

# *Public Voices*

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# *Public Voices*

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# *Public Voices*

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In academia, the importance of interdisciplinary discourse (IDD) as an instrument of change and evolution for disciplines and subfields has expanded considerably in modern times. The concept of discourse continues to develop as a means of sharing and transmitting communication, dialogue, and ideas across disciplinary boundaries. While basic levels of discourse are simple, they can progress into more advanced stages where distinctive challenges arise. Under such circumstances, the transmission process has a significant impact on the substantive scholarship and value structures of the recipient discipline, causing it to recast itself in order to effectively absorb transmissions. For some disciplines, transmissions over the long run are beneficial and lead to progressive change and development. For others which did not form their own distinct identities early in the developmental stages, the IDD process results in complications since appropriate interfaces do not exist to absorb the transmissions received. This has the potential to trigger an identity crisis, as has been the case with public administration. This article examines three distinct periods of recasting in public administration: 1) early development and the influence of business models (1887-1940); 2) the development of a science of administration (1940-1968); and 3) postmodernism and public administration (1969—present). While public administration has evolved considerably across these periods of recasting, it has not escaped the immanent progression toward an identity crisis.

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# Interdisciplinary Discourse: Conceptualization and Applications in Public Administration

*Daniel Baracska*

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## **Introduction**

The significance of interdisciplinary discourse (IDD) has grown appreciably in modern academic settings. As Lattuca argues, "we know...that disciplinary communities not only share values and norms but at times contest these values and norms. Faculty members espouse methods but also challenge them" (Lattuca 2005, 19). This assumes that "complications of individual identity are related to disciplinary complexity" (Klein 1996, 53). These ideas have broad ramifications since recipients reexamine and reshape their frameworks and identities according to the transmissions received from other disciplines. While still a basic concept, there has been relatively little development or exploration of the research side of IDD in the academic literature, particularly relating to its antecedents and implications in disciplinary and subfield settings. Most of the scholarship on IDD has been pedagogical, focusing on interdisciplinary curricula and programs of study. Further, development of the actual concept of discourse has largely been neglected, as it has been assumed that it is a normal activity which occurs among disciplines. This article seeks to address some of these limitations.

As a profession and field of study, public administration has benefited appreciably from IDD. Discourse has allowed the field to expand through exchanges of concepts, ideas, and theories with other academic fields and disciplines. However, the effects of discourse have also caused disorder in public administration, culminating in what modern scholars refer to as an "identity crisis" (Ostrom 1973). This has resulted from an inability to integrate the effects of discourse into the foundations of the field due to early deficiencies in forming a distinctive identity in the developmental stages. This paper develops this line of thought further, with particular emphasis on how public administration has recasted itself in three time periods in response to transmissions received through discourse. The recasting of the recipient discipline is the most advanced level of discourse, which forces it to reexamine and reshape its identity, both in terms

of scholarship and values. This can be beneficial for disciplines or subfields that have been stagnant. But recipients that are unable to successfully integrate the source's transmissions in the recasting stage ultimately confront an identity crisis. For public administration, the three distinct periods of recasting discussed in this article include: 1) early development and the influence of business models (1887–1940); 2) the development of a science of administration (1940–1968); and 3) postmodernism and public administration (1969–present). The concept of discourse is examined as a prelude to the analysis of these three periods.

## **The Concept of IDD**

The basic concept of “discourse” in this context refers to simple interactions like communication, dialogue, and idea sharing between academic disciplines and their associated subfields. It is a progressive phenomenon, and has in many interdisciplinary settings resulted in productive outcomes like cross-sharing and collaboration. It can be formal or informal, and its outcomes can be narrow or broad. The older academic tradition has often been one where the reality of closed disciplinary boundaries caused research to be insular and disconnected to the activities of sibling disciplines. This led to situations where scholars “independently arrived at similar conclusions published within months of each other but [were] uninformed by the thinking that went into the other work (Jamieson and Cappella, 1996, 13-14). Alternatively, more recent eras in academia view discourse and interdisciplinarity as significant opportunities to diversify concepts, methods, and theories through cooperative efforts.

On a basic level, discourse is relatively simple, representing a normal phenomenon which occurs in academic environments. Yet, discourse can progress into more advanced sets of activities since “there is no single pattern of disciplinary interactions. Because disciplines are responsive to so many spatial, temporal, demographic, and epistemological variables, it is difficult to predict how disciplines will interact.” (Klein 1990, 44). While discourse can be triggered by any participant individually or jointly, the process entails roles where a “source” discipline(s) is tapped and interfaces with a “recipient” discipline which formally or informally (depending upon the level of discourse) seeks the counsel of the source(s). Basic discourse can be two-directional where the source may benefit just as much from the interaction. In fact the roles may many times blend and be indistinguishable.

In instances when discourse progresses to higher levels of activity, such as the sharing and intermixing of advanced concepts and theories, complexities potentially arise with the interface of substantive scholarship and the value structures which coexist between disciplines and/or subfields. The interface between the source and recipient is not always ideally suited to process the interactions between the two sides. For instance, public administration was initially molded in the tradition of scientific management and business principles. However, public and private administration have different value structures, with the former being service-driven with concerns for transparency and accountability, and the latter focusing primarily on competition and profitability. While the process can be beneficial for all parties, incompatibility and confusion can also result. The most advanced level of discourse leads to a “recasting” of the recipient discipline, forcing it to reexamine and

reshape its identity, both in terms of scholarship and values. This can be beneficial for disciplines or subfields that have been stagnant. But recipients that are unable to successfully integrate the source's transmissions in the recasting stage ultimately confront an identity crisis where no coherent or underlying theory exists to guide its scholarship. This is not to support the perspective that there should exist one absolute, binding theory, but rather acknowledges that certain underpinnings help maintain the cohesiveness of disciplines and/or subfields, particularly in their developmental stages, which also help them to evolve. Such an identity crisis has been the case with IDD in American public administration, which has over time experienced benefits, but also setbacks, or frustrations in advancing as a field. As Vincent Ostrom effectively captured in his renowned work, *The Intellectual Crisis in American Public Administration*, "the ambiguities of the shifting theoretical scene were accompanied by shifting styles of work in scholarly research" (Ostrom 1973, 9). The effects of higher levels of discourse are apparent in public administration. The field has borrowed and integrated concepts, methods, and theories from other sources like sociology, psychology, business administration, political science, economics, and history. This borrowing has made public administration an eclectic field that has been searching for themes and direction through much of its evolution (Stillman 1991; Chandler 1998).

### **Conceptualizing IDD in Academic Environments**

All disciplines and subfields develop and evolve. Its members intrinsically determine what its scholarship and values will reflect. During early development, a discipline constructs a distinct identity that is unique from other disciplines, and in effect becomes bounded by its procedure for adjudicating knowledge claims. Recent times have shown that the propensity for using interdisciplinary approaches to solve complex world problems has affected most academic disciplines and fields of study. As Miller argues, "the historically separate origins of the various subfields of the discipline are now less relevant than the intersections that today connect subfields" (Miller 1981, 9). In fact, "subfield parochialism" has diminished as new approaches in research have generated interconnectedness more so than in previous eras. Even so, there has been a tendency to view subfields, specialties, schools, and sects as counter-cultures in academia (Becher 1990).

As indicated above, basic discourse can be conceptualized as simple interactions like communication, dialogue, and idea sharing between academic disciplines and their associated subfields. This phenomenon is inherent in all disciplines which seek to remain progressive while interacting with their environments. Examples include dialogue in academic conferences and settings, seminars, and workshops. Discourse which occurs at higher levels reflects a progression beyond this basic simplicity into more advanced stages. The levels of IDD can be captured by a three-level sequence. Basic discourse represents level 1. It can be endogenous if it occurs exclusively within a discipline amongst its various subfields, or exogenous if it occurs with those from outside its boundaries. Most discourse occurs at this level, eventually terminating once the benefits diminish. Discourse is particularly difficult to trace and measure at this level since "the processes by which individuals collaborate are largely invisible to those outside the collaboration" (Creamer and Latucca 2005, 3). This level does not induce large changes in scholarship or value structures. While initial discourse

can be triggered by a source or recipient, mutually or individually, the primary discipline(s) or subfield(s) which are tapped and provide the substance and theory for the interface constitute what is referred to as the source(s), and the receiver of these transmissions is referred to as the recipient. There can exist more than one source and recipient at any point in time, but for simplicity this analysis examines individual transactions.

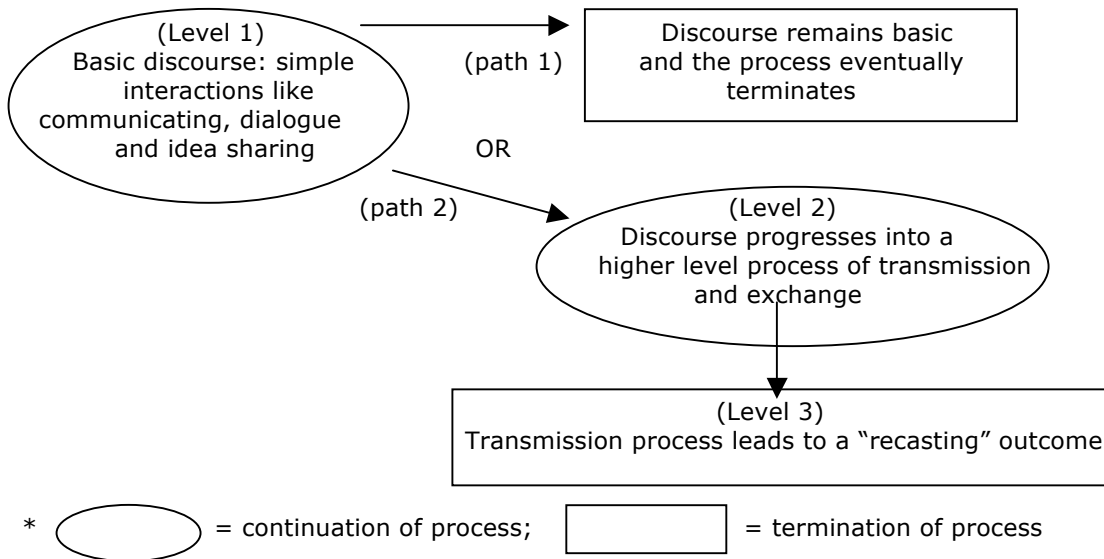
When IDD progresses to level 2, it becomes a more complex transmission process that involves the diffusion of a source's substantive scholarship into a recipient discipline or subfield's existing framework. Examples include coauthoring and coediting refereed articles and books, collusion on grant, consulting, and other funded projects, and larger scale dialogue where participants take back experiences to their home disciplines. Integration proceeds as a method for synthesizing the inputs into existing scholarship (Klein 1990). In more acute instances, values are transmitted from a source to a recipient. Transmissions require processing into the framework of a recipient. The effects (positive or negative) of the transmission process eventually require that the recipient reexamine and possibly reshape its framework and identity. In selected instances, this outcome culminates in level 3, known as "recasting." As examined here, recasting is the most aggressive change which can result from the IDD process. Examples include the integration of new methodologies (i.e. behavioralism) into the discipline, the introduction of a new subfield (i.e. international public administration; homeland security), or a complete updating of the theoretical base. Disciplines and subfields which first develop their own distinct frameworks and identities are better equipped to absorb the effects of the recasting phenomenon, while others may potentially spiral into an identity crisis from which they must develop and advance their own foundations in order to again resurface. The recasting outcome is the actual byproduct of converting, absorbing, and integrating transmissions into the recipient's framework. Under such circumstances, "discursive practices help collaborators move beyond an individualistic or disciplinary stance to one that integrates knowledge from different domains" (Creamer 2005, 41). Each time recasting occurs, the effects guide the direction and research of the recipient until a later point when it is forced to recast itself again. This has produced beneficial outcomes for many disciplines and subfields which have successfully evolved over time. However, the recasting outcome can also become a challenge to recipients that are unable to convert and integrate the sources' transmissions into its existing framework. The figure below illustrates this process.

## **The Importance of Conceptualizing and Studying IDD**

The benefits of interaction through dialogue between academic disciplines have been reflected upon for centuries in the literature. Plato is considered by many to be the first philosopher of interdisciplinary studies. He postulated that philosophy is a unified science and a philosopher is one who synthesizes knowledge (Klein 1990). After these rudimentary efforts, the encyclopedic approach surfaced via taxonomists and eighteenth-century conceptualists like Diderot and d'Alembert (Darnton 1984; Mautner 2000). Encyclopedists advanced high standards of intellectual authority through their contention that "the orthogonality of disciplinary domains fostered the growth of knowledge by permitting one discipline to problematize the research of another discipline, thereby ensuring that the highest critical

standards were maintained by everyone" (Fuller 1985, 5). Other Enlightenment-era thinkers who advanced a multiplicity of cultural, intellectual, and historical ideas on metaphysical, religious, moral, and political subjects included Condillac, Helvetius, Montesquieu, Rousseau, Turgot, and Voltaire (Mautner 2000). These scholars reached beyond the confines of their respective fields to develop more comprehensive theories and ideas.

**Figure 1: Conceptualizing the Term "Discourse"**



Rationally, and by virtue of their very designs, disciplines have over time leaned towards being monopolistic by seeking to build, extend, and protect their cognitive authorities (Gieryn 1983; Fuller 1985). Cognitive science is empirically-grounded but also relies upon suppositions from normative thought (Haugeland 1981). Yet, the authority yielded by cognitive science observes that while distinct disciplinary boundaries exist, the environment in which scientific inquiry occurs can be neither ignorant of external findings and conclusions, nor purposively isolated from other theories and models (Darden and Maull 1977). The use of cross-classification in interdisciplinary research is encompassed by the concept of orthogonality, whereby interrelationships and cross-connections are built as sharing promotes discourse and higher levels of knowledge than are possible through singular modes and the constraints imposed by the tradition of strictly insular boundaries (Haugeland 1981; Fuller 1985). Interdisciplinary efforts have sought to diminish cognitive dissonance and analytical incompatibility through effective interfaces, while working more towards the construction of workable, yet authoritatively-grounded syntheses of concepts and models that are theoretically compatible and methodologically defensible. IDD has become a viable forum for academics to share concepts, methodologies, and theories which span traditional disciplinary boundaries.

Generally, hermeneutics, with its emotive and pragmatic tones, has faded in relation to the intellectual authority which cognitive and empirically-grounded modes of scientific inquiry have offered (Fuller 1985). The existence of orthogonal subfields and disciplines is more

apparent in purer sciences like biology and chemistry, where mutually reinforced formulae and conceptualizations allow for cross-classification and collaboration more so than in disciplines which are predominantly normative and reflective. While the arguments postulated by normative thinkers are sometimes elusive and vague, scientific approaches allow for the construction of verifiable evidence grounded in precision, validity, and rationality. Based upon this, interdisciplinary efforts were nurtured more during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries given the growing stature of the role of scientific methods, which stretched back to Renaissance and Enlightenment-era thought from earlier centuries. Modern thinkers pondered the creation of interfaces between old disciplines and fields and new scientific discoveries, which in many instances spawned the creation of entirely new disciplines. The disciplines of biophysics and biochemistry are examples, both evolving from traditional molds. Their interface with the real world has allowed them to evolve more so than if the old disciplines had remained isolated and separate. This indicates that there is a strong rational basis for interdisciplinary studies since "no single paradigm provided the core for an analysis of the broad range of environmental problems" (Wolman 1977, 800).

In a contemporary context, Columbia historian Frank Tannenbaum employed the term "holistic" in 1944 to show the need for studying whole systems, thus forcing unification of fragmented fields to meet contemporary challenges (Klein 1990). Decades later, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) developed a broad definition of interdisciplinarity as the "simple communication of ideas to the mutual integration of organising concepts, methodology, procedures, epistemology, terminology, data, and organisation of research and education" (Berger 1972, 25). In essence, interdisciplinarity broadly describes the interactions among two or more different disciplines. Without a formally constructed theoretical framework, interdisciplinary research has largely assumed an inductive approach (Pickett, Burch, and Grove 1999). Interdisciplinary efforts span beyond mere institutional borders, and encompass an entire discipline or subfield across the academic spectrum. John Higham once portrayed the academy as "a house in which the inhabitants are leaning out of the many open windows gaily chatting with the neighbors, while the doors between the rooms stayed closed." (Higham 1990, 15). Contemporary interdisciplinary research shows it to be a pragmatic tool since real world problems are not always separable into discrete disciplines, thus requiring a more adaptive process that joins the efforts of previously isolated fields together in nontraditional ways. This holds particular promise for practitioner-oriented fields like public administration. Such thought contradicts the traditional impression that academic divisions, which house disciplines at colleges and universities, are more centers of convenience which provide a basis for specialized research and education, than they are practical venues for solving real world problems (Wolman 1977). The cross-fertilization of ideas creates workable solutions and attracts students to innovative research settings reflective of post-graduate work environments.

### **The Concept of IDD in American Public Administration**

As a theme, administration is found scattered throughout the works of pre-modern thinkers, who wrote on ancient societies in Athens, Rome, and even the medieval city-states of Europe. Today, public administration is the epitome of IDD, blending together the rich

theoretical traditions of other, more established disciplines (Rosenbloom and Kravchuk 2005). It has borrowed extensively from adjoining fields and disciplines. While the concept of administration was a topic of consideration in the classical works of early thinkers as Madison, Hamilton, and Jay's *Federalist Papers* and other literary sources which emerged during the Constitution era, the modern era of American public administration primarily developed during the period of the late nineteenth to early twentieth-centuries as the American state was being constructed with an institutionalized civil service system (Kettl 2000). A stigma of professionalism has since that time shrouded public administration, as found in the literature. Public administration is often considered to be one of the several primary subfields in political science. As the first issue of the *American Political Science Review* acknowledged, "from its very beginning, public administration was one of the critical foundations of political science, and political science was the natural home of public administration" (Kettl 2000, 8).

Segments of research and theorization in contemporary public administration scholarship retain a distinctively normative quality which emulates the pre-behavioralism era of political science. Given the link between public administration and political science, it was logical for early public administration scholars to first consult the literature of political science when developing pedagogical and intellectual boundaries, and an identity. Political science had already been established as a formal academic department at many American colleges and universities. However, we generally date the study of modern public administration in America to Woodrow Wilson's classic 1887 essay, "The Study of Administration" and the Progressive era (Kettl 2000). There was not a defining point in time when public administration formally became an existing field. As Luther Gulick noted in his 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary address to ASPA, "we still need a fundamental and comprehensive theory. Once we have that, we can, perhaps, state the concepts in such a form that they can be grasped and accepted as habits of common thought and action" (Gulick 1965, 2). Gulick's address highlighted the failure of public administration to develop adequate theoretical foundations, though the postmodern movement (discussed below) argues that an absolute and binding theory is unnecessary, if not undesirable. Further, as Richard Stillman notes, from the beginning public administration theory suffered from a "failure to define its scope and substance as a coherent theory, even in the late twentieth century" (Stillman 1991, 9). The dualistic tones present in early scholarship which displaced values like "politics" and "partisanship" in favor of "efficiency" and "effectiveness," the scientific approaches of managerial thinkers in the early era, and the pluralistic slant that political science was also contending with in its literature, which consequently spread to public administration, all concomitantly prevented consensus and direction in the field during its development (Stillman 1991).

### **American Public Administration: Three Significant Recastings**

Unquestionably, IDD in public administration has in many respects been beneficial to the field's development and evolution. We are able to distinguish the influence of political science, sociology, economics, law, statistics, anthropology, business administration, geography, and psychology as the *primary* academic disciplines which public administration has interfaced with (Chandler 1998). The progression of IDD to level 2 signifies a more complex process trend in

public administration, where substantive constructs (concepts, methodologies, theories / approaches) and value constructs (principles, foundations, philosophies) were transmitted from the many source disciplines and subfields identified above. This level signifies a more enduring and lasting effect on public administration than is observable with simple level 1 discourse. This warrants a brief clarification. The transmissions which occurred between other disciplines and public administration through IDD have expanded the substantive learning and value structures of the latter extensively. For instance, models on human behavior, and Max Weber's conceptual development of idealistic bureaucracies provided public administration with a strong initial framework for analyzing complex public organizations and systems early in the twentieth-century. These transmissions were derived from exogenous sources like sociology and psychology. Transmissions from the field of business administration introduced concepts and theories of efficiency and effectiveness to public administration. Woodrow Wilson, early in the field's development, regarded public administration as the *business* side of government, and much of the early scholarship failed to distinguish between the differing values inherent in the public and private sectors. Consequently, there was a movement in public administration to operate with business-like efficiency, but it wasn't able to effectively resolve the discrepancies in missions and ambitions which drive the two sectors (e.g., profiteering versus service). Attempts to create a workable interface between the source and recipient resonated in the subsequent creation of incongruous terms (i.e. "democratic efficiency") which left public administration scholarship unfocused, and even confused. The consequence was public administration's vacillation between viewing people as citizens or customers, personally or impersonally. Later, methodological advancements gained through transmissions from the behavioral revolution and logical positivism made public administration embrace a more scientific approach in its research activities. The policy sciences became integrated to public administration research. New movements like the New Public Administration (NPA) and New Public Management (NPM) embraced segments of earlier thought, much of which was borrowed from other disciplines, in an effort to move the field forward. Yet, the Minnowbrook Conference and application of postmodern thought to public administration theory indicated that scholars were still not convinced that a cohesive theory existed, or was even plausible in the foreseeable future. This echoed ideas from postmodern thought.

The table below illustrates selected examples of prevalent transmissions which occurred from other disciplines to public administration, both as it was developing and evolving. The most enduring transmissions resonated in periods of recasting, the third level of discourse. The recasting outcome is different than Thomas Kuhn's concept of paradigm shifts. While both shake up the framework and identity of the changing discipline, a paradigm shift is a displacement of the dominant approach which refocuses research in that area (Kuhn 1962). Recasting extends beyond singular approaches to affect the totality of a discipline's scholarship and value structures, with the latter having the more profound effect. Three periods of recasting which significantly reshaped public administration as a result of discourse with other disciplines are explored below: 1) early development and the influence of business models (1887–1940); 2) the development of a science of administration (1940–1968); and 3) postmodernism and public administration (1969–present).



**Table 1: Specific Examples of Transmissions and Sources to Public Administration**

<b><i>Nature / Description of Transmission</i></b>	<b><i>Primary Source and Orientation of the Transmission</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human behavior models</li> <li>• Max Weber's sociological treatise on bureaucracy (late 1800's)</li> <li>• Concepts and values of private sector effectiveness and efficiency from business administration</li> <li>• Scientific management (1915-1940) – "one best way" – Fayol and Taylor</li> <li>• Influence of logical positivism and Vienna Circle authors</li> <li>• Organization theory and leadership approaches (1930's onward) from psychology –</li> <li>• Economic theories and models (1930's onward)</li> <li>• Behavioralism (1940's) – from Sociology and Psychology to PS to PA</li> <li>• Public Choice Theory / mathematics theory (mid-1960's onward) – utility maximization</li> <li>• New Public Management – UK, Australia, New Zealand, Scandinavia – market values and privatization</li> <li>• Analyses that use newer technology-oriented tools (GIS, SPSS, survey research packages, etc.)</li> <li>• National Performance Review and Reinventing Government (1993) – molding business principles to PA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sociology; anthropology; psychology</li> <li>• Sociology; psychology</li> <li>• Business; economics</li> <li>• Business; economics</li> <li>• Math / Science; social sciences</li> <li>• Business, communications, and psychology</li> <li>• Economics</li> <li>• Sociology; psychology; social sciences</li> <li>• Economics; mathematics</li> <li>• Business; economics</li> <li>• Geography; statistics</li> <li>• Business; economics (Public Choice)</li> </ul>

### **1) Early Development of Public Administration and the Influence of Business Models (1887-1940)**

As has been the case in many fields, public administration was particularly susceptible to transmissions from outside sources through IDD during its early developmental period. As scholarship was enlarging, its value structure was being cultivated by the initial sets of thinkers. During public administration's early development, the expansion of the American state was largely resulting from the growing complexities of American society (Stillman 1991). However, public administration scholarship provided little guidance. The field's boundaries were open to outside thought, and early scholars began integrating the substance of other sources into their own research.

