chapter.

Rethinking Philosophy

Role of Philosophy

In thinking about the role of philosophy in our lives, some consider philosophy as a means to explain phenomena and answer larger questions such as the nature of understanding, the basis to judge good and evil, or the proper role of government in society. In this chapter, philosophy is viewed as a conceptual lens through which we understand the thoughts and phenomena about us.

In this chapter, philosophy is a dependent variable that is shaped by society that, in turn, has been shaped by technology. Philosophy is a product of linear influence or, more properly, in many cases a synergistic minor influencer and major influencee with society. That point is illustrated by the various chapters in this book. They explain society's influence on key philosophers who are products of their society and who reflect the influence of the leading key changes in each of their times. Because of the time-lag effect of certain cultural influences, the views of some philosophers did not become influential in their own lifetimes.

The importance of technology upon society was dramatically presented in Alvin Toffler's *Future Shock*. In that book, the driving force changing society was not philosophy but rather technology. For example, the invention and eventual use of gunpowder revolutionized the art of war by ending the importance of the defensive castle that was key to the decentralized power relationships of the baron to the king in feudalism. Gunpowder strengthened the role of the crown and greatly strengthened the power of what eventually became the nation-state. Another example was the invention of the precise clock, which made accurate navigation by longitude possible. In turn, this meant that an economic philosophy built on mercantilism was not only possible, but was a superior means than war to increase the wealth of emerging nation-states such as England, France, and Spain.

A major thesis of this chapter is that the key technologies that drive and shape society eventually need to be reinvented using new philoso-

phies. New technologies advantage certain people in a society who can think and act in a manner that is more compatible with the emerging society. They comprehend their advantages and adapt their lens of understanding accordingly. As a result, they tend to be more successful than others in terms of wealth, power, or both. Others in the society may be slower to recognize the changing opportunities, but eventually they learn by experience and the demonstrated successes of those who adapted earlier. As their success becomes more obvious, others follow the example of success. In the past 200-year period, the two defining technologies can be labeled as industrialization and information. In their respective eras, each had broad and remarkable impacts on almost every aspect of society.

As society changes, intellectuals cast about for new lenses to use to understand the conditions that are changing their lives. New philosophies are born as the older lenses become inadequate to explain the shifting paradigm brought on by technological change. For example, industrialization resulted in the concentration of wealth and political power in the hands of a few economic barons. In turn, the excesses of this situation provided government the opportunity to take over or control those limited power centers with an administrative state. The lenses to accomplish that end were socialism and progressivism, which both accepted and championed the primary role of the state in society.

Philosophy acts as a mental filter for the more intellectual among humankind, and it also biases humankind to act and judge in particular ways defined by the philosophy. Because philosophy has influence, it advantages and disadvantages various groups in society. Over time, the advantaged groups prosper and gain increasing power. Commonly, even the disadvantaged groups begin to adopt the philosophy of the successful groups if they are permitted to do so by the ruling elite. A good example is the invention of modernism. In western Europe, modernism fit the new industrial society particularly well because the so-called objective empirical inquiry using the “scientific method” tended to create functional knowledge for the advantaged elite groups. Those industrial and government groups tended to prosper, and other societies around the world saw the remarkable successes and began to emulate them and use modernism.

Modernism, such as developed and used by John Locke and Jeremy Bentham, biases human thinking toward left-brain analytical thinking and away from metaphysical right-brain thinking that dominated the very being of human behavior in the previous centuries. With modernism, religious thinking became marginalized and even dysfunctional. With modernism, gifted analytical left-brain thinkers were advantaged and had greater success in society. However, right-brain thinking did not disappear, although those who thought in that manner were less central to power and economic success. Power became secularized, and religious thought

became decreasingly important, even in such matters as values and ethics, especially among the world's intellectuals.

Philosophy does influence the way humans see, understand, and judge. Philosophy does not advantage all humans in exactly the same way because other factors such as heritage and social conditions are also important. Nevertheless, philosophy has been and remains a remarkably powerful influence on humankind in general and some people in particular.

Critique of Modernist and Postmodernist Philosophy

Certainly, humankind is currently at its technological zenith, and modernist philosophy can take some of the credit. Today, modernism leads humankind to believe that it can eventually know everything, and with knowledge there are no limits. Postmodernism is an active minority voice of realism that questions the optimism of the modernist and takes some of the authority out of what otherwise could be an intellectual tyranny. Because of modernism, humankind has concentrated on developing left-brain analytical capabilities. In contrast, postmodernism reminds humankind that left-brain thinking alone is insufficient. Thus the two contesting yin and yang positions present us with a balance that is at times inconsistent but dynamic and functional. Nevertheless, this chapter argues that both are inadequate for the 21st century.

Modernism and postmodernism place belief in an ultimate truth or Absolute as either beside the point or simply not relevant. The role of doubt in philosophy need not be debated again, but the issue of the Absolute's existence shall be discussed, as it is central to this chapter. Postmodernism adopts a relativist perspective that only accepts judgments of truth within the confines of a paradigm. Modernists adopt a temporary version of truth that is subject to continual revision. Neither accepts a fundamental, universal permanent truth, especially on the existence of an Absolute. In different ways, both say that truth is relative and that ultimate values, including ethics, are also relative.

