



Introduction: The Role of Public Administration in Governing

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Enter the bureaucrat, the true leader of the Republic.

(Senator Palpatine, *Star Wars*, Episode 1)

The SAGE Handbook of Public Administration represents an attempt to address the major issues in, and perspectives on, public administration. The Handbook is an international treatment of this subject, with scholars drawn from a wide range of countries and intellectual traditions. Further, although the large majority of the participants in the project are academics, the attempt has been made also to confront issues of practice, and the relevance of academic research to the day-to-day problems of making government programs perform as they are designed to. Public administration is an area of substantial academic activity, but it is also the focus of important practical work, and public servants have a wealth of experience that is important for understanding public administration. No single volume could hope to cover in any comprehensive manner the full range of concerns about public administration, but we have, we believe, illuminated the crucial issues and also provided a starting

point for those readers who wish to pursue this field of inquiry and practice more thoroughly.

WHY ADMINISTRATION MATTERS

The most important premise of this Handbook is that public administration matters. There is a tendency among the public, and even among scholars of the public sector, to equate politics and government with dramatic events such as elections, or with the visible conflicts between politicians that shape major policy developments. Those activities are indeed important for governing, but there is a massive amount of activity involved in translating laws and decrees made by politicians into action, and in delivering public programs to citizens. That work is often less visible, but is crucial for making things happen in government. Legislatures and political executives may pass all the laws they wish, but unless those laws are administered effectively by the public bureaucracy, little or nothing will

actually happen. The bureaucracy¹ is often the favorite target for newspaper leader writers and for politicians, but without administrators little would happen in government.

Public administrators comprise the bulk of government employment and activity. In the United Kingdom the central government in London has 650 members of the House of Commons, a few hundred members of the House of Lords, a few hundred political appointees in the executive departments, a few thousand judges, but several hundred thousand public administrators. In addition, there are several hundred thousand public employees in local authorities and the devolved governments of Scotland and Wales. The majority of the employees of government are not the paper-pushers one usually associates with public administration but rather are responsible for delivering public services to the public. Many public administrators in central governments are responsible for providing services, but (on average) local and provincial public servants are even more so.

The principal activity of public administration is implementing laws, but there are also a range of other important activities carried on in these public organizations: for example, bureaucracies make policy, and in essence make law. The laws passed by legislatures are often general, and require elaboration by administrators (Kerwin, 1999; Page, 2000). The secondary legislation prepared by the bureaucracy not only makes the meaning of the laws clearer but also permits the application of the expertise of the career administrators to policy. This style of making policy may raise questions of democratic accountability, but it almost certainly also makes the policies being implemented more technically appropriate for the circumstances, as well as making them more flexible. Although even less visible than their rule-making activities, bureaucracies are also important adjudicators.

In addition to writing secondary legislation, administrators also influence policy by advising the politicians formally responsible for making law. Political leaders may have numerous talents but most politicians

do not have extensive expert knowledge about the policies for which they are responsible. Therefore, they require assistance in writing laws and setting policy. The senior public bureaucracy has traditionally had a major role in providing their ministers with the needed advice and information (see Plowden, 1984). That role for public administration is, however, under attack as politicians become more distrustful of bureaucrats and want advice from their own politically committed advisors (Peters and Pierre, 2001). In addition, the reforms of the public sector that have been implemented over the past several decades have stressed the role of the senior public administrator as a manager rather than as a policy advisor, and that has altered the career incentives of senior public managers.

We said above that the work of public administration may be less visible than that of other aspects of government, yet at the same time it is the major point of contact between citizens and the state. The average citizen will encounter the postal clerk, the tax collector and the policeman much more frequently than their elected representatives. This contact between state and society has two important consequences for government. One is that the implementation of laws by the lowest echelons of the public service defines what the laws actually mean for citizens. The laws of a country are what is implemented, and lower echelon employees – policemen, social workers, teachers, etc. – often have substantial discretion over how implementation occurs and who actually gets what from government.

