

Refounding Public Administration

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Blackburn Manifesto

this in turn demands the guidance of wise leaders who hold on high a clear vision of the public interest. But proper administrative tools are essential. (Herring 1936: 3)

It is our belief that given the growth of technicism we will continue to witness the atomization of our social and political lives and the consequent growth of hyperpluralism (McSwain and White, forthcoming). This means that we cannot expect to see strong political parties as a source of governing impetuses. We can probably expect to see further efforts to remake the presidency of the Constitution into a plebiscitary chief executive, but we feel that there is real peril in moving in that direction. The only possible source of governing impetuses that might keep our complex political system from either a dangerous concentration of power on the one hand, or impotence or self-destruction on the other, is a public administration with the necessary professionalism, dedication, self-esteem, and legitimacy to act as the constitutional center of gravity. That is a stark statement that some will find shocking, but it is said not for its shock value but in the interest of plain speaking and candor. Without such a public administration, one dedicated to discovering the public interest in the midst of conflicting demands and clashing interests, we cannot expect the outcomes of our political system to be more than the lowest common denominator of the most powerful interests, the result of presidential aggrandizement, and/or the consequence of the denigration of public service. We can also expect more scandals such as Watergate, GSA, Iran-Contra, HUD, the savings and loan industry, or Pentagon Procurement. Which brings us to the final point that distinguishes the Blackburg Perspective from Minnowbrook I or other theoretical thrusts in public administration today—our concern for revitalizing the concept of the public interest.

As the reader will see, all the chapters are concerned with this idea of the public interest, but particularly Charles Goodsell's and mine. We refuse to accept the murder of a perfectly useful concept by Glendon Schubert (Schubert 1957). We hold with Pendleton Herring who over a half-century ago said, "This concept is to bureaucracy what the 'due process' clause is to the judiciary," or as James Fesler has said more recently—"It is for administrators what objectivity is for scholars." It is a crucially important ideal, and as Fesler says, "If there is not a public interest then we must denounce the idea of ideals—if it is illusory, so are justice, liberty and integrity" (897). If the concept is not alive and well, we must make it so and quickly.

Is this concern for resuscitating the concept of the public interest another example of "groundedness"? We think so. The normative impulses the academic wing of public administration had to suppress during the height of the behavioral revolution emerged clearly enough in Minnowbrook but suffered for lack of any conceptual or normative lodestar like the public interest (Hill 1988). Clearly it was needed. We will leave the explication and resuscitation of the concept to Charles Goodsell's able pen in Chapter 3.

We hope this attempt to contrast the Blackburg Perspective with the writings to emerge from the first Minnowbrook Conference is not misinterpreted as invidious. Nothing could be further from the truth. Minnowbrook I stands as the only significant event in public administration theory in nearly a half-century. Two of us were participants in Minnowbrook I, and six of us were invited and five of us were able to attend the second Minnowbrook conference that occurred as this chapter was written. The comparison is made solely for purposes of trying to locate the Blackburg Perspective within the intellectual ecology of public administration during the past few decades. In point of fact, I believe that when comparisons of Minnowbrook I and II are made we will see the same shift to "groundedness" in the second conference. We hope so, and we hope that our ideas in this volume are not too far from the intellectual mainstream of public administration thought. We will be happy if the chapters that follow merely catalyze, sharpen, or give voice to manifest concepts that are latent or only partially articulated in a body of scholarship and the related world of practice.

The chapter that follows sets forth the Blackburg Manifesto. It is very close to the form that was first read in a New York hotel suite. There is one major difference—one that did not change many of the words but which made a significant shift in the substance. We are speaking of the addition of Camilla Stivers's ideas on the role of citizens in the *The Public Administration*. Cam, who was one of our doctoral students, was such an intelligent critic and her ideas so consonant with our own that it seemed only sensible to add her as a co-author. Our reaction to her ideas was, "We *knew* something was missing! We wish we could have had your input from the beginning." Fortunately, it was not too late to add her ideas to this book.

In Chapter 2 John Rohr sets forth the constitutional case for *The Public Administration* that we prescribe. We have made it clear in the preceding pages why we feel this constitutional grounding is crucial for public administration but especially for *The Public Administration*. This is as good a place as any to indicate that we will use capitals when we mean to refer specifically to the prescribed ideal we advocate in contrast to the field as currently constituted.

In Chapter 3 Charles Goodsell does an excellent job of administering intellectual CPR to the long-comatose corpus of theory (pun intended) known as the public interest. We think it is the kind of rejoinder many of us have felt for years should have been made to Glendon Schubert's brilliant butchery but that we had come to assume we would never see. *The Public Administration* could never come into existence without a viable normative concept and powerful political symbol like the public interest. We doubt that one will often see Schubert footnoted from now on without its being accompanied by a Goodsell cite. More importantly, readers of the Goodsell chapter will never again be able to think about the concept in the cramped, negative, and narrowly positivistic way Schubert's work depicted it.

1. Public Administration and the Governance Process: Shifting the Political Dialogue

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Introduction

Nearly a century has passed since the appearance of Woodrow Wilson's essay "On the Study of Public Administration." Some of what he wrote seems to have a disturbingly prophetic quality. For example:

The weightier debates of constitutional principle are even yet by no means concluded; but they are no longer of more immediate practical moment than questions of administration. It is getting harder to *run* a constitution than to frame one.²

If those words have such a disturbing quality today it is doubtless because they have proven so painfully true for us as the twentieth century draws to a close. We have accomplished administrative wonders since Wilson penned those words: dug a canal connecting the world's great oceans; organized, equipped, and deployed millions of men and women to win two global wars; saved from collapse and altered the nature of the American political economy by massive administrative intervention during the Great Depression; organized scientists and workers in a secret and desperate race with Nazi Germany to develop a nuclear weapon; we built an interstate highway system of unmatched size and capacity; we have put together hundreds of organizations both public and private involving thousands of scientists and engineers and billions of dollars to place American footprints on the moon. The list could and should go on and on. Yet despite these and many other accomplishments, it "gets harder

to run a constitution." All our administrative accomplishments do not add to, and some wonder if in fact administration even contributes to, the stable and effective functioning of our political system. The essence, we believe, of what Wilson meant by "running a constitution" is a public administration that *does* result in the stable and effective functioning of our political system—in a way that steadily improves the quality of our lives and expands both equity and opportunity.

The problem then lies not simply in a lack of organizing and managerial skills, though we still have plenty of room for improvement. Rather it goes beyond, to the problem of governing a modern republic with a commitment to freedom and justice on the one hand and a commitment to a complex mixture of capitalism and state intervention on the other. Several contradictory pressures are thus generated. The commitment to freedom and justice creates pressures for equity but commitment to state capitalism creates a counterpressure for economic and social differentiation. The requirements of maintaining a vigorous economy in an increasingly competitive world and of maintaining world-power status in an increasingly dangerous environment create pressures for a rational, comprehensive, planning and policy process while our historical and constitutional tradition is based on fractionated power, overlapping jurisdictions, and disjointed incrementalism. The problems of public administration in America result from the difficulty of governing effectively such a political system; hence the difficulties of governing such a political system are not the result of, or caused by, public administration.

Rowland Egger sums up American history in a way that places our governance problem and the problems of bureaucracy in perspective. He points out that America has experienced four great social revolutions. The first was the revolution for independence, which set in motion forces of social change only partially crystallized and reflected in the great compromises of the Constitution; the second was the Jacksonian era, which marked our changed conceptions of who was entitled to participate in republican government; the third was the Civil War, which redefined the nature of the federal Union and further altered our definition of citizenship by making it national in character. There is, however, a fourth social revolution that is still in progress according to Egger. It began with the New Deal's response to the Great Depression and was given further impetus by the Civil Rights Movement now augmented by the Women's Movement. This revolution is in the process of redefining our concepts of justice and equity and our expectations of government's role in our efforts to find a uniquely American definition for these abstract concepts.