What are the consequences of relative values and ethics? Relative values and ethics are a certain formula for human conflict. With modernism and postmodernism, such conflicts can only be resolved by consensus or when some key groups voluntarily do not assert their claims by aggression or capitulation. With modernism and postmodernism, there is no ultimate means to settle a dispute by appealing to ethics or morality. With those lenses of understanding, people can be fools, but they can never be correct, as no such ultimate condition exists. Such a reasoning process leads to openness, but it also creates a cynicism in the value of consensus and the character of what the other groups claim to know.

Is there an escape from this philosophic cul-de-sac? In chapter one, the altruistic/materialistic, rational, and government capability dimensions were said to constitute three sets of two choices each. For example, some, like Thomas Hobbes, argue that mankind is essentially materialistic and in need of a sovereign leader to address the needs of us all. Some, like Jean-Jacques Rousseau, argue that mankind over time is essentially concerned with the needs of all. Some, like Jeremy Bentham, argue that humankind can reason through its general welfare by using rational thought, including analysis. Others, like Edmund Burke, argue that such large matters are beyond rational human inquiry and that such decisions need to rest on appeals to historical traditions. Twentieth-century liberals and 19th-century conservatives argue that government can be a positive instrument to direct society. Still others, like 20th-century conservatives and 19th-century liberals, argue that government cannot be a positive instrument for society.

Thinking Outside the Box

Chapter one noted that the three dimensions constituted a box, but that need not limit the choices of philosophers. They could reconceptualize the box in a more sophisticated way or even think outside the box. Staying within and reconceptualizing the box was done by James Madison. He decided that each dimension was not a matter of one or the other but really was a mix. This primary author of the U.S. Constitution assumed that humankind was both altruistic and materialistic and that the goal of the government process was to maximize the likelihood of the altruistic choice. Madison did not choose between rational or incremental decision making but instead assumed that either could exist or that they could and most likely would exist in combination. In a similar manner, he assumed that government was not necessarily the agent to solve society's problems, but that it could do so if it acted accordingly.

Another option is to transcend the box entirely. For example, instead of assuming that people are either altruistically or materialistically driven — or even a mix of the two — we can assume that individual free choice can allow people to move from being materialistic and ego driven to the higher plane of genuine altruistic motivation. Under this assumption, free choice is critical, as humankind need not be bound permanently to any motivation but can freely move to a higher plane or even fall back to a lower plane. With such an assumption, the role of philosophy is not to interfere with free choice, but rather to help those who wish to transcend to the higher plane of altruistic choice. Those who make this assumption are similar to James Madison in that they also recognize that many, and possibly most, will still select the materialistic and ego-driven choice in spite of their freedom to select the higher plane.

Another assumption that transcends the box looks at the rational dimension differently. It agrees with the 19th-century conservatives that complete rationality is impossible, but then argues that with God's help humankind can transcend to a higher thinking capability that somehow combines left- and right-brain thinking. For example, humankind is not capable of reaching a viable global ethic with mere rational thought. However, if that rational thought is combined with the feelings of the heart associated with the Absolute, then a global ethic is possible. Such a decision-making process can establish a universal ethic and encourage decision making using the full range of human capability.

The last assumption to transcend the box concerns the dimension of the appropriate role of government in society. The assumption can be simply that this decision is really not important or salient to the real purpose of life. Frankly, in the larger scheme of things, the role of government in society is not really all that significant, and it is not one of the appropriate questions for philosophy to address. What is salient is the care one takes with others and with nature. That care can be manifested in government or private action or in some combination of the two. The key is human caring and not the instrument used to manifest that caring.

Philosophy is a lens of understanding that helps people realize that the fundamental solution for society's problems is primarily a matter of getting people to think of themselves as an interconnected being. When that is done, government is sometimes the solution, depending on contextual situations that change with times and places. The answer to the government dimension is not a constant "yes" or "no" but rather "it depends." That answer transcends the box.

Is a philosophy that transcends the box possible? The answer is yes, and it has existed since the beginning of recorded history. The common spiritual-wisdom literature (that is found, at least, in the holy scriptures of the Hindu, Jewish, Buddhist, Christian, and Islamic traditions) provides that philosophy. Humankind need only understand and apply it as a lens of understanding. For example, the Koran uses the metaphor of sight and says, "Momentous signs have come to you from your Lord. He that sees them shall have much to gain, but he who is *blind* to them shall lose much indeed" (Koran 6:104). In other words, we are continually given signs and messages from God, and unless we learn them with our hearts, we will remain blind and will be unable to see clearly through the lens by which we understand life. The scriptures of all traditions teach us that government is not the answer to society's problems, but rather that the answer is individually and collectively within each of us.