In essence, public administration's significance in the late nineteenth-century had grown as the American state began to systematically transform into a positive force with a class of professionalized civil servants (Rosenbloom 2005). This era represents the first instance when the field was recasted. Initially, the field's normative values encapsulated the thought of pre-modern and modern thinkers of political philosophy. Yet there was also perceptually an innate, pragmatic tone that tempered any inclination to make it wholly idealistic and disconnected from the realities of administrative life. The tone was pragmatic since it had an optimism which inspired public administrators to play both positive and constructive roles, tying them to a broader evolutionary vision of administration. This was evocative of the evolutionary thought developed by classical pragmatists like C. S. Pierce, William James,

and Jane Addams, whose works were influential in public administration early in the twentieth-century. Classical pragmatism was essentially an American philosophy that brought idealism and humanitarian values to bear on frontier life (Brom and Shields 2006). Its influence on public administration induced enthusiasm, discussion, and integration of segments of pragmatism's tenets amongst many of its members. But the effects were limited. This inspiration was also a trait of Progressive thinkers. While Progressive reform efforts closely linked the administrative process to normative values like democracy, service, and consensus, there was optimism that scholarship would also sensibly reflect the functional and instrumental sides of the field. This blend of pragmatism and normative thought was developed in early substantive scholarship and grounded the field's existence in reality rather than mere abstraction, making it distinct from political science and other fields.

But neither public administration's philosophical side, nor its pragmatic orientation provided adequate solutions to questions posed from complex issues at the turn of the century. The evils of large, corrupt political machines spanned several decades in the late nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries, coinciding with public administration's initial development period. This strained the process of becoming a legitimized profession. Large, unwieldy trusts in the private market showed that the business sector was more complex and advanced, but also necessitated a new regulatory system to prevent the concentration of market power and capitulation of American labor to exploitative work environments. On the international front, the United States was metamorphosing from isolationism to participation. These factors necessitated strong domestic and foreign policy agendas, and a positive role for the government.

Despite the plethora of externalities that sprang from the industrial revolution in America, the private sector's model for operational efficiency was not one that early public administration scholars chose to ignore. Business administration and management became two of the principle sources which public administration borrowed from early in its development. Members from these sources were largely pro-capitalists who wanted a minimalist government. If they couldn't curtail the growth of the American state, then the next best alternative was to make government an operational and functional reflection of private sector practices. Hence, these sources enthusiastically transmitted ideas and theories to public administration, which then absorbed the transmissions and integrated them into its substantive thought and value structure.

By its very nature, public administration had been an orthogonal field that naturally and quickly came to be regarded as the "business side" of government. With the enactment of the Pendleton Act in 1883, the civil service system was constructed to exude professional conduct and a level of proficiency that would more effectively satisfy the needs of citizens than the corrupt and fallible practices that dominated during the era of political machines (Rosenbloom 2005). The transmission of substantive concepts, methods, and theories, and also values that were already well-developed in the private sector by reputed writers as Charles Babbage, Henri Fayol, Frederick Winslow Taylor, Oliver Sheldon, Elton Mayo, Chester Barnard, and Philip Selznick, were well received with enthusiasm by segments of scholars in public administration. Yet, the interface between the source and recipient exhibited complexities from their different foundations and identities (e.g. profiteering versus service), and public administration had not at the time effectively developed its own unique

framework or identity. This in part helped to contribute to the “intellectual crisis” which Vincent Ostrom referred to in the 1970s (Ostrom 1973).

Business administration’s own development had been functional, and at first offered promise for the functional path that public administration was itself taking. Market philosophies had been refined from the pre-modern modes of mercantilism and trade to the more complex modern modes advanced through technology and intricate production processes (Stillman 1991). Strong market-based values had evolved business administration into a complex discipline as the economy transformed from the agrarianism of frontier life into a complex modern society during the industrial revolution. However, Progressive reformers were critical of big business and the fallacies of laissez-faire economics. They liked the efficiency side found in business scholarship, but still held a vibrant place for the normative values championed by premodern philosophers. Unfortunately, these values hadn’t been wholly solidified into public administration’s foundations. Progressives sought a practical and responsive government that also reinforced principles of democracy and justice. They were pragmatic in their view that administrators played essential, if not evolutionary roles in society. This was reinforced by the underlying theme of optimism. Yet the triumph of substantive methods, theories, approaches, and models in private sector practice made such values as effectiveness and efficiency attractive for public administration. Consequently, the interface between progressive reform and business thought became shaky as transmissions through IDD caused the two sets of values to compete. Ultimately, public administration did not lose sight of its original purpose, or the appeals that progressive reformers offered to end corruption and inefficiency in government. Rather the field was reshaped via IDD transmissions to become one of “democratic efficiency” (Dudley 2006). This hybrid reflected a multiplicity of transmissions from several influential sources, yet no core underlying theory or framework existed to guide scholarship.

From these early transmissions, public administration scholarship assumed a practical and technical tone. This was exhibited both in its substantive scholarship and theories, and its incessant return to and reflection on values of efficiency, rationality, and effectiveness (particularly later with the Public Choice approach and New Public Management movement). The crux of the debate showed that the study of public administration needed to be “related to the broad generalizations of political theory concerned with such matters as justice, liberty, obedience, and the role of the state in human affairs” (White 1948, 10). Yet it also continued to revolve around promoting the “most efficient utilization of the resources” in the public sector” (White 1948, 10). The problem was that its founders didn’t provide a clear vision for the field, and IDD transmissions were not effectively translated into a cohesive theory or framework. The earlier public administration scholarship traces back to Wilson’s landmark essay in 1887, which argued “the field of administration is a field of business” (Wilson 1887, 209). Wilson has in fact been credited as being the “father” of public administration, and his essay has served as one of the first authoritative and seminal critiques which he wrote to shape the field, even though contemporary scholarship dismisses many of his assertions as being myopic. Wilson was tenacious in his contention that power in government, like in the private sector, should be directed by a strong executive, rather than through the deliberative processes typified in legislative bodies like Congress in the public sector, or boards of directors in the private sector.

Goodnow, one of the founders and first president (1903) of the American Political Science Association (APSA), was also an early public administration scholar whose classic book *Politics and Administration* (1900) came to reflect the sentiments of Progressive era thinkers. Goodnow advanced the idea of a politics-administration dichotomy, where politics is the policies or expressions of the state, and administration is the execution of these policies. His ideas initially contributed to the split in public administration's identity to a large degree. Goodnow's thesis separated these activities into functional spheres that were considered distinct and plausibly disconnected from each other (Goodnow 1900). His work was clearly reminiscent of the technocratic and functional tone from the era, yet he was not dismissive of the importance that values and principles like democracy and justice played in the American political system. By the 1920's, public administration scholars like Willoughby had apparently accepted this dichotomy of normative political science and efficiency-based business administration values, as was evidenced by his managerial orientation and contention that the field should be concerned primarily with the executive branch and implementation (Willoughby 1927). The recasting of public administration had occurred, and this practically-oriented, technocratic theme reflective of outside transmissions is chronicled throughout much of the history of public administration, particularly by scholars like Dwight Waldo (Fry 1998). Fry observes a common theme in Waldo's various historical accounts of the foundational era in the field -- the application of a generic managerial orientation where "public administration accepted both business procedures and a business ideology as the business model was used to deprecate the balance of powers and aggrandize the role of the chief executive, as well as to justify hierarchical control mechanisms" (Fry 1998, 223). Notions of democracy were largely absent, but when they did appear in the literature, they were substantively based and only partially integrated into the scholarship of public administration.

Through IDD, subsequent scholarship after the founding period absorbed transmissions that were managerially oriented, with little reflection for how to integrate such transmissions into the field's existing framework. In other words, since public administration had failed to adequately develop early in its existence, there did not exist a proper interface from which later IDD transmissions could proceed. Like other related ideas, the scholarship of Taylorism spread to public administration via IDD. Public administration was enthusiastic of the achievements of efficient production processes and principles of scientific management. Scholars of business administration gave those in public administration optimism that the implementation of routine activities like planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting, and budgeting (POSDCORB) would restore confidence in the public sector (Gulick and Urwick 1937). The ongoing reference to such concepts in its scholarship signified that public administration was absorbing them as values into its identity. In White's words, "the scientific management movement has had a very important share in stimulating improvement in the methods of carrying on public business" (White 1926, 13). To Wilson, Taylor, and White, public administration values were comparable to those found in business. They found little distinction between private and public administration. As White's statement suggests, the administration of government was construed to be a business endeavor, only one that occurs in public settings. To old school managerialists, the initial embrace of business values like efficiency and effectiveness were rational building blocks in creating a solid foundation for public administration, from which specific techniques and procedures could be developed and applied with marginal adjustments that took into consideration the

“public” side of administration. Other transmissions reinforced the business side of administration, even though they were converted and absorbed as applications in the public sector. The Brownlow Report and The Report of the President’s Committee on Administrative Management in 1937 further supported the application of managerially-oriented approaches in the public sector by arguing in favor of increasing the power of the president and making the executive the prominent branch of government, much like CEO’s were considered the vibrant leaders of lucrative corporations.

Similar transmissions from other sources reflect this initial focus on the business side of administration. For example, Max Weber’s concept of ideal bureaucracies was introduced (Fry 1998). From this, public administration absorbed substantive thought from Weber’s sociological approach relating to job and task specialization, coordination, and distribution of functions. Weber’s development of bureaucratic theory became a staple in classical theory. Classical theory’s influence in public administration was succeeded by further transmissions derived from sociology and psychology. Also via IDD, other transmissions adapted the thought of the human relations school to a more humanistic vision of organizational life in public organizations. Public administration scholarship referred to Elton Mayo’s 1920’s research in the Western Electric Company’s Hawthorne plant and the 1940’s research of Kurt Lewin’s psychological leadership theories for guidance (Tausky 1978). The field refined these transmissions for its own use in public sector settings. Additional substantive transmissions from psychology and organizational behavior expanded the human relations sphere even more. Maslow’s hierarchy of needs found a place in public administration scholarship (Maslow 1954). Argyris’ personality model influenced analyses of public sector behavior in organizational settings, and Herzberg’s two-dimension theory of motivation enhanced Maslow’s hierarchy with emphasis on job content and job environment. From the management science specialty of business administration, the structural contingencies theory was transmitted via IDD as a central idea for bridging classical and humanistic theories with an examination of organizational contexts. Using these more developed substantive constructs, public administration scholars found contingency theory’s concepts of open systems and uncertainty appropriate for exploring organizational behavior and decision making in public settings (Tausky 1978). But overall, the field was still left directionless, some critics acknowledged the direction public administration had taken, but disagreed with it, instead calling for new directions in its scholarship and value structures. For instance, Marshall Dimock viewed efficiency as “coldly calculating and inhuman,” where “successful administration is warm and vibrant” (Dimock 1936, 120). These transmissions all largely cultivated a businesslike focus within public administration embodied by this initial development era recasting.

## **2) Developing a Science of Administration (1940-1968)**

When the second period of recasting came, it was clear that public administration was facing an identity crisis. The absorption of transmissions from multiple sources during its development era overwhelmed the necessity of forging a unifying theory from within. While much of these developments were taking place in public administration, political science was also recasting itself through the behavioral revolution as it strived to become more of a social science. This trend toward scientific methods in turn affected its component subfields, and

also caused scholars of public administration to rethink how the field would progress methodologically. The 1930's members of the Chicago school of the social sciences sought a unification of rational and empirical approaches by using logical positivism. They emphasized the logical analysis of language using Descartes's *Mathesis Universalis* (Klein 1990). Logical positivism became particularly influential in public administration, and represented IDD that originated in other scientific and mathematical disciplines.

Together, the transmissions of movements like behavioralism and logical positivism had a large impact on making public administration embrace the scientific approach. A new science of administration was not a replacement for the business side of administration, but rather a complement to transmissions which pursued higher levels of organizational efficiency in the public sector, but primarily through the use of quantitative techniques. Logical positivism was being absorbed into public administration via the sponsorship of Herbert Simon. Simon has been recognized as a principle influence on public administration scholarship, but he had himself been influenced by Alfred North Whitehead and Bertrand Russell's mathematical treatise entitled *Principia Mathematica*, Ludwig Wittgenstein's philosophical perspectives in the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, and the works of those who founded the Vienna Circle in the early twentieth-century (Cruise 2006). However, he adapted and applied this thought within public administration, challenging the field to become more scientific.

The values of democratic efficiency were still apparent from the initial recasting period, and this new wave of scientific inquiry forced a reformation of public administration scholarship to "scientize" through managerial techniques and functionalism. The field became polycentric as scholars and critics acknowledged the predilection for business-like values in previous scholarship, yet offered their own distinct derivations and contributions to refine it in small incremental steps. While the 1930's saw an emergence of other scholars and critics of the science of administration approach like Chester Barnard, Robert Merton, Mary Parker Follett, Elton Mayo, Fritz Roethlisberger, Ordway Tead, W. W. Willoughby, Herbert Simon, and Dwight Waldo, the tone of the field remained practical and functional, using a much more scientific approach.

The concepts and theories that were transmitted through IDD had discrete, but well developed sociological, behavioral, and psychological angles which emphasized rational modes of inquiry. They were derived from analyses that examined substantive issues within the existing value constructs of the field, like institutional functions (Weber 1958; Urwick 1943; Fayol 1949), leadership qualities (Barnard 1938; Follett 1926), and human-centric traits (Maslow 1954; Merton 1957; McGregor 1960). Periodic analyses of budgetary functions (Wildavsky 1964; Schick 1966) reinforced the technical, revenue-driven side of public administration, which paralleled but didn't wholly imitate business administration's initial transmissions and values of profit making. V. O. Key, Jr. in particular explored the lack of cohesion that existed within subtopics of public administration in his analysis of budgetary theory, or the lack thereof, signaling broader ramifications for the field as a whole (Key 1940). Interestingly, Paul Appleby analyzed how government was different from every other activity in society during this era, particularly through its enmeshment with politics. His descriptive account stopped short of any detailed discussion on how to refine and solidify public administration's values accordingly

based upon these distinctions (Appleby 1945). Even so, the transmissions that public administration had absorbed into its framework had built an identity where the field was considered the business side of government, and efficiency and effectiveness were highly sought after standards that guided thought. This underlying theme was endemic in the multitude of approaches that public administration scholars used during the time.

### **3) Postmodernism and Public Administration (1969—present)**

With the third and most recent significant recasting of public administration, there has been a general sense that the “one best approach” philosophy advanced through the transmissions of classical managerialists, behavioralists, and positivists are ill-suited for guiding scholarship in the field. This is reinforced by postmodern thought. The first and second recastings were not outright failures, but the field’s identity has lacked a visible cohesive structure given the influence of multiple transmitting sources. The Minnowbrook Conference that was convened at Syracuse University in 1969 is perhaps the clearest example of public administration’s return to endogenous development. It signaled a shift in the field’s polycentric theory, with much contemplation over how to make sense of transmissions from early periods of the field’s history. Consistent with postmodern thought, public administration was also becoming noncommittal and critical of universalisms and truisms. It was connected to its outside environment through IDD, but was still adverse to any contention that one commanding theory should guide scholarship in the field. Transmissions in this era have been absorbed with caution, with special consideration for the recasting outcome. The field has been perceptibly frustrated with the impulsion of thought and unicentric idealism that behavioralists and positivists have attempted to integrate into the core of public administration with their visions of driving all scholarship through quantitative and scientific methods. This has demonstrated not only a shortcoming in the interface between the sources of these methodological movements, but also in the absorption of these values into public administration’s own framework. In this latest recasting, public administration has in effect been trying to *detach* itself from the effects of transmissions of earlier periods through, and to instead create its own distinct and unique identity.

For instance, in the late 1960’s, public administration was reintroduced to the important role of political philosophy as a foundation and framework. This has signaled the necessity of revisiting older normative principles. Connecting scientific methods to meaningful reflection and theorization was a hallmark of post-behavioralism and post-positivism, both in political science and its subfields. This has likewise affected public administration. From this lead, many newer public administration scholars appreciate the importance of revisiting the normative thought of political philosophy to guide the field’s scholarship and value structures. They view this as a means for generating meaningful dialogue that could bridge the theory-practice gap that had surfaced early in public administration’s development era with the embrace of practical and functional values that paralleled those of business administration. Instead of outright disconnecting itself from earlier values like effectiveness and efficiency, contemporary scholars are using such transmissions to build a guiding vision for the field. They seek a new orientation that incorporates earlier transmissions into broader foundational philosophies that weren’t entirely developed initially, but nonetheless still exist (i.e.: democracy, equity, and participation).

The New Public Administration (NPA) and New Public Management (NPM) movements have produced significant reflection within the field, but have still failed to provide answers to questions that seem normatively-based. Public administration scholars recognized the Minnowbrook Conference to be a catalyst for shifting the focus towards democratic idealism within the field. In fact, Minnowbrook represented a concerted effort by public administration scholars of the time to assert their own unique and distinct values, something which should have occurred during the development era.

As Stillman argues, the Minnowbrook scholars “exhibited particular hostility toward traditional public administration aimed at state-building and toward enhancing administrative efficiency, economy, and effectiveness as embodied in POSDCORB, as well as newer rational techniques such as operations research, decision-sciences, systems theory, PPBS, MBO, or other techno-professional inventions stressing rationality, science, behaviorism, realism, or any sort of hard empirical quantitative methodologies” (Stillman 2005, 22-23). Further, these “young Turks” were reserved in their embrace of behavioral methods from the discipline of political science, and its subsequent application in public administration. They warned against overly-empirical research that was disconnected from notions of democratic idealism, and viewed “POSDCORB as all *too* real, *too* powerful, *too* much the embodiment of the establishment and therefore fundamentally detrimental to egalitarian, democratic, humane values” (Stillman 2005, 23). Soon after Minnowbrook, Vincent Ostrom employed a public choice approach to attack old public administration doctrines as being too obeisant to the “single-centered” approach advocated by early Wilsonites who were fixated with the politics-administration dichotomy, and the Weberian bureaucratic idealism (Ostrom 1973). The problem was that the public choice school transmitted scholarship and values from economics and mathematics via IDD in the same sloppy fashion that earlier transmissions had from other sources. There was not an appropriate interface between the source (economics and mathematics) and the recipient (public administration). Public choice’s market driven approach integrated utilitarian ideals further in public administration, forcing it to become preoccupied with concepts like utility maximization rather than ones created endogenously.

As mentioned above, this most recent recasting of public administration has occurred contemporaneously with the era of postmodernism. Postmodernism rejects universalism, essentialism, ontological realism, and the construction of metanarratives (Fox and Miller 2006). This perspective liberates public administration from having to embrace a single unified theoretical foundation, but also presents the field with salient challenges. For instance, public administration’s identity crisis has been exacerbated by the lack of theoretical consensus among theorists. Segments of scholars in the field have focused on advancing the positivist ideal, often at the expense of normative thought and other viable perspectives (Raadschelders 2000). There continues to be a conceptual arena within public administration that is dominated by the enduring dispute between advocates of the public management approach in the tradition of Herbert Simon, and the perspective that the field must sustain the more normative theory of politics position offered by Dwight Waldo. The postmodern perspective has brought no closure to this debate, and both viewpoints are forcing the field to drift further apart rather than agreeing to disagree. As Stivers asserts, while efficiency-based approaches and the use of the scientific method are relevant aspects of public administration, this should not be at the expense of the political tradition. Normative



theory perceptibly finds itself at odds with empirical approaches which fail to recognize the importance of early thought in developing the field. The consequence has caused infighting between proponents of traditional public administration and those from the public management perspective, thus prolonging the efficiency-democratic dialectic (Stivers 2000a).

In light of these disagreements, the concept of IDD in public administration has come to facilitate interaction among competing perspectives. Primarily surfacing from the efforts of the Public Administration Theory Network (PAT-Net), a “Discourse Movement” came into existence in the 1990s as a result of a series of debates among scholars to address many of the issues that continue to confront the field. Like public administration itself, the nature of this postmodern Discourse Movement is fragmented among varying viewpoints. Sections within the movement include the right (Charles Fox and Hugh Miller), the center (David Farmer), and the left (O.C. McSwite). From a political perspective, the right of the spectrum addresses a broad audience in the mainstream public administration community (and some from the discipline of political science) on the topic of using general rules of discourse to transform policy making. In rejecting the present model of politics, Fox and Miller’s focus is on legislation and integrating rules of discourse into the implementation process. This has been to such an extent that Fox and Miller offered discourse theory as a third approach to the constitutionalism/neoinstitutionalism and communitarianism/civism slants which have surfaced in postmodern public administration theory as challenges to earlier orthodoxies. Their scholarship attempts to integrate public administration traditionalists into the discourse movement, who historically viewed governance through the lenses of access, power, and influence. They maintain that “the underlying assumptions endemic to most public administration theorizing has led to the ongoing intellectual crisis” (Fox and Miller 1995, 8). Postmodernism’s challenge to these assumptions through the lenses of anti-foundationalism, situational viewpoints, eclectic perspectives, and focus on the decentered-self have deconstructed earlier monolithically-based themes and metanarratives in favor of celebrating the legitimization of “otherness” and distinctiveness.

Further, Fox and Miller’s focus on “authentic discourse” seeks to extend the Habermasian<sup>1</sup> ideal without the pitfalls of modernist frameworks in order to “induce improvements in tendencies already extant in public administration” (Fox and Miller 1995, 78). In addition to authentic discourse, Miller elaborated that their use of agnostic discourse, as borrowed from Hannah Arendt, is a corrective method to Habermas’ assumption of metaphysical harmony, which saw humans inexorably progressing toward a utopian order (Miller 2000). Consistent with postmodern thought, Fox and Miller assert that all ideas are contestable through the venue of discourse. Baudrillard’s concept of “hyper-reality” also has significance in Fox and Miller’s work. Baudrillard coined the term to represent a blurring of distinctions between the real and unreal, which Fox and Miller use to signify the “thinning of reality” which has occurred in narrowing the boundaries between substance and triviality, thus resulting in an increase of monologic (false) claims that are presented in everyday messages. This is particularly perceptible in the media and advertising world’s use of exaggerated marketing slogans used to capture the attention of prospective buyers of their products. In place of monologic claims, several essential facets of discourse -- sincerity, situation regarding intentionality, willing attention, and substantive contribution – are necessary for it to progress in a meaningful fashion (Fox and Miller 1995).

The center of the Discourse Movement is more focused on institutional arenas of discourse, as exemplified by David John Farmer's scholarship. This perspective seeks to establish an open attitude of inquiry to broaden the scope of public administration through discourse beyond basic micro-level administrative practices, to instead consider the larger-scale issues confronting bureaucracy and society. It connects public administration discourse to social and political issues of varying complexities, with an emphasis on the concept of justice. Further, Farmer asserts that IDD from philosophy and economics can potentially enrich public administration theory and practice. He crafts a ladder metaphor as a basis for conceptualizing discourse, where dimensions (rungs) exist on a spatial plane of dimensionality (Farmer 1998). Sets of dimensions in various areas of human IDD (e.g. public administration, business administration, military administration, and non-profit administration) can manifest themselves in the ladders of one another. Farmer identifies four dimensions – me, they, our, and out of the cave – which frame how the scope of discourse proceeds on a spectrum of lower to higher rung activities. Rung three is where disciplinary walls are overcome and unity among fields becomes possible. Using discourse allows for progression to occur beyond the flatland, but Farmer warns that each level is limited in that it “filters some information and arbitrarily excludes or marginalizes opportunities for knowing or doing” that must be acknowledged upfront by participants (Farmer 2000, 85).