If this is a meaningful synopsis of our history then it becomes understandable, though no less lamentable, that America's public administration is caught in the eye of recurrent political storms: reviled by some because it does too much in pursuit of equity and justice, and by others who perceive it as doing too little. Both ends of the political spectrum have seen it at times as the ominous instrument of their opponent's will. Not only has it been forced to bear the

opprobrium of being seen as the "opponent's instrument," but it has also become the scapegoat for the general problems of what Theodore Lowi has aptly labeled "interest group liberalism": the parochialization of the public interest, the fragmentation and erosion of public purpose and the centrifugal pressures that have franchised pieces of public authority to policy subsystems. Although American public administration is not without blame for some of these maladies, it has as often as not been victim rather than perpetrator, "compliant with" rather than "cause of," and, indeed, it can be argued that it has often served as the strongest available counterweight to these disturbing tendencies.

Be that as it may, political leaders have increasingly used "bureaucracy" as an epithet. Presidents of both parties have made attacks on it the centerpieces of their campaigns, only to find that this tactic, so useful in getting elected, becomes a self-inflicted wound in the subsequent struggle to govern. The gap between our system's need for effective governance and the capacity of our elected officials to provide it widens at an alarming rate.

Government and the American Dialogue

Much of the denigration of bureaucracy has been a natural outgrowth of our politics. Jacksonian democracy was heavily freighted with negativism toward government because new groups wanted both access to it and control of it. Even though the Progressive movement ran counter to this, the residual negativism has been amplified by contemporary conservatism and by political actors from all parts of the spectrum who are frustrated by the problems that derive from interest group liberalism but that are blamed on government or, synonymously, bureaucracy. *Thus our political culture has come to include a pernicious mythology concerning the public sector and public administrators which needs to be corrected before the American dialogue can enter a new and meaningful phase.* Items:

Most clients of bureaucracy are not dissatisfied; in fact the vast majority of them are very pleased with the services and treatment received.

The rate of productivity increase in the public sector is not clearly lower than the private sector; it is probably higher overall.

The federal government has not grown in number of employees since the early 1950s.

The bureaucracy is not a monolith; it is composed of many small and diverse bureaus and offices.

Public agencies stimulate and implement change; resistance to change is no more endemic to the organizations in the public sector than to the private.

Studies have shown that the private sector is more top-heavy with administrative personnel than the public sector.

Waste and inefficiency are no more prevalent in the public sector than the private; but in the former it is seen as waste of the taxpayers money while in the latter we fail to see that it is passed on to us in the prices we pay as consumers.

But our purpose is neither to bury bureaucracy nor to praise it; rather we hope to take a step toward reconceptualizing it as The Public Administration. *Bureaucracy* in its technical sense refers to a form of social organization that is not confined to the public sector. We carry no brief for any particular organizational form. Our focus is on the *functions* of government agencies and not on how they might be organized. Thus we speak of "The Public Administration" as an institution of government rather than of bureaucracy as an organizational form.

We see no way of arresting the pathologies of our political system and coming to grips with the sizeable problems of our nation's political economy without a new way of thinking about, speaking of, and acting toward The Public Administration. This will not be a sufficient condition for the challenges we face, but it will assuredly be a necessary one.

There must be, then, a significant change in both the content and breadth of the American Dialogue. This dialogue juxtaposes, on the one hand, ideas associated with broadening and deepening personal liberty and, on the other, ideas associated with social equity, public order, fiscal soundness, and capital accumulation. Inevitable tension between these two sets of ideas has meant that disagreement about the nature and role of government has always been central to that dialogue, though it has worn different masks at different times. During the last half-century the disagreement has become particularly acute as we have sought to redefine liberty and equity while carrying out our fourth social revolution.

We have been socialized, for complex reasons that have to do with the nature of capitalism, to fail to see this as the core issue of the dialogue. Nonetheless the great national debates of our history have as often as not involved questions about the nature and role of "government" in the struggle between democracy and order. Today we feel it is imperative that an important shift take place in the dialogue. Our political rhetoric and symbols have become too far divorced from reality and the conditions we face. *We cannot preserve and revitalize American industry and our natural resources in the face of increasing global interdependence nor improve the quality of our lives, if our public dialogue is focused on whether or not government has any role in these matters or on how to reduce its role, while the reality of our world, our behavior, and our actions is of necessity trying to grapple with questions of "How?" and "What form is most effective?"*

As Dwight Waldo reminds us, only in America did we create such rhetorical and symbolic disjuncture between the concepts of "good government" and "good management". In the rest of the Occident there is a profound and natural linkage resulting from legal concepts and institutions rooted in Roman law. Americans sharply attenuated that linkage when they revolted against the British monarchy and then, a century later, "invented" what Waldo calls "self-conscious administration," which strove to be "scientific" with empirically discoverable and generally applicable principles. We believe that attenuation

fact. This is not to say they were less important for being rhetorical; indeed they may be more important for that very reason. One point, however, is that the nature and role of public administration were never far from the center of America's public dialogue; they were only camouflaged as questions about "government" rather than "public administration." Beginning with the Articles of Confederation and continuing down to this day, we have been arguing about liberty and order and the nature and role of "government" in the pulling and hauling between these polar abstractions. From the suppression of Shays's Revolt and the Whiskey Rebellion, the assumption of the states' debts by the national government, the building of post roads, the national roads, the granting of land by the government to railroads and canal companies, the Northwest Ordinance (which dedicated land in each territory to support public schools), through the Interstate Commerce Act, down to current debates over the sale of government-developed communication satellites to private enterprise, in all these we have been engaged in a national struggle to define the nature and role of "government" in the perilous evolution of some kind of ordered liberty. *We must therefore refocus the American dialogue from questions about the nature and role of "government" to questions about the nature and role of "public administration."* This would be a subtle but crucial shift in the American dialogue from questions of "whether" there should be a role for The Public Administration to questions of "what form?" that role should take.

Finally, as part of an effort to shift the American dialogue, we need to assert that The Public Administration, with the managerial skills which lie at its core and its experience in applying those skills in a political context, is, despite its problems, a major social asset. As a major social asset it should be subjected to constructive criticism but not diminished, denigrated, or decapitalized lightly or for short-run partisan advantage. There may well be a direct relationship between the attacks on The Public Administration and the erosion of civic morality evidenced in behavior ranging from corruption and tax evasion to vandalism and littering. Those who attack The Public Administration for partisan advantage are no friends of the Republic; indeed they inflict considerable harm on the body politic. Similarly, those engaged in decapitalizing and disassembling administrative capacity should recognize that subsequent ruling groups (some of them of their own political persuasion), and all citizens will have to pay the price of such foolish disinvestment. Though The Public Administration needs many improvements and alterations, the need for administrative capacity will only increase, not diminish. *One of the major political economic questions confronting the American political system, one that needs to be at the center of a refocused American dialogue is: which (not whether) government intentions and actions should be pursued through the public sector, that is, be a part of The Public Administration and therefore have its authority and legitimacy behind them while at the same time being subject to its constraints.*

The Public Administration's Distinctive Character

The Public Administration is, of course, centered on the executive branch but includes segments of all branches of government to the extent that they relate to the constitutional mandate of the executive: the faithful execution of the laws through our multileveled governmental system. Our position is pointedly historical and includes not only those things we might point to with pride, like the Hatch Act, but also those of which we are justly ashamed, like the Teapot Dome Scandal.