Moving from the abstract to the practical application is always the most difficult aspect of philosophy. What would such a philosophy mean to public administration? To the maximum extent possible, society would

need to minimize judgmental behavior and maximize positive, supportive altruistic behavior. Certainly materialistic and ego-driven behavior would exist, but it would be accepted. However, when such behavior causes harm to other individuals and nature, it would be either discouraged or, when necessary, it would be curbed to protect the society and nature. Social goals would be set to minimize divisiveness among groups and maximize supportive behavior of individuals and groups that supported the whole of society.

Making decisions using this philosophy would be significantly different. Individuals would be encouraged to use their total mental capabilities, including their intuitive sense of righteousness. Under this philosophy, improving the total mind becomes important. Possibly the following clarifies the importance of the total mind: "Everything has mind in the lead, has mind in the forefront, is made of mind. If one speaks or acts with a corrupt mind, misery will follow, as the wheel of a cart follows the foot of the ox. Everything has mind in the lead, has mind in the forefront, is made by mind. If one speaks or acts with a pure mind, happiness will follow, like a shadow that never leaves" (Dhammapada 1:1-2). Following this philosophy, part of professional training and education is the subject of ethics and values applied to the work context so that administrators are well-equipped to exercise their professional judgments through their responsibilities.

Under this philosophy, government is merely an instrument that is ultimately of secondary importance. Policy makers and public managers would need to consider themselves in their governmental roles as radically less significant than their roles as human beings. Their primary purpose in life is their own spiritual development and their service to their fellow humankind. This philosophy does not stress the status or power of the administrator, but rather the central role of his or her total growth as a person and in service to others. With such thinking, corruption does not make any sense, and decisions that are meant to benefit the whole rather than one group make all the sense in the world.

Applying philosophy in this manner is not a call for a theocracy, but merely a call to look for and apply the spiritual wisdom that informs all of our religions. The scriptures of all traditions warn us that religious leaders are not immune to materialistic and ego-driven decisions. Their claim to being religious enables them to easily abuse the special regard afforded them by others. This philosophy is not a call to select leaders by religious tests, but rather a call to realize that the inner worth of the individual is important. This worth is defined not in terms of religious zeal, but rather by the accumulated daily actions that reflect a person's continuing concern for the interests of the whole rather than the causes of one, or any, given group in society.

Although the previous discussion does argue in favor of a universal philosophy grounded in the accumulated spiritual wisdom of all major faiths, care must nevertheless be taken to recognize the significance of context especially influenced by shifting technology. The next section of this chapter briefly explains how technology changes society and has induced the critical need for a shift in philosophy that reinvents society. This section argues the need for a constant universal philosophy that is nevertheless adaptive to changing times and circumstances.

Cycle of History

Changing Tide

Change in society is occurring and cannot be successfully resisted. The tide is a useful metaphor to explain the nature and strength of the change. The tide comes in and the tide goes out. It happens with predictable regularity. Now, one can stand on the shore like the fabled King Canute and command the tide to stop rolling in, or one can channel the course of the tide using a great deal of imagination and effort to meet the challenges of the day.

Centralizing and decentralizing power shifts happen in society. This section argues that it happens in predictable patterns and that the current portion of the pattern is moving toward decentralization of power. The decentralization is running from the public sector to the private sector, from the executive to the legislative, from the national level of government to lower levels of government, and from the top-level executive to lower-level managers. Given the larger pattern, arguing over the merits or demerits of decentralization is mostly a fruitless task. One is wiser to deal with change with imagination and work to mitigate the negative and promote the positive aspects as much as possible.

This decentralization of power affects the role of government in society. Public administrators can channel the decentralizing change, but the change itself will happen regardless of whether those in the profession are for or against the change. Centralization/decentralization of power acts in a specific cycle like the tide. One phase of the cycle is an increasing, centralizing political and economic power. In this phase, the central government gets stronger, the executive in government increases power, and the government increases its scope of influence over the private sector. In the alternative phase of the cycle, there is a decreasing centralizing political and economic power. The central government gets weaker, the subunits gain in strength, and the private sector gains in political and economic strength compared with the government. In the decreasing

phase, the executive grows weaker, especially in relation to the legislative or judicial branches of government.

The cycles of changing power relationships recur in a pattern. In other words, history “repeats itself” in continuous circles or, more accurately, cycles of ebbs and flows. According to Eastern thought, history progresses through circles or cycles of *yin* and *yang*. In Western economic thought, cycles are used to discuss the ups and downs in business activity over a period of years. Here, history is described as moving through time in cycles of increasing government centralization and then government decentralization. The ebb and flow seem to be caused by landmark technological innovations that have a radical impact on the economies, on social structure, and even on how work is done in the major societies in the world.

The shifts in ebb and flow also influence the conduct of public administration. At the beginning of this 21st century, civilization is at one of its major turning points in history. Those of us interested in public administration need to recognize the changing of the tide and adapt ourselves to the new environment. About every 200 years, a new cycle of centralization and decentralization occurs. For about 100 years, there is either increasing reform bringing strong central political control in the major nations of the world, or there is a trend toward greater decentralization in those same nations. In about the 50th year of the century, a significant emerging influential technology is discovered, and slowly it influences basic institutions and relationships in society. Eventually, the transformation is reflected in some major historical political circumstances. The current phase shift became politically noticeable prior to the beginning of the 21st century (i.e., the 1970s).