The left of the postmodern Discourse Movement is comprised of process theorists who view discourse through the lenses of organizational development and the practical aspects of governance. This considers discourse to be essential in group settings and interpersonal processes, such that it includes micro-dynamic levels of social interaction (White 2000). These divergent perspectives on discourse suggest agreement on its importance to public administration in this most recent recasting, but also demonstrate continued debate on using IDD to steer the field in a particular direction. O. C. McSwite<sup>2</sup> has also emphasized the significance of discourse to postmodern public administration. McSwite's analysis integrates aspects of Jacques Lacan's psychoanalytical theory into a discourse approach that acknowledges the importance of collaborative relationships forged through continuous communication processes. These ideas are grounded in the concept of social ontology where human beings become a product of interactions with others, as relationships develop and meaning is created from this process of interaction (McSwite 1997, 1999). This is reinforced in an essay written by Orion White, which was offered in response to ideas presented in Fox and Miller's book on postmodernism, as discussed above. While White's essay did not mark the beginning of the Discourse Movement, it sparked considerable thought for reconceptualizing public administration around the core idea of discourse (McSwite 2000). White referred to the discourse movement as “a broad range of arguments sharing the purpose of moving the field past its obsessional identification with rationalism and with technocratic expertise as its *raison d'être*” (White 1998, 471). Perhaps this is suggestive of the beginnings of another recasting in future times.

These various debating perspectives on the concept of IDD in postmodern public administration tend to emphasize the significant role for ideas to develop through interactions among participants in various settings, where currents of messages are eventually interpreted and aggregated together into meaningful associations. The problem is that in using the postmodern perspective, discourse can stimulate interaction, but justification for the existence

of a binding truth becomes problematic since contradictory perspectives are a reflection of a multitude of viewpoints. As Anderson remarks, “two people attending the same event, taking the same class, and/or working in the same organization will have different interpretations of their experiences, and both will tend to view their experience as the ‘truth’” (Anderson 2002, 6). Again, this relates back to the efficiency-democratic dialectic, the constitutionalism and communitarianism slants, and other strains of debate which have endured in the field. Further, White has cautioned that while discourse in public administration has positive implications, namely by inviting members to share new ideas and thought, it can also degenerate into an embrace of rationalism and earlier paths of frustration which were left unresolved. He advocates separating traditional forms of empiricism from discourse (White 2000). This is reinforced by Stivers, who sees discourse less as leading to an explanatory scheme built from empirical hypothesis testing, and more from the perspective that it involves part interpretation and part critique. This encompasses “sense-making” of what are considered to be an inchoate series of events and processes (Stivers 2000b). Consequently, this venue moves discourse beyond the tendency to emphasize problem solving, and instead focuses on a broader perspective where it becomes “a system of possibilities for knowledge... made up in part of sets of unusually tacit rules that enable us to... do certain things and confine us within a necessarily delimited system” (Flax 1990, 205-206).

Despite the brief discussion above of these setbacks, this third recasting holds more optimism that public administration scholars are not ignoring earlier transmissions, but instead are building upon lessons from previous recastings. This perhaps offers promise that the course of the field’s identity crisis can be moderated, if not undone to some extent. The reassertion of normative ideals and democratic principles by contemporary public administration scholars has strong roots in the New Public Service Movement advanced by Robert and Janet Denhardt. At the core of this movement is the contention that public administration ideals are distinct from business administration, a perceptible departure from the Wilsonian and scientific management era. Consequently, the former must revive and reassert the label “citizens” to describe Americans, rather than reducing them to “customers” of services, which inherently tends to detach people from both their civic obligations as citizens and their roles as members of communities (Denhardt and Denhardt 2003).

Finally, the transmissions absorbed by public administration (i.e. theories of organizational behavior, personality traits, leadership, and motivation from the discipline of psychology, and so forth) from earlier recastings have been revised and transmitted back to other outside disciplines. This trend is already apparent in the scholarship of business ethicists and their explorations of private sector social responsibility. Evidence is further found in analyses of the regulatory environment in the business administration literature. This has shown that public administration has itself recently become a change agent and source of transmission rather than being exclusively a recipient.

## **Concluding Statements**

Disciplines and subfields are ever-changing and adapting entities that respond to internal and external stimuli. IDD is a vibrant impulse for change, providing both positive and negative opportunities in the evolutionary process. Level 1 discourse is relatively simple, but levels 2

and 3 have the potential to significantly impact a discipline and/or subfield. This was shown in the application of the concept of IDD to public administration. Public administration borrowed extensively at times from other disciplines, particularly during its developmental era, when it may have been better served by fostering its own substantive scholarship and values. Had the field done this, then transmissions through IDD could have gradually helped the field evolve, by integrating exogenous scholarship and values into its framework, perhaps avoiding the difficulties in recasting presented above. The potential for an identity crisis would have been much less, and public administration may have potentially evolved into a more cohesive field.

The latest period of recasting has made perceptible progress towards addressing the concerns of an identity crisis. However, much work remains in this era of postmodern thought, which is both anti-foundational and skeptical that there can be a single unifying perspective. The transmission process is complex and unpredictable, and the inclination to embrace ideas from outside sources is strong when the field is searching for a sense of greater significance and meaning in the eyes of other academics. Practitioners are perhaps best able to benefit from IDD, as they profit from techniques and procedures which are tested in academic venues and later applied on a practical basis. For instance, Noonan discusses how interdisciplinary research is advocated in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The research produced by the EPA has been interdisciplinary by design, as exhibited in a rather broad portfolio of successfully completed research projects and peer-reviewed journal articles. The broad mandate of the agency has provided the impetus of this interdisciplinary approach. It has taken a watchful relationship over children, health, and the environment, and has even partnered with cadres of scientists, physicians, toxicologists, epidemiologists, and sociologists (Noonan 1999). Numerous other examples can be found, which are beyond the scope of this research.

This article concludes with an interesting prospect. Garofalo and Geuras suggest a counterview that could plausibly bring about a transformation in the field. They contend that public administration is a moral endeavor that is designed to advance values that society considers significant. Correspondingly, this makes public administration a “plausible prototype for other professions to emulate as they pursue their own objectives” (Garofalo and Geuras 2006, preface). In essence, this would view public administration as a moral agent that can transmit its own constructive scholarship and value structures to other disciplines. In doing so, the IDD process would reverse and transmit from public administration to previous sources like business administration, but for a more sublime and optimistic vision for post-modern society. However, to do so will first require that the field develops and asserts its own core values, and in doing so, finds contentment in its own unique identity.

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## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> Habermas outlined the four validity claims for authentic communication to be understandability, which are rarely met: truth of propositional content, sincerity of the speaker, and the appropriateness of speech performance. See Miller, Hugh T. "Rational Discourse, Memetics, and the Autonomous Liberal-Humanist Subject" in *Administrative Theory & Praxis*, Mar (22) 1: 89-104.

<sup>2</sup> Note: O.C. McSwite is a pseudonym for two authors writing together – Orion White and Cynthia McSwain. See Farmer, David John. 2003. "Thanks to O.C. McSwite" in *Administrative Theory & Praxis (Administrative Theory & Praxis)*, Jun (25) 2: 309 -314.

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# Creating the First Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations (1941-1949) and Subsequent Developments: A Case Study of Thickening in the Federal Bureaucracy

*Mordecai Lee*

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## **Introduction and Literature Review**

In 1995, Light identified and documented a natural dynamic in the politics of the federal bureaucracy. Calling it ‘thickening,’ he observed the ongoing and seeming inexorable process by which additional senior layers of federal departments and agencies were inserted into the hierarchy of those organizations (Light, 1995). Light’s work has been widely absorbed into public administration literature as part of its accepted knowledge base. However, given the nearly instant and universal acceptance of his conceptualization, there has been little follow-up research to document in more detail specific play-by-play aspects of the thickening dynamic. One such study was on the creation and spread of assistant secretaries for public affairs (Lee, 2008).

One aspect of thickening that Light noted was the expansion in the number of assistant secretaries in Cabinet departments. This inquiry seeks to provide a detailed historical case study documenting an example of the thickening dynamic, namely the invention of an assistant secretaryship for Congressional relations in one department and the subsequent horizontal thickening as this precedent spread throughout the Cabinet.

In 1940, no Cabinet department had an assistant secretary for legislative liaison. By the late 1970s, it was commonplace (Murphy, Nuechterlein and Stupak, 1978, 30). At the time of writing (2009), it was nearly universal. Of 15 departments, 14 had an assistant secretary for Congressional relations. Of those, nine were entirely dedicated to Congressional relations and had no other responsibilities, four were assistant secretaries with dual duties for legislative and intergovernmental affairs, and one (DOT) was for “Governmental Affairs” generally, without a specific reference to Congress. Only one department (Interior) did not have an

assistant secretary responsible for legislative affairs, assigning it instead to a director in the office of the Secretary (and, therefore, not a presidential appointee and not confirmed by the Senate). This indicates that a thickening process had occurred, yet the step-by-step evolution of the thickening process for this position has not been researched or documented.

In summary, the case study reflects the secular arc of developments that Light identified. It also provides an opportunity for an exploration of the phenomenon of legislative liaison in public administration. (Note that this excludes legislative relations by the President or other chief elected executives, a distinctly different topic and literature.) Legislative liaison has been a relatively neglected focus in public administration literature, somewhat surprising given the central role – whether positive or negative – that a legislative body can play in the survival, growth and health of a bureaucracy. From the modest literature in public administration on the practice of legislative relations, several sources highlight its importance. Khademian suggested it should be considered as “*key to effective public administration*” (1996, 193, emphasis added). Addressing senior federal civil servants, Cummings called Congressional relations “*extremely challenging*” (2008, 216). Thompson quoted a federal agency head in the 1970s telling all agency personnel that “*Response to congressional mail takes precedence over every other item of agency business*” (1975, 61, emphasis added). Other examples of the literature include the experiences of a practitioner on Capital Hill (Scroggs, 2000) and legislative liaison at the state and municipal levels of government (Abney, 1988; Reynolds, 1965).

Legislative liaison is at the fulcrum of the relationship between unelected bureaucracies and elected legislatures, at the conjoining of the two elements of the so-called politics-administration dichotomy. In that context, legislative liaison is a useful venue for observing bureaucratic-political relationships. Both sides in this relationship have conflicting institutional impulses regarding the other. Generally, bureaucracies seek autonomy (Carpenter, 2001), but also recognize the power that elected officials in the legislative branch have over them.

Conversely, legislators seek to exercise their power over executive branch agencies (Fiorina, 1989) while fearing being dominated by the bureaucracy’s self-interested lobbying and propaganda. For example, in 1919 Congress passed a law *criminalizing* agency lobbying of Congress. (In 2002, the law was revised by decriminalizing the ban on lobbying, but was retained on the books.) In addition, in 1951, Congress began adding to annual appropriations bills bans on using federal funds to indirectly lobby Congress through public relations (Kosar, 2005). Also, from 1958 to 1989 Congress imposed on the largest Cabinet department, the Defense Department, a statutory limit on funds the military could spend on legislative liaison (US General Accounting Office, 1986).

Parallel to the legislative hostility to being lobbied by the bureaucracy, a different strand in Congressional culture was also evolving during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Congress was institutionalizing itself. It expanded personal and committee staffs, created legislative branch agencies to assist it, and took all manner of actions to assure its centrality in the federal decision-making process (Lee, 2006). In particular, Congress gradually came to terms with

the rise of the administrative state during that period by imposing on the bureaucracy numerous legal constraints that collectively created a “legislative-centered public administration” in the US national government (Rosenbloom, 2000). Therefore, insisting on its prerogatives, one would expect that Congress would demand that federal departments maintain robust liaison offices that would cater to legislative and legislators’ every whim (Fiorina, 1989, 63-66).

## Scope and Methodology

As a detailed examination of one example of the thickening process, this inquiry provides an historical narrative of the gradual nature of the dynamic. The key historical markers are when the thickening process began for this particular office, when it came to a culmination and, how – once fully institutionalized in one department – it spread horizontally throughout the Cabinet. Given the focus on the assistant secretaryship for Congressional relations as an example of thickening, it is important to identify the events that would be considered historical proofs of the emergence of this new position.

Part of Light’s theory of thickening was that the number of assistant secretaries has gradually increased. This has the effect of making each individual assistant secretary’s portfolio more specialized and more specific. Therefore, for this study, the culmination of the thickening process in one department is defined as creation of a permanent position of an assistant secretary whose official responsibility is *solely* for Congressional liaison. Four criteria have been developed here to measure the progress of thickening towards its completion.

First, an assistant secretary position cannot be established by executive fiat, unlike, for example, an assistant *to* the secretary. No departmental secretary or even the President could order the creation of a new assistant secretaryship. Only Congress can authorize such an office. In the US national government, an assistant secretary is the lowest level of a departmental appointment that requires Presidential nomination and then confirmation by the US Senate. Therefore, when legislative liaison becomes the formal responsibility of an assistant secretary this is an indication that it has crossed a significant political boundary into the President’s subcabinet and has attained an important status, one that only Congress can create.

Second, if an assistant secretary was assigned the duties of Congressional relations *and* something else, then this was an indication that it had not yet been considered important enough to be freestanding. Designating an assistant secretary exclusively with a staff (rather than line) role of legislative liaison is a signal that such an enterprise was deemed sufficiently significant to be the sole duty of the assistant secretary. (Light defined staff as “those units that facilitate the activities of ‘line,’ or service delivery units” [1995, 29, Table 1-8, note b].) Therefore, when the first Cabinet department established an assistant secretary with titled responsibility solely for Congressional relations, then this was an historical marker of it being elevated to a senior status in the bureaucracy.

Third, sometimes Congress has authorized new assistant secretary slots in a Cabinet department without designating the areas of responsibility of those new offices. In those cases, the departmental secretary is given the authority to assign (and change) portfolios to such offices. Therefore, for these situations, the next threshold of institutionalization would be if the legislative liaison role of the assistant secretary slot had been formally, officially and publicly designated by the secretary.

The fourth and final criterion to determine the culmination of thickening would be when the US Senate *confirms* the nomination of an assistant secretary knowing that the nominee's role would solely be legislative relations. This obviates situations of an assistant secretary being given the responsibility for legislative liaison *after* being installed in office. In such a case, the person's Senate confirmation cannot be interpreted as final Congressional assent to the existence of such an office. When this fourth scenario occurs, then the thickening process would be deemed complete.

In summary, the four criteria suggested here for determining the institutionalization of legislative relations in federal public administration are: (1) the department's legislative liaison officer is an assistant secretary; (2) the subcabinet officer's sole responsibility is Congressional relations; (3) the position has been formally and officially titled either by Congress or the departmental secretary as responsible for the activity; and (4) Congress has confirmed the nomination of a proposed assistant secretary knowing, in advance of the confirmation process, that the nominee would be responsible for legislative liaison.

### **Origins: Assistant Secretary of State for Legislation, Special War Problems, and Fisheries, Breckinridge Long, 1941-1944**

In 1940, President Franklin D. Roosevelt nominated Breckinridge Long to be one of three Assistant Secretaries of State. Long, a wealthy Democrat from St. Louis, had served in President Wilson's subcabinet (getting to know Roosevelt when the latter was Assistant Secretary of the Navy) and had been a major financial contributor to Roosevelt's Presidential campaign. Secretary of State Cordell Hull (who had been in office since Roosevelt became President in 1933) assigned Long a grab-bag of portfolios including such line responsibilities as visas, international conferences and consular services as well as staff duties including personnel and management (Departmental Order 840, 1940).

By early 1941, between the outbreak of WWII in September 1939 and the US becoming a combatant in December 1941, Hull – a former Congressman and Senator – saw the need to enhance the department's legislative relations (Hull, 1948, 1656). In general, Hull had “an outstandingly cordial relationship with Congress” (Fenno, 1966, 204). Nonetheless, Hull concluded that the “need for coöperation [sic] between Congress and the Department was too complicated to be met by mere personal contact of the Secretary with individual members of the two houses” (Colegrove, 1944, 962). In a reorganization partly timed to coincide with the beginning of FDR's unprecedented third term, in March 1941, Hull formally expanded Long's duties to include:

General liaison work with the Senate and the House of Representatives and general representation of the Department of State at hearings before Congressional committees, *excepting* the legislative activities relating to the duties and administrative functions of the Assistant Secretary [for administration]. (Departmental Order 922, 1941, emphasis added)

Here, then, in 1941 was the beginning of the thickening process in regards to legislative liaison in the US national government. Splitting Congressional relations into two categories was an interesting, but probably doomed, experiment in public administration. Long's duties excluded budgetary, personnel and administrative issues relating to the management of the department. His jurisdiction, therefore, covered such policy matters as treaties, agreements and major statements of policy embodied in legislation. The division between these two aspects of Congressional relations appears to have been an effort to operationalize a separation of *policy* from *administration*, a concept endorsed by American public administration theorists at the time. However, in reality, policy and administration are not truly divisible in government management, given that each greatly overlaps with the other (Appleby, 1975). Given that Long had already had been confirmed as assistant secretary, he did not need to be re-nominated to the Senate when he received the Congressional liaison portfolio, thus not meeting one of the criteria used for this historical inquiry. Later in 1941, Long's official title became Assistant Secretary for "Legislation, Special War Problems, [and] Fisheries" (*US Government Manual [USGM]*, 1941, 604).

Long's only public statement on his conception of his role focused on both formal and informal communications with the legislative branch; viewing himself as the Secretary's personal representative; and facilitating direct contacts between Congress and other senior departmental officials (The State Department Speaks, 1944, 120-21). While Long periodically testified on Capitol Hill, many of his appearances related to his line responsibilities, rather than to his legislative relations role. Conservative *New York Times* columnist Arthur Krock wrote that as the department's lobbyist Long was "very popular at the Capitol," partly because his personal style was "tolerant in manner and speech" (1944).

However, Long's performance in office regarding his line responsibilities (partly over the controversy of the limitations he imposed on Jewish refugee visas [Peck, 1980]) gradually undermined his standing in the administration (Israel, 1966, 366). His fall from favor was especially clear after the appointment of businessman Edward R. Stettinius, Jr. as Under Secretary of State in fall 1943. One of Stettinius's first projects was to reorganize the department in early 1944. Stettinius stripped Long of all his line responsibilities, leaving him solely with Congressional liaison. Furthermore, Long's legislative relations duties were quite circumscribed, excluding all matters dealing with "appropriations and the administration of the Department and the Foreign Service" – vast aspects of the department's operations (Departmental Order 1218, 1944, 46).

The transformation from multiple line and staff duties to one staff responsibility was clear from the new departmental organization chart. Long was the only assistant secretary who did not oversee any offices, bureaus or divisions. He was merely a self-contained box on an

organization chart, with no lines linking the bottom of his box to the top of any other boxes (Departmental Order 1218, 1944, 67). In this respect, Long's office was now the pure staff role of Congressional relations. (Long's successor, Dean Acheson, criticized Long's working style, claiming that Long "handled congressional matters out of his hat and on a purely personal basis" [1987, 134].) Still, Long's assignment in 1944 didn't meet the fourth criteria used here because even though legislative liaison was his sole responsibility, he had not been confirmed by the Senate regarding that configuration of his responsibilities.

### **Increasing Importance: Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Relations and International Conferences Dean Acheson, 1944-1945**

Following his reelection to an unprecedented fourth term in November 1944, President Roosevelt replaced Secretary Hull by promoting Stettinius to Secretary. Anticipating that Congress was about to approve an earlier Presidential request to create two more assistant secretariats in the department for the duration of WWII (going from four to six); Stettinius decided to further reorganize the department. Having already demoted Long in the first reorganization, Stettinius was clear that he wanted Long out altogether along with two of the three other incumbent assistant secretaries (Henning, 1944).

Stettinius was ambivalent about the future of the fourth incumbent assistant secretary, Dean Acheson, who had handled economic affairs. Under Secretary-designate, Joseph Grew told Acheson he could not keep his current portfolio. If he chose to remain, his duties would be "congressional relations and international conferences." Acheson felt the latter portfolio was added almost as an afterthought, because being an assistant secretary solely for Congressional relations would "otherwise seem meager." He assumed that the offer "was expected to be declined" (1987, 132). Still, he accepted with alacrity, preferring not to be associated with the other three assistant secretaries who were being removed from office involuntarily.

In presenting his reorganization to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Stettinius said Acheson's new responsibilities were "of the utmost importance." Acheson's liaison role was to "seek to keep the Congress currently informed of all developments in our foreign relations and generally to maintain the strongest and closest possible working relationship between the Department, the Foreign Relations Committee, and other committees of Congress" (Stettinius, 1944, 687). However, with Acheson having already been confirmed by the Senate when he had been appointed assistant secretary (for economic affairs) in 1941, he did not need to be reconfirmed. As with Long, Acheson had neither a confirmation hearing nor a floor vote that would have met the criteria used here as the completion of the thickening process.

There were two administrative signals that Acheson's role was as staff rather than as a line manager. First, in Stettinius's reorganization of the department, Acheson (like Long) was the only assistant secretary (of six) who did not oversee any bureaus, offices or divisions (Departmental Order 1301, 1944, 794-95). Second, a few months later, when Under Secretary Grew testified before the House Appropriations Committee on the department's budget for FY1946 (July 1, 1945-June 30, 1946), he described Acheson's domain as comprising "a small



staff attached to his immediate office” (US Congress, 1945a, 9). Nonetheless, two political scientists, assessing Stettinius’ reorganization, wrote of Acheson’s job that “no one can doubt the importance of this assignment” (Laves and Wilcox, 1945, 314).

Despite the circumstances of his appointment, “Acheson threw himself into his new posting with verve. For someone reputed to scorn Congress, he demonstrated a surprising skill with senators and representatives” (Beisner, 2006, 20). Acheson developed a nuanced philosophy of his nearly unprecedented role. About half a year into his new job, Acheson testified at a Congressional hearing on reorganizing the legislative branch. He enigmatically said of this new role, “the more successfully this job appears to be performed, the less successful it really is.” He explained that while an administrative agency needed someone who understood the legislative branch, at the same time the legislative relations official “must be continually on guard against a tendency to extend his own jurisdiction or to make himself important in the department.” He should not “interpose himself between the officers of his department and the Congress.” In general:

The job must not disintegrate into the job of being a good fellow and going around and merely trying to build up a machine for your department. That is very bad. That will bring discredit on the whole thing, and if you develop it into that then Congress would abolish such an office very soon. (US Congress, 1945b, 512)

Acheson practiced what he preached. Rather than trying to monopolize all departmental contacts with Congress, he instead assumed responsibility for shepherding through Congress some of the major postwar treaties and agreements. In that respect, he had the *substantive* role in legislative relations, rather than merely a *procedural* one of facilitating the work of line officers. He analogized his self-definition of Congressional relations to that of a law firm handling very complicated matters for a client. Each senior lawyer in Acheson’s shop would be given an assignment and would be fully responsible for it from beginning to end. First, in-house, the lawyer would intensively review all important proposed “contracts” before they reached the client. Then, after taking care of all possible problems, he would present the documents to the client (Congress), answer any questions the client might have, and then continue work with the client until the documents had been fully executed (Acheson, 1987, 135). In this manner, Acheson and his small staff of lawyers worked with Congress in 1945 on international treaties such as extension of Lend-Lease, the Bretton Woods agreements on a post-war international monetary system and the United Nation’s Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Acheson also understood the link between legislative relations and public relations. He made several public and media appearances on important matters that the State Department had submitted to Congress. Acheson realized that, in an amorphous way, Congress reflected public opinion. Therefore, spending time to persuade the citizenry of the rightness of a departmental recommendation was a form of indirect legislative relations, working through the public to influence the legislative branch (What is, 1945; United Nations, 1945; Associated Press, 1945).

In general, Acheson greatly advanced the thickening of the department's legislative liaison. James F. Byrnes, former Congressman, US Senator and Supreme Court Justice, was at that time in the White House as the war mobilization director. (He was sometimes called the 'Assistant President.') Regarding Acheson's service, Byrnes was "impressed with his ability to work with Congress" (Curry, 1965, 134). A Washington-based foreign policy analyst wrote that Acheson had "systematized the work" of the department in the area of Congressional relations, simultaneously complimenting Acheson's service while implicitly criticizing Long's (Bolles, 1949, 496).