The Public Administration is distinctive in character. It has at its core generic management technologies that comprise its "administrative capacity." These are a vital part of its expertise and they closely resemble the technologies of management in the private sector. But Wallace Sayre puts it aptly when he says that business and public administration are alike in all *un-important* respects. For the Public Administration is more than generic management. It is the administration of public affairs in a political context. As Carl Friedrich noted a half-century ago, administration is the core of modern government; it is an application of state power for what we hope are moral and humane ends, but always with the possibility of being used otherwise. Since governance entails the state's rewarding and depriving in the name of society as a whole, and since politics is the art of gaining acceptance for those allocations, administration is an inextricable part of both governance and politics. Because of its role in rewarding and depriving, redistributing, distributing and regulating, and because it is the only set of institutions that can rightfully coerce to achieve society's ends, it is seldom viewed dispassionately. Rather it is, as Murray Edelman reminds us, an object against which the people displace fears, hopes, and anxieties. The Public Administration is inescapably fundamental to this displacement and therein lies its distinctive character. Its part in governance and the resultant political context means that: (1) the Public Administrator must engage not in a struggle for markets and profits but in a struggle with other actors in the political and governmental processes for jurisdiction, legitimacy, and resources; (2) those persons with whom he or she must interact possess distinctive perceptions, expectations, and levels of efficacy toward The Public Administration (e.g., the differences between consumers and citizens or suppliers and interest groups are profound); and (3) the requisite skills, foci of attention, and perceived tasks of The Public Administration differ markedly from private-sector management. These differences are so great that a manager successful in one sector will not be as successful in the other without considerable adaptiveness. To the degree that we lose sight of that distinction, to the same degree do we lose our vision of what The Public Administration is or can be.

The Public Administration is also self-consciously derived from, and focused upon, what we shall call an Agency Perspective. By agencies we mean

that are the instruments of action in pursuit of the public interest. A better understanding of the distinctiveness of The Public Administration must be built upon a greater appreciation of the institutional histories of agencies—their histories in a broad contextual sense—the history of an agency's political economy.

We feel this is appropriate and necessary because many of these *agencies are repositories of, and their staffs are trustees of, specialized knowledge, historical experience, time-tested wisdom, and most importantly, some degree of consensus as to the public interest relevant to a particular societal function.* Indeed the persons staffing these agencies have been charged with acting in the public interest and in executing the popular will in ways that sustain and nurture legitimacy for generations. The Agency Perspective is thus based on many years of struggle within the larger political system and the more limited governance process to achieve and enact some kind of consensus over specific aspects of public policy. Surely this unique task and experience is worth far more than we have been willing to acknowledge up until now.

That is not to say that the agencies have not been misdirected or misused by others or that they have not operated at times in self-serving ways. Indeed, as acknowledged earlier, agencies have contributed at times to the centrifugal pressures in American government, and in some respects they may have aided those who aimed to reduce their legitimate sphere, by neglecting substantive relationships with the ultimate source of legitimacy in governance, that is, the citizenry. But the dangers of parochialism are endemic to all organizations and they are, in the final analysis, perversions of the Agency Perspective. The Agency Perspective is intended only to serve public administrators as a "center of gravity" or a "gyroscope" as they go about their duties. On this solid foundation they must build a concern for broader public principles and values; in other words, a concern for the public interest.

As Max Weber pointed out, bureaucracy can be used for good or evil; how it is used depends on the human beings who staff it and direct it. Fortunately, over the grand sweep of American history, with exception made perhaps for the period between the election of Jackson and the passage of the Pendleton Act, agencies have for the most part been staffed by persons who have taken seriously the task of faithfully executing the popular will and the public interest. Although some have no doubt been concerned with a broader public interest, most have viewed that task through the lens of their agency and assumed, like the rest of us, that the broader public interest would emerge from the governance process as a whole. The point is that few groups in our society have been given as demanding a task as executing the public interest from any perspective. That task and the special skills and knowledge acquired by The Public Administration in performing it are worth far more than our present political dialogue allows.

Political elites have failed for self-serving reasons to credit agencies and

the public at large, cut off from the realities of administrative practice, has also failed to credit them. Most lamentably, The Public Administration has been too timid in pressing its rightful claims to legitimacy of which the Agency Perspective is the basic foundation, and too hesitant about building the sense of trust among citizens that would justify such claims.

Most recently we have also allowed The Public Administration to be diminished by the headlong rush to adopt a policy or program perspective with an excessive focus on output without balancing it by concern for the public good. The two are often erroneously assumed to be synonymous, when in fact they are not. An agency can produce outputs inimicable to the long-range public interest; as well as short-run "results" that can have devastating effects on its infrastructure and capabilities and, most importantly, the future public good. A park service, for example, can process a larger number of visitors through facilities that it is overloading and allowing to decay through lack of maintenance. It is therefore possible for an agency to be "responsive" to immediate pressures while simultaneously being irresponsible with regard to the public interest. One of the characteristics of the Agency Perspective and of The Public Administration therefore should be a prudent and reasoned attention to agency performance, one in which consideration is given both to the short and long-run consequences, qualitative as well as quantitative measures; and one which rejects "the bottom line" as a slogan antithetical to good public administration.

Although public policy analysis and program evaluations used wisely can be valuable in carrying out the public business and in demonstrating agency performance, they are not ends in themselves, and simplistic use and clever abuse must be constantly guarded against. In executive agencies these techniques make sense only when viewed as part of the ongoing processes of administration. *Policy analysis, program evaluation, and decision sciences when applied within executive agencies should be subordinated to an agency perspective and to core management process. Too often the former have been allowed to intrude upon this perspective and these processes and have been detrimental to good public administration and inconsistent with their own aims.*

A particularly corrosive influence on the Agency Perspective came from humanistic psychology and a variety of cultural dynamics during the 1960s. We refer to the denigration of the role of authority in the administrative process and management relationships. The adolescent texture of the 1960s cultural upheaval wore heavily on our traditional concepts of authority within agencies. Now, in cooler retrospect, it is time to correct the misconceptions that arose from the debate of the traditionalists and the humanists in organization theory on this issue.

We need to note, first, that the traditional point of view was incorrect to the extent that it sought to base obedience to authority purely on the principle of deference and depicted the use of managerial authority as a tool by which managers could improve performance (the "shape up or ship out" position). This perspective was correct, however, in depicting the human situation as one

requiring authority to check our sometimes capricious tendencies. In particular, the traditional view is correct in seeing that encounter with authority is an essential and positive part of the maturation process, not only in adolescence but throughout life; and for superiors and subordinates alike.

By the same token, the humanists were incorrect in carrying their attack on authority to the point of denying that it plays a needed role in institutional life—implying that it can thereby be replaced completely by processes of participation. They were, however, providing a helpful corrective to the traditional view by their call for more openness in the use of authority and for the establishment of a greater degree of mutual confidence in organizations.

What we can distill from this debate is the idea that authority is not as useful as feedback and other "humanistic" communication devices for improving performance in administration, but it is essential for dealing effectively with the intractable problem of compliance on issues wherein reasonable persons can disagree. It is these issues of compliance on which hinge both the personal development of managers and the people they manage, as well as the effectiveness of agencies in implementing public policies and programs. In sum, the message here is that *the vitality of the Agency Perspective, the health of The Public Administration, and the self-concept of the Public Administrator hinge upon our return to a fuller appreciation of the positive role of authority in administration.* This appreciation, in essence a form of trust, will develop among citizens to the extent that administrators communicate the realities of administrative practice so that citizens can understand them, and ultimately acknowledge the legitimacy of administrative authority.

The distinctive Agency Perspective is one that deserves greater legitimacy than it has received from our political culture. The very nature of the role the Agency plays in governance leads it inevitably to develop a distinctive perspective on the public interest. The Public Administration which rests upon the Agency Perspective as a foundation thus has an historic, covenantal, organic, and constitutional legitimacy that needs illumination. Many agencies at all levels of our political system have been with us from our genesis as a nation; some are even suggested in the text of the Constitution.

The distinctive nature of The Public Administration lies in the fact that it is a part of the governance process, that it is administration in a political context and competence directed *toward the public interest*. This sets it apart from management in business and provides the basis for a truly distinctive claim to status that has been too long ignored. The claim ought to rest, however, on more than competence to manage in a political context. It must also rest on a claim of competence in the maintenance of (1) the Agency Perspective; (2) the broadest possible public interest; and (3) the constitutional governance process.