An Illustration

Possibly the best way to explain the cycle is to focus on the United States and its short 200-year history. The centralizing and decentralizing of power are reflected in both (a) the roles of the national government and state governments and (b) the relative power relationship between the executive and legislative branches of government. In both situations, the budget as a process reflects the shifting power relationship. Budget power has altered over the last two centuries, and budget reforms describe how the actual power relationships change in the various time periods (McCaffery: 347). The history of reform in American public administration reflects the larger ebbing and flowing of power to and from central authorities, such as between the executive and legislative branches of government. Prior to the American Revolution, the colonies, part of the British Empire, experienced strong mercantilist policy in which the power was concentrated in the central government. The “mother country” created colonies to

establish strong trading relationships between the colonies and the mother country. The colonies were expected to supply raw materials to the mother country and then purchase the finished products back from the mother country. In the 1770s, England used a strong central government authority to advance its economic well-being, but it was politically resisted by a successful rebellion in its American colonies.

Right on schedule in 1776, two landmark events occurred: the American Declaration of Independence and the publishing of Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*. Both heralded a reversal toward a decentralized economic and political authority in the new nation. In 1789, a countertrend established a potentially strong national government and executive branch within government. The countertrend lasted about a decade. Again, on schedule at the beginning of the 19th century, the spirit of 1776 reasserted itself with the election of Thomas Jefferson. The early and middle 1800s were a period of minimal and decentralized government except during periods of war. By the middle 1800s, the technological innovations of mechanization, such as the cotton gin and other manufacturing innovations, began to influence the society. In time, they led to the undoing of the decentralized policy, but before that occurred, those policies greatly benefited the economic interests of the emerging industrial barons of the middle and late 1800s.

As those changes influenced the society, the majority of the workforce shifted from agricultural to manufacturing employment, and the nation shifted from a rural to an urban society. A strong need for raw materials such as coal, steel, and other materials essential to supply the industrial revolution became important. Urban living conditions grew worse and included poor housing, inadequate roads, inhumane working conditions, unsanitary conditions for food processing, and so on. At the same time, those very changes created wealth at a remarkable rate, but it was disproportionately distributed to the new economic elite of the nation.

Not surprisingly, political movements arose in reaction to the new conditions. Political reform groups advocated transformation to a centralized and stronger government to confront the economic barons who were then the decentralized power sources. In the United States, the Progressive reform movement was successful. In Europe, the socialists and communists were successful. Starting in the 1880s, reforms moved toward a strong centralized role for government using strong executive leadership to address the national problems. In the United States, an early landmark reform was the adoption of the civil service. In America, the political centralizing reform movement existed in both major political parties. It was first championed within the Republican party by Theodore Roosevelt, and later, the reform movement gained success within the Democratic party under the leadership of Woodrow Wilson and Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Tide Shift

According to authors like Alvin Toffler, John Naisbitt, Robert Reich, and Peter Drucker, at the end of the 20th century another fundamental transformation took place. Power is again shifting right on schedule. The engine of the power shift is technology, with the computer being the current device. Since the middle 1900s, the computer has been converting society in fundamental ways, including revising organizational patterns from pyramid designs to largely web and often virtual associations that employ a much more decentralized approach to work. With this shift, most new jobs are no longer in manufacturing but rather in service or information activities. By the 1980s, the political mood of the people also started to move away from wanting strong national government policies toward favoring the new information elites in society who are decentralized from the traditional power centers in society. At the close of the 20th century, the mood in America no longer supported the strong national government actions that characterized the middle 20th century and its agenda of political reform.

In this yin and yang cycle of history, a change occurs that swings the power structure in society from its previous orientation. In the 20th century, the political-reform orientation began as an increasing centralization of power. Starting in mid-century, a major technological innovation, the computer, started to change the very nature of society. At the three-quarter mark in the century, a landmark political milestone occurred — President Nixon's resignation and its ensuing fallout, including several laws in the mid-1970s — that denoted a fundamental political alteration leading, ultimately, to society's assent to the decentralization reform of the state. Notice that the dominant political-reform movement started the 20th century by continuing the 19th century's centralizing of power. By the mid-century, however, power slowly began shifting to a decentralized political pattern, giving important advantages to a new decentralized economic elite. In this yin-and-yang cycle, political reform of a centralizing nature dominates for about 100 years, and then the political reform movement switches to a decentralizing nature for about 100 years. The primary causal factors of transformation emerge in mid-century and become apparent on the political scene at about the three-quarter mark of the century.

Given the repetitive nature of the cycle's pattern, there will be major disagreements on the role of government in society, with a nation's political parties playing a leadership role in the redefinition. In the events currently unfolding in the cycle, the fundamental reforms are being advocated, not surprisingly, by both political parties, with the initial successful reforms coming from the majority party of the last portion of

the previous century (i.e., the Democratic party in the United States). If the pattern prevails, the party associated with the previous century's dominant reform themes will have political successes at the end of this century, but that will last only a few elections. As was evidenced by the election campaigns of 2000 and 2004, the political split within America is remarkably even and, more remarkably, emotional with deep-seated fundamental differences within the electorate itself.