### **Reversing the Thickening Process: The Abolition of the Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Relations, 1945-1949**

President Roosevelt died on April 12, 1945. Ascending to the presidency, Vice President Harry Truman gradually, but inevitably, sought to install his own team in office. A few months later, Stettinius resigned as Secretary of State and Truman appointed Byrnes to the position. Byrnes became Secretary of State in July 1945. Promoting Acheson to Under Secretary, Byrnes named his long-time associate (and former White House assistant) Donald S. Russell as Acheson's successor. While Byrnes never said so, it was widely assumed that Russell would assume Acheson's legislative role (Reston, 1945). On September 12, 1945, Acheson accompanied Russell to a meeting of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and introduced Russell as the nominee "to take the place formerly occupied by Mr. Acheson" (US Congress, 1945c).

Russell's nomination was the first time, since Long had begun doing Congressional liaison in 1941, that the Senate faced a nomination for a subcabinet officer to conduct legislative relations. However, the Foreign Relations Committee did not hold a formal public hearing on Russell's nomination, so no transcript is available to reflect legislators' views on having an assistant secretary for Congressional liaison. (Some of the committee's closed executive sessions were transcribed and published decades later, but not this one [Ross, 2007].) The committee unanimously recommended Russell and he was approved by the Senate on September 14 without any floor debate (US Senate, 1946, 555).

Russell was quickly sworn into office and the new edition of the official *US Government Manual*, going to press on September 20, listed Russell as "Assistant Secretary of State (for Congressional Relations)" (*USGM*, 1945, 181). On October 4, Russell represented the department at the typical kind of Congressional hearing that an assistant secretary for legislative liaison would participate in. It related to the international implications of a bill to extend the time for filing applications for patents (US Congress, 1945d, 55-58). Therefore, on a *de jure* basis, Russell could be viewed as the first subcabinet officer for Congressional relations, having been confirmed by the Senate with the assumption that he would be handling legislative liaison solely and being officially listed as such in the *US Government Manual*. However, three weeks after his confirmation, Byrnes reorganized the department, shifting Russell to the assistant secretaryship for administration (Appointment, 1945) and reshuffling some other assignments of the other five assistant secretaries. Therefore, Russell's service as

assistant secretary for Congressional relations was *de minimis* and he ought not to be deemed as the culmination of the thickening process.

In Byrnes' reorganization, in effect October 1945 through the end of his service in January 1947, no subcabinet level officer at the State Department had any titled responsibility for legislative liaison. Byrnes felt comfortable handling it personally, Acheson had experience in that line of work and the line assistant secretaries could handle matters relating to their respective areas. In January 1947, upon Byrnes' resignation, Truman named retired Army Chief of Staff George Marshall to replace him as Secretary of State. Marshall retained Acheson as Under Secretary for the initial part of his term and made no major changes in the portfolios of the six assistant secretaries. Given Marshall's wartime experience dealing with Congress and Acheson's previous service, they felt someone should, at least, be *assigned* that responsibility.

Limited in the number of assistant secretaries they could name, in 1947 Marshall and Acheson officially added to the department's Counselor (a position equivalent in protocol rank to assistant secretary) the duty of Legislative Counsel (Organization, 1947). (The Counselor was distinct from the Department's Legal Advisor.) This relatively vague duty was "the maintenance of liaison with the Congress and the Bureau of the Budget with respect to appropriate matters" (*USGM*, 1948, 88). Marshall's Counselor, Charles E. ('Chip') Bohlen, "a Foreign Service Officer not expert in domestic political affairs" did not handle this responsibility with much vigor (Bolles, 1949, 497). A member of his staff recalled years later that Bohlen was "saddled with the responsibility... [and] didn't much like that job. It wasn't the sort of thing a career diplomat particularly enjoyed" (Marcy, 1983, 23-24). Bohlen viewed that assignment as so minor (or disliked) that he didn't even refer to it in his autobiography (Bohlen, 1973, 273).

### **Thickening Accomplished: The First Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Relations, Ernest Gross, 1949**

During the campaign year of 1948, a Presidential commission was studying the structure of the executive branch. Called the Hoover Commission for its chair, former President Herbert Hoover, the commission had a broad ranging mandate from President Truman to examine the structure and operations of the federal government and then make recommendations to Congress and whoever would be elected President in November 1948. Hoover, an engineer before entering public service, had long been interested in issues of management, organization and efficiency (Lee, 2006, 100-05, 134-35). To assure balance on the commission, Truman had named Acheson, now a private citizen practicing law, as vice chair. During 1948, one of the Commission's task forces researched the operations of the State Department (and other federal agencies involved in foreign affairs) and then prepared a report with tentative recommendations for the commission's consideration. Its report began circulating in late 1948 (Kuhn, 1948). In the area of Congressional liaison, it concluded that current departmental legislative relations were "unsatisfactory" (a knock at Bohlen) and recommended that "The State Department should establish a coordinated program of congressional liaison under the

supervision of an Assistant Secretary with no other duties” (US Commission, 1949a, 32). The report was publicly released and forwarded by Hoover to Congress on January 13, 1949.

Meanwhile, in an upset, Truman had won election to a full term. Partly to give the President an opportunity to craft a new team for his new term, but mostly due to ill health and exhaustion, Marshall quickly (but quietly) informed Truman of his desire to resign. On January 8, Truman formally announced Marshall’s resignation as Secretary of State and Acheson’s nomination as his successor. The Senate confirmed Acheson on January 19 (the day before Truman’s inauguration). Acheson was now in a position to effectuate the lessons he had learned as Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations, as Under Secretary in a department without such a subcabinet officer, and as vice chair of the Hoover Commission. He didn’t wait for the commission to publicly release its recommendations based on the Task Force report. Shortly after becoming Secretary, Acheson contacted Ernest Gross, the department’s Legal Advisor. As recalled by Gross in an oral history interview:

Secretary Acheson called me in his office one day, and said he wanted me to become Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Relations, which really meant carrying on a large part of what I had already been doing [as Legal Advisor]. I was not particularly enthusiastic about this. It came as a great surprise to me. He said he regarded that post as important, that he himself had done it and he regarded it as a great service to the Department.

So, although somewhat reluctantly, I did agree to do it, naturally, since he was rather insistent about it. (Gross, 1975, 466-67)

On February 14, 1949, Acheson publicly accepted the resignation of the Assistant Secretary for Transportation and Communications and quickly re-designated the portfolio of the vacant assistant secretaryship to be for legislative liaison. That same day, Truman formally nominated Ernest Gross to be Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations in a message to the Senate (Gross nominated, 1949). By his actions, Acheson was demonstrating his recognition of the importance of legislative liaison having subcabinet status in a federal agency. Four days later, the Hoover Commission sent to Congress its recommendations in the area of foreign affairs. One was that the department should have an assistant secretary for what it variously referred to as Congressional Affairs or Congressional Relations. The report articulated a comprehensive rationale for legislative liaison in executive branch agencies:

The recent experience of endeavoring to take care of congressional relations on a part-time basis has demonstrated the need for full-time, high-level direction in this field. The Assistant Secretary, Congressional Relations, should participate actively in top-level policy formulation in the State Department. He should be able to marshal personnel from anywhere within the Department to present to the Congress special phases of foreign affairs problems. Conversely, he should be able to arrange to bring to the Department the views of congressional leaders on international matters.

... Finally, as a minor but significant part of his work, the Assistant Secretary should be the medium whereby the State Department provides helpful services to the members of Congress. (US Commission, 1949b, 53-54)

Here was a modern definition of legislative relations, entailing a staff rather than line role, providing advice to the highest levels of the department, engaging in two way communications with the legislative branch, and providing constituent casework and other services to individual legislators.

On February 23, 1949, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee considered Gross's appointment. By now, the recommendation from a prestigious and nonpartisan national commission to create in the State Department a full time assistant secretary for legislative relations had become the new conventional wisdom, uncontroversial in political terms. The committee didn't even call a public hearing on Gross's nomination. Rather, going straight into executive session, his nomination was recommended without any substantive discussion (US Congress, 1949, 4-5). Gross was confirmed on March 1, 1949 (Confirmations, 1949).

Therefore, based on the four criteria used in this historical inquiry, Gross was the first subcabinet officer in the US national government for legislative liaison: he was an assistant secretary (or higher), he had no duties other than the staff role of Congressional relations, he had publicly been assigned to manage those matters as reflected in his official title, and the US Senate confirmed him knowing of that assignment. Congressional relations had arrived and the thickening process was complete.

On May 26, 1949, Truman signed into law a bill implementing other aspects of the Hoover Commission's report on the State Department (63 Stat. 111). In another example of thickening, it increased the number of assistant secretaries to ten. Gross served less than a year, when he was appointed deputy head of the US Mission to the United Nations. Acheson replaced him with Jack McFall, a former staffer of the House Appropriations Committee. McFall served for the rest of the Truman administration. (McFall later said that Congressional relations was much harder for the State Department than other agencies because the department had "practically nothing with which to trade," when dealing with legislators [Casey, 2008, 11, 372n36].) The first Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Relations in the Eisenhower administration was former Congressman Thruston Morton, later a US Senator.

However, not everyone praised the unfolding of the thickening process in relation to legislative liaison in the State Department. In 1964, political scientist James McCamy criticized the phenomenon, writing, "Congressional relations have [sic] become a new, strange specialty. The State Department now has 22 persons devoted to 'channeling,' as they say in government, relations with Congress. ...we do not need a special office for Congressional relations. Abolish it" (1964, 95-96). McCamy did not further explain his rationale.

## Horizontal Thickening: Spreading to Other Federal Departments

The precedent of the State Department spread slowly to the rest of the executive branch, reflecting Light's thickening theory. Next came the Department of Health Education and Welfare (HEW). The Department had been created in 1953 during the first Eisenhower administration. Initially, one of HEW's three assistant secretaryships was designated for program analysis, including legislative responsibilities (*USGM*, 1956, 320). However, when the incumbent left in 1957, the office was re-designated as the "Assistant Secretary (for Legislation)" (US Congress, 1957a, 509). The new assistant secretary was Elliot L. Richardson.<sup>1</sup> His confirmation process did not arouse any legislative challenges to the spread of the thickening process from the State Department to HEW (US Congress, 1957b).<sup>2</sup>

The major expansion in Cabinet departments with assistant secretaries for Congressional relations occurred in 1973-74 as part of a larger effort at the beginning of the second Nixon administration to increase White House control over the executive branch (Light, 1997, 229; Nathan, 1975). This was an example of a President playing an active role in the thickening process. In the case of Congressional relations, Nixon's goal was to make executive branch lobbying more reflective of his priorities by systematizing it organizationally. In February 1973, the President's chief lobbyist, William Timmons, sent to Nixon an "administratively confidential" memo updating him on the post-reelection effort to:

- have legislative officers involved in policy development.
- provide Senate confirmation which implies Congressional acceptance of individuals dealing with Congress.
- give them Presidential commissions so they become part of your team and serve at your pleasure (Timmons, 1973, 1, underlining in original).

Timmons worked with second-term secretaries to increase the number of departments with assistant secretaries for Congressional relations, succeeding in four Cabinet departments. In 1973, Defense Secretary Elliot Richardson agreed to designate one of the Pentagon's assistant secretaries solely for legislative liaison (US Congress, 1973a, 4-6).<sup>2</sup> Also, that year Timmons succeeded with the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Interior Department (US Congress, 1973b, 11; 1974, 551). A few months before Nixon resigned in mid-1974, the Treasury Department also created an assistant secretaryship for legislative affairs (*USGM*, 1974, 385, 390).

Yet, while the Nixon White House viewed the expansion of Congressional relations to subcabinet status as a way for Presidents to increase their control over the bureaucracy, Congress was separately in favor of the same effort, but for opposite reason. For example, in 1972, a committee of the House of Representatives (with the Democratic Party then in the majority) recommended approving Nixon's reorganization proposal to create a Department of Community Development. The committee report suggested amending the President's proposal by creating within the department a subcabinet office for Congressional relations. The report explained the need of "having an Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations in view of the ever-increasing importance of expeditious exchange of information between the

Department and the Congress” (US Congress, 1972, 14). Here was an example of Congress’s active role in the thickening of the federal bureaucracy (Light, 1995, 108-16).

## Conclusions and Future Research

This historical case study of the thickening of the federal bureaucracy with a new assistant secretary position for Congressional relations has documented Light’s macro theory on thickening. The process was a gradual one between 1941 and 1949, of starts and stops, even of a reversal. However, the thickening process for the State Department culminated in 1949 with a permanent assistant secretary for legislative liaison. Based on the four criteria developed here for documenting the completion of thickening, the office holder had no line responsibilities, had no other staff responsibilities, was formally designated with this role and, finally, was confirmed by the Senate with the legislators knowing in advance of the nominee’s assignment. Then, exemplifying horizontal thickening, the position gradually expanded to other Cabinet departments. At the time of writing, it was commonplace in the President’s Cabinet, with nine of 15 departments having assistant secretaries dedicated solely to legislative affairs (and four more with assistant secretaries for Congressional and intergovernmental relations). Also, as Light suggested, both Congress and Presidents played a role in the thickening process, with both the legislative and executive branches seeing advantages to thickening in this particular instance. Further research on thickening could include other specific positions in the Washington bureaucracy, such as subcabinet officers for policy, or program analysis and evaluation. Such positions also appear to have emerged gradually beginning in the 1960s and now are common. How did the first such office come into being and how did it spread horizontally? Light’s theory on thickening can also be applied in future research to other levels of government, such as whether it also occurs in state and local government or perhaps is solely a phenomenon in the national capital.

The case study was also an opportunity to examine the role and history of legislative liaison in public administration. At the federal level, this is an activity that Congress has had ambivalence about. Fearing being overwhelmed by agency advocacy, Congress has banned agency lobbying. Yet, at the same time, it viewed the thickening of the assistant secretary for Congressional relations benevolently, not as enhancing agency lobbying, but rather as facilitating its own relationship with the bureaucracy. Further research on legislative liaison in public administration is also called for. Future inquiries could focus on current practices in the federal bureaucracy, such as how the assistant secretaries for Congressional relations walk the fine line of performing acceptable liaison while not violating the ban on lobbying; and examining their standing and status within each department. Other research could focus on the history and practice of legislative liaison in state and local governments.

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## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> Weighing in on the nomination of a resident from his state, Senator John F. Kennedy (D-MA) wrote the Finance Committee urging Richardson's confirmation because "I have worked with him on many occasions in the past, and have always found him to be extremely able, dependable and fair-minded" (US Congress, 1957b).

<sup>2</sup> As Attorney General in 1973, Richardson memorably resigned during the Saturday Night Massacre rather than implement President Nixon's order to fire the Watergate Special Prosecutor.

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# Forging Theatre and Community: Challenges and Strategies for Serving Two Missions

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## **Overture**

The first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century has been characterized as the era of the “outsourced brain” (Brooks, 2007;) and “American unreason” (Jacoby, 2009), with human contact and communication routinely mediated and compromised by a myriad of electronic devices. Vanderburg (2005:82) describes this recent development in the human condition as follows:

Today technology is creating a new life-milieu that includes, but is not limited to, the modern city and the web of technological means used in virtually every daily-life-activity, to the point that they interpose themselves between us and others, between us and much of what happens in our society and the world, and between us and nature. It is largely via these technological means that we experience and participate in our world.

As personal computers, the Internet, cell phones, video games, and i-pods merge into a seamless source of personalized virtual reality, how can individuals be enticed to emerge from their electronic silos and actually engage others in meaningful discourse as members of a community with common interests and problems? One organizational response to this challenge is the activities of community-based organizations. Such organizations are widely recognized for their ability to promote and facilitate creative face-to-face human interactions that serve as a counterweight to the forces of individuation and declining trust in public institutions, while playing a niche role in the process of building and sustaining community solidarity (Kramer, 1981; Coleman, 1990; Putnam et al, 1993).

This study provides an in-depth examination of one organization that strives to build community through face-to-face interaction: Live Arts community theatre in Charlottesville, Virginia. Founded in 1990 by a small group of artists dedicated to producing theatre that are “modern, rigorous, and risky,” the organization seeks to be both a product of its community and a process for creating it. This unique mission aims to “create extraordinary work with

ordinary people” and is committed to “outreach, education, and new works as tools for *creating both art and community*” (Live Arts, 2004, italics added).

The dual mission of promoting community involvement and achieving excellence in theatre productions is a source of creative tension for the organization, as it requires balancing two seemingly contradictory impulses. Critics have noted that by embracing professionalism, “nonprofit organizations destroy community rather than building it up” (Salamon, 2002, p. 20). These tensions are magnified (or perhaps manifested) by recent rapid growth and change in the organization, from operating with a small budget and limited facilities to a nearly \$1 million dollar budget, an annual audience of 20,000, critical acclaim, a new facility, and a volunteer base of over 500.

The setting of a community-based nonprofit organization such as Live Arts provides a rich and revelatory platform to examine what we believe to be critical concerns of the nonprofit sector at large. An organization’s success creates pressures upon leadership to not merely fulfill its social mission but to function, “...as aggressive entrepreneurs leading outward-oriented enterprises able to attract paying customers, while retaining the allegiance of socially committed donors and boards, all of this in a context of growing public scrutiny and mistrust” (Salamon, 2002, p. 22). We articulate these concerns to comprise the following research question that is central to the study:

*How does a community theatre manage growth, success, and the demand for high standards in performance and organization, without compromising its dedication to cutting edge productions, building community, and reliance on volunteers?*

In particular, we examine how Live Arts seeks to preserve and balance its mission of achieving artistic excellence that challenges and engages the community, the need for financial sustainability, and more efficient production and management systems. How can these multiple goals be managed simultaneously, particularly as critics argue that increasing professionalization of nonprofit work is likely to rob organizations of much of the community driven components of their missions?

## **Act One - Literature Review: Understanding Nonprofit Community Theatres**

American theatre consists of a wide repertoire of theatres from commercial theatre organizations such as Broadway production companies and dinner theatres, to professional nonprofit theatres, amateur nonprofit theatre companies, and community-based theatres. This project focuses on what are classified as nonprofit professional theatres registered as public charities. However, a clear cut definition is a nearly impossible endeavor because “any profile of nonprofit professional theater”, as Wyszomirski (2001, p. 208) rightly states, “...is likely to blur the distinctions between nonprofit and commercial theatres as well as between professional and amateur productions.” This blurring is both the result of substantial

movement of actors and theatre personnel between the sectors and a movement of audience amongst them.

Some attempts at definitions are worth highlighting: Geer (2008) defines a community-based theatre as a "...theater *of, by, and for* a particular group. It is Outward Bound for towns. Celebratory and critical, it is controlled by the consensus of two expert groups — artists and community members" (Geer, 2008). Cohen-Cruz (2005, p. 2) identifies community performance as, "collaboration between an artist or ensemble and a 'community' in that the latter is a primary source of the text, possibly of performers as well, and definitely a goodly portion of the audience." Cohen-Cruz clarifies stating that despite the usage of highly similar terms, *community-based* performance is not to be confused with community theater. She draws the distinction thus (Cohen-Cruz, 2005): "...in contrast to *community-based* performance, community theater is enacted by people who neither generate the material, shape it, work with professional guidance, nor apply it beyond an entertainment frame. There need not be [in community theater] any particular resonance between the play and that place and those people, and there is rarely a goal beyond the simple pleasure of 'Let's put on a play'" (p. 7). She identifies collective context, reciprocity, hyphenation, process and an active culture as being key characteristics of a *community-based* production.

Given this distinction, we define, the modern U.S. nonprofit community theatre broadly and thinly on the basis of its legal identity as an independently incorporated theater recognized by the federal government as tax-exempt charitable entity under section 501c3 of the Internal Revenue Code. Professional nonprofit theatres while recognized as 501c3s, may or may not share the characteristics of a *community-based* theatre as described by Geer (1993) and Cohen-Cruz (2005) above. This, indeed, accounts for one of the central contradictions facing professional nonprofit community theatre; an aspect that will receive attention in the review of literature that follows.

In reviewing literature pertinent to the somewhat muddled world of nonprofit community theatres, we begin by briefly examining the history of the theatre movement in the North American context and then move to discussing some of the critical issues faced by the nonprofit theatre community. In doing so, we uncover that, quite like other parts of the arts and culture subsector, nonprofit professional theatres are shrouded with several key contradictions including the nature of commitment of a nonprofit professional theatre to "art":

Is its pursuit of artistic "excellence" too elitist, focused on the needs and preferences of artists and a narrow audience?

How should nonprofit theatres reconcile the need to create art with a fundamental commitment to process and inclusion?

How can nonprofit theatres stay bold and adventurous while also confirming to the ever-present need to demonstrate commercial success to their trustees and supporters?



We begin by examining the history of the theatre movement for it is in its evolution that we uncover some of these key dilemmas.

Community theatre, also called “art theatre, “amateur theatre,” “grassroots theatre,” “group theatre,” “tributary theatre” or even “little theatre,” is one among many forms of theatre. Theatre in America includes professional nonprofit theatre companies, commercial theatre organizations and nonprofit community theatres. Commercial theatre companies range from Broadway production troupes to touring roués. There is a large contingent of nonprofit community theatres – the type of theatre that we are most concerned with in this report. Historically, the roots of American, community-based theater is traced to Native American forms that are rooted in the expression and preservation of collective identity. However, most modern accounts of the origin of American community theatre date to the latter half of the nineteenth century. Inspired in large part by the European Art Theatre movement, “little theatres” brought about revolutionary changes in technique, playwriting and acting. Gradually, these “little theatres” sprouted in states such as Illinois and Wisconsin, which then birthed their own permanent resident theatrical troupes. They produced native local drama and the term “little” denoted the size of the performance halls where many such plays were staged. By 1870, “the country had about fifty permanent resident theatrical troupes, as well as a touring system which brought road shows to town and cities across the land” (Cohen, 2001, p. 41). The growth of the countrywide road system spurred further growth of touring companies to an extent that by 1886, the country boasted of nearly 280 such performers traveling the length and breadth of the country.

But the community-theatre movement did not take off until the turn of the century when, with the advent of movies, the small-town professional playhouses either closed due to the competition from this new art form or were converted to movie-houses. The movement grew in the early part of the twentieth century with over 2,000 registered with the Drama League of America. These groups were lauded as cradles of creative talent,, of “special thrill” (MacGowan, 1929), and as a response to the desire of “American people for a non-merchandized, personal theatre” (Brown, 1939 as cited in Cohen, 2001, p. 42).

According to the American Association of Community Theatre (AACT), that represents and serves amateur, nonprofit theatre companies, “Community theatres involve more participants, present more performances of more productions and play to more people than any performing art in the country. We are critical to the cultural life of the communities of which we are a part.” Percy MacKaye (1909), among the early prophets of American theatre, dreamed of theatre “as a national force” that had hitherto never been associated with democratic ideals such as that of citizenship, law, industry, statecraft or patriotism. He elevated theatre as being “particularly fitted for such association” (Mackaye, 1909, p. 11). Kuftinec (2003) contrasts professional and academic theatre from community-based productions when she points out that, community-based productions unlike their “deadly” counterparts:

...reinspire my faith in theater’s ability to directly engage and reflect its audience, by integrating local history, concerns, stories, traditions and/or performers. At the same

time, the work raises deeply provocative questions about ethical representation and about how individuals and groups negotiate their identity. (p. 1)

Most accounts of the professional nonprofit theatre are seamlessly presented alongside a history of community-based theatre. Kuftinec (2003, pp. 32-33) notes that following 1915-1917, several young men were drafted for the First World War causing many “little” theatres to be dissolved. Some that were financially vulnerable chose to institutionalize their organization and in the process, lost the sense of “community” that Kuftinec associates with community-based productions. These theatres professionalized by hiring personnel from the “outside”. Theatres that began to hire “professionals” from the outside started to mimic Broadway; a process that steered many little theatres away from the local development of playwrights. The regionalization, professionalization and even the urbanization of theatre groups (from rural theatres to those located in major metropolitan areas) was looked upon by some as a positive development.

The 1930s through the 1960s and 1970s saw the growth of theatre groups around specific group identities (and hence the name “group theatre”) such as those comprising workers (in the early 1930s) and in due course (in the 1960s and 1970s), African American, lesbian, queer, disabled, Latino/a, Asian American among numerous others. The creation of such groups was, of course, informed by social movements of the time. Kuftinec (2003, p. 37) refers to the formation of such group-based theatre as a paradox for “in the quest for group identity, performance is seen as both a manifestation and formation of culture. Identity then is not pre-formed but performed, essential but not essentialist.” It is from these, Kuftinec (2003, p. 37) continues, that “community-based” theatre emerged and is best distinguished from “group theatre” as “less-grounded in assimilated unity, socialism, or identity politics and more in strategic bridge building.”