The "public interest" has, of course, long been derided, particularly by social scientists, as a meaningless concept at best, a mask for arrogant despotism at worst. But setting aside for a moment the difficulties of defining its contents precisely, it is ironic that many social scientists prefer to be concerned with

behavior but ignore the fact that the concept has a day-to-day, commonsensical, practical salience for the behavior of hundreds of thousands of Public Administrators. Caught as they are in the struggle of conflicting interests—sometimes as interpreters, other times as decision makers, and even at times as victims—they understand intuitively that the containment if not the resolution of that conflict is rooted in some notion of the public interest even though some may use the concept cynically or self-servingly. It is therefore a concrete, living, behavioral reality in spite of our problems in defining its specific content.³

The approach traditionally imposed for defining the concept has, however, led us astray by making a definition impossible. This approach has been to ask, "What is the public interest in terms of the *content* of given policy situations?" This question may never be answered. But, by shifting our perspective from specific content to an *ideal* and a *process*, and the emphasis from a search for certainty to recognition of the problematic nature of the public interest, the problem is no longer insoluble. In this vein, the "public interest" refers to a combination of several habits of mind in making decisions and making policy: attempting to deal with the *multiple* ramifications of an issue rather than a select few; seeking to incorporate the *long-range* view into deliberations, to balance a natural tendency toward excessive concern with short-term results; considering *competing* demands and requirements of affected individuals and groups, not one position; proceeding equipped with *more* knowledge and information rather than less; and recognizing that to say that the "public interest" is problematic is not to say it is meaningless.

Although this type of definition will not satisfy those who have been accustomed to posing the issue in substantive and finite terms, an ideal and process-defined norm is not that unusual—either as practical guidepost or positive symbol. The democrat endorses majoritarianism; the civil libertarian extols due process; lawyers cherish an adversarial legal process. We recommend approaching, if not defining, the public interest in the same spirit. Even the strongest opponent of the public interest concept, the economic conservative, is committed to an ideal and process-oriented norm, the competitive market.

Because this definition does not provide us with given policy or option answers, it invites the charge that the public administrator who lays claim to protecting the public interest is merely insisting on his agency's definition of what is "right." Such misplaced absoluteness constantly occurs on the part of public administrators as well as others. All must recognize the subjective elements in any conclusion as to which choice is "right," and indeed that "certainty" about the public interest is a dubious and perhaps dangerous posture. (Many of those involved in the Watergate Affair were certain that the public interest was embodied in the president's position.) At the same time, it can be said that all decision criteria are ultimately matters of agreement among relevant individuals. The key to the legitimacy of any criterion, including the public

interest, is not whether it is subjective but whether all those who have a stake in the matter at hand have had the opportunity to share in defining it.

Although we feel that a commitment to a public interest viewed as an ideal, a process, and a habit of mind is the soundest ground for the concept, we would not preclude others. For example, the search in a positivist tradition for the specific content of the public interest has blinded us to another possible approach regarding its nature. It can be argued that we have already learned, believe, and know a good deal about what the public interest is *not*. Defining something negatively may be unsettling for those of us educated in contemporary social science, but it is commonplace in our everyday lives and in such diverse fields as theology and developmental psychology. In theology, for example, the transcendent is often undefinable and is therefore discussed in terms of what it is not. And in what may be a meaningful analog for The Public Administration and the public interest, Rollo May suggests that the human capacity to say and mean "no" is the most significant first statement of self-discovery—that is, knowing what we are not must, of necessity, occur well before knowing what we are.⁴ Thus although we ought to continue to define the public interest in terms of a process, the pursuit of a positive but ever-problematic public interest could conceivably begin by explicating it negatively. We know, for example, that racism is not in the public interest. We may well debate what constitutes a manifestation of racism, but even on that issue we already have considerable definition in statutes, administrative regulations, and court interpretations. We probably have even more consensus on what constitutes racism than we realize; it is simply not well explicated. Starting with the negative as a means of explicating the public interest may yield more insight than a positivist approach has admitted thus far.

In speaking about The Public Administration's distinctive relationship to the "public interest" we thus wish to remain open to the idea that its content, however elusive and problematic, might yet to some degree be definable. But more important we think is the point that although the content of the public interest remains problematic, when an institutionalized tradition and support system exist to nurture a process *emphasizing* the relatively comprehensive, long-term, deliberative, and informed efforts essential to the search for the public interest, the chances increase that action will follow in accord with these values. Whatever the weaknesses of The Public Administration, it provides more of an institutionalized tradition of this kind than other elements of society or other actors in the political process, certainly more than political parties, interest groups, or mass media. Surely The Public Administration does not "know" the content of the public interest; but it is in a relatively good position to nurture the kind of process essential for its ongoing pursuit, particularly when it takes the enlarged view of the process that encompasses efforts to render faithful interpretations of the interests of all relevant stakeholders, including citizens at large.

The practical and beneficial consequence for The Public Administration of accepting the public interest as ever problematic may be a perspective that fosters: (1) tentative steps and experimental action rather than our typical "solutions" for this or "wars" on that; (2) curiosity and dialogue about ends as well as means; (3) individuals and institutions that "learn" as well as respond; (4) humility and skepticism about "grand designs"; (5) greater awareness of the unique responsibility and potential contribution of each individual to a national dialogue about the public interest; and (6) a greater attentiveness to the words of public discourse.⁵

Recognition of the distinctive character of The Public Administration can also be greatly enhanced if its academic community comes to a new and important point of resolution and clarity in the venerable question of whether or not there is a politics-administration dichotomy. First we must acknowledge that public administration theory detoured sharply into an intellectual cul-de-sac when some of us followed Herbert Simon's attempt to establish a fact-value dichotomy. We also erred in following too closely the organizational sociologists in their narrower quest to understand complex organizations. Both efforts led us astray from the important debate over a politics-administration dichotomy that had been carried on by Wilson, Goodnow, Gaus, White, Appleby, Waldo, and others. Our temporary obsession with behavioralism and our attempts to stay in step with political science, which was in the heat of its own behavioral fad, delayed moving on to a clearer resolution of the politics-administration dichotomy. Organizational sociology and business administration were never interested in questions of governance, and political science drifted farther and farther from such concerns and pulled public administration with it.

The path to a point of clarity on the dichotomy rests on grasping that the distinction between the two phenomena must be understood on three different levels. First we need to recognize that at the highest level, speaking descriptively and conceptually, there is no dichotomy. Public administration at this level of abstraction is an integral part of the governance and political processes. We need to comprehend this point as the beginning of our understanding of The Public Administration's role in the political system and the governance process. But in establishing that point over several decades, we have lost sight of the fact that at a second level of meaning (again speaking descriptively), at a less abstract level of behavior and action, there is, and always has been, if not a dichotomy, at least a considerable distinction. Persons in the governance and political processes seek to make and maintain a distinction between roles, behavior, situations, and phenomena that are political and those that are administrative. Sometimes the distinction is made self-servingly or even cynically; but it is made nonetheless. To ignore it is to ignore behavioral and empirical reality, and to do that is to thwart description and understanding of the behavioral phenomena we label public administration.

Finally, at a third level of meaning, if we speak prescriptively and normatively to those persons involved in ruling and governing, we feel we should acknowledge, elucidate, and extend the distinction between politics and administration. We need to help clarify and nurture the distinction between political and administrative roles and better understand and elaborate upon the distinction between ruling and governing. That distinction, at this third level of meaning, is crucial if The Public Administration is to be accepted, not least by the public at large, as a legitimate and valued part of the political process in general and the governance process more particularly.

The emergence of judges and courts as legitimate and valued actors and institutions in the governance process ("of" but not "in" politics) can serve as an analog. In the evolution of the English political system judges began as agents of the king, traveling the realm settling disputes in his name. Their work might best be looked upon as an early form of nation building. Their reputation for fairness fixed in the public mind a well-founded belief in the superiority of royal justice over the justice administered in the courts of the barons. These royal judges developed the common law—a law that was common throughout the realm and of a higher quality than the particularistic law of the feudal manors. Eventually, however, these royal officers developed distinctive symbols, ritual, language, a way of reasoning, and a claim to expertise and legitimacy that gave them a stature and role distinct from the king's—one that would lead them to use the law and their claim to be its legitimate interpreters to stand in opposition (but a loyal opposition) to the king. This development was taken even further on this side of the Atlantic when Chief Justice Marshall's adroit handling of *Marbury v. Madison* established the basis of the Supreme Court's claim to judicial review of the constitutionality of acts of Congress.