Eventually, the forces for lesser government will succeed in the 21st century. They will dominate the policy agenda for the next 75 years. However, halfway into the century, a major new technology will appear that will start transposing society again toward a centralization of power, and in about the 75th year, the leadership in the nation will clearly see the need to shift back to a strong national government with strong executive leadership. Wars and environmental emergencies are likely to interrupt this trend, but the overall trend will remain dominant until it starts to ebb seriously in the 75th year of the century.

During the decentralizing phase of the cycle, income distributions will move significantly away from the lower- and middle-income peoples to the upper economic elite. If the cycle maintains its pattern, concerns that are important to the whole population, such as the environment, will be addressed minimally unless those conditions negatively affect the well-being of the economic elite. Some sets of people will be particularly disadvantaged in this period, with the most likely set being those who have few skills and cannot benefit significantly from education. By the 40th through 60th year of the century, conditions will occur to accelerate the decentralization policy trend. By the 60th through the 70th year, the negative aspects of these policies will prompt political unrest.

Of course all of this speculation is based on the assumption that a yin-and-yang cycle exists. However, if it is true, the very nature of society and government will be significantly altered in the next few decades. In fact, those changes are already occurring. At the beginning of the 21st century, the success or failure of both private and public sectors are interconnected (Garofalo). Both have to operate efficiently, but more significantly, both have to complement each other. For example, public entities need to reform their budget and financial practices to increase not only their efficiency, but also to help the private sector increase its efficiency. Government must lead the competitive market with rapid change based on improving information technology and the knowledge explosion from the information highway. Government cannot be immune from the fundamental paradigm shift that is occurring in the world today (Tapscott and Caston 1993; Tapscott 1996).

Government reform takes place when society is not pleased with the results of government. That displeasure occurs when society is undergoing

rapid change and government's processes are not capable of adapting quickly enough. Under those conditions, reform is recognized as essential. Consider the new information age, where transformation is occurring the most quickly. If government slows up the reaction time to information change and the advantages that occur from an ability to process data quickly, then those government processes are the most likely target for reform. Government is itself information intensive. Today, the call for reform is not the old routine academic response to the death of one reform or another due to a shift in presidential leadership (Straussman: 83). Today, the call for reform is much more fundamental.

Rethinking Philosophy

Lens Prescription

The elements of a useful philosophy consistent with society in this information age are apparent. Increasingly, society is going to be decentralized, with nation-states seeing their power shift to both lower levels of government and to virtual supernational governments. For example, key services such as welfare are increasingly becoming a state activity, and "peace keeping" is being done by virtual supernational groups established for limited time-bound purposes. Increasingly, society needs to enable and even foster greater empowerment of its creative technical talent so that the quality of life in society can be significantly advanced. Such talent is both rare and easily frustrated by the conventional roadblocks of bureaucracy and red tape common in 20th-century society. In the 21st century, the challenge will be to foster, protect, and encourage talented people while maintaining the necessary other values critical to making a society work in a peaceful well-working world.

In the information age, networks and web communication and organization arrangements will become more common (Reich 1992). Such ideal working arrangements require (1) an overall agreement on the common mission for each such arrangement, (2) relatively equal knowledge and expertise among the partners so that no one partner is likely to take advantage of the relationship, (3) transparency, meaning honest and fully shared information, especially on group members' performance, and (4) a comparable ability to negotiate group arrangements among all parties. The philosophy of the information age should encourage these conditions to exist and be followed.

Partnerships or any arrangements, especially in the information age where shared talent is critical, must be based on mutual trust and shared purpose. In the information age, group members are highly dependent on other parties to perform their agreed-upon duties. If one group, or

even one person, begins to feel that another partner is not pulling its weight or is cheating, then the distrust can lead to frustration, anger, and even retaliation that will eventually destroy the fragile nature of the agreement. Each partner must feel that its expertise and actual work is acceptable, and it must be reasonably satisfied with its partners' work efforts. Such trust commonly must be earned over time based on earlier, more-limited relationships that worked well. It is like deposits in a bank account that accumulate interest over time. If the human-trust balance is kept high, a mistake can be forgiven (Covey 1987). In establishing such virtual partnerships, care must be taken to think through expectations, to create honest and useful information-monitoring systems, and to establish mechanisms that will be used when the partnership is ended.

In the 21st century, there is likely to be greater use of public and private partnerships. In such situations, each partner needs to approach the relationship with equal expertise in terms of establishing and following through on the arrangement. If one partner can bargain better and establishes an inequitable agreement, then dysfunctional attitudes are created that will hurt the whole effort over time. For example, if an information-technology contract between a developing country's government and a First World contractor gives good profits to the company but gives worthless machines to the government, then the people of the developing country are hurt, and the trust necessary for future relationships with the First World would be seriously harmed.