The second impact of the lower echelons of government is that these face-to-face interactions often define what government is for citizens. How am I treated by government? Is government fair, efficient and humane or is it the arbitrary and bureaucratic (in the pejorative sense of the term) structure that it is often alleged to be? The bureaucracy is therefore important in creating an image of government in the popular mind. The good news is that evidence about these interactions tends to be rather positive. Citizens in a

number of countries report that most of their interactions with government are positive. The bad news, however, is that many of those same citizens still have a generally negative view of government and of the bureaucracy.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND THE SURROUNDING SOCIETY

Throughout this Handbook, contributors maintain the perspective of the public administration as embedded in the surrounding society. Although this might appear to be a rather obvious point of departure, the approach emphasizes something often forgotten: public administration is an explication of the collective interest and its legitimacy to a significant extent hinges on its ability to play a part in the pursuit of those interests. Much of the recent debate on New Public Management and market-based models of public service delivery, just to give an example, has tended to portray the public bureaucracy as a generic structure. Ironically, however, introducing market-based solutions in public service production has significant effects on the relationship between the public administration and the surrounding society, as we will argue below.

Furthermore, emphasizing the embedded nature of the public administration helps us understand the rationale for creating links between civil society and the public administration, or more generally, links with the state. The governance perspective on the public bureaucracy highlights those links because they are elements of a broader strategy for service production and delivery that is open to a range of means of generating service. By including societal actors in service delivery the bureaucracy enhances its capacity to act and to 'do more for less', as the Gore Report put it.

Finally, the society-centered perspective on the public administration portrays the public bureaucracy as a potential target for group political pressure. The public administration controls vast resources, and operates

frequently at an increasing distance from elected officials; it is also a major source of regulation. All this contributes to making it attractive to a wide variety of societal groups, ranging from trade unions and employers' association to local environmental protection groups and neighborhood organizations. An understanding of the exchanges between the public bureaucracy and its external environment is critical to an analysis of the bureaucracy in a wider sense.

Politics, administration and society

In order to understand how the public bureaucracy relates to society, we need to generate a broader picture of public-private exchanges in society. The triangular relationships between politics, administration and society are, needless to say, manifold and complex. Starting with the politics-administration linkage, most observers of public policy and administration today agree that this is a false dichotomy. The argument coming out of the classic debate between Friedrich and Finer – 'Policies are implemented when they are formulated and formulated when they are implemented' – seems to be a more accurate representation of the current understanding of the politics-administration relationship. If anything, this statement has gained additional currency since the 1940s along with recent administrative reform and structural changes in the public sector. Reforms aiming at empowering lower-level public sector employees and the greater discretion exercised at that organizational level is but one example of recent changes that support Friedrich's argument (Peters, 2001; Peters and Pierre, 2000).

Thus, politics and administration should be thought of as different elements of the same process of formulating and implementing policy. But politics and administration differ in terms of how they relate to society; while both are critical components of democratic governance, 'politics' in the present context is a matter of representation and accountability,

whereas 'administration' refers to policy implementation and the exercise of political power and law. Citizens, organized interests, private businesses and other societal actors interact with both politics and administration, albeit for different reasons. Put in a larger perspective, then, we are interested in the nature of the interface between state and society. Leaving aside the input that is channeled primarily through political parties, we now need to look more closely at the linkage between the public bureaucracy and society.

While historically speaking the public administration's main task has been to implement and communicate political decisions to society, one of the key changes that has occurred over the past decade or so has been the increasing opportunities for citizens to have a more direct input into the public bureaucracy. The experiments with *maison services publiques* in France, the concept of *Bürgernähe* in German administrative reform during the 1990s, the emphasis on (even) more transparency in the Scandinavian countries, and the search for different ways to customer-attune public services in the United States all testify to an almost global tendency to reduce the distance (both physical and intellectual) between the bureaucracy and the individual citizen. This pattern, in turn, is evidence of a strong felt need to strengthen the legitimacy of public sector institutions. With some exaggeration it could be argued that while previously that legitimacy was derived from the public and legal nature of the public administration, legitimacy is currently to an increasing extent contingent on the bureaucracy's ability to deliver customer-attuned services swiftly and accurately.

Perhaps the most powerful and comprehensive strategy of bridging the distance between citizens and the public service is found in the various consumer-choice-based models of public service production. The overall purpose here is not so much to bring citizens (now referred to as consumers) physically closer to service producers but rather to empower consumers through market choice. By exercising such choice,

consumers can receive public services more attuned to their preferences than would otherwise have been possible. Furthermore, consumer choice sends a signal to the public sector about the preferences of its consumers, which in aggregated form can inform resource allocation. Described in a slightly different way, this model of consumer choice thus provides society with an input on decisions made in the public bureaucracy with the important difference that the input is not funneled through political parties but is rather an instant communication from the individual to the bureaucracy.