Like the judicial system, *The Public Administration needs to assert, but also to be granted, its propriety and legitimacy as an institution. It should assert the value of the Agency Perspective in effective functioning of the political system, the value and legitimacy of the Public Administrator as an actor in the governing process, and the distinctiveness and worth of his or her role—competence directed to the maintenance of: the Agency Perspective, the broadest possible understanding of public interest, and the constitutional governance process.* If this is done, and done far more successfully than it has been to date, it is conceivable that civilian Public Administrators, like judges before them or like their military colleagues today, could question a directive of their political superiors and have the question regarded as a sober second thought rather than as an act of bureaucratic sabotage. When that can happen The Public Administration, the Public Administrator, and our political system will have come of age. It may be, however, that just as the judicial agents of the king developed their reputation by going out among the people and visibly demonstrated the superiority of their practice, The Public Administration's assertion of legitimacy will need to be founded on more direct linkages with the people, in order to win their trust.

The Public Administration and Capitalism

In *The Administrative State*, Dwight Waldo questioned whether the rationalistic mentality reflected in the literature of public administration to that point could sufficiently comprehend what he called the "imponderable emotional substructure" of society. His point seems to have been that this aspect of social life had to be adequately understood if general social health were to be ensured. We wish to address this question in its current form in the United States, though we feel that our suggestion might have more general implications.

In our view social health, as with individual health, depends critically upon the existence of a reflexive relationship between the emotional substructure or unconscious and the conscious side of the human process. This reflexive relationship requires on the one hand a relative openness to the designs of the unconscious that emerge in ambition, pursuit of personal agendas, risk, and adventure. On the other hand, it also requires that these designs of the unconscious be juxtaposed with collective needs and concerns and with needs for introspection, judgment, and moral reasoning applied to matters affecting others beyond the expression and gratification of selfish impulse. In the case of the United States, it seems that capitalism as an institutional form has well provided for one half of the reflexivity equation. The genius of the market is that it can so quickly and easily give expression to emergent needs, tendencies, and tastes that are constantly forming and seeking vent in the collective unconscious. It is this aspect of capitalism that leads advocates of laissez-faire to equate (and to some degree correctly so) capitalism with freedom. In this sense at least, suppression of the emotional substructure is hardly a problem in capitalist society. Growth and development, stemming from unconscious impulses whether economic, social, or psychological, can take place relatively unimpeded for most of our people with the exception perhaps of a disturbingly persistent "underclass."

But capitalism has been notably less successful in providing the other side of the reflexivity equation. The marketplace can so facilitate the expression of the unconscious or emotional substructure that it can overwhelm the conscious side of society. As wants are expressed and satisfied with increasing speed and facility, a point can be reached where new wants are created by the process itself. Gratification divorced from content and substance becomes the motivating orientation of individuals and eventually of society itself. When this happens, societal bearings are lost, points of reference, both moral and practical, become obscure, and public standards that are essential for the exercise of collective human discretion and judgment fail us. Hence, the market is a necessary but insufficient device for maintaining our social well-being. Public authority, expressed through stable institutions of the Public Administration, is essential as a cooling, containing, and directing foil to the capitalist marketplace. Such institutions, indeed, must represent the collective consciousness of our society and serve as the vehicle for our efforts to bring to bear knowledge,

reason, and moral judgment on both our problems and the design of our future. Capitalism in our case has been helpful in releasing the energy required to move our societal ship. It cannot by itself, however, give it adequate navigation. We must look to The Public Administration, under the captaincy of our political institutions, for this.

The Public Administration and the Constitution

Our political rhetoric and symbols are badly out of synchronization with our "enacted constitution" or at least with a Federalist interpretation of it. For that interpretation encouraged and anticipated The Public Administration. Unfortunately existing public administration theory is distressingly weak on this point and members of The Public Administration have themselves forgotten or failed to grasp it. Instead they have sought simply to emphasize their nonpartisan instrumentalism and to emulate management practices of business. Valuable though a claim of nonpartisan instrumentalism was in the emergence of The Public Administration at the turn of the century, it is neither well grounded in the Constitution nor adequate to the role demands of the late twentieth century. The Constitution to some extent explicitly and to a greater extent implicitly and through historic practice has assigned a more demanding and significant role to The Public Administration. We have all known since our first civics class that our Constitution is designed to preserve freedom by dividing power, but we do not always connect that profound truth with our circumstances as public administrators. It means, of course, that in the never-ending battle between the chief executive, the legislature, and the courts, The Public Administration is a "free-fire zone" and that the Public Administrators serve as targets of opportunity for the combatants.

When we assert that the Constitution, or at least a Federalist interpretation of it, anticipated The Public Administration, do we mean that the framers thought of it in the bleak metaphors of war used above? Assuredly not. With the possible exception of Hamilton at his most prescient, they did not foresee The Public Administration of today anymore than they could have foreseen the myriad changes in other institutions that have come to pass. But the history of the earliest days of the Republic (and indeed the actions of some of the framers themselves) show that as soon as the constitutional drama began to unfold, the Public Administrators were the persons in no-man's land who were left with ambiguities and a discretion that was viewed, on the one hand, as a threat to them (and to others) and, on the other, as a challenging opportunity to keep the constitutional process from becoming a stalemate in which the public interest would be the ultimate casualty.

In dealing with its constitutionally derived ambiguity and discretion The Public Administration must always act within the constraints imposed by its origin in covenant, a covenant manifested in the Constitution, the Civil Service Reform tradition, and historic experience. The word covenant has sacral over-

tones that are not altogether inappropriate for our purposes. But its secular usage preserves its fundamental sense of a solemn agreement on obligations between parties, and that would seem to capture what The Public Administration was, is, and ought to be: a solemn agreement between the Public Administrator and the citizens he or she serves; an agreement to serve the public with competence directed toward the public interest and the maintenance of a democratic process of governance; competence constrained by the vitality of the constitutional heritage, the law, and our common history as a people. The Public Administration therefore should look to the past as prologue to the great public dialogue that inspires a free society. The Constitution should thus be viewed not as "The Word" but as "The Living Word."

The Public Administration should be neither monolithic nor homogeneous. It must assume a rich diversity of perspectives born of differentiation and specialization and ought to welcome constructive criticism from within and without. Differing perspectives ought to be granted a legitimacy, that is, they ought not to be judged as *ipso facto* self-serving, but as a part of the constitutional heritage of robust public dialogue. In this respect the Public Administration is an analog to the pluralism of the larger political process with all the attendant assets and liabilities plus one: the opportunity and the moral obligation to strive explicitly to achieve the broadest possible public interest, something theories of pluralism trust to an invisible hand. Thus the conflict among the differing perspectives of The Public Administration is a valuable part of the creative tension so essential to a healthy American dialogue.

If The Public Administration asserts and accepts its moral authority and rightful claim to be a constitutionally legitimate participant in the governance process, it can contribute to the correction of a major defect in the Constitution: its unsatisfactory resolution of the problem of representation. This problem was the centerpiece of George Mason's brilliant argument against ratification and was a source of embarrassment to such staunch Federalists as Washington and Hamilton. Both friends and foes of the Constitution wondered how the 65 members of the House would represent more than 3 million people. Today we ask how 435 members can represent a nation of more than 246 million people. Pluralist theory and the bureaucratic-politics school of thought have tried to suggest that the competition of interest groups is the best assurance of representation of all the people and that the public interest emerges as the vector sum of all interest group pressures. Although such a claim is not without merit, it has never been convincingly demonstrated and has been subjected to devastating criticism. It remains all too painfully clear that not all citizens and interests are represented by interest groups.

In light of this constitutional defect, The Public Administration as an institution of government has as valid a claim to being representative of the people in both a sociological and functional sense as a federal judge appointed for life, a freshman congressman narrowly elected by a small percentage of the citizens in southeast Nebraska or a senator from Rhode Island. For that matter The

Public Administration may be as representative of the people as a whole as a president elected by a coalition of voting blocs and interest groups claiming victory based on less than 51 percent of the popular vote and 29.9 percent of the eligible voters, which in turn is approximately 19 percent of the total populace. Political commentators have erred in looking for representation from elected officials alone.