Needed: A New World Ethic

The information and industrial ages have raised the possibility of humankind "suicide." With its emphasis on the machine, the industrial age radically multiplied the muscle power of humankind. A person need only look at agriculture practices in many developing societies to see the small production resulting from a dependence on human muscle power that does not multiply itself with machines, and then contrast that to First World farming practices, with their high farm mechanization and high yield per farmer. The industrial age taught humankind that machines can radically enhance our muscle power. With its emphasis on the computer, the information age radically has and is multiplying the left-brain mental power of humankind. A person need only look at the formidable task of inventory control before the use of computers with bar-code and radio frequency identification (RFID) technology. The information age is teaching humankind that computers can radically enhance certain mental powers. The result of this remarkably enhanced humankind is our potential collective suicide.

Prior to being enhanced by the industrial and information ages, humankind was able to eliminate huge segments of itself and its envi-

ronment by such practices as war and foolish environmental policies. With the benefits of those two ages, humankind is now capable of accomplishing the same ends, but at a much grander scale. Three examples illustrate the challenge: First, military armament can cause much greater harm to more people than ever before; second, in spite of the fact that we can easily feed the world, more people are dying of hunger in our times; third, our environmental policies today cause vast deforestation and loss of wetlands, which in turn pushes more and more species of plants and wildlife into extinction.

Look into the mirror and see the problem. For almost all of us, the person who will do us the most harm in our life is ourselves. Our enemy is ourselves, both individually and collectively. Because we ignore our own responsibilities, we are literally killing ourselves, much like the cigarette smoker with cancer who refuses to quit smoking. We are in denial, and we cannot face up to our own responsibility for our fate. Our so-called progress has led to inhuman consequences we euphemistically label as the “side effects” of scientific progress, the “external effects” of economic success, and “collateral damage” in military operations. Although we are one people living on one planet, we refuse to think holistically and instead continue our lemminglike march toward “progress,” with all its side and external effects. Not only is a new covenant between humankind and God’s nature urgently needed, but the old covenant is being marginalized and considered foolish.

Mankind is in denial. The world today is a polycentric constellation of interrelated regions (e.g., North America, a changing former Soviet empire, the European Union community, and the Pacific Rim), but our vision remains riveted on key rival nation states (e.g., England, France, Germany, Japan, Russia, China, and the United States). Foreign policy is a matter of cooperative internationalism, but our vision remains imperialist and postcolonial. Economic policy is based on an eco-social market, but our vision is capitalism and postcapitalist. Social policy is postcapitalist and postsocialist, but our vision remains capitalist and socialist. Sexual equity is more than a male-female partnership, but our vision remains either patriarchal or a simple postpatriarchal society. Culturally, we are moving toward an overall plurality, but our vision remains diversity. Religiously, we are moving toward an ecumenical interreligious world, but our vision remains our religion against the others (Küng: 20).

Modernism and postmodernism produced a marginalized, relative, or absence of ethics and faith. Given the human condition, this is inadequate. Humans have an innate conscience, and as Kant noted, we must realize ourselves and shape our world (Küng: 49). To accommodate an enhanced humankind, we need to enhance our faith, and our ethics as an ethics-free or even as a relatively ethical society will not create an ethically

responsible people. Modernism and postmodernism cannot provide a reason for the absoluteness and universality of ethical obligation (Kung: 51). Without absoluteness and universality, the denial will continue, and the grounds for resolution do not exist. Mankind needs to move from a technology that dominates people to a technology that serves humanity. Humankind needs to move from industries that destroy the environment to industries that further the holistic interests and needs of men and women, including the need to be in harmony with nature. Humankind needs to move from a legalistically bound democracy to having freedom and justice that are reconciled (Küng: 20).

Humankind needs a world ethic so that we can survive ourselves. Humankind needs an enhanced faith and ethic to match the enhanced humankind that resulted from the previous industrial and information ages. We need a common ethical system grounded in a philosophical and theological theory of values and norms that directs our decisions and actions. But why? Why be moral? Why not, as Nietzsche tells us, accept that human beings are beyond good and evil? Why not lie, deceive, rob, or otherwise do what we wish if we have either no fear of discovery or can escape punishment? Why shouldn't politicians be corrupt as long as they agree with the briber and the briber's discretion is without question? Why should business people place limits on their profits given the capitalist system? Why should a scientist curb research that can hurt someone if no one can make that determination? Why shouldn't any people, race, religion, or group hate, harass, exile, or liquidate whomever they wish to if they can get away with it? (Kung: 26).

Being ethical is not only not being evil; it is also being good. Why should people be friendly, compassionate, and even ready to help others? Why should a person in business behave with absolute correctness, even when there are no controls or sanctions? Why shouldn't lawyers lie for their clients and present arguments they know to be false? Why shouldn't a person or set of persons show tolerance for another, even if they have no such tolerance? Why should a religion tolerate another religion when they believe the other religion is wrong? Why should leaders commit themselves to peace and always avoid war or conflict? (Kung: 27).