Community-based theatre strives to build coalitions and in the process continually works to produce art in an environment rife with tensions between associations and distinctiveness, bridge building and boundary construction, the predictable and creative, planned and spontaneous leadership, acceptable and unacceptable behaviors, tolerance and judgment, volunteerism and professionalism, and between inclusion and exclusion. These tensions characterize community-based theatre as much or more as they do professional nonprofit theatre. This will be evident as we trace the history of Live Arts and the many conundrums that drive its work in theatre production.

Before exploring some of these conundrums, we conclude the review of literature with a few facts about professional nonprofit theatre groups. The best source of information on professional nonprofit theatres is the Theatre Communications Group (TCG, 2009), a leading membership organization for professional not-for-profit theatres in the United States. TCG has more than 400 theatre members in 47 states, 17,000 individual members, and represents a wide array of institutional sizes and structures. Thirty-six percent of members have budgets under \$500,000; 21% in the \$500,000-1 million range; 25% in the \$1-3 million range; 6% in the \$3-5 million range; 8% in the \$5-10 million range; and 4% have budgets in the \$10 million or more range. According to its *Theatre Facts 2008*, professional not-for-profit

theatres produced an estimated 202,000 performances in 2008, employed nearly 131,000 paid personnel in artistic, technical and administrative positions, and an attendance of 32 million people. The American Association of Community Theatre (AACT), in contrast, serves amateur nonprofit theatre companies and enlists 7,000 theatres across the U.S. and its territories as well as theatre companies with the armed forces overseas. It boasts of nearly a million volunteers and a combined annual budget of over \$60 million with 45,000 productions per year and more than 375,000 performances garnering a total audience of 7.5 million people.

Despite the fact that community and nonprofit theatres are the largest producers of theatre in the United States and “involve more participants, present more performances of more productions and play to more people than any performing art in the country” (AACT, 2008), there is only a handful of research on the conundrums and pleasures that plague nonprofit community theatre productions. Our research addresses these gaps in the literature and in doing so suggests what we believe to be the next likely steps that Live Arts may utilize to address some of the key tensions.

### **Methodology**

To answer our research question, we conducted a single case study analysis. The primary unit of analysis is the chosen community-based nonprofit organization namely, Live Arts. We focused on critical incidents in Live Arts’ history, particularly as it relates to managing growth and change. These incidents are the second, or nested, unit of analysis. Each incident is “instrumental” to understanding how the leadership at Live Arts managed the pressures of retaining its social mission while also developing a professional response to the demands of theatre production (Stake, 1995). Each of the critical incidents, spread over a lifetime of the nonprofit, was selected using multiple sources of evidence. Detailed examination of organizational archives, participant observation of theatre productions, and in-depth conversations with NPO leaders, board and staff, and with community volunteers, focused our attention on key events. The choice of these events was confirmed and corroborated during the duration of our data collection efforts in Charlottesville, Virginia. We made three visits to Live Arts to study the organization, beginning with an initial round of interviews and observations. After an analysis of these first interviews, we followed up and re-interviewed subjects and additional subjects in order to build a “thick” description of the organization and its role in the community.

## **Act Two: Organizational History/Background**

### **Founding**

Like most community nonprofits and theatres, the story of Live Arts is closely tied to the community in which it performs, Charlottesville, Virginia. A small (pop. 40,427), historic, and vibrant city in north central Virginia, home to Monticello and the University of Virginia, Charlottesville embodies many of the best, and most problematic, aspects of a progressive city in the southeast United States. In 2004 it was rated the best place to live in the USA and is

known as one of America's most educated cities, making it fertile ground for the arts. Despite its obvious attractions, Charlottesville still lives with the legacy of slavery and Jim Crow segregation, with wide income and class disparities.

In the 1980s, along with much of the rest of the country, Charlottesville struggled economically, and its downtown area, which features a large walking mall, declined precipitously leaving many boarded up storefronts. It was in this context that Live Arts was born in 1990 as the brainchild of an ensemble of actors and theatre enthusiasts who sought a platform for their craft that did not have to be "family friendly," where they could perform cutting-edge theatre in downtown Charlottesville. After producing Sam Shepard's "Lie of the Mind," they asked themselves,

Might it be possible to have a theatre space in Charlottesville, preferable downtown, that would provide a place to do high quality, alternative performances, a place where the performers would have a significant amount of control over how the space was run (Parent, 2005)?

What emerged was an "intentional community" of volunteers dedicated to this vision of collaborative creativity that was warmly received in the cultural environment of Charlottesville. The founders and other early members have fond memories of the first few years of Live Arts. "You could say it was founded on beer," recalls the founding artistic director, in reference to the dance parties (later replaced by "coffeehouses" with Dave Mathews one of the first performers) that provided much of the revenue and publicity for the performances. In a 1991 board meeting, she reiterated that Live Arts aspired to be something other than a typical community theatre, a theatre ensemble, "working from within" to achieve high quality while open to new people and community participation.

This early period in Live Arts development was focused on providing a platform for the performers, with an emphasis on "high quality, alternative" productions, "... stuff that people have to think to watch" (averaging around 7 events/productions per year). The "early days," as one founding member recalls did invite "a number of locally written sketches, but providing a platform for such locally written sketches was short-lived." The quality of the works developed for instance during its playwriting workshops, she further noted, weren't deemed strong enough to warrant a staged performance.

In the "little theatre" tradition, the troupe settled into a small space (Michie Building), intersected by two, inconveniently placed columns, in downtown Charlottesville, that served as their home for more than a decade, and where, beginning with Sartre's "No Exit," Live Arts forged its reputation as an avant garde theatre and a valued part of the Charlottesville community.

A play performed in October 1991 provides a good example of a Live Arts production that challenges the audience to think outside conventional boundaries:

*The Ballad of the Sad Café* is a love story, in which the three main characters, Miss Amelia Evans, Cousin Lymon, and Marvin Macy, alternate between the roles of lover and the beloved with one another. As one critic put it, “*The Ballad of the Sad Café* is about an asexual woman over six feet tall, a hunchback dwarf and a lazy criminal, each of whom is unhappily in love with each other...” *The Ballad of the Sad Café* is far from standard theater fare. However the bizarre “gothic” quality of McCullers’ work serves to point out the universal rather than the exceptional by revealing the hidden abnormalities in “normal” life.

Ironically, the limitations of the Michie Building did much to help build the reputation of Live Arts: The productions, put on entirely by volunteers, attracted a loyal audience into an otherwise unremarkable space. Transcending and transforming that space – even having events during construction and renovation – was part and parcel of the creative process and played a central role in the organization’s identity. Speaking to its early desire to straddle several different features namely, of being avant garde, harnessing local talent *and* putting forth quality productions, two founding members state that, “We [as artists] were sick and tired of being censored. We [at Live Arts] wanted to be paid for hard work and a space, a place for our work.” This led to a phase in which we see Live Arts, gradually begin to display characteristics most akin to a rational, business-like form of governance and internal management.

### **Organization/Business Model**

Anyone who has had an opportunity to observe a theatre from behind the scenes knows that even the most modest productions requires extensive preparation, planning and effort. An effective organization is essential for survival, from fundraising and financial management to marketing, box office, technical direction, set building, production, etc., along with artistic direction and rehearsals. Accordingly, behind the scenes, Live Arts adopted the formal organizational trappings essential to a sustainable organization. The founding Executive Director (1990-1995 and Production Director 1995-2000), who with his brother organized and ran the dance parties, became Live Arts’ first paid employee, and, along with other founding members, “...basically held the whole thing together for a long time,” while another founder shepherded Live Arts through 501 (c)(3) incorporation and formed a six-member board in 1991 (Parent, 2005). The Preamble to its bylaws, describes Live Arts as follows:

Live Arts, Inc. accepting the responsibility for promoting community oriented cultural events, providing an affordable performance and rehearsal space to artists, in order to allow said artists to promote and nurture their individual crafts and talents, and to set high standards of quality theatrical presentations, through their resident theatre company, do hereby organize themselves as a non-profit organization . . .

The business model adopted by Live Arts was unique in the universe of community theatres: An avant garde theatre that relied heavily on volunteers, with no paid performers, and eschewed government and foundation grants in favor of a “business” or entrepreneurial model (revenue from fundraising events, corporate sponsorships, and box office receipts).

The challenge that Live Arts posed for itself was how to be rooted in the community, in terms of both financial and human resources, while maintaining its commitment to high quality, nontraditional productions. In other words, Live Arts was formed as neither a government funded arts organization that worked to maintain its autonomy and survive on the basis of government grants, nor as a traditional community theatre that relied on popular box office hits and traditional favorites. Instead, Live Arts is committed to an ongoing effort, and often struggled, to find the right mix of community fundraising and box office receipts, trusting that audiences, volunteers, and donors would collaborate in sustaining this unique creative enterprise.

Yet, like many community nonprofits, Live Arts often found itself in a “crisis driven” mode. The founders, several of whom were also board members, would often jump in to fix problems, and despite a loyal following, the average attendance at productions (based on available records) averaged only 52% of capacity. It was clear that some changes had to occur if Live Arts was to sustain its unique approach to community theatre. A strategic planning effort in 1997 listed the following critical issues:

1. **FUNDRAISING:** Historically, Live Arts has relied on ticket sales for our primary source of income and the unpredictability of such has caused some instability in the operating budget... In order to achieve a more stable financial future for Live Arts, more effort must be put towards fundraising.
2. **FACILITY:** There are limitations to the physical space... that impede programming, and a large percentage of the operating budget is spent on rent. We should seriously examine the feasibility of relocating Live Arts.
3. **BOARD AND STAFF:** Due to the rapid growth of Live Arts as an organization, board and staff structures and communication have been in constant flux. A redefinition of both board and staff organizational structure and roles, clarifying their relationship to each other, is needed.
4. **OUTREACH:** Although attendance at Live Arts productions continues to grow, we recognized that there are still many in the Charlottesville community who are unaware of Live Arts and its mission. Development of a community outreach plan that incorporates marketing strategies is needed.
5. **VOLUNTEERISM:** Although volunteer participation at Live Arts has been fairly consistent, we are aware that the volunteer program is unorganized and some people are both under and over utilized and go unrecognized for their efforts.
6. **PROGRAMMING:** Live Arts has made every effort to provide consistency in its program choices. However, a lack of a defined mission and no formalized process for input on programming has caused there to be some criticism of programming choices. An interactive process for program selection would alleviate this problem, keeping in mind that the artistic director makes the final decisions.

This evaluation alongside a great deal of self-examination led Live Arts down the path of implementing several changes in key organizational attributes.

## **Act Three: Transitions**

### **Board and Staff**

The next phase in Live Arts' development centers on striving to achieve the strategic goals that stem from these critical issues. In 1996, the board of directors hired a full-time artistic director who had worked in various capacities with Live Arts since 1992. In 2000 he added the title of Executive Director, recognizing him as the focal point of both artistic and operational leadership. In this capacity, he embraced and extended the mission of Live Arts, *to forge theatre and community* through face-to-face interaction and engaging challenging issues:

A good theatre artist is speaking to things that the audience finds resonant; good art and good box office. Art and commerce are both interesting when pursuing both... Closing the circle, telling the story, the communal experience is elementally human, part of the ancient ritual, giving it new life and form, always joyful. Community theatre is a cliché. Ours is a worldview based on curiosity and rigor, questioning; not the source of answers, but of questions. We must have high expectations. Great art is not the province of the select few and "ordinary" people are capable of great art (because there are no ordinary people). And ordinary people can appreciate great art and challenging pieces.

The move towards a more corporate, and more centralized model, although viewed with some ambivalence by the founders and long time members, began to achieve much of the desired stability, growth, and direction for the organization. Under this model, Live Arts reached new levels of success and prominence in the community. Attendance, driven in part by more diverse programming, including musicals, climbed to an average of over 70% of capacity of the Michie Building theatre. Clearly, it made a difference to have a full-time director focus on both the artistic and operational aspects of the organization. The founders of Live Arts remained very much involved, but now were not as called upon to solve day-to-day problems. And while some characterized the organization as "a million individual conversations" between the artistic director and the many volunteers and the full-time staff – on and behind the stage – that created each production, Live Arts began making progress towards dealing with each of its strategic issues.

It was also during this time that Live Arts defined its mission as "forging theater and community." Accordingly, most of the founders turned their attention to fundraising in the community in order to achieve financial stability, secure a bigger and better theatre for Live Arts, and a more prominent presence in downtown Charlottesville. The result of these efforts was an exciting new era for Live Arts that also ushered in a new set of challenges and opportunities.

### **Fundraising/Facility**

Two key developments define this period in Live Arts history: 1) the move to a new downtown building with multiple theatres, and rehearsal and office space, designed

specifically for Live Arts, and 2) the restructuring of staff positions and a gradual transition to a more corporate management structure with less reliance on the artistic director for (day-to-day) operational decisions.

By most any measure, Live Arts can be seen as a successful nonprofit community organization, having grown from its modest beginnings to a prominent place in the community, both physically and in reputation. The new building just off the mall in central Charlottesville was designed with a large down stage and a smaller up stage in order to accommodate more patrons and volunteers while also preserving the intimacy reminiscent of its early days. The results of this development include over 20,000 patrons per year, a volunteer base of over 500, and educational outreach to students and aspiring actors. “Our earnings,” notes a founder member with pride, “from the box-office (ticket sales) is about 25 to 40 percent of our revenues now.” He adds that “it would be downright dangerous not to have a rigorous structure in place. It is this structure that puts pressure upon us to do our best with each show. Space may be more limiting – it, for sure, creates pressures.” Live Arts thus “forges theatre and community” by reaching a large audience with its repertoire of challenging plays and performances, and by involving many volunteers in the production process.

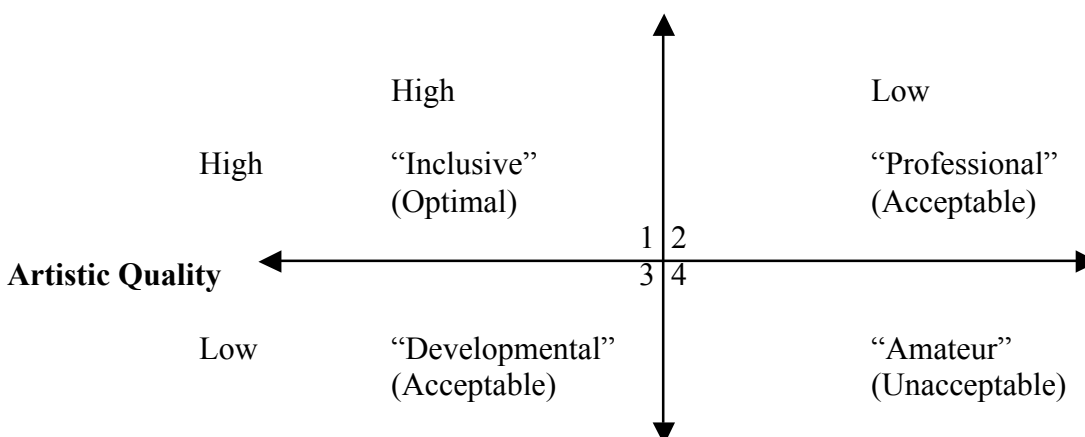
At the same time, success and expansion present Live Arts with the challenge of how to create a sustainable and lively enterprise that remains true to its identity and community-based mission. The larger, more complex facility allows a wider range of activities and community involvement, but also brings unprecedented financial and management pressures. The expense of occupying and maintaining the building requires up to 12 productions per year, making it more difficult to find enough volunteers to staff them all, and risking that talent and experience may be spread more thinly across productions. The need for more revenue to meet physical plant and staffing intensifies the need to achieve the right balance of earned and unearned income as the means for sustaining the organization and autonomy in programming. More professional and/or popular productions can bring in needed revenue, but may do so at the cost of community involvement and volunteerism, and may undercut Live Arts’ identity as a source of thought-provoking, cutting-edge theatre. Maintaining an avant-garde identity and putting forth challenging plays and performances does carry with it the potential to alienate audience and volunteers and as such can undermine the mission of inclusive art. Live Arts continues to challenge this perception and asserts that “great art is not the province of the select few and “ordinary” people are capable of great art (because there are no ordinary people).”

### **Programming**

The following figure suggests the types of productions that can emanate from the combined quest for artistic quality and community/volunteer involvement (forging theatre and community). In pursuit of its mission, Live Arts produces a mix of inclusive (optimal), professional (acceptable), and amateur (acceptable) productions, while managing audience expectations and enthusiasm about the broader mission of Live Arts.



**Figure 1: Community/Volunteer Involvement**



Quadrant 1, inclusive productions, is the working model for Live Arts, a unique but reliable pattern of relying on a core of experienced volunteers, who help to assure the quality of productions without resorting to professionalism, and a larger but less experienced population of volunteers who fulfill critical functions – from stage management to lighting and set building - but have less access to lead roles and directorial opportunities. It is also the least risky approach, often getting the results one would expect from a professional theatre, upholding the artistic quality and cutting-edge tradition of Live Arts, while retaining volunteer involvement as the core of the enterprise. It is above all, a tried and tested routine at Live Arts; a routine that aligns itself well with its founding philosophy of producing quality art while also forging participation from members of the Charlottesville community. For some at Live Arts, this is a natural development consistent with the identity of Live Arts, as expressed by a board member: “Certainly, the community is welcome here. There are repeat volunteers and a turnover of people that constitutes a larger ring... not a small group focused on itself. But still not meant to be “popular,” not trying to maximize seats or appeal to the whole population.” Nevertheless, the inclusive model is based on striving to maximize both volunteer involvement and artistic quality, assuming that the two are not incompatible and can be reinforcing elements over time.

The key to maintaining this inclusive nature of theater production is to continually monitor the quality of productions while also assessing the presence of a vibrant, continually changing group of volunteers who constitute the “larger ring.” This ring of volunteers provides the raw materials that help support the professional core of volunteers. The vibrancy of the model thus depends on maintaining a mix such that the core characteristic of cutting-edge theatre resides within and is supported by an ever larger/diverse mix of newer, less experienced volunteers. The more diverse and changing the nature of members in the outer ring, the greater is the likelihood that Live Arts can forge community through the medium of theater. The potential flaw or drawback with this inclusive model is that the experienced core of volunteers can be relatively stable but must find some means to grow as well. How do you maintain a dynamic core of talented volunteers as the founders fade from the scene? This eventuality must also be considered lest Live Arts finds itself facing a vacuum in leadership.

Occasional deviations from the inclusive model, with more or less community involvement or artistic quality, can be acceptable within the parameters of Live Arts' mission and audience expectations. Plays in quadrant 2, what we identify as "professional" productions, are those that rely heavily on the more experienced volunteers, especially the founding members, with a focus nearly exclusively on the artistic quality of production rather than on community involvement or development of new talent. Its opposite, quadrant 3 or developmental productions, are those productions that emphasize community involvement and development of volunteers, including those in the LATE program, over achieving the normally high level of artistic quality of Live Arts productions. While audiences will normally expect the quality of productions characteristic of quadrants 1 and 2, they can accept the somewhat lower quality of a developmental production as long as it is understood in the context of Live Arts mission to forge theatre and community. In effect, all productions at Live Arts can be characterized as developmental and inclusive. The purpose of this proposed typology is to point out the relative emphasis of each production and how it relates to the organization's mission.

The decisions about what plays to produce, how many, and whether and how to target more diverse audiences, are central to the future of Live Arts. Efforts continue to create a more structured and disciplined management system, with responsibilities and decision making resting not just with the CEO, but delegated according to staff role and responsibilities.<sup>2</sup> The key question is: To what extent does Live Arts conform to familiar forms of community theatre, especially professional or amateur theatre, or does it succeed in creating a collaborative platform for "forging theatre and community?" It is in this context that we examine the experience of being involved with Live Arts and the extent to which the mission of forging theatre and community is a reality for volunteers, staff, board members, and others.

### **The Volunteer Experience**

We conducted in-depth interviews with a convenience sample of 21 volunteers that includes actors, directors, set crews, and board members, many of whom had volunteered for more multiple roles and productions. Some had been involved with Live Arts as founders with many productions to their credit; others had a shorter and/or more intermittent involvement. We asked them the following questions (leaving space for follow up and probing questions):

How and when did you becoming acquainted with Live Arts? What made you interested in volunteering? What roles have you played with Live Arts? What was the first? Describe your first experience with Live Arts. How important is it for you to be involved in Live Arts? How important are you to Live Arts? How do you know? Describe the most important experience you've had with Live Arts. What made it so important? What else can Live Arts do to promote community? How do you encourage participation? How does Live Arts both create and engage the community?

We were especially interested in the extent to which volunteers perceive a "forging of art and community" and whether productions achieved genuine collaborations amongst volunteers of varying talents. Most reported a very positive set of experiences with Live Arts, although we perceived no hesitation to voice critical perspectives. We did not have the opportunity to

interview any volunteers who have terminated their relationship with Live Arts – for whatever reason, so we expect that the overall perspective is more positive than it would be if such experiences were to be included.

For most of these volunteers, Live Arts is not an ancillary part of their lives; it is a source of friendship, an opportunity for community involvement, and platform for artistic expression. For some Live Arts is a “saving grace, a saving place,” a “safe haven,” and “my escape.” One volunteer described her first experience with Live Arts as “a spiritual experience, like having another family. I knew right away I could do more here. The wide range of performers, from novices to the more experienced, means I can be a teacher and a learner.” Likewise, a board member stated, “We love this place. We’re not theatre people but the people here are important to us. We came here without knowing anyone and were embraced by the Live Arts people... I’ve lived in a lot of places and nothing compares to Charlottesville, but Live Arts facilitated my involvement, a network of volunteers.” A volunteer (actor) described Live Arts “like a pressure valve for this wealthy, politically liberal, yet socially conservative town. Can see interesting plays you haven’t heard of in a town this size. It’s a small town and LA [Live Arts] provides something special. C-ville is not all about UVA. There’s a lot of pride in the town and ambition to grow and improve; fertile ground for innovations.” Another volunteer (actor) found that Live Arts provided an opportunity to do high quality work and experienced a sense of “excitement and passion” and that “they needed me as much as I needed them. They were interested in my suggestions and I was not spoken down to. And, I gained a new set of friends.” Or, as another put it, “I love this place and everybody in it! It really is like a family, complete with the crazy aunt, drunk grandpa, and fun cousins; a safe place to explore all my artistic ability.”

A not-so-rosy picture painted by a few volunteers is, however, important to note. One volunteer actor expressed regret that he was screamed at about 30 times by a Director: “Screaming at volunteers is just not done. Just lost his temper and shoved me – it was bad!” He remains an active volunteer to this day and while likely an isolated incident, this frustration is an expression both of the pressure for performance that pushes directors to demand of volunteers more than they are able or willing to give and is moreover, symptomatic of how professional nonprofit theatres must constantly be mindful of what volunteers consider acceptable or unacceptable behavior. Another volunteer explicitly stated that “I’d work with a director if he/she isn’t too sensitive. Should relax with it all.”

It would be wise, as one Live Arts personnel observes, to consider that volunteers fall within two categories:

There are those that come in for training. Now these folks are really open to being directed and told what to do and how to go about doing it. And the other type is the one that already knows it and is really coming to us because it is a hobby. These folks are an asset but they take work. You accept them for what they bring in but these latter ones are the ones that demand work! I deal with them alright – I treat them as an asset and let them go about their job with little micromanaging.

Many volunteers noted that they felt pressured to participate all year long. “The place sure needs more volunteers. Developing a bigger pool of volunteers is a must so that there is no burnout.” Yet another volunteer mentioned that “it is no longer about two shows a year... I hate working over the summer.”