It is time for us to advance the proposition that the popular will does not reside solely in elected officials but in a constitutional order that envisions a remarkable variety of legitimate titles to participate in governance. The Public Administration, created by statutes based on this constitutional order, holds one of these titles. Its role, therefore, is not to cower before a sovereign legislative assembly or a sovereign elected executive. Our tradition and our constitution know no such sovereign. Rather the task of The Public Administration is to share in governing wisely and well the constitutional order that the framers of the Constitution intended as an expression of the will of the people who alone are sovereign.

The Public Administration and the Public Administrator

We have spoken at length of The Public Administration—we now wish to speak more specifically of how it relates to our ideas about the Public Administrator.

As a critical first point, we need to remind ourselves that the Public Administrator takes an oath to uphold the Constitution of the United States—not the whims of the powerful. This oath initiates administrators into a community created by that Constitution and obliges them to know and support constitutional principles that affect their official spheres of public service. When law empowers rather than commands, that is, when it confers discretion upon administrators instead of issuing specific orders to them, the administrators' oath obliges them to exercise their discretion in a manner that is informed and guided by broad constitutional values as well as more immediate, short-term considerations.

Much has been said in recent years on the development of professionalism in the public administration and its meaning. What is important from the point of view of this essay is not so much whether the Public Administrator is or is not a member of a profession, or whether he or she has achieved a right to claim professional status. Rather, what is important is that the Public Administrator acts in a professional manner in the sense of a concern for the development of competence and standards, an orientation toward service, and a set of values that regards the broadest possible definition of the public interest as a real although problematic trust, and, above all, which holds the maintenance of the constitutional order as a fundamental duty. To act in a professional manner, for the Public Administrator, is to use expertise and competence toward these ends.

The more significant perspective on professionalism is thus to see the Public Administrator as a trustee and a legitimate and significant participant in the governance process of society.

As a trustee the Public Administrator must strive to look beyond both the political pressures of the day and a degrading self-image of mere instrumentalism. He or she should strive for a role that is "critically conscious": purposive in pursuit of the public interest and in maintaining the democratic governance process but disciplined by the rule of law and constitutional tradition of limited government; and conscious of the need at times to prudently accommodate powerful forces that may represent a temporary retreat from, or pause in, pursuit of the broadest possible definition of the public interest. Progress toward both the agency perspective and the broader public interest may not always be steady or forward.

The Public Administrator, however, must be steadfast and persistent, heeding Hamlet's advice to "play to the judicious few," rather than the vociferous many or the powerful few, to play to the long-term public interest rather than the most immediate and powerful pressures. And we need to remind ourselves that the "judicious few" need not be a small, closed, elite group. It has no preordained limits to its size. It is after all, an article of democratic faith—or at least an object of democratic hope—that the judicious few might become the judicious many. It is the duty of the Public Administrator to work to expand the ranks of the judicious few—by stimulating reasoned debate on the meaning of the public interest and by taking advantage of opportunities to facilitate substantive involvement by citizens in the governance process. The judicious few will only become the judicious many when more of the people develop the practical wisdom that is the essence of politics. This wisdom is best learned in the course of public-sphere activity itself. As the success of numerous publicly funded programs run by citizens attests, the administrative state is neither too big nor too complex for meaningful citizen involvement.

In large measure, it is the bureaucrat's faith in technical expertise and in the possibility of comprehensive solutions that makes him or her hesitant to turn to citizens. But the uncertainty and complexity of modern-day governance demand not comprehensiveness but tentative strategies, social interaction, and frequent feedback and adjustment. From this perspective, the postindustrial administrative state is *not only inconsistent* with involvement by citizens, *but it positively discourages it.*

Much has also been written about making the bureaucrat responsive and responsible. The Public Administrator must indeed act responsibly, and this means being responsive to constitutionally and legally valid orders that are specific. Responsiveness also means being attuned to the clientele that are served. The responsiveness of the Public Administrator to either elected officials or clients should not, however, be "seismographic" nor that of a "hired lackey," nor even that of a "faithful servant," for it must be more in order to be responsible in the highest sense of that word. Nor should it be the responsive-

ness of an artful dodger working between and among the forces resulting from interest group pressures, for it must be more than that. Rather the Public Administrator can only be responsible if his or her responsiveness is that of a trustee of that special perspective shaped by the agency's point of view, a public interest perspective and fidelity to the constitutional heritage.

This means that the responsiveness called for is one that conforms to the Public Administrator's ultimate responsibility, which like that of all governmental officers is to the constitutional order and the democratic governance process. This means that in their role as trustees the Public Administrators may have to incline their agencies' responsiveness toward the president at one point and toward Congress at another, or at other times toward the courts or interest groups that are likely to serve the long-term public interest as the agency sees it. Less often, it may mean that the Public Administrators must act on behalf of a public interest defined more broadly than the Agency Perspective, or on rare occasions they may have to act on behalf of the maintenance of the democratic governance process. This means, in essence, that the Public Administrators may have to play the role of balance wheel in the constitutional order, using their statutory powers and professional expertise to favor whichever participant in the constitutional process needs their help at a given time in history to preserve the purposes of the Constitutions itself.

Inevitably some will view The Public Administration merely as a means to status and power and some will pervert their duty into a sinecure. In spite of the inevitable human frailties of a few, despite its erosion by careerism and the fragmenting pressures of specialization, and in spite of its current detractors, The Public Administration has been, and remains, a vocation given meaning in the service of a "cause." In the everyday words of public administration, this cause is characterized as being a "civil servant," "career executive," or "public employee." With a self-conscious shift in the American dialogue we feel that the sense of a calling will grow and flourish in The Public Administration and Public Administrators as never before—more will live "for" it as a "cause" and fewer "off" it from less noble impulses.

Certainly the founders of the Republic viewed public service as a "calling" and as a trusteeship; so did the idealistic reformers who came later in our history: the Populists, the Progressives, and the New Dealers. If we have not yet lost that vision, it is certainly in grave peril.

Much of our loss of transcendent vision has been brought on by our concern for professional status. We have paid a heavy price for adopting too slavishly the trappings of science believed essential to a claim of expertise. A focus on the *means* of governance—as in management science, systems analysis, PPBS, and program evaluation—is important to a claim of expertise. But when we focus on these means to the exclusion of claims of transcendent purposes and moral commitment to community building, or of enhancement of freedom and dignity and the improvement of the quality of citizens' lives, we erode the legitimacy of The Public Administration and reduce the Public Administrator

to just one more profession or interest group. We have let our vision slip from transcendent purposes and moral commitment to a narrow focus on the application of "value neutral" instrumentalism. It has cost us and the nation dearly.

The code of behavior of the Public Administrator must be broadened to include approaches to practice that will support this transcendent commitment. First, as we have said, administrators must seek to expand opportunities for direct citizen involvement in governance, so that citizens develop the practical wisdom that is the ultimate basis of trust in administrative good faith. Also, administrators must develop personal reflexivity, that is, consciousness of their own values and assumptions and how they affect daily decision making. Such consciousness will enable them to become critical of established institutional practices that inhibit the expansion of freedom and justice, and work toward change where it is possible. Finally, administrators must be able to give reasons for what they do. Though established practices may frequently preclude direct dialogue with relevant stakeholders, it is the administrator's responsibility to consider who all these stakeholders may be, what their concerns are, and what reasons he or she would give for a decisive action if dialogue were possible.

The Public Administrator must assume that the human condition can be improved though never perfected. He or she should work for the amelioration of societal problems without expecting quick, cheap, or permanent solutions. The Public Administrator should work with the knowledge that some problems can best be alleviated by outcomes of the market or the use of marketlike devices whereas others can best be met by some form of state intervention. Although Public Administrators must be responsive to ideological or party-based views of elected officials on social problems, they must also provide them with sound analysis and feasible options based on their special competence. The Public Administrator should thus be both an analyst and an educator but *not* a philosopher-king or mandarin. He or she must work for the long-term education of elected officials, other actors in the governance process, and citizens at large on matters of public interest, and assume that this will often be a thankless and arduous task.