Civil society

The role of civil society in the context of public administration takes on many different forms. Perhaps the most conspicuous arrangement of involvement of civil society is the long-established system of so-called laymen boards (*lekmannastyrelser*) in Swedish agencies. But civil society plays many different roles in different national contexts. In much of continental Europe, for example, civil society plays an important part in delivering public – or quasi-public – services. Much of this cooperation between the public administration and civil society takes place at the local level.

The growing interest in governance during the 1990s highlighted these forms of cooperation between the state and civil society. The governance perspective draws on broad strategies of resource mobilization across the public–private border. This is a pattern which has for long been established in the 'corporatist' democracies in Western Europe. As well as the mobilization of resources, a focus on civil society also has a democratic element, with the relationship with groups providing a source of ideas, legitimation and feedback for government from its society. There are real dangers of these ties limiting the autonomy of government, but they can be the means of making administration less remote from the citizens.

Closing the gap: emerging models of administration – citizen exchange

Much of the administrative reform that has been conducted during the past 10–15 years has been implemented against the backdrop of a weakened legitimacy for the public bureaucracy, and, indeed, for the public sector as a whole. The 1980s in particular was the heyday in the belief of the market as an instrument of resource allocation, leaving little support for public institutions. Additionally, the neoliberal elected leaders emerging during that decade – primarily Reagan, Thatcher and Mulroney – made a strong critique of the public sector and its employees part of their political *Leitmotif* (Hood, 1998; Savoie, 1994). As a result, public sector budgets were drastically cut back. Reaffirming the legitimacy for the public sector, it seemed, could only be accomplished by proving that the public sector could deliver services in a fashion not too different from that of private organizations: that is, in close contact between organization and client, with a purpose to provide services adapted to the particular needs and expectations of the individual client. Put slightly differently, the strategy seems to have been that the future legitimacy of public sector institutions should rest less on traditional values like universality, equality and legal security but more on performance and service delivery.

Much of the administrative reform witnessed during the late 1980s and 1990s was characterized by these objectives. If we look more closely at the points of contact between citizens and the public sector, they can be summarized in two general trends. First of all, there was a clear emphasis on transparency and accessibility. Structural changes in the public bureaucracy aimed at enhancing exchange between individuals and the public sector. Across Western Europe, governments embarked on a decentralization project, partly to bring political and administrative decisions closer to the citizens. In addition, many public service functions were devolved further, and thus closer to the clients.

The other general trend in administrative reform manifested itself in an effort to make exchanges between citizens and the public bureaucracy easier. Obviously, structural changes like decentralization were necessary, albeit not sufficient, for this type of reform. Here, the general idea was to develop less formal and more accessible means of exchange between clients and the public sector employees. So-called one-stop shops were introduced in several countries, frequently on an experimental basis. More recently, we have seen a wide variety of channels into the public sector available to the citizens via the Internet. It is quite likely that we have only seen the beginning of ‘e-government’.

Together, these structural and procedural changes have significantly altered the relationships between the public bureaucracy and its clients. There is today a much stronger emphasis on proximity – if not physical, at least technological – between the public sector and clients. More importantly, perhaps, the tenor of these exchanges has tended to change towards a less formal and more service-oriented communication.

The changing role of public administration

Some aspects of contemporary public administration would appear similar to someone working in government decades earlier, while other aspects have been undergoing fundamental transformation. While the changes are numerous, there are two that deserve highlighting. The first, as alluded to previously, is the increasing emphasis on the role of the public administrator as a manager, and the need to apply the managerial tools familiar in the private sector. This drive toward generic management has almost certainly enhanced the efficiency and perhaps the effectiveness of the public sector, but its critics argue that it has also undervalued the peculiarly public nature of management in government, and the need to think about

public sector values other than sheer economic efficiency (Stein, 2002).

A second major change in public administration has been the increasing linkage of state and society in the delivery of public services. Government is no longer an autonomous actor in implementing its policies² but often depends upon the private sector and/or the third sector to accomplish its ends. This linkage of state and society may enhance the effectiveness and the legitimacy of government but it also presents government with problems of accountability and control. Blending state and society means that public administrators must become more adept at bargaining and governing through instruments such as contracts, rather than depending upon direct authority to achieve the ends of government.