There are two answers: One is consequences or karma. When we are evil or refrain from being good, there are individual and collective consequences that we often do not comprehend until the consequences become real to us. Given the enhanced nature of humankind, consequences are also often enhanced. If those consequences do not hurt us individually but hurt others, we are often ignorant or choose to be ignorant of them. Nevertheless, we cannot divorce ourselves from the reality that we are all interconnected and that our demise is a joint undertaking. The second answer is relevant only to those of faith. The golden rule exists

in various forms in all faiths, and such action is linked directly to a belief in God. You should be ethical precisely because you believe in God. For many, this is the reason for their ethical behavior.

Toward a Global Ethic And Faith

The 1993 Parliament of the World Religions issued an initial declaration, and the words of the last two paragraphs are as follows:

In conclusion, we appeal to all the inhabitants of this planet. Earth cannot be changed for the better unless the consciousness of individuals is changed. We pledge to work for such transformation in individual and collective consciousness, for the awakening of our spiritual powers through reflection, meditation, prayer, or positive thinking, for a conversion of the heart. Together we can move mountains! Without a willingness to take risks and a readiness to sacrifice there can be no fundamental change in our situation! Therefore, we commit ourselves to a common global ethic, to better mutual understanding, as well as to socially beneficial, peace-fostering, and Earth-friendly ways of life.

We invite all men and women, whether religious or not, to do the same ("Towards a Global Ethic").

A common global ethic will be difficult to achieve, but it is more unlikely to be achieved outside the context of religion. Modernists and postmodernists do not provide a reason for absoluteness and universality of ethical obligation (Kung: 51). Neither of them have lenses of understanding that permit people to follow unconditional norms that run contrary to their interests. However, what is an ethic worth if it is not observed by everyone? What is an ethic worth if it is not unconditional and categorical? Modernism and postmodernism cannot place an unconditional inner obligation on anyone for anything, including human existence. Under modernism and postmodernism, ethics depends on consequences, but those consequences can be misunderstood, misperceived, or not perceived at all. Without consequences, modernism and postmodernism cannot say why anyone should be against killing hostages or be in favor of some good. Nietzsche's glorification of "beyond good and evil" removes the categorical imperative. The categorical quality of ethical demands cannot be grounded in modernism or postmodernism. It must be grounded in an Absolute that provides an overarching meaning that embraces,

permeates, and includes the whole of human society and, indeed, everything (Kung: 52–3).

Only the one unconditional in all that is conditional can provide a basis for the absoluteness and universality of ethical demand critical for the survival of enhanced humankind. The relative ethic can deteriorate into human arbitrariness, such as the Nazi experience. Only the bond to an infinite offers humankind the ultimate freedom in a world bound by the finite. This is not arguing that religious leaders and doctrines are not commonly dominated by human egos, quick to judge others while remarkably forgiving of themselves. There is too much history that demonstrates that the religious commit evil, but there is also too much history that demonstrates that the secularized also commit evil. Clearly, religions do distort that which purports to be sacred. Nevertheless, belief in God is critical to establishing a global ethic that can guide our enhanced humankind (Kung: 53).

Believers speak with absolute authority. They can and do shape the whole human existence for all peoples, including intellectual elites and the population. Believers can create an all-embracing horizon of meaning even in the face of suffering, injustice, guilt, and apparent meaninglessness. Belief can speak to supreme values, unconditional norms, deepest motivations, and ideals, and it can define responsibility. Belief can create feelings of home, trust, faith, certainty, self, security, and hope, regardless of one's circumstances. Belief can provide the justification for protest and even resistance against unrighteousness in spite of impossible conditions (Kung: 54).

Unfortunately, religions tend to focus on their particular version of belief rather than looking toward what defines the substance of all believers. Religions know all too well where each of them have differences in practice, but not how each of them share the same common spiritual wisdom. Religions focus on themselves and not on the wholeness of the Absolute that constitutes and defines the believer. Religions all share a concern for human well-being, and they all provide the basis for an unconditional global ethic and faith. In positive ways, religions can give unconditional meaning to human dignity, human freedom, and human rights that should always be nonnegotiable standards based on an unconditional Absolute (Kung: 56).

This is arguing that ethics is neither dogma nor tactics, as neither legalistic ethics nor the situation should dominate the other. Ethical norms without a situation are empty, and the situation without norms is ignorance. There is a synergistic relationship that requires human introspection and continual learning. Ethical norms should also help us illuminate the situation, just as we use situations to help us reconsider and interpret our ethical norms. Each of us must live our situation and go down our own

unique spiritual path, but we can and we will be faced with decisions that will be unconditional for us if we are believers and have ethics that are derived out of our beliefs. For us, we are always situationally defined, but certain situations leave the believer with categorical moral choices without any ifs or buts. For believers, there are universal normative constants that occur in the context of particular variables that can and are conditioned by situations (Kung: 57). In other words, we need always to apply the golden rule, but the context in which we apply it is always conditioned by our situation (Kung: 59).