Volunteers whose service stretches back to the days of the Michie Building are well aware of how the organization, and its relationship to the community, has changed. Live Arts, “Went from being this funky, almost underground hidden jewel, a tight group where you knew everybody.” Or as another volunteer put it, “This building... still feels kind of new and foreign to me and not what I associate with Live Arts. The old space was all in one level, small and cramped but easier to keep track of everything. Everyone had a key, an open environment.” In those days, recalls another:

We quite often made something out of nothing. The ingenuity that came from confinement has been challenged by our growth. When we got the new building we felt we had to get bigger and give back to the community, and now have to reinvent our community in keeping with the space; and ongoing process that is much trickier than we imagined.

Some volunteers already feel challenged to transcend this new space and reach out to the community in multiple venues, but also feel constrained by community expectations to use what was built mainly with donated dollars: “Being in the new building has made it more difficult to get out to other venues. We’re concerned that donors might resent going out of the building to do shows so soon after building it.”

As noted above, the new building creates new, and somewhat unexpected demands and strains on the organization. Increased costs and community visibility requires a rigorous programming schedule, making it more difficult, but no less important, to achieve the collaborative ideal in each case. “The critical turning point was moving into this building. Audience expectations are higher... The old space had a sense of permissiveness; the audience would forgive a lot.” And while the volunteer base has expanded to around 500, the reality for each production is that fewer volunteers are available to audition for acting roles or to work on sets, costumes, and lighting. A long time volunteer recalls that in his first show:

There was a crazy level of community involvement, and that has deteriorated. It’s still there but not at the same level because there are more shows spread out in a larger facility. Even now some of the best shows are done on the ‘upstage’ that seats only 65-70. Every show costs you volunteer power as well as dollars... nonprofit, intellectual theatre takes a toll and is hard to sustain.

A more critical perspective on this professional/volunteer model recognizes the trade off between the quest for artistic quality and reliance on volunteers and sees it as somewhat exploitative, as “selling a product with an unpaid and marginalized labor force... The longer you’re here you run up against the chance for the better roles,” because it is “an entertainment based theatre, not community based,” where, “volunteer does not equal community,” and the

result is a, "...volunteer organization that puts out plays that cater to a particular part of the community. Nothing wrong with it as long as you acknowledge it." The risk is creating a perception of elitism, where "...people think of it as less accessible than it is, ...that Live Arts is a bit 'cliquesish', and that some people had a bad experience and didn't feel appreciated." Or as another volunteer put it, "Live Arts has always had open casting, but doesn't always get the word out that that's what's happening."

The inclusive model can sustain the organization and avoid exploiting volunteers by valuing learning and following the philosophy that the talents of the volunteers may indeed inform the nature of the product (plays). This philosophy parallels how *community-based* productions are defined in that they emphasize process as much as product and are based on mutual benefit and a heartfelt exchange between the artists and community participants. In fact, it seems almost impossible to overstate how important it is to continue to cultivate new talent among volunteers and provide them with opportunities for significant roles, and to strive to maximize both community participation and artistic quality. When one looks beyond any single production and towards sustaining Live Arts as an important and visible community organization, it is critical to strive to make everyone better. As one volunteer who recently directed a play for the first time puts it, "In the long run, "The varsity team is only as good as the JV team." A range of skills exists in every production, from the very experienced to first-timers. As another experienced volunteer points out, this diversity of skills and experience:

Creates an incredible opportunity for learning in the context of a 9-week commitment (5 days per week). We haven't always done a good job of spreading knowledge, to pass it on to new people, (which) is key to our sustainability. With growth, the old systems of communication and learning are not working... We need every single person and can't afford to lose anyone, ever. If you aren't having fun and feel isolated, you won't come back.

More popular and professional productions characteristic of most community theatres may bring in needed revenue, but may do so at the cost of community involvement, and volunteerism, and undercut Live Arts' identity as a source of thought-provoking, discussion invoking, cutting-edge theatre:

We don't hit it out of the park every time, and range from great f-----g good to can't stand to be in the room with it. We bat better than .500 and that's very good; an extraordinary audience will return after a bad show. If you're only doing "safe" work then there's no profound meaning for anyone; not trying very hard. Audience can see failure in the context of a larger struggle. Programming is a continuum as is the audience, actors, etc. An actor on stage in a play last week was first in a play 15 years ago and the audience has seen him develop. We have the advantages and disadvantages of a name brand. People have expectations and we have the obligation to upend those expectations from time to time.

## Community Outreach

For most of its history, Live Arts has sought a creative and sustainable balance between its origins as an avant-garde theatre that provides a platform for dedicated performers and challenging productions, and its role as a community-based, nonprofit organization that recognizes community outreach as a critical, strategic, and ethical issue. Without deliberate and ongoing efforts to attract a more diverse constituency, Live Arts would likely attract a relatively narrow slice of Charlottesville and surrounding areas – white, educated, and economically secure – to its plays, as audience and volunteers. The decision, taken early in its history, to incorporate Live Arts as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, established a trajectory away from a narrow constituency and towards greater engagement with the community. This has occurred through deliberate programming choices, educational and volunteer outreach, and box office discounts.

There is substantial conversation within Live Arts on how best to bridge this gap between its identity as an avant-garde theatre and the mission to forge community. “The founders,” notes a member of Live Arts’ board, “were cool but need to and can attract a new crowd... the goal is to get to the point where people in the community can think of Live Arts as theirs... the building is interesting, but the outside is imposing, like a fortress.” Under the title “Opening Doors/Tearing Down Walls (Make It Easy),” the executive director reflects on the need to make the lobby more warm and welcoming; tour shows to parks, neighborhoods and community centers; provide options for childcare and transportation; speak more languages beside English; host fundraisers in the residences of supporters and sell a student pass for admission to classes as well balcony tickets; to more fully exploit the “pay what you can”, make free previews available alongside scholarships and balcony seats to address economic barriers to attendance. Some of these have indeed been implemented over the years.

For instance, the “Pay What You Can Night” (Wednesdays), opens the theatre doors to many who might not otherwise be able to afford to attend a play, or, “to encourage more first timers to come.” A survey conducted during the 2005-06 season shows that the majority of those who attended the Pay What You Can Night were not new to Live Arts and also pay full price when able, while a significant minority (32%) were first time patrons. Most paid between five and ten dollars per performance and expressed their appreciation for the opportunity: “It makes it possible for all members of the community to afford Live Arts and is a real community service.” “It is a huge enabler for students and gives us exposure to the arts.” “It is nice that people who can afford a little extra can allow others less fortunate to be able to attend who may not have the resources to do so.”

A more daunting challenge for Live Arts has been how to promote racial and ethnic diversity in Live Arts audience and volunteers, a diversity that is more reflective of the Charlottesville community. Records show that since 2000, out of 89 productions, 33 featured an all African-American or diverse casts, with at least one production per year with an African-American theme, which are well attended by African-Americans. Further, in our interviews and observations of post production meetings, it is clear that African-Americans and other

minorities are welcome at Live Arts and have taken on significant roles at all levels of productions, including as lead actors and directors. A founding member and director remarked that, “We now have a good base of African American players. It has taken us 18-20 years to get the African Americans to become a part of it all. Theater is not a component of their lives. That fact really must be understood. We have tried hard to get here.”

Despite these genuine efforts to reach out to Charlottesville’s African-American community, there remains a gap between these efforts and perceptions of their success. Many of those we interviewed, including African-American volunteers and staff members, perceived that “...it still comes off as largely doing one “black” production each year,” bringing in more African-American audience members, and as one long time volunteer put it, achieving “integration by segregation.” We found considerable consensus among the interviewees that while Live Arts has a passionate and loyal audience, it still struggles to reflect the diversity of the Charlottesville community, tending to be older, and more white and wealthy. “Ethnically, Live Arts is all sort of one note. There’s the one ‘black’ production each year. If they were a little clearer about their desire for a more diverse group, they would get it.”

Another volunteer added that while Live Arts is dedicated to the community, it depends ... on what community you’re talking about. Live Arts does a lot for the middle class and on up, but not much with the lives of the working class... There’s not a whole lot of outreach to the African-American community either; I’ve hardly seen any other African-Americans in the audience. Because prices are quite reasonable, I think it has to do with the perception that ‘It’s not for us,’ and the plays are not oriented towards African Americans.”

The results, while slow and unsatisfactory to some, are indeed emerging. While many are skeptical, some do acknowledge that the efforts have borne fruit and that the problem perhaps lies not so much in the diversity entailed in each production or event and outreach effort but in the number of such productions and the challenge therefore of reaching optimal results with each. A board member notes:

Live Arts, I believe, has successfully broadened its role in the community. There are several minorities in the High School Musical (staged July 11-August 2, 2008). The choreographer is a minority, principal is a minority, and many of the students are minorities. We are perhaps operating beyond capacity. It is important to examine how much we can do and do well.

## **Conclusion**

The story of Live Arts is being acted out, in one form or another, in similar communities across the nation. The dual mission of forging theatre and community through meaningful face-to-face interaction is by no means an easy task, but is more than worthwhile as a counterweight to the technologically driven individuation that pervades contemporary society. Therefore, deliberate efforts must be made and resources allocated to achieve both ends. At Live Arts, measures designed to safeguard the core group of adherents (actors, audience and

members) while continually expanding the periphery of volunteers to include ever more participants are essential to survival and success. Such expansion through deliberate means is particularly important at a time when Live Arts and numerous other nonprofit organizations experience declines in revenues, leadership transitions, and acute shortages of volunteers in tough economic times (*PA Times*, 2009). Broadened and deepened community participation in meaningful and challenging performances, facilitated by a professional management team, remains the key to survival of a theatre that helps to create and sustain the “face-to-face” foundation of a vibrant community.

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## Notes

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<sup>2</sup> Since we completed the study, Live Arts has split organizational leadership between artistic and operational directors (following the departure of the CEO).

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# Public Service Motivation in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*<sup>1</sup>

Sharon Mastracci

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Buffy Summers protected the world from evil for seven seasons on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (*BtVS*). Buffy was to Sunnydale, California what national defense is to the United States: she possessed a license to kill for the protection of the whole. Depictions of public service in popular culture are not unprecedented. Gotham City was home to two prominent public administrators: district attorney Harvey Dent, and police commissioner James Gordon. Diana Prince—aka Wonder Woman—served as a nurse in the Allied Army during WWII. Dr. Bruce Banner—aka The Incredible Hulk—was a physicist in a U.S. government laboratory. And when he’s not ruling the Hallowed Halls of Asgard, the Mighty Thor served New York City as emergency medical technician Jake Olsen. Buffy doesn’t maintain a separate, “secret” identity, and as the series progressed, she increasingly battled evils closer to home.

## **“Flooded”: The Introduction of Finances and Responsibility**

“Flooded”, the fourth episode of *BtVS* Season Six, features a number of important events: Giles returns to Sunnydale, Andrew and the Evil Trio are introduced, and Buffy sees Angel for the first time after her resurrection. An important role of this episode relates to no particular story arc: the presentation of financial issues and Buffy’s function in the economy through her first explicit interactions with economic actors. Despite their arguable insignificance of economic issues to the broader narratives in *BtVS*, my emphasis is warranted; after all, the episode is entitled “Flooded”, and not “Giles Returns”, “Introducing Andrew”, or “Flooded with Emotion after Hearing from Angel”, and etcetera. The simple title “Flooded” suggests Buffy being overwhelmed in general—by finances, others’ expectations, her own resurrection, and—home maintenance.

The episode opens (and closes) with the mundane: a leaky pipe in the basement. Buffy can save the world but she can't seem to fix a leaky pipe, and this vexes her. She feels responsible for everyone in her nontraditional extended family, and with good reason. When the matter of expenses is raised, all stare plaintively at Buffy, waiting for *her* to do something. Before she died, Buffy's mother, Joyce, took care of everything. Giles reminds Buffy in this episode that her mother "took one crisis at a time, without the aid of superpowers, and got through it all" (Giles, "Flooded" 6.04). Now, everyone depends on Buffy to take care of everything from keeping a roof over their heads to saving the world (a lot).

Why now? Edwards, Rambo & South (2009) argue that Season Six is when the Scoobies are forced to grow up, to come into their own, and face adult realities. Financial matters start to appear as never before, and are not met with ease. Xander and Anya have jobs, but until now, only passing reference had been made to Giles' income ("Checkpoint" 5.12), Cordelia's financial woes, and Willow's support for college. Dawn, the youngest member of the group, views the world of work as "assembling cheap toys in a poorly-ventilated sweatshop" ("Flooded" 6.04). And despite Xander's efforts to adjust to life after high school, Anya remains frustrated with his uneven progress and cries, "When are you going to grow up, Xander?" (In fairness, Anya is 1,120 years old and has had more time to figure things out).

Maybe the Scoobs' problems with adapting to a post-high school world have something to do with the only life that they've known up to this point: Not only did Joyce take care of Dawn and Buffy's expenses, but the other characters lived at their parents' homes, too, their lives were centered around the routine of classes at Sunnydale High, its library, Giles, and the apocalypse *du jour*. Graduating from high school complicated the routine that they knew: their meeting place had to change because they no longer could justify their presence in the school library, and each discovered a newfound freedom over how they spent their time.

## **Public Goods and Services**

The economy of Sunnydale, California (and everywhere else) is comprised of people producing and consuming goods and services. Goods are tangible items—everything from cars and houses to contact lenses. Services are intangibles—car washes, house cleaning services, and eye exams. Most goods and services are "private" and allocated by price: if you pay for it, you get it. If you don't, you don't. Dog food, beer, clothing, oil changes, bananas, manicures, air travel, DSL, and DVDs are but a few examples of private goods and services. "Market failures" are said to happen when goods and services that needed are not produced at all, or not in sufficient quantity. Most public goods are due to market failures.<sup>2</sup> Oftentimes, these are goods and services that no single firm would make enough money from, but are beneficial to society and considered important to provide anyway; so government does so either directly or via policy. For example, VHS tapes are no longer profitable, but VHS tapes are not considered public goods that ought to be produced no matter what. Seat belts and air bags may not be profitable additions from the automaker's point of view, but they must be produced and installed in every car because government says so. Seat belts and air bags make everyone safer, so the argument goes, and reduce the costs of treating critically injured

accident victims. Seat belts and air bags are public goods. Governments enact and enforce safety regulations on all sorts of products because consumer protection is a public or collective good, the costs of which no single producer would voluntarily incur. For instance, keeping an egg farm compliant with U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) standards is costly, so its owner might be tempted to shirk the rules and cut costs in order to sustain profits. USDA fines for noncompliance are meant to deter shirking. The costs of food safety and other public goods/services are obvious, but benefits are diffuse, difficult to measure, and impossible to price. Only when something goes wrong—the summer 2010 salmonella outbreak from contaminated eggs—are food safety regulations appreciated.

Some public goods are ensured through fines and regulations, while others are provided by government directly, like national defense and law enforcement. American society does not leave public safety to only those who can pay because, in part, a general sense of security accrues to all by prosecuting crimes and deterring potential crimes. National defense is law enforcement on a national scale and is a textbook example of a public good. Whether health care is a collective or private good is hotly debated at present. Most countries define health care as a collective good to be provided by government and not available only to those who can pay.

### **Defining Characteristics of Public Goods**

Two defining features of public goods and services are *exclusivity* and *rival consumption*. Consumption of private goods and services is *exclusive* and *rival*; not so for public goods. “Consumption” of national defense—benefitting from the service of national defense—is *not exclusive* to only certain people. Even those who passionately oppose military action experience the effects of government’s efforts in support of national defense. Even those who oppose government regulation benefit from clean air and clean water regulations. Consumption of collective goods is also *nonrival*. My “consumption” of national defense (or clean air or safer food, etc.) does not reduce the amount available to another consumer. Public goods consumption is not a zero sum phenomenon, where one gets the goods at the expense of someone else. To appreciate this point, consider any private good: my consumption of a sandwich is rival to your consumption of it. My sandwich consumption reduces the overall supply of sandwiches and the raw materials used to make it, which no one else can have once I’ve finished my lunch. Views about the effectiveness of government regulations or the propriety of national defense aside, laws exist to address market failures and to create and provide collective goods and services.

Slaying<sup>3</sup> possesses both defining characteristics of collective goods: consumption is nonrival and not exclusive. Benefits to the citizens of Sunnydale accrue to everyone, not just the good guys. Indeed, slaying is a public good in the world economy, not just in Sunnydale, for Buffy didn’t just save Sunnydale, she saved the world. Furthermore, the benefits from slaying are nonrival. The protection that accrues to one person does not lessen the amount of protection available to another person, except that she can only be in one place at a time.

### Defining Problems of Public Goods

In addition to the two defining characteristics of collective goods—nonrival and nonexclusive consumption—two problems are unique to collective goods and services as well. First is the problem of *pricing*. Safety regulations for toys are desirable, but if one toy maker can cut costs and cut corners by using cheap paint that might contain lead, others will follow, lest they lose business to the cheaper producer. But what price is put on safe toys or clean air or national defense? Prices for private goods are meted out in the market—for example, if I find the price of one brand of cat food too expensive, I buy a cheaper brand. This mechanism is not feasible for public goods because even if I refuse to pay for clean air or clean water or national defense, I can still “consume” it because consumption is not exclusive. Further evidence that slaying meets the definition of a public good relates to the pricing problem. In “Flooded”, the reliably Capitalist Anya (Pasley 2003) suggests redefining slaying from a collective good to a private one. The response is akin to what one might expect from a Canadian or French citizen’s reaction to the American health care system:

ANYA: I know how. Um ... if you wanna pay every bill here, and every bill coming, and ... have enough to start a nice college fund for Dawn? Start charging.

BUFFY: For what?

ANYA: Slaying vampires! Well, you’re providing a valuable service to the whole community. I say cash in.

BUFFY: That’s an idea. *You* would have.

DAWN: You can’t charge innocent people for saving their lives!

The pricing problem inherent in collective goods also underpins a vignette later in the same episode—they key scene in this episode for my argument—between Buffy and Mr. Savitsky, the loan officer at Sunnydale Securities Bank:

BUFFY: Are you saying you won’t give me a loan?

MR. SAVITSKY: Well the problem is ... you have no income. No job ...

*They just stare at one another. Buffy sits, silently crushed. And all of a sudden a SECURITY GUARD’S BODY comes crashing through a teller’s window, sending GLASS SPRAYING as he lands with a painful THUD on Mr. Savitsky’s desk, rolls off and falls to the floor. Buffy leaps to her feet, whirls to see: A GIANT M’FASHNIK DEMON stands in the center of the bank, ROARING.*

BUFFY: (resigned) No job. I wish.

Once Buffy chases the demon off, she broaches the subject again: “Now, about my loan. I’m not saying I’m *charging* you for saving your life or anything, but ... let’s talk rates”. In the end, however, she rejects the idea of charging for services and her loan application is denied.<sup>4</sup>

The second problem inherent in collective goods is the inevitability of *free riders*. Even the bad guys are protected from other bad guys through Buffy's efforts. Non-exclusive consumption can be exploited, resulting in the free rider problem, which is also found in "Flooded":

JONATHAN: Are we really gonna kill her? That's so sad.

WARREN: Shut up, Whine-athan.

ANDREW: But ... I, I don't want to kill Buffy either.

JONATHAN: Yeah, she saved my life a bunch of times! Plus, she's hot.

Buffy's service to the public is collective and its benefits diffuse, so she cannot decide who is protected and who is not. Collective goods benefit everyone, and in the above example, even those who would kill her would take advantage of the fact that they are still alive to devise plans against her. Later in the episode, The Trio surrounds itself with cash from the bank robbery and further articulates the advantages of free riding:

ANDREW: Is this the life or what?

WARREN: Mm.

ANDREW: I mean, here we got all the stuff we ever wanted... and we didn't even have to...

WARREN: Earn it?

ANDREW: Exactamundo.

JONATHAN: It's true, my friends. The way I see it ... life is like an interstellar journey. Some people go into hypersleep and travel at sub-light speeds... ..only to get where they're going after years of struggle, toil, and hard, hard work. We, on the other hand ...

ANDREW: Blast through the space-time continuum in a wormhole?

JONATHAN: Gentlemen ... *He lights a cigar with a burning hundred dollar bill* ... crime is our wormhole.

Up to this point, I hope to have demonstrated sufficiently that slaying possesses both defining characteristics of public goods: nonrival and nonexclusive consumption. Successful slaying on one night does not reduce the "amount" of slaying capacity available on the next night. Though not immortal, slayers heal quickly and when one dies, another steps into her place.<sup>5</sup> The benefits of slaying are not exclusive to certain humans or demons and not others. Slaying also possesses the two problems endemic to public goods: pricing and free riders. Events in "Flooded" bring these problems to the fore: the Evil Trio represents the free rider problem and the loan officer expresses the pricing problem of public goods. Buffy further confirms her belief in the collective nature of slaying in her rejection of Anya's suggestion to charge a price for slaying. She accepts her role as a public servant. In fact, the only other occupation Giles can think of for her is in public service: "Have you considered law enforcement?" ("What's My Line, Part One" 2.09).

In the public service motivation literature, it remains an open question whether the presence of public goods and services implies the presence of public service motivation. It does not

necessarily follow that Buffy provides slaying services in the spirit of public service motivation. Faith is also a slayer and is also unpaid but she could hardly be accused of acting out of a concern for the public welfare. The next section takes up the definition of public service motivation; and in the section that follows I employ a series of measures alongside evidence from *BtVS* to determine whether, if at all, the public service motivation construct is manifest Buffy's approach to slaying.

## Public Service Motivation

Theories of human motivation underpin theories related to workplace behavior, which in turn have shaped ideas surrounding individuals' choices to work for the public interest. Do the motivations of workers in one industry differ from those in others? Do some people work out of a sense of public purpose, while others just want to get paid? Mainstream labor economists theorize that people put in effort only up to the level of wages, regardless of where they work or what they do. People place a price on leisure and are induced to work only once the expected wage exceeds the value of leisure (Prasch 2004, p. 150, 153):

[T]he "labor-leisure" tradeoff ... posits that people hold fixed attitudes regarding the relative merits of leisure versus additional income ... high wages lead to greater effort, greater willingness to learn, improved morale, and lower turnover.

Clearly, there is no room for a sense of higher purpose or altruism in this explanation unless those attributes were incorporated into the labor-leisure calculus, but that would generalize the tradeoff hypothesis to the point of meaninglessness. The idea that individuals only reluctantly submit to "the irksomeness of labor" if given sufficient incentive is a very old one. Economist/sociologist Thorstein Veblen ridiculed this view of human nature more than a century ago, arguing instead that the need to create, build, and act is instinctual and in fact, an aversion to work is unnatural (1898, p. 188-189, emphases supplied):

[A person] is in an eminent sense an intelligent agent ... he is endowed with a proclivity for purposeful action ... *a discriminating sense of purpose*, by force of which all futility of life or of action is distasteful to him ... In the intervals of sober reflection, when not harassed with the strain of overwork, men's common sense speaks unequivocally under the guidance of *the instinct of workmanship*. They like to see others spend their life to some *purpose*, and they like to reflect that their own life is of some use.

Consistent with Veblen's depiction of human nature are psychological motivation theories, which allow for the presence of a public service ethic once certain conditions are met. One's basic physiological, safety, and esteem needs must be met before she or he can develop altruism and the desire to serve others: "Satisfaction of the self-esteem need leads to feelings of self-confidence, worth, strength, capability, and adequacy of *being useful and necessary* in the world" (Maslow 1943, p. 382 emphasis added). In fact, Maslow's hierarchy of needs would place public service motivation at its apex: a person will prioritize the needs of others



and overlook free riders and imperfect valuation of her efforts after all the lower needs have been met (Cofer & Appley 1964, p. 679).

Hertzberg's explanation of employee motivation (1968) emphasizes job enrichment as a strong motivator and concludes that employees are motivated by challenging and meaningful work. But his worldview is not entirely consistent with the idea of a distinct public service ethic. Hertzberg anchors his theory of motivation in the individual workers and not a broader communal purpose. In fact, he recommends keeping individuals workers out of the overall job enrichment process: "it is the content [of the job] that will produce the motivation, not attitudes about being involved" (1968, p. 62). In general, however, theories on public service motivation are indebted to these broader explanations of human motivation and we use them to understand workplace behaviors in the specific context of public service.