Finally, the bureaucracy is now less centralized and less hierarchical than ever in its recent history. The degree of centralization of the bureaucracy and of government policy has varied by country, but in almost all there is less power now vested in the center than in the past. Just as working with civil society may require a different set of skills than governing alone, so too will working more closely with subnational governments, or with quasi autonomous organizations that are nominally connected to ministerial authority but which may be designed to act more on their own.

A strong bureaucracy in a weak state?

Bert Rockman has observed that 'If one distinguishes between outlays on the one hand and personnel and organizational structure on the other, it may be that the future holds a sizeable public sector, but one that will have less government' (Rockman, 1998: 38). If the New Public Management reform paradigm continues to dominate the orientation of administrative reform we may soon find ourselves with a hollow administrative structure processing huge transfers but with service

provision increasingly conducted under the auspices of market actors, Rockman argues. We have already discussed the changing channels of exchange between the public bureaucracy and its external environment as well as the overarching objectives of the administrative reform that has been conducted during the late 1980s and 1990s.

Rockman is probably too optimistic (or perhaps pessimistic) about the extent to which administrative reform can shrink public employment and the public bureaucracy. We argued earlier that much of our contact with the state is not with elected representatives but with front staff of the public bureaucracy such as police officers, tax collectors, nurses or social workers. There may be some decrease in the number of such personnel, but these functions cannot be automated. Instead, the cutbacks in public employment have been conducted either by transferring entire functions from the state to the market: for example, railway, telecommunications and postal services. The public sector remains a fairly labor-intensive sector, not least because of the nature of the services it delivers.

What is at stake here is the relationship between strength and external orientation. Not least in an historical perspective, the notion of a 'strong bureaucracy' frequently invoked an image of a self-serving and self-referential bureaucracy. A more contemporary definition of a strong bureaucracy is one which swiftly can deliver a wide variety of public services, adapted to the needs of the individual. Furthermore, a strong bureaucracy is characterized by the rule of law. The law-governed nature of the public administration is a safeguard against clientalism, corruption and favoritism. Arguably, there is a potential contradiction between the service-delivery aspect and the law-governed nature of the bureaucracy. The point here is that a public bureaucracy will most likely never be able to compete with private sector companies in terms of flexibility and service but, as we will argue later in this chapter, that is hardly surprising given that public

administration was designed primarily according to other objectives.

The strength of the public administration is nearly always a mirror image of the strength of the state. Internal strength is critical to the public bureaucracy's ability to fulfill its role in society regardless of the degree to which the state encroaches society. Also, a strong public bureaucracy is critical to sustain core democratic values like equality, legal security and equal treatment. For these reasons, a strong bureaucracy in a weak state need not be an arrangement that cannot be sustained in the longer term.

MANAGING IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

We dealt above with one crucial aspect of public administration – its link with society and the political system. We now shift our attention more to the internal dynamics of these organizations (or aggregations of organization), and especially with their management. The reform of public administration over the past several decades has concentrated on the managerial aspects of government, attempting to make government more efficient, effective and economical. These three Es have driven a massive change in the public sector, much of it focusing on the role of the market as an exemplar for good management.

Goodbye to hierarchies?

Much of the administrative reform that has been implemented has been a series of attacks against the hierarchical structure of the public administration. Hierarchies, the dominant argument goes, are rigid and slow, unable to change, inefficient and fail to draw on the professional expertise inside the organization. Furthermore, hierarchical structures are said to be unable to relate effectively to clients and cannot provide customer-attuned services to the public. How valid is this critique? What alternatives are

there to hierarchies? What values and norms are associated with this type of organization? In addressing these questions – and the future of hierarchies in the public administration more in general – we first need to discuss the strengths of hierarchies, given the expectation placed on the public bureaucracy. From that perspective, we can proceed to discuss the extent to which the preferred role of the public administration has changed and how these developments impact on the organizational structure of the bureaucracy.

In most countries, the public bureaucracy found its organizational form at a time when the primary role of these organizations was the implementation of law. Public service production of the scale we know it today did not exist; it is to a very large extent a feature of the latter half of the twentieth century. Hierarchy thus early on became the preferred organizational model as it is an efficient instrument for the implementation of law, a process where values such as uniformity, accountability and predictability are essential. The initial growth of the public sector service production did not significantly challenge the hierarchical structure of the public bureaucracy. These services were rather uniform in character, with little or no flexibility or 'customer-attuning', to quote a contemporary concept. Given the limited and one-way exchange between the public bureaucracy and its clients, hierarchies could prevail. Instead, it was the massive attack on the public sector during the 1980s and 1990s which presented a major threat to the hierarchical structures in the public sector. Hierarchies could not sustain the accumulated challenges from within in the form of drastic budget cutbacks and from clients expecting a higher degree of flexibility. Thus, structure in and of itself became an issue in the administrative reform of the 1990s (Peters, 2001); if the hierarchical nature of public organizations was replaced by some form of flat and flexible organization which accorded greater autonomy to the front-line staff, many of the problems of lacking legitimacy and inefficiency would be resolved, critics argued.