The Public Administrator should be committed to (1) praxis, critically conscious action or pursuit of goals; and (2) reflectiveness, thoughtful and critical assessment of action taken, in order to learn from experience. Both praxis and reflectiveness are essential to a role that directs its competence toward the kind of transcendent purposes we have outlined. They are also essential to more specific, day-to-day goals of serving the public with grace and dignity, of respecting the public while at the same time respecting one's self and one's peers.

Conclusion

Whether or not the Public Administrator and The Public Administration are living up to the prescriptive ideals we have outlined is a question that must be

repeatedly asked and answered as honestly as possible. There are inherent problems and pathologies that we deny or ignore at our peril. Thus, those of us in the academic community associated with The Public Administration have a special task that goes beyond producing the necessary skills and expertise in new members or even helping instill the transcendent purpose. It is the special task of constructive and friendly criticism. It requires caring enough to be critical in a constructive way.

We also have a special responsibility to play a leading role in refocusing the American dialogue, a duty all too neglected of late by most of us. Accordingly we hope this paper will serve in a small way to initiate the desperately needed refocus of the American dialogue, a change essential if we are successfully to conclude Egger's fourth revolution to redefine equity and justice. Seeking to redefine equity and justice in a system that remains in large part capitalistic, which derives much of its momentum from that part, and which has considerable socioeconomic differentiation as both a consequence and catalyst, will be as great a challenge as any democratic society has ever faced. If we are to have any chance of meeting that challenge, our political dialogue must shift from "whether" there ought to be a public administration to what the role of The Public Administration and the Public Administrator should be in the governance of the Republic—as it enters its third and perhaps most perilous century.

Notes

1. The co-authors of this paper bear equal responsibility for the ideas it contains and with one exception are listed alphabetically. Wamsley's name appears first simply because he was assigned the role of faithful scribe.

Camilla Stivers was not one of the authors of theory in the original manuscript that received considerable circulation. As one of our students she criticized the original manuscript because we failed to consider the crucial role citizens should play in The Public Administration and in the shift of our political dialogue. The list of persons whose ideas we have drawn upon is too long to present here, but surely it would begin and end with the names of Dwight Waldo and Norton Long. We decided the best way to deal with the criticism was to include her as co-author and to become her students in this matter.

We wish to thank our many colleagues who provided criticism and encouragement. Particularly helpful were the comments of Phillip Cooper, Bayard Catron, Linda Wolf, Fred Thayer, Philip Schorr, and Eugene Lewis. The faults that remain belong to us; they did all they could to save us. Obviously we are drawing on the thoughts of many other persons in the intellectual community associated with public administration. With a few exceptions noted below, however, we have chosen not to use notes. We do not intend this to be an academic paper but a statement (a manifesto?) that we hope will encourage dialogue.

2. Wilson, Woodrow. "The study of Public Administration," *Political Science Quarterly* 56 (June 1887).

3. We are especially indebted to Professor Bayard Catron for this point. Indeed, most of the words of the foregoing three sentences are his. We could do little to improve on them. Source: correspondence with the authors.

4. Our thanks to Linda Wolf for this point. Correspondence with the authors.

5. *Ibid.*

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progress" aimed at promoting trust in government: a collaborative public management would be "more willing to share ideas, knowledge and power with others, not merely instruct citizens and patronize them" (Vigoda 2003: 885).¹

By contrast, direct and deliberative democratic institutions can build community out of individuality, shared values out of diversity, consensus out of partisanship. In the process of debating public issues, individuals can forge a sense of community as they talk through their differences. In addition, a sense of community and norms of reciprocity will constrain disorderly and fractious impulses (Bellah et al. 1985; Dryzek 1990; Gutmann and Thompson 1996). The abundant literature on social capital supports and extends this idea (Putnam 2000, 2002).

Participative processes have their own pathologies, however. They are subject to some of the same problems as representative ones, in that inequalities of wealth— independent of, or combined with, inequalities of social status—can distort the version of the public interest that results from their workings. Lynn (2002: 448) lists a variety of other "vexing issues" arising from direct participation:

Among them are the destructive consequences of rent seeking, ambition, ignorance, avarice, ideology, narcissism, and prejudice... Economists will adduce collective action problems, opportunism, conflicts of interest, and information asymmetries...

In addition, participative institutions—both those that involve direct participation by citizens and those that link organizations in networks—present difficult issues of accountability. To the extent that networks are egalitarian and cooperative, not coercive, they are what political theorists call "anarchies," of which the defining characteristics are, first, that there is no specialization of political roles (that is, no one is the leader all the time) and, second, there is no enforcement of collective decisions (participants are free to join or withdraw from the arena as they wish (Taylor 1982)). In such cases, accountability is diffused—the collective as a whole is the responsible party—and, in a sense, accountability by all means accountability by none. Alternatively, the only means of ensuring accountability is constant, consistent participation: absent enforcement of collective decisions, players must stay at the table to protect their own interests (L. deLeon 1994).

5.3 DEMOCRATIZING PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

Both the contemporary literature of public management and its related disciplines of public administration and public policy contain extensive research on a variety of means by which the practice of public management can be democratized. This section provides a brief overview of a few of them.

5.3.1 Representative Bureaucracy

Where the political system does not function effectively to represent the will of the people (a charge against both overhead democracy and pluralist democracy), another means of achieving representativeness may be provided by the bureaucracy itself. A representative bureaucracy is one in which the workforce reflects the composition of the citizenry with respect to such qualities as class, gender, race, and ethnicity.² A representative bureaucracy "symbolizes as well as promotes equal opportunity and equality" (Dolan and Rosenbloom 2003: 6); it is often preferred by clients (Thielemann and Stewart 1996). More importantly, it should result in policy that serves the public interest.

As Meier and Nigro (1976) have argued, however, the effectiveness of representative bureaucracy involves a four-variable causal chain: social origin dictates socialization experiences, which shape attitudes, which motivate behaviors. Challenging this theory, they cite evidence that people from different social backgrounds can have similar socializing experiences (Barber 1970), that organizations are powerful socializers (Baldwin 1968; Janowitz 1960; Kaufman 1960), and that attitudes may be slightly or not related to actions (Wicker 1969).

Research on the linkages among variables in the theory of representative bureaucracy finds mixed results, but contingency theories show promise. For example, Thompson (1976) suggests key conditions under which passive representation turns active: when minority officials deal with issues that clearly will affect persons of their race, when minorities work in close proximity to each other, and when minority officials occupy jobs that have discretion. Recently, Meier and Bohte (2001) reinforce this last proposition in a study of minority teachers. As predicted, when bureaucrats have policy discretion over an area directly linked to their values, they are likely to take concrete action on behalf of those values.

Interestingly, though, Selden, Brudney, and Kellough (1998) found that attitudes can be more important than status—even persons not from minority backgrounds may act on behalf of minority interests if they believe it is important to do so. Furthermore, in a discussion of comparative civil service systems, Van der Meer (1996) distinguishes demographic, opinion, and interest representativeness, suggesting that the opinions of under-represented groups may not necessarily reflect their more general or long-term interests. On the other hand, advocates of representative bureaucracy argue passionately that a "trustee" relationship is insufficient. Feminist theorists attack as deceptive the "long held view that men could represent women without the latter being physically present... by acting as a trustee for them" (Kelly 1998: 204). They point out that increasing representation of women in political and social life is related to the implementation of policy that promotes and preserves their interests (Guy 1992; Hale and Kelly 1989; Kelly and Guy 1991; Stivers 1993). As is so often true in social science, causality cannot be definitively established for this association. It seems plausible, however, that the

presence of politically disadvantaged groups in the administrative apparatus (and, of course, in legislative bodies as well) does function to keep "their" issues on the agenda and, subtly, gives public managers' sense of responsibility a human face, the face of colleagues.