Scholars of public service motivation have posited that government and nonprofit workers are motivated by more than just material gain (Perry & Wise 1990, Perry 1996, Perry 1997). Others have expanded this idea beyond the public and nonprofit sectors (Brewer & Selden 1998, Brewer, Selden & Facer 2000). Other scholars, however, have found no difference between public- and private-sector workers' motivations (Maidani 1991, using Hertzberg's 1968 methodology) and still others question whether a specific construct like public service motivation can be isolated, identified, and studied at all (Gabris & Simo 1995). Considering Buffy never received pay for slaying services yet remains committed to her duty, one might be tempted to answer an immediate "yes": that she indeed operates from a public service ethic and possesses public service motivation. However, public service motivation is defined as "an individual's predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions and organizations" (Perry & Wise 1996, p. 368). It is situated in the context of institutions and organizations and the slayer is only loosely part of or representative of any organization—the Watchers' Council (until "Graduation Day, Part One" 6.21, returning on a limited basis starting with "Checkpoint" 5012) and the Initiative temporarily. Faith doesn't get paid, either, but her slaying is not grounded in a desire to serve the public interest, benevolence, or altruism. Her motivation is strictly rational utility-maximizing self interest—not money but pleasure—that Buffy might share if, in the following passage, Faith is not "way off base" ("Bad Girls" 3.14):

FAITH: We're Slayers, girlfriend, the Chosen Two. Why should we let [Wesley] take all the fun out of it?

BUFFY: Oh, that would be tragic, taking the fun out of slaying, stabbing, beheading.

FAITH: Oh, like you don't dig it.

BUFFY: I don't.

FAITH: You're a liar. I've *seen* you. Tell me staking a vamp doesn't get you a little bit juiced. Come on, say it.

*Faith stops, faces Buffy, folds her arms and waits. Buffy smiles, hesitates, looks away...*

FAITH: Aah! You can't fool me. The look in your eyes right after a kill? You just get hungry for more.

BUFFY: You're way off base.

FAITH: Tell me that if you don't get in a good slaying, after a while, you just start itching for some vamp to show up so you can give him a good ...

*She makes a stabbing motion and grunts.*

BUFFY: Again with the grunting. You realize I'm not comfortable with this.

FAITH: Hey, slaying's what we were built for. If you're not enjoying it, you're doing something wrong.

Unless Faith is indeed wrong about Buffy's motives in this passage, there may well be a glimmer of self-serving utility maximization underpinning Buffy's slaying. So, it is not clear whether slaying—despite being a public good and the slayer a public servant—is necessarily executed (so to speak) in a spirit of public service. Buffy might serve strictly from a sense of “sacred duty, yada yada yada” (2.13); something she was born into that she doesn't really want to do but feels she has little choice in. She may not put it into a larger societal context at all. The concept of public service motivation might not have anything to do with Buffy as the Slayer.

Perry and Wise (1990, p. 370) propose three types of service motivations: rational, norm-based, and affective. *Rational* motives include one's desire for political power, personal identification with a cause, or advocacy on behalf of a private interest, each of which may translate into material gain. Faith represents the rational self interest motivation that transcends monetary remuneration. Rainey (1982) finds material incentives to be only weakly linked to effectiveness for employees operating from a public service state of mind. The second type of motivation defined by Perry and Wise (1990) is based in societal-based *normative* standards. Norm-based motives relate to one's desire to serve the public interest, loyalty to duty and government in general, and a commitment to social equity. Finally, *affective* motives involve emotional investment and can be characterized by a Crusader's passion for a cause. A way to measure these three types of motives will help determine if and where Buffy's slaying fits with the public service motivation (PSM) construct. Perry (1996) elaborates these three motivation types and develops a gauge to measure public service motivation in which respondents indicate the degree to which they agree or disagree to thirty-five statements grouped into the following six categories linked to the three types describe above:

- **Attraction to Policy Making:** A rational motive, this category involves activities that “can reinforce one's image of self importance” (Perry 1996, p. 6)
- **Commitment to the Public Interest:** A norm-based motive; in general, altruism
- **Civic Duty:** Also a norm-based motive related to the previous category but specific to civic institutions such as government agencies and departments
- **Social Justice:** A third norm-based motive, this category “involves activities intended to enhance the well being of minorities who lack political and economic resources” (Perry 1996, p. 7). To Buffy, these would be weaker beings or humans who don't have a slayer's abilities or Buffy's slayer support system.

- **Compassion:** One of the affective motives, this category involves “an extensive love of all people within our political boundaries and the imperative that they must be protected in all of the basic rights granted them” (Perry 1996, p. 7). Buffy protects the pursuit of happiness; individuals’ pursuit of a normal life. She preserves civic participation in events like prom and graduation (Pasley 2003)
- **Self Sacrifice:** A second affective motive, this is “the willingness to substitute service to others for tangible personal rewards” (Perry 1996, p. 7).

Does the concept of public service motivation fit the activity of slaying completely or only in part? And if only partially, which parts and why? I will use Perry’s 1996 survey instrument as revised and abbreviated by Coursey & Pandey (2007) to answer these questions along with quotes from *BtVS* as if Buffy were answering Perry’s survey to test the hypothesis: “Buffy possesses public service motivation.” The revised survey is comprised of the following nine statements,<sup>6</sup> to which respondents indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement on a five-point Likert scale (Perry et al 2008):

**Attraction to Policy Making**

1. Politics is a dirty word. (Reversed)
2. The give and take of public policy making doesn’t appeal to me. (Reversed)
3. I don’t care much for politicians. (Reversed)

**Commitment to Public Interest**

4. I unselfishly contribute to my community.
5. Meaningful public service is very important to me.
6. I would prefer seeing public officials do what is best for the whole community even if it harmed my interests.

**Civic Duty**

7. I consider public service my civic duty.

**Compassion**

8. I am often reminded by daily events about how dependent we are on one another.
9. I have little compassion for people in need who are unwilling to take the first step to help themselves. (Reversed)

A number of the items listed above overlap intentionally in order to capture various constructs—Compassion, Civic Duty, etc.—from a number of angles. Relevant quotes from *BtVS* also cover more than one item. So, rather than address each of the preceding seventeen items individually, I will cite passages from the series—including and beyond the touchstone episode for this paper, “Flooded”—and discuss how they reveal what Buffy would have responded had she taken the PSM survey.

## **Empirical Analysis: Scripts as Texts**

Examining scripts as texts is described by Durand (2009), who concludes that the shooting scripts have canonical primacy over other manifestations of the story. Linsley's (2009) essay in response to Durand, argues that the episode and episode transcript should take precedence over other forms, based on the differences between them in "Chosen" (7.22). I use both, starting with the searchable episode transcript database (<http://vrya.net/bdb>) and double checking any differences between the transcript and the shooting script ([www.Buffyworld.com](http://www.Buffyworld.com)). For the extended quotations in this paper I rely on the shooting scripts, which tend to give more detail of the scene. Of course, references to episodes in the Season Eight graphic novels possess no such disparities.

## **Politics and Policymaking**

Buffy Summers, along with most of Sunnydale, California would likely agree strongly with Statements One, Two, and Three. No one in Sunnydale has a reason to trust politicians and community leaders. The most visible example of an elected official is Mayor Wilkins, but other public figures appear as well. "Mayor McSleaze" (Buffy, "Choices" 3.19) is not only the most visible, but also the most outrageous depiction of corrupt politicians. He contracts with Mr. Trick to eliminate the Slayers, fails at that, then uses Faith to kill Buffy, and ultimately arranges for the annihilation of Sunnydale as part of his ascent to demon form. In contrast, Principal Snyder proves more annoying than nefarious in his repeated attempts to frustrate the Scoobs' efforts. His general attitude toward students ranges from cynicism to outright hostility ("School Hard" 2.03): "A lot of educators tell students, 'Think of your principal as your pal.' I say think of me as your judge, jury and executioner". This is not a positive example of leadership in public service.

Other public servants depict government authority about as well: police are ineffectual at best and inept at worst; Colonel McNamara and "the boys at the Pentagon [are] in way over [their] heads" (Buffy, "Primeval" 4.21); and the social worker investigating Dawn's home situation is meddlesome and eventually duped. Although comparatively little evidence of policymaking in Sunnydale exists to inform opinion on Statements Two and Six, the ineffectiveness and evildoing of political and public figures in Sunnydale suggest that Buffy's responses to survey items related to politics would score low on public service motivation.

## **Selflessness and Service**

Several survey items cohere under the theme of selflessness, to which the textual evidence suggests Buffy would respond "Strongly Agree". Statements Four and Seven, "I unselfishly contribute to my community" and "I consider public service my civic duty", evoke strong agreement based on her words and actions throughout the series. Pasley (2003) argues convincingly that although overt expressions of political ideology are absent in *BtVS*, the importance of civil society "shine[s] through fairly clearly and consistently from the Buffy mythos" (emphasis supplied):

It is only when the local humans venture out of the house and make use of Sunnydale's community institutions ... that they become vulnerable. ... It is in these places (or the alleys behind them) where Buffy fights so many of her battles. ... *Maintaining the conditions under which civil society or community life can flourish* is one of the slayer's primary purposes.

Many examples exist of decisions and actions that reinforce Pasley's observations. From day one, Buffy wanted to be a normal teenager, worrying about things like missing classes, making friends, and not having "last month's hair" ("Welcome to the Hellmouth", 1.01). She simply wanted to participate in typical high school activities like cheerleading, dating, and going to parties, and worked hard to preserve adolescent traditions like senior prom (3.20):

You guys are gonna have a prom. The kind of prom everyone should have. I will give you all a nice, fun, normal evening ... if I have to kill every single person on the face of the Earth to do it.

Pasley (2003) further notes: "Buffy wanted nothing more than to participate in this sort of normal community life, but even if she couldn't, she evinced a steely determination to seeing that her fellow citizens could do so." Beyond the high school, Buffy created and preserved the space within which Sunnydale citizens could establish social institutions, as well. "Gingerbread" (3.11) features the most explicit evidence of community action via Joyce's founding and leadership in Mothers Opposed to the Occult (MOO). MOO concludes that the brutal murder of two children was the work of witches, and with Principal Snyder, proceeds to confiscate books, black clothing, scented candles, and detain anyone deemed suspicious. By the end of their Crusade, Joyce and Sheila nearly burn their own daughters at the stake. Despite the potential for civic participation to operate against Buffy's best interests, she protects the citizens (and ultimately its denizens) of Sunnydale, allowing them to engage in social activities. While she may not situate slaying in the context of civic duty, the evidence above indicates that Buffy would score high on Statements Four, Five, and Seven with respect to public service motivation.

### **Buffy's Support System and Community**

Buffy would agree strongly with the eighth statement, "I am often reminded by daily events about how dependent we are on one another." Support for this is found from the very first episode to the end of the television series: Buffy's earliest slayings in Sunnydale included her new friends Willow and Xander, and sealing the Hellmouth in the very last televised episode was a team effort, as well. These same friends brought Buffy back each time she died: Xander after the first time, Willow the second. After vampire Spike's first (nearly dusty) encounter with Buffy, he grumbles, "A Slayer with family and friends. That sure as hell wasn't in the brochure" ("School Hard" 2.03). The appearance of Kendra, a very different kind of Slayer, provides the clearest contrast between Buffy's approach to slaying and the archetypal loner Slayer who operates in secrecy. In "What's My Line, Part Two" (2.10) Kendra articulates this contrast to Buffy:

Your life is very different than mine ... The things you do and have, I was taught distract from my calling. Friends. School. Even family ... My parents, they sent me to my watcher when I was very young ... I don't remember them, actually. I've seen pictures. ... that's how seriously the calling is taken by my people. My mother and father gave me to my watcher because they believed that they were doing the right thing for me, and for the world. You see?

But Buffy doesn't "see" this at all. Kendra's life makes no sense to her, which she tries to explain to Kendra later in this episode. Buffy relies on her circle of friends to fight evil forces—even befriending vampires and demons—figuratively sharing her power throughout the series and literally sharing her power with all potential Slayers at the end of Season Seven and into Season Eight, actually making Buffy a better Slayer. "This is why Buffy survived" notes Pasley (2003), "while the more traditional Slayer, Kendra, raised by her Watcher and forbidden to have a social life, was easily overwhelmed by Spike's hypnotic girlfriend, Drusilla." Drusilla eventually kills Kendra. In sum, Buffy would agree strongly with the Statement Eight, "I am often reminded by daily events about how dependent we are on one another", which is consistent with the presence of public service motivation.

#### **Self Sufficiency**

Buffy would likely disagree with Statement Nine, "I have little compassion for people in need who are unwilling to take the first step to help themselves." Buffy holds herself to a higher standard of behavior than she expects from others. Xander tries to remind her ("Phases" 2.15) "Buffy, you can't blame yourself for every death in Sunnydale ... If it weren't for you, people would be lining up five deep needing to get themselves buried." She accepts her role as slayer and does not expect humans to fight demons themselves. Furthermore, while demons and humans kill other humans, Buffy will not cross that line. To Buffy, "being a slayer is not the same as being a killer" ("Bad Girls" 3.14); demons and other big bads are slayed, and humans are killed, but Buffy will not kill. When she (mistakenly) thought she took a human life in "Ted" (2.11), Cordelia wondered, "she's like this Superman. Shouldn't there be different rules for her?" But as Giles points out, even if there were different rules, Buffy does not allow herself to make such mistakes: "Whatever the authorities are planning for her can't be much worse than what she's doing to herself. She took a human life. The guilt ... it's pretty hard to bear and it won't go away soon." Buffy even refused to kill the hellgod Glory when she transmogrified into the human form of Ben, prompting Giles to do what Buffy would not ("The Gift" 5.22):

BEN: ... She could have killed me.

GILES: No she couldn't. Never. And sooner or later, Glory will re-emerge and make Buffy pay for that mercy, and the world with her. Buffy even knows that, and still she couldn't take a human life. She's a hero, you see. She's not like us.

BEN: Us?

*Giles coldly clamps his hand over Ben's mouth and nose. Ben struggles feebly for a while. Then stops. Giles' expression never changes.*

In sum, Buffy accepts—however reluctantly at times—her role as the Slayer, holds herself to a high standard of conduct, and does not expect humans to fight for themselves. She would disagree with Statement Nine, “I have little compassion for people in need who are unwilling to take the first step to help themselves.” Excepting the survey items relating to politicians and policymakers, who no one in Sunnydale would be expected to defend, Buffy’s imputed responses indicate that she is a public servant motivated by a public service ethic.

Perry’s original 1996 survey included more than just these nine items. Respondents were also asked a number of questions to gauge how far they would be willing to go to back up their views on public service. In other words, respondents may talk the public service talk, but do they walk the walk? To capture this, I include the Self Sacrifice items from the original survey, which are especially pertinent to this study (as advised by Coursey & Pandey 2007, 556) Buffy’s public service uniquely involves self sacrifice, akin to public safety occupations in law enforcement, the armed services, emergency response, and firefighting, where lives are routinely put on the line in the name of public service. Beyond risking her own life each evening when she patrols for demons, Buffy donated blood to Angel at the end of Season Three and died for Dawn (and the world) at the end of Season Five. It is in this light that the following items are considered:

#### **Self Sacrifice**

10. Making a difference in society means more to me than personal achievements.
11. I believe in putting duty before self.
12. Doing well financially is definitely more important to me than doing good deeds.  
(Reversed)
13. Much of what I do is for a cause bigger than myself.
14. Serving citizens would give me a good feeling even if no one paid me for it.
15. I feel people should give back to society more than they get from it.
16. I am one of those rare people who would risk personal loss to help someone else.
17. I am prepared to make enormous sacrifices for the good of society.

#### **Extrinsic Rewards**

Statements 12 and 14 are about money: “Doing well financially is definitely more important to me than doing good deeds” and “Serving citizens would give me a good feeling even if no one paid me for it”; with the former being measured inversely. Ample evidence exists that Buffy would strongly disagree with the former and strongly agree with the latter. Pasley (2003) on Buffy and Dawn’s reactions to Anya’s suggestion to “cash in” in “Flooded”:

Buffy thinks of slaying as anything but a service to be exchanged for money: it is her calling, her destiny, and she will not have it ‘stripped of its halo’ and converted to a form of wage labor.

Buffy also takes advantage of the opportunity to “keep an eye on” Sunnydale High without regard to pay in “Lessons” (7.01):

PRINCIPAL WOOD: We do have a small community outreach program, gets people from the town to teach electives and such ... the money we could pay you wouldn't even fold, but it would just be a couple days a week ...

BUFFY: Are you asking me to be a counselor?

PRINCIPAL WOOD: We have a guidance counselor, but I think the kids could use someone, you know, closer to their age, who still ...

BUFFY: I'm in!

PRINCIPAL WOOD: You serious? You heard the part about the money?

BUFFY: I heard. I've been temping, my schedule could be a little funtastic, but I'll work it out. I'd like to keep an eye on this place.

Both examples—Buffy's rejection of charging fees and her acceptance of the low-paying counselor position—provide insight into her views on serving people and doing good deeds. On both statements, Buffy would score high on the public service motivation scale. Although beyond the scope of this paper, further research should examine the problematic role of money in *BtVS*. Indeed, Buffy's decision in Season Eight to finance their operations via the "victimless crime" of robbing Fort Knox undermines the credibility and legitimacy worldwide Slayer efforts.

### **Duty and Mission**

Statements 11 and 13: "I believe in putting duty before self"; and "Much of what I do is for a cause bigger than myself", respectively, relate to Buffy's role in the larger good-versus-evil context and her place in Slayer lore and lineage. Buffy's response to Statement 11 would depend on when she was asked. Throughout the first two seasons, Buffy was a rather reluctant Slayer particularly with respect to "duty", going so far as to run away at the end of Season Two and not returning until the second episode of Season Three. She seemed to have settled into her role and duty more comfortably from then on, "putting duty before self" and at times even before her friends. For example, Buffy cites the "duty thing" against Willow's plea to "have a girl night ... eat sundaes and then watch *Steel Magnolias*" ("Something Blue" 4.09).

Regardless of whether she wholly accepts her sacred duty, she would certainly agree with Statement 13, that slaying is for a larger cause. But—Buffy would not agree that the cause is the Watchers' Council, but rather, she would place herself in the context of a war between good and evil forces. Giles underscores this point to fellow Council member Quentin Travers: "You're *waging* a war. She's *fighting* it. There is a difference" ("Helpless" 3.12). Ultimately, the Slayer and her Watcher—Buffy and Giles—are not on the same side as the Watchers' Council. Buffy's approach to slaying is not dictated to her from Giles or from the Council: "Orders? I don't take orders. I do things my way" (Buffy to Kendra in "What's My Line, Part Two" 2.10). Giles loses faith in the Council's wisdom as well, declaring, "I don't give a rat's ass about the Council's orders" ("Helpless" 3.12). In short, Buffy would agree to both statements, but only to a renegotiated and redefined "duty" and "cause" to suit her interpretation of the Slayer's role.



### **Personal Sacrifice**

It almost goes without saying that Buffy would strongly agree with Statements 16 and 17: “I am one of those rare people who would risk personal loss to help someone else”; and “I am prepared to make enormous sacrifices for the good of society.” Buffy kills her first love, Angel, to prevent the demon Acatla from swallowing the world and drawing every living creature on the planet into hell (“Becoming, Part One” 2.22). Buffy loses her life. Twice. Marauding zombies crash Buffy’s welcome home party after she ran away to Los Angeles (“Dead Man’s Party” 3.2 [www.vrya.net](http://www.vrya.net)). Buffy’s slayer duties get her kicked out of high school. Twice. Hellhounds attack her senior prom. She has a difficult time transitioning into college while continuing her Slayer duties and eventually drops out. She misses an ice-skating date with her estranged father on her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday so that she can save her mother from a crazed vampire. She loses her second vampire lover, Spike, during the battle to defeat the First Evil and close the Hellmouth. But perhaps the most poignant personal loss and sacrifice Buffy suffered as a direct result of being the Slayer was the involuntary resurrection she experienced after her death at the end of Season Five. Although subsequent Slayers are called forth each time one dies—and Faith was activated upon Buffy’s death—Willow believed the world needed Buffy back. But as all *BtVS* fans know, Willow’s resurrection spell robbed Buffy of eternity in Heaven.

### **That’s Nice. So What?**

In this paper, I set out to discover and describe aspects of the political economy of Sunnydale, California. First, I established slaying as a public good, Buffy as a public-goods provider—a public servant—facilitating the discussion of public service motivation (PSM). to determine whether or not Buffy, as a public servant, operates from a public service ethic. Applying evidence from shooting scripts and episode transcripts to an oft-used PSM survey, I determined that Buffy is motivated by a public service ethic.

“Flooded” does an excellent job of introducing the formal economy and Buffy’s place in it—all in a single episode. By Season Six, questions must be addressed that were not at issue before: Who buys groceries, pays the electric bill, property taxes, etc? Where do all those cute clothes come from? Joyce took care of all of these things before, “without the aid of any superpowers” (Giles to Buffy, “Flooded” 6.14), but Joyce is gone. This episode establishes slaying as a public good by demonstrating how it meets the economic definition of public goods. Non-rival consumption is illustrated in the bank-robbery scene where all patrons are equally protected by Buffy chasing off the M’Fashnik demon. Non-exclusive consumption is illustrated in the Evil Trio’s conversation about killing Buffy even though each of their lives had been saved by her in the past. The pricing problem is depicted by Anya in her suggestion to “cash in”. The free-rider problem is portrayed in the scene that takes place in the Evil Trio’s den. What’s more, the free-rider problem is explained to the audience overtly by Warren as he expounds upon the benefits of living the life without having to “earn it”; how others work to get by while “crime is [their] wormhole”. Finally, Buffy’s invisibility to the formal economy is illustrated by her interaction with the loan officer, who explains to

Buffy—and the audience—that, from the perspective of the market, she has “no job”. Again, all of these issues needed to occur in Season Six—or soon after Joyce’s passing—in order for subsequent money matters to make sense. For instance, Buffy’s decision to get a “real” job (“Anne” 3.01 aside) in “Doublemeat Palace” (6.12) might have seemed out of context, had economic necessity not been introduced previously.

Establishing slaying as a public good, Buffy as a public servant, and the presence of PSM in Buffy’s slaying allows *BtVS* to inform scholarship on public service by providing further evidence that public service exists outside the public sector, as does public service motivation. Furthermore, Buffy represents public service motivation taking place outside the context of any organization—her purpose is not the product of externally-imposed sense of duty and mission, but rather, a deeply personal duty and mission. On the other hand, she is no vigilante. She voluntarily engages in community and society and maintains her connections with friends, family, and public institutions. Pasley (2003) observes this, as well:

This insistence on a hero who stays connected to her society and draws strength from that, rather than being weakened by it, is somewhat unique in the superhero genre. In the movies, at least, Superman, Batman, and Spider-Man keep much more secret identities and shy away from relationships lest their loved ones be threatened. Buffy (and Angel) fall apart and get beaten when they go it alone. Social capital is their secret weapon.

Although Buffy is unique in her collective approach to slaying, the public servant as superhero is not unprecedented. Harvey Dent was Gotham City’s idealistic district attorney zealously pursuing the most hardened criminals until his own transformation into supervillain Two-Face. Is that the inevitable fate of do-gooders? Does Harvey Dent’s fall from grace represent popular cynicism surrounding politicians and public officials? One poll before the 2000 election ([www.telegraph.co.uk](http://www.telegraph.co.uk)) showed that a majority of American voters favored *The West Wing*’s President Josiah Bartlet over Bush and Kerry. Was this an ill-informed electorate or a wish statement from an informed, yet cynical, public? In recent, more optimistic times, popular culture reflected the faith in public service inspired by Barack Obama, most notably Shepard Fairey’s iconic “Hope” poster. In this context, *Buffy the Public Servant* belongs alongside the similarly-motivated public service exemplars created in popular culture.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Prepared for presentation at SC4: The Slayage Conference on the Whedonverses, Flagler College, St. Augustine, Florida, June 5, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> When I refer to “public goods”, I always mean both *goods* and *services*. National defense and consumer product safety regulations are quintessential public goods even though they are not tangible products and therefore services by definition. Moreover, I use “public” and “collective” synonymously as well as “private” and “normal”.