It would be incorrect to argue that the critique concerning the inertia and rigidity in the public bureaucracy is without justification. In some ways, however, that is not the issue. Public organizations were never designed to maximize on efficiency, flexibility and customer friendliness but rather to ensure a uniform and unbiased implementation of the law. Thus, to some extent, the critique during the past couple of decades has employed an irrelevant yardstick for its assessment of public organizations. Moreover, this critique sees only one side of the modern bureaucracy – the service-producing side – and disregards the other side, the exercise and implementation of law. That having been said, it is clear that some relaxation of hierarchy and structure has become critical to the public sector and, indeed, such organizational change is already taking place in most countries.

Does this mean the farewell to hierarchies? As we have pointed out in a different context, hierarchies have more to offer as instruments of governance than is often recognized (Pierre and Peters, 2000). Ironically, some of the problems frequently associated with more flexible and market-like public organizations, such as accountability and a poor responsiveness to the political echelons of government, are often argued to be among the stronger aspects of the hierarchical model. The challenge in the longer term for the architects of government therefore is to design organizations that combine the efficiency and service capacity of decentralized organizations with the uniform and legalistic nature of hierarchical organizations.

Is marketization the answer?

The same arguments that denigrate the role of hierarchies emphasize the importance of markets as an alternative to more traditional forms of organization and management in the public sector. The assumption is that if government were to use the principles of the market, both in the design of individual

programs and in the internal management of government programs, then government will do its job much better. Advocates of the market argue that adopting market principles will make government more efficient, and could reduce the costs of public sector programs to taxpayers.

Although the market has become a popular exemplar for reforming the public sector, there are also a number of critics of the market. Perhaps, most fundamentally, the public sector should not have efficiency as its fundamental value, but rather should be concerned with effectiveness and accountability. Relatedly, market mechanisms may reduce the accountability of public programs by emphasizing internal management rather than relationships with the remainder of the political system. Finally, much of what the public sector does is not amenable to market provision, or they might never have been put into government in the first place, and hence attempting to apply market principles may be mildly absurd. Although an unthinking acceptance of the market is not likely to produce all the benefits promised, there are certainly things to be gained by using some of these techniques. As with so many things in the public sector, the real trick may be in finding the balance between different approaches.

The less politics the better?

There are several circumstances suggesting that the involvement of elected officials in administration is not conducive to maximum performance of the administrative system. The most important argument against too much involvement by politicians in public sector management is that it means not taking management very seriously, or at least not as seriously as electoral considerations. Running large-scale operations, public or private, requires managerial skills and there is nothing in elected office that in and of itself guarantees that the person elected holds those skills. Indeed, the careers of most

elected officials rarely involve managing an organization of any significant size. Part of the mantra of administrative reform in the past several decades has been to 'let the managers manage' and that has been in part a claim for a stronger role for public administrators in the governing process.

Clarifying what separates the roles of elected officials and organizational managers in public administration is important (Peters, 1987; Peters and Pierre, 2001). Career officials are expected to provide continuity, expertise and loyalty. Elected officials are expected to provide legitimacy, political judgment, and policy guidance. Bureaucrats are sometimes accused of attempting to monopolize policymaking through their expertise, and their control of the procedures of government, while politicians are accused of micro-management and attempting to politicize the day-to-day management of organizations and personnel. Certainly, public administrators cannot ignore their nominal political 'masters' but they must also be sure to maintain their own rightful position in governing.

APPROACHES TO PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

We have already pointed out that public administration stands at the intersection of theory and practice. Within this field of study there have from time to time been heated debates over the relative weights that should be assigned to those two ways of approaching the field. The practitioners have seen academics as hopelessly wound up in theoretical debates that had little or nothing to do with actually making a program run successfully. Academics, on the other hand, have seen practitioners as hopelessly mired in 'manhole counting' and incapable of seeing the larger issues that affect their practice.