5.3.2 Proactive Administration

Overhead democracy suggests something akin to economists' notion of "trickle-down" effects, in which benefits bestowed on the rich and powerful eventually make their way down to less favored participants. But perhaps a trickle is not enough; critics who contend that public administration is elitist would prefer a "cascade" theory—citizen input should pour in from all directions—from inside and outside, from above and below. In this conceptualization, representative bureaucracy brings input from inside administration, overhead democracy brings it from above, and so-called iron triangles (Ripley and Franklin 1984) and issue networks (Heclo 1978) portray influence coming from the external environment of interest groups.

Another important source of democratizing influence, however, can come from "below," from the clients whom public agencies serve. One of the earliest explicit statements of this idea of proactive administration was put forward in a volume of essays (Marini 1971) arising from the Minnowbrook conference in New York, which kicked off a movement in the United States called the New Public Administration. Reacting against the increasingly professionalized (Mosher 1968; Mosher and Stillman 1977) civil service, with a workforce that over-represented the educated middle class compared to the impoverished and disproportionately minority underclass, these theorists (particularly Michael Harmon 1971) argued that authoritative decisions in a democracy should not be made only by legislators in the policy selection phase; rather they should be made, proactively, by administrators as well. Some twenty years later, the "Blacksburg Manifesto," which formed the basis for *Refound-ing Public Administration* (Wamsley et al. 1990), pursued the same notion, suggesting that "the popular will does not reside solely in elected officials but in a constitutional order that envisions a remarkable variety of legitimate titles to participation in governance," and that "Public Administration, created by statutes based on this constitutional order, holds one of these titles" (47).

5.3.3 "Street-level" Bureaucracy

As in the field of public administration, during the 1970s and 1980s a debate within policy implementation studies pitted those who preferred a top-down approach (Matland 1995; Sabatier 1986) —on the ground that elected officials are more likely

to be representative of the population from which they are drawn than are bureaucrats—against those who took a bottom-up orientation. Scholars like Michael Lipsky (1980) focused on the activities and beliefs of "street-level bureaucrats"—front-line workers who interact directly with the clients of public agencies. Street-level bureaucrats, though not formally accountable to their clients and protected by civil service rules, unions and limited liability, may nevertheless have a better understanding of and dedication to client interests than do legislators. They are often, in fact, engaged with clients in the co-production of public services (education, law enforcement), so both parties have an interest in success (P. deLeon and L. deLeon 2002). And clients are not without resources to impose their demands on public servants:

Street-level bureaucrats... are also dependent upon clients. Clients have a stock of resources and thus can impose a variety of low-level costs. This is because street-level bureaucrats must obtain client compliance with their decisions, particularly when they are evaluated in terms of their clients' behavior or performance (Lipsky 1980: 57).

In some few cases, street-level bureaucrats may go so far as to exceed the limits of their administrative discretion. Maynard-Moody and Leland (2000) note that the research on the ways in which street-level workers deviate from formal policy suggests that they do so in order to make their work lives easier. Their own study of a variety of front-line bureaucrats, however, found that a sample of social-welfare professionals were sometimes more committed to client needs than to their agency or to government in general. Clearly, this stance runs counter the classic view of managerial responsibility or the prescription that administrators can "exercise autonomy from organizational or hierarchical imperatives only under certain circumstances and for certain "civic" reasons" (Pollitt 2003), such as whistle-blowing or resistance to actions that are wasteful of public resources.

5.3.4 Administrative Responsiveness and Responsibility

Less radical than theories of proactive administration, but consonant with the Blacksburg Manifesto's call for a fuller appreciation of the positive role of authority in administration, is the development of theories of administrative responsibility. Responsibility and its cousin, responsiveness, are processes by which citizens' choices, as conveyed via the electoral system, are converted into administrative practice. Responsiveness, as suggested in the preceding section, requires that public managers conform to law and policy. But the intent of law may be ambiguous or incomplete. In this situation, "managerial responsibility" (Bertelli and L. Lynn 2003) requires the manager to follow laws, rules, and policies created by the legislative branch. This obedience must also, however, be moderated by four elements: judgment as to what the public interest and professionalism require; accountability

to law and rules, recognizing that these may emanate from divergent sources; balance, an attempt to take into account contending interests expressed through many and various channels; and rationality, or judgment that is both reasonable and realistic. Bertelli and Lynn insist that responsibility is both a requirement and a right: "However much courts, legislatures and interest groups may wish it to be otherwise, fulfilling legislative mandates in conformity with both individual and collective justice requires principled deference to public managers, who bear the primary burden of administration" (265).

In an intriguing analysis of responsibility, Bovens (1998) suggests that the older conception of hierarchical responsibility – in which individuals were expected to be strictly obedient to superiors, has given way to a view that managers should also be loyal to peers, their professions, and citizens. Situations in which loyalty to the organization (or, by extension, its political controllers) are in conflict require choices between loyalty, voice and exit (Hirschman 1980). Each of the alternative conceptions of responsibility has less legitimacy than the older notion, and thus public employees must be skillful in balancing their organizational citizenship with their role as citizens of a political community. Because modern notions of proper loyalty and obedience are so fluid, the quest for responsibility, Bovens suggests, will never end.

5.3.5 Citizen Participation

The literature on citizen participation is extensive in both time spanned and quantity. With roots in political science, it investigates questions such as the relationship between participation and the sense of political efficacy, the socio-economic correlates of participation, and the spillover among political, social, and economic participation (Berry, Portnoy, and Thomson 1993).

There are many ways of involving the public in public management. Pollitt (2003) uses a tripartite classification that ranges from informing them, to consulting them, to allowing them full two-way and iterative participation. He also describes "market" and "forum" models; participation is more intensive (along the scale described above) and also more extensive (from participation by individuals to participation by collectivities) in the latter. Moynihan (2003) offers a very similar typology and then asks why, when participation seems to be such a good idea, is there so little of it? His answer reflects a concern that is very widespread among theorists, elected officials, public managers, and even citizens: participation is time-consuming and frustrating and may not even produce better outcomes than decision making by professionals. Other concerns are that democratic activities absorb resources that could be better spent on needed services or that democratic initiatives sometimes backfire—in an effort to secure the participation of socially excluded groups, they in effect discriminate against access by other,

established groups (Lowndes, Pratchett, and Stoker 2001). An interesting approach is the contingency theory proposed by Thomas (1995), suggesting that successful outcomes are more likely when participative mechanisms (public hearings, consultation, etc.) are appropriately matched to a variety of decisional and situational conditions.

One way to reduce the costs of participation is to use technology. A number of case studies, drawn from various nations, describe the use of email, websites, networked laptops, and wireless keyboard pads, among other things, to make citizen input easier to obtain and manage, or to provide information to citizens in support of their involvement in decision making (Chen, Huang, and Nsaio 2003; Kakabadse, Kakabadse, and Kouzmin 2003; La Porte, Demchak, and de Jong 2003; Moynihan 2003). Drawing conclusions from a worldwide survey of government websites, La Porte, Demchak, and deJong note that government websites can be justified either on the ground that they increase product efficiency (service provision) or that they increase civic participation, or both. "Hence, the use of the Web is likely to rise irrespective of the philosophical choices and is likely to be included in commonly accepted definitions of democracy" (2003: 437).

Finally, several observers note that the public management literature places undue emphasis on political participation. Social and economic participation are also important avenues by which citizens can achieve public outcomes that meet their needs. Nonprofit or nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) as well as informal clubs and associations, exemplify the former, while private sector activity exemplifies the latter. Lam (2003) makes this argument in the context of Hong Kong: participation may take the form of demonstrations and social movements that favor or protest government activity. Hong Kong residents have a reputation as politically apathetic, but in fact they are quite expressive, if this broader definition of participation is used.

5.4 DEMOCRACY WITHIN PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS

The preceding sections have focused on the relationship between public management and the political systems by which policy is made and implemented. Several lines of research and theory address the separate question whether public agencies themselves should be run democratically. In Dwight Waldo's famous question, is "autocracy at work" really the necessary price for "democracy after hours" (Waldo 1984: 75). Denhardt (1993) is unequivocal in asserting that public organizations in a democracy must themselves be exemplars of workplace democracy: "Democratic