By looking to the greatest thoughts on spiritual wisdom throughout recorded history, we can define a common spiritual wisdom that in time permits us to define a new world ethic. The key is to look for the common rather than the different. For example, what do all faiths share in common? An answer flows out of the proceedings of the Kyoto conference on religion and peace. That conference noted that we share:

- A conviction of the fundamental unity of the human family, of the equality and dignity of all human beings
- A sense of the sacredness of the individual person and his conscience
- A sense of the value of the human community
- A recognition that might is not right, that human power is not self-sufficient and absolute
- A belief that love, compassion, unselfishness, and the force of inner truthfulness and of the spirit have ultimately greater power than hate, enmity, and self-interest
- A sense of obligation to stand on the side of the poor and the oppressed as against the rich and the oppressors
- A profound hope that good will finally prevail (Kung: 63).

Conclusion

For the 21st century, this book argues that philosophy is relevant to public administration, and this chapter argues that philosophy needs to adopt a lens of understanding that is universal and unconditional rather than relativistic in character. This is true especially for matters of ethics if public administration is to be part of the process of establishing a global ethic. According to Sergiovanni (1992), the values now considered legitimate in society are biased toward rationality, objectivity, self-interest, individuality, and detachment. As a result, emotions, the importance of group membership, sense and meaning, morality, self-sacrifice, duty, and obligation are neglected. Today, public administrators at all levels are asking for ethical

models and ethical guidance (Garofalo). This chapter argues that a philosophy is needed that builds upon the spiritual wisdom of all recorded knowledge in such books as the Upanishads, the Bible, the Dhammapada, and the Koran.

Due to page limitations, a book of this character does not cover all the philosophers that could be included. One such philosopher is Immanuel Kant, who lived from 1724 to 1804. In some respects, he illustrates how spiritual wisdom can be included in the development of a philosophy. For example, Kant uses the New Testament's spiritual-wisdom phrase "Be wise as serpents and innocent as doves" to point out the conflict of politics and morals, but also to point out that this conflict causes humankind no real difficulty. Any conflict between politics and morality is to be resolved by the subordination of politics to morality, but there is much practical room for action, as any government official knows, before such a conflict must be resolved by subordination (Hassner: 594).

For the purposes of public administration, philosophy should be viewed as a lens of understanding that is both universal and contextual. It should be universal in using the infinite and constant of the Absolute, especially in developing a global ethic. It should be contextual in adapting to the changes in time and space. Humankind is constant, but the industrial and information ages have enhanced humankind to the point that our mutual demise is a very real potential unless we learn to act as one people on one planet. This is the context of the 21st century.

Again we can turn to Immanuel Kant for clarity. Humankind needs to apply Kant's "categorical imperative," which is based on the golden rule at the point of action to decide if that action is "ethical." To illustrate, let us say a person can borrow money, but he knows that he will not repay the loan. The ethical question is "Should he promise to do so nonetheless?" Kant says the man should use the categorical imperative and ask: "If everyone borrowing money acted in the same way, what would be the result?" Because his false promise would be dysfunctional to society, the man now knows that he should not make such a false promise. His concept is captured in the words: "Act so that the maxim of your action might be elevated by your will to be a universal law of nature." (Hassner: 590–1).

Another example from Kant illustrates his use of spiritual wisdom. The concept of karma exists in both Eastern and Western spiritual wisdom, and Kant uses that notion in his kingdom of ends. Kant argues for a kingdom of ends in which the duty of the individual is not addressed to the ruler, but rather to each member of the kingdom in the same degree. Duty is the practical necessity of acting according to the principle of reciprocity that defines the logic of the equality of human beings in dignity. In this kingdom, Kant argues, passion must be subordinated to reason. With this logic, Kant asserts: first, to respect the right of humanity in

oneself by refusing to allow others to treat one as a mere means and by demanding to be treated as an end; second, to harm no one; third, for the sake of the foregoing, to enter into a society in which the property of each can be guaranteed against the others. To Kant, the love of humanity is conditional, but respect for its rights is a sacred and absolute duty. To Kant, moral duty means that one must respect everyone's morally neutral rights, even if it is the right to immorality (Hassner: 592–3).

In summary of this chapter, we use lenses of understanding as we move through our lives, and philosophy can help us appreciate the impact of those lenses on our vision. The current modernist and post-modernist philosophies are not the correct prescriptions for the 21st century, with its enhanced humankind that can easily commit collective suicide without a firm global ethic. Fortunately, there is an alternative that builds on the spiritual wisdom found throughout our recorded history. Philosophy can use spiritual wisdom, as Kant did, and the result can be a lens prescription that enhances our ethical being to match the challenges of the new millennia.

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Handbook of Organization Theory and Management: The Philosophical Approach, Second Edition identifies and discusses many of the most important philosophies and movements that have influenced contemporary public administration. This textbook begins with the classics, explores the postmoderns, and ends with 21st-century views. The text details many of the greatest and a few of the lesser-known thinkers who have crafted the philosophical lens that we use to define and understand public administration.

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DK834X



Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
A CRC PRESS BOOK
www.taylorandfrancisgroup.com

6000 Broken Sound Parkway, NW
Suite 300, Boca Raton, FL 33487
270 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10016
2 Park Square, Milton Park
Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN, UK

ISBN 0-8493-3834-4