In addition to standing at the interaction of theory and practice, public administration

also stands at the intersection of a number of academic disciplines, as well as having a distinctive literature of its own. Leaving aside for the time being the literature that can be labeled 'purely' public administration, political science, economics, sociology, psychology, law, management and philosophy, and probably others, have had some influence on the study of public administration. Political science has probably had the longest relationship with public administration, given the importance of the bureaucracy for governing and the fundamental concern in democratic countries about means of holding the bureaucracy accountable to elected officials. That having been said, however, law has been the foundation of public administration in much of continental Europe. More recently, economics and management science have come to play a dominant role in thinking about public administration, as reforms of the public sector have tended to rely upon procedures found in the private sector.

While theory and practice, and an array of academic disciplines, contend for control over the study of public administration, the fundamental point that should be emphasized is that all of these perspectives bring something with them that helps to illuminate administration in the public sector. Political science has emphasized the role of public administration as a component of the process of governing, and has, along with law, also emphasized the importance of enforcing the accountability of the bureaucracy, while philosophy has emphasized the need for an ethical framework for public administrators. Economics has pointed to the role of public administration in taxing and spending decisions, as well as providing a theoretical frame through which to understand bureaucracy (Breton, 1996; Niskanen, 1971). Sociology has brought a long tradition of organizational theory, as well as a concern for the linkage of state and society (Rothstein, 1996). Administrative reforms of the past several decades have placed a substantial emphasis on the similarities of public and private management and there has been a

good deal of borrowing from business management to transform government.

WHAT'S SO SPECIAL ABOUT THE PUBLIC SECTOR?

The reader will have noticed by this time that he or she has opened a rather large book containing thousands of words. What about public administration merits this attention, especially when most citizens appear as happy to avoid their own bureaucracy? And could both this attention have been lavished on more general questions of management, not just on administration in the public sector? What indeed is so special about this area of inquiry and, perhaps more importantly, what is so special about this area of human activity?

To some extent the answers to those far from simple questions should be evident from the material already discussed in this introduction. Most fundamentally, public administration is central to the process of governing society, no matter what form that governance may take. Without their public administration, legislatures could make all the laws they wished but unless they were extraordinarily lucky, and the population was extraordinarily cooperative, nothing would actually happen.³ In Bagehot's terminology, the public bureaucracy is much of the effective part of government, and it is crucial for providing the services that the public expect from their governments.

The absence of public administration is an extremely unlikely occurrence, and the more relevant question is what happens for governing when public administration is not effective, or efficient, or ethical. The various forms of failure of administration each has its own negative consequences for government and society. Almost certainly an unethical and parasitic administration is the worst form of failure, especially in a government that aspires to be democratic and legitimate (see Chapman, 2000). Honesty and accountability

are crucial for building a government that is respected by the public, and may even be central to building an efficient and effective government. A government that is perceived as equitable and fair builds trust, which in turn can make government more effective.

Losses of effectiveness are also important as governments increasingly are being judged by their capacity to deliver, and the contemporary emphasis on performance management provides quantitative indications of how well governments are doing their jobs (Bouckaert and Pollitt, 2003). Despite all the emphasis in the New Public Management, efficiency may be the least important value for the public sector, especially in the eyes of the public. They may mind much more that services are delivered, and that they are delivered in an accountable and humane manner, than they care about the cost per unit of service delivered. This does not mean that public administrators should not care about efficiency, but only that this is not necessarily the dominant value that it has been made to be.

ORGANIZATION OF THE HANDBOOK

The remainder of the Handbook is organized in 14 parts, each having been shaped and edited by a Part Editor. Those editors have each added an Introduction to their section, discussing its contents and relating it to general themes that run throughout the volume. These 14 parts represent the principal dimensions of the literature within public administration, attempting to cover both traditional themes as well as more contemporary managerialist approaches to administration.

NOTES

1 Bureaucracy is often a word of opprobrium, but we are using it here in a more neutral manner, meaning the formal administrative structures in the public sector.

2 The degree of autonomy enjoyed by the public bureaucracy in traditional patterns of governing is often exaggerated, but there has been a marked shift in the involvement of the private sector.

3 A conservative American politician once commented that he should like it if Congress were placed on a cruise ship and had to put all its laws into bottles to float back to land. Only the laws in those bottles that were found would go into effect. Without public administration, governing might be a good deal like that.

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