<sup>3</sup> “Slaying” is the generic term for eliminating predatory demons, which is what Buffy does. “Killing” isn’t used due to the confusion about how one actually “kills” the undead. On the other hand, it may be that calling Buffy a “slayer” is to gloss over the fact that she is a lawless, homicidal pariah, and “demon” is just away to avoid thinking about her victims as sentient beings. See, Hugh? I *was* listening.

<sup>4</sup> In *The Watcher’s Guide, Volume 3*, Paul Ruditis interprets the loan officer’s decision as punishment for Buffy’s role in the bank robbery. I do not see a link, however. Willow’s comment, “even if the bank *was* robbed, which you battling demons couldn’t possibly know ...” intimates a conversation between Buffy and Mr. Savitsky after her last words in the scene, but he wasn’t close to approving a loan before the attack based on insufficient documentation of her ability to repay. I interpret the scene as evidence of the problem of placing a value on public goods and services, not as an indication that the bank *would* have loaned Buffy money *but for* the loan officer’s belief that she was a cover for the bank robbery.

<sup>5</sup> All slayers are female and young. At the beginning of each episode, a voiceover reminds viewers: “Into each generation a Slayer is born. One girl in all the world, a Chosen One. One born with the strength and skill to fight the vampires, to stop the spread of their evil and the swell of their numbers.” Show creator Joss Whedon deliberately juxtaposed the world-protecting, evil-slaying power possessed by the slayer with the stereotypically powerless image of a teenage girl; a southern California cheerleader named “Buffy”, no less.

<sup>6</sup> PSM 4: “It is difficult for me to contain my feelings when I see people in distress” is not used here for two reasons. First, Coursey and Pandey (2007) found evidence that respondents interpret it in a range of ways, so it fails to capture compassion consistently. Second, research on emotional labor in public service articulates the important differences between feeling strongly about a situation and taking action to address it, compared to failing to control one’s emotions (Guy, Newman & Mastracci 2008).

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# “Dialogue” in Guantanamo Bay

*Alexander Dawoody*

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*Disclaimer: The following is a fictional scenario and has no political agenda. It intended to understand the mind-set of those who are involved in either the Iraqi resistance or in terrorist networks and willing to carry out the political agenda of such networks. It also intended to reflect on aspects of interrogation methods employed by United States government in order to obtain information from those suspected of insurgency or terrorism.*

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Those who would sacrifice freedom for security deserve neither.  
—Benjamin Franklin.

## **Introduction**

The play contemplates the interrogation of two detainees at Guantanamo Bay. One is a member of Iraqi resistance and the other is a member of Al-Qaeda. One is interrogated by a career bureaucrat, a veteran CIA agent, while the other is interrogated by a fairly new CIA agent. Although the scenario is not based on a real-life story, the themes reflect possible reality based on news coverage of the Iraq War and Guantanamo Bay. The understanding of these themes will enable us to better comprehend public policy geared toward protecting our national security, better understand who we are fighting and the causal effects of the threats to our nation.

## The Characters

- Agent X: A veteran CIA agent stationed in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, who has been working for the agency since 1993.
- Agent Y: A CIA interrogator stationed in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, who has been working for the agency since 2003.
- Subject Z: An Iraqi Sunni Arab and member of the Iraqi Resistance Movement. He was captured in Fallujah, Iraq, in 2004 by U.S. Marines before he was able to detonate a road bomb. He was placed in Abu Ghraib prison in Baghdad for one year before he was relocated to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in 2006.
- Subject T: A Wahabi Fundamentalist from Saudi Arabia and member of Al-Qaeda. He was captured in Karbala, Iraq, in 2005 by Iraqi Police before he was able to ignite an explosive strapped-on belt while he was among thousands of Iraqi Shiite pilgrims to the holy shrines of Imam Hussein, the grandson of Prophet Muhammad. He was then handed to US Marines and transported to Guantanamo Bay Federal Detention Center for interrogation.

## Scene One

*The Place:* CIA Interrogation Room 29D in Guantanamo Bay Federal Detention Center  
*The Date:* March 2009

Agent Y: (to an MP) Bring Detainee # 32188F in.

MP: Yes, Sir.

*The MP returns after a few minutes with a man wearing a blindfold and an orange uniform. He appears to be shaking and mumbling something. The MP sits the man on a chair facing Agent Y. He leaves the subject with the blindfold on and departs the room.*

Agent Y: *Al-Salam Aliakmon* (Arabic for “Peace be Upon You”).

Subject T: *Wa Alyakom al Salam* (Arabic for “peace be upon you as well”)

Agent Y: How are they treating you here?

Subject T: Some days better than others.

Agent Y: Are you able to practice your religious duties in these facilities?

Subject T: Yes, *Alhamdu lil lah* (Arabic for Praise to God)

Agent Y: Do you have a copy of your Holy Quran in your cell to read?

Subject T: Yes, *Alhamdu lil lah*.

Agent Y: Do you have access to clean water for ablution before prayers?

Subject T; Yes, *Alhamdu lil lah*.

Agent Y: Do they give you “*halal*” meat to eat (*meat that is prepared according to Islamic tradition*).

Subject T: Yes, *Alhamdu lil lah*. They do give me *halal* meat.

Agent Y: Do you have any request from me?

Subject T: Can you please take off this blindfold? I am afraid of the dark.

Agent Y: (*To MP*) Guard, come and remove his blindfold.

*The MP reenters the room, removes the blindfold from Subject T and leaves the room again.*

Agent Y: Is this better?

Subject T: Yes, *Alhamdu lil lah*.

Agent Y: Are you comfortable?

Subject T: Yes, *Alhamdu lil lah*.

Agent Y: Do you want a cigarette?

Subject T: I do not smoke.

Agent Y: Can I get you something to drink or eat?

Subject T: Some water, please, and a few pills of aspirin.

Agent Y: (*To MP*) Guard, bring two aspirins and a glass of water for the detainee.

*After a few minutes, the MP returns with a glass of water and two aspirins and hands them to Subject T. The subject takes the pills with water. MP leaves the room.*

Agent Y: Anything else?

Subject T: No, *shokran* (Arabic for “thank you”).

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Agent Y: Okay. Let us start then, shall we?

Subject T: *Bism Allah al rahman al raheem* (Arabic for “in the name of God, the most compassionate, the most merciful”).

Agent Y: What is your nationality?

Subject T: I am from Saudi Arabia.

Agent Y: Are you a Wahabi Muslim?

Subject T: Yes.

Agent Y: Where in Saudi Arabia did you live?

Subject T: I was born in Yemen but raised in Ta’if.

Agent Y: What was your occupation in Ta’if?

Subject T: I worked for ARAMCO as an engineer.

Agent Y: So, you had a good life.

Subject T: *Alhamdu lil lah.*

Agent Y: Are you married? Do you have children?

Subject T: Yes. I have three wives and five children. Four boys and one girl.

Agent Y: Were you satisfied with your salary at ARAMCO?

Subject T: *Alhamdu lil lah.*

Agent Y: If you had a good paying job, a family, then why did you decide to leave Saudi Arabia and go to Iraq?

Subject T: Life is about believing in something and fighting for it. It is not about jobs, money, or comfort.

Agent Y: Don’t you feel responsible for your family? Who will take care of them without you? Who is supporting your wives and children now?

Subject T: I trust them to God’s care.

Agent Y: That is irresponsible. Does your Holy Quran guide you to leave the responsibility of your family to uncertain destiny just to follow some cause?

Subject T: Yes. For God's sake, and to fight for God, nothing is more important, not even family or one's own life.

Agent Y: Is this why you decided to go to Iraq, to fight for God?

Subject T: Yes.

Agent Y: Why Iraq of all places?

Subject T: Because an infidel army had occupied a Muslim country. Therefore, it was my duty as a Muslim to fight. This is Jihad, a holy war.

Agent Y: Who told you to go to Iraq?

Subject T: No one. I decided to go there on my own.

Agent Y: How did you enter Iraq?

Subject T: It was not difficult. You guys left the borders open. I traveled to Syria first, and then from there to the City of Al Qa'im on the Iraqi-Syrian borders.

Agent Y: No Iraqis or Americans were at the borders to ask for visa or passport?

Subject T: No.

Agent Y: How about the Syrian border guards?

Subject T: Those were easily bribed by money.

Agent Y: From Al Qa'im, where did you go?

Subject T: I hired a taxi and went to the City of Al-Ramadi in the Anbar Province.

Agent Y: Why Al-Ramadi?

Subject T: I knew it was a good haven for Jihadists like me.

Agent Y: How did you know this?

Subject T: From news broadcasted on networks such as Al-Jazeera Television.

Agent Y: Once you arrived to Al-Ramadi, where did you go?

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Subject T: To a mosque. I wanted to pray and thank God for arriving to the land of Jihad.

Agent Y: Then what?

Subject T: I met two brothers at the mosque who took me to their home and I stayed with them as a guest.

Agent Y: Were those people Iraqis?

Subject T: Yes.

Agent Y: Wahabis like you?

Subject T: No, but Sunnis.

Agent Y: Did they have families?

Subject T: One was single, but the other one was married and had a wife and a child. Their parents were also there living with them. They also had a teenage sister.

Agent Y: They allowed a stranger like you to live in their home while a young girl was living there? Isn't this against your religious practices?

Subject T: I married her later so the arrangement could be honorable and pious.

Agent Y: You married her? So, you now have four wives?

Subject T: Yes.

Agent Y: How old was the teenager?

Subject T: I don't know. I think 16.

Agent Y: How old are you?

Subject T: 32.

Agent Y: Isn't there something wrong with this picture?

Subject T: I see nothing wrong here. The marriage was done according to the *Sharia* (Islamic jurisprudence).

Agent Y: Where is your fourth wife now?

Subject T: She was killed.

Agent Y: By?

Subject T: Your air bombings of the city.

Agent Y: How about the brothers?

Subject T: They joined Al-Zarqawi in Baqoba.

Agent Y: Where are they now?

Subject T: I do not know.

Agent Y: How about Al-Zarqawi, do you know where he is?

Subject T: No.

Agent Y: Do you want to know?

Subject T: (remains silent)

Agent Y: He is roasting in Hell.

Subject T: What?

Agent Y: He was killed by US and Iraqi troops in Baqoba.

Subject T: *Ena lil Lah wa ina elehe la rajoon* (Arabic for “We are from God and we shall return to Him”).

Agent Y: Do you feel sorry for the bastard?

Subject T: He was a good Muslim. A martyr.

Agent Y: A good Muslim? Someone who kills other Muslims like himself just because they are of a different sect?

Subject T: Are you referring to the “*rafidoon*”? (Arabic for “rejectionists”).

Agent Y: I am referring to the Shiites.

Subject T: Shiites are *rafidoon*. They are non-Muslims and their killing is a duty.

Agent Y: A duty? You must be kidding me? How could it be your duty to kill a brother Muslim?

- Subject T: They are not my brothers. I do not also consider them to be Muslims.
- Agent Y: What have they done to deserve such punishment?
- Subject T: They place other gods next to Allah.
- Agent Y: I do not follow you. They are Muslims too and believe in the same one God as you do.
- Subject T: No, they place some men next to God, and worship these men. This is blasphemy. The killing of the blasphemists is a duty in order to keep the religion pure.
- Agent Y: Who are the others that the Shiites are worshiping? I am not aware of such a thing.
- Subject T: They make men such as Ali and Hussein holy, visit their shrines, and pray to these shrines instead of praying directly to God alone.
- Agent Y: Do you dislike Ali and Hussein?
- Subject T: No, they both are good Muslims and relatives of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him. However, I do not consider Ali and Hussein holy or pray to them. I only pray to God alone. The Shiites are *moshrikon* (Arabic for “polytheists”).
- Agent Y: Who are you to decide what people worship? Are you God’s deputy?
- Subject T: *Astaqfiro Allah* (Arabic for “God forgive me”)
- Agent Y: Then what?
- Subject T: As I said, it is a Muslim’s duty to kill infidels as well as Muslims who stray from Islam to commit blasphemy.
- Agent Y: What kind of a religion is this that calls for the killing of others who have done nothing to you or anyone else?
- Subject T: It is the religion of Islam.
- Agent Y: I do not think so. Islam is a religion of peace. It does not call for the killing of the innocents.
- Subject T: So now the CIA knows our religion better than us?

- Agent Y: I do not think any religion that believes in God calls for the killing of the innocents. It goes against the teachings of any religion.
- Subject T: The Shiites are not innocents. They are sinners.
- Agent Y: Even so. That is none of your business. It is between them and their God. Who are you to decide their conducts or practices?
- Subject T: It is my religious duty to do so as a Muslim.
- Agent Y: Says who?
- Subject T: Says the Holy Quran.
- Agent Y: You are lying. I read the Holy Quran. It does not say anything like this. You are inventing this to justify your crime.
- Subject T: Say whatever you want. I know my religion and I am aware of my duty to God. Neither you nor your army or government can scare me. At least I kill for God's sake and I am willing to die in that cause. You kill as well, but you kill for oil and greed. Who is the real criminal here?
- Agent Y: We do not kill innocent people, period.
- Subject T: Really? How about the millions of Iraqis that you murdered during your stupid war for oil?
- Agent Y: Millions?
- Subject T: Yes, millions.
- Agent Y: This is a lie.
- Subject T: You mean you did not kill any innocent Iraqi civilians during your war on Iraq?
- Agent Y: Yes, we did, but not on purpose. Those who were killed were victims of unfortunate accidents. They were casualties of war. We also sacrificed thousands of our own brave sons and daughters in the US military to liberate Iraq.
- Subject T: It is your government who is responsible for the death of your soldiers. Do not blame others. It is the price of war for soldiers to die during combat. But, what about innocent Iraqi civilians who had nothing to do with Saddam the *kaffir*

(Arabic for infidel) or your war? What was their guilt to be killed in such a stupid war for oil?

Agent Y: Saddam had his military bases placed within the civilian populations. So, when we bombed these military targets, it was unavoidable for a few civilians to get killed who happened to live nearby. This was not our fault. Saddam is the one to be blamed.

Subject T: A few? Who is lying now?

Agent Y: Do not lecture me on right or wrong. I do not need a lecture on morality from a terrorist who is willing to kill innocent people just because they have different religious practice while worshiping the same God.

Subject T: How about the killing of innocent Iraqi civilians after the fall of Saddam? Do you blame that on Saddam as well for hiding his military bases among the civilian population?

Agent Y: No. There is no such thing. We did not cause in the death of innocent Iraqi civilians after Saddam’s fall.

Subject T: Really? I was there when you bombed the City of Fallujah with white phosphorus. I saw hundreds of innocent women and children burn to death. What do you say to that, an unfortunate accident as well?

Agent Y: We were targeting Al-Qaeda in Fallujah, not Iraqi civilians. We also gave ample time for the civilians to evacuate and leave the city for safety elsewhere.

Subject T: Elsewhere? Where exactly? You left them to the mercy of their fate with nowhere to go. And since they had no place to go, most of them remained in the city and later they were bombed by you. You call this liberation?

Agent Y: It does not matter. The main target was Al-Qaeda, not Iraqi civilians.

Subject T: But you knew there were civilians still trapped in the city. Yet, you did not care and continued with your decision to bomb them. This is why our Muslim brothers everywhere around the world when they hear such news, join the Jihad and come to Iraq to fight you. You are infidels, have no conscience, no mercy, no God. You say that you are Christians and follow the teachings of Jesus, peace be upon him. But you follow only one false god: greed. This is why America will go down.

Agent Y: And who will bring us down, an insect like you?

Subject T: *(remains silent)*.

Agent Y: Are you lost for words?

Subject T: (*remains silent*)

Agent Y: Okay. Let us continue with this lovely conversation. After marrying the 16 years-old girl in Al-Ramadi, what then?

Subject T: I was able to connect with other brother Jihadists at Anbar Province.

Agent Y: Iraqis?

Subject T: They were of various nationalities.

Agent Y: Arabs?

Subject T: Yes.

Agent Y: Iranians?

Subject T: Iranians are Shiites and running the puppet government of occupied Iraq under your nose. Why would they join us?

Agent Y: So you would not accept a Shiite within your Jihad?

Subject T: To Hell with the Shiites. I would like to kill each and every single one of them.

Agent Y: This is why you went to Karbala? You wanted to commit suicide by killing yourself by igniting a strapped-on explosive belt and then take out as many Shiites with you?

Subject T: Yes.

Agent Y: Why Karbala?

Subject T: It is the site of the Shiite Holy Imam, Hussein. It was the anniversary of his Martyrdom, which is called *Ashora*, a holiday for the Shiites. They come to Karbala during this holiday in the thousands.

Agent Y: And you thought it was a good opportunity for you to blow yourself up in a crowd of Shiites and take a few dozen along the way with you.

Subject T: I was aiming for a few thousand.

Agent Y: Thousands?



Subject T: Yes. The more blasphemists one kills, the better is his reward in heaven.

Agent Y: You really think by killing Shiites or American infidels you will go to heaven?

Subject T: Yes, I believe this with all my heart.

Agent Y: And you have no trouble in confessing this to me?

Subject T: I am not afraid of you. I am ready to die.

Agent Y: And go to heaven?

Subject T: Yes.

Agent Y: And receive 72 virgins to add to your collection?

Subject T: (*remains silent*)

Agent Y: Why are you here then instead of being in heaven?

Subject T: Unfortunately, when I tried to ignite the explosive switch, it did not ignite. Some *rafidoon* saw the explosive belt under my shirt. They arrested me and handed me to the Marines.

Agent Y: Where did the Marines take you?

Subject T: To a military hold-up somewhere. I do not know the location. I was blindfolded.

Agent Y: Then what?

Subject T: I was questioned by some intelligence officers a few days after my arrest.

Agent Y: Did you tell them the truth?

Subject T: Yes. I have nothing to hide. I am proud and humbled to be a soldier of God.

Agent Y: A soldier of God? You are nothing but a terrorist and a criminal.

Subject T: Call it whatever. I know what I am and my conscience is clear.

Agent Y: Your conscience is clear? Do you really have a conscience after admitting to plotting to kill thousands of innocent civilians who have done nothing to you?

Subject T: They are not innocents. They are blasphemists. Their blood is free to be spilled. This is God's command.

Agent Y: I am glad that I know nothing of such a god.

Subject T: Your church also ordered the killing of the blasphemists. If it is okay for you to do so to protect your religion, why is it not acceptable for us?

Agent Y: Excuse me?

Subject T: Read your history. The Christian church ordered the killing of anyone who did not follow its doctrines by burning them on stakes as heretics.

Agent Y: That was in the Middle Ages. We are in 2009 now for God's sake. Get out of your cave, Neanderthal.

Subject T: It is you who is in a cave. I am following the light by offering myself to make right the righteous path of God.

Agent Y: If your path is the road to light, then I prefer to stay in darkness.

Subject T: *(remains silent)*

Agent Y: Where did you get the explosives?

Subject T: They are available everywhere in Iraq. We also buy some from the Iraqi police if we pay them a good amount of money. They don't care. They are all corrupt and interested in making money only.

Agent Y: Who trained you to use these explosives?

Subject T: We have brothers who fought in Afghanistan with the Mujahedeen against the infidel Communists. Some were trained by your agency, the CIA. We also have some brothers who served in the Iraqi military and then lost their jobs once your government took over.

Agent Y: Where are these training camps located?

Subject T: We have no camps. We train in homes owned by our supporters.

Agent Y: How about funds?

Subject T: Excuse me?

Agent Y: Where do you get money to buy bombs or bribe the Iraqi police?

- Subject T: We get them from many brothers around the world who wire money to us through *hawala* (Arabic, for money transfer by post office or special brokers). We also get money smuggled through from supporters in other countries.
- Agent Y: Why do those people send you money?
- Subject T: Because they believe in our cause. It is their form of charity.
- Agent Y: A charity to kill the innocent?
- Subject T: No. A charity to kill the infidels and the blasphemists.
- Agent Y: Did you receive money from Ben Laden himself?
- Subject T: I never met or had contact with the Sheikh, may God protect him.
- Agent Y: How about other Al-Qaeda members?
- Subject T: There is no such thing as an Al-Qaeda. This is only an umbrella name given to identify the entire Jihadist movement to direct your focus toward a narrow segment only while ignoring the wider operation.
- Agent Y: What do you mean there is no Al-Qaeda?
- Subject T: There is no Al-Qaeda in a sense that there is no such centralized organization with a top-down command and control centers. Every group operates independently while adjusting to different situations and environment. We benefit from collective expertise and resources when available, but we remain autonomous and respond through smaller groups to targets of opportunity. This is why it is difficult for you to defeat us.
- Agent Y: Why?
- Subject T: Because your mindsets and trainings are designed to encounter structured organizations. When a network lacks such structure, such as that of ours, you do not know what to do, where to start, or whom to follow. Your focus is on the Sheikh. But he is only a symbol. Everyone of us is Osama Bin Laden. So go and maintain your focus on this one person, while we exploit your weakness and narrow strategy for our advantage.
- Agent Y: Do not take comfort in your band of criminals. We will defeat you.
- Subject T: (*remains silent*).

Agent Y: (To MP) Guard, come and take this detainee back to his cell. I am done with his interrogation for the day.

*The MP enters the room, places the blindfold back on the subject and escorts him out of the room.*

## Scene Two

*The Place: CIA Interrogation Room 22B in Guantanamo Bay*

*The Date: March 2009*

Agent X: (to an MP) Bring him in.

MP: Yes, Sir.

*The MP leaves and returns after 10 minutes with a man wearing a blindfold and an orange uniform. He appears to be calm. The MP sits the man on a chair facing Agent X. He leaves the subject with the blindfold on and departs the room.*

Agent X: *Al-Salam Aliakmon* (Arabic for “Peace be upon you”).

Subject Z: (*remain silent*)

Agent X: I thought your Holy Quran teaches you to respond in kind if someone greets you with peace?

Subject Z: Are you offering me peace?

Agent X: Yes.

Subject Z: You are lying.

Agent X: What makes you think that I am lying?

Subject Z: Because if you truly offered me peace, I would not be here in your prison.

Agent X: You are here because we want to prevent you from harming yourself or others. So, in a way, we are offering you peace by keeping you here.

Subject Z: I am here because you want peace for yourself and for your government’s occupation of my country, not for me or my people. Your so-called “peace” is one-sided and aimed only to benefit your interests.

Agent X: Iraq is a free and sovereign nation now. The United States does not occupy Iraq.

Subject Z: Then why do you have 160,000 American troops in Iraq? Are they there on a vacation to enjoy the hot sun of the desert?

Agent X: They are there to protect the Iraqi people from terrorists like you and to help the Iraqi government stand on its own feet. We will leave once your government is ready to secure the country on its own.

Subject Z: To begin with, I am not a terrorist. Your government is a terrorist for coming to a sovereign nation, invading it under false pretences and lies, bombing its cities, torturing and raping its citizens, and destroying its infrastructure. Because of your war of choice in Iraq, many Iraqis were killed and more became refugees. You committed more crimes against Iraq within a few years than Saddam Hussein had in 30 years. As for your so-called Iraqi government, they are nothing but a bunch of thieves and puppets that your government imported from abroad and installed in the Green Zone in Baghdad to pretend that Iraq is sovereign and has its own government. Iraq is neither sovereign nor has its independent national government. Today, Iraq is nothing but an occupied territory of the United States. You are there not to fight terrorism but for oil. And the puppets in the Green Zone are your local agents to certify and secure your piracy.

Agent X: You are misguided. We are not there for oil. If we wanted oil, Saddam was more than willing to give it to us for free if we allowed him to stay in power. Yes, we went to Iraq thinking Saddam had weapons of mass destruction. But that is irrelevant now. That was then and now is now. We are not the enemy of the Iraqi people. Even if we went to Iraq under false information, we are ready to rectify our mistakes and rebuild Iraq. American taxpayers thus far have poured nearly two trillion dollars into Iraq. What do you say to that?

Subject Z: You poured two trillion dollars to enrich Halliburton and Blackwater, not to help the Iraqis. After six years of occupation, the world’s most powerful country still cannot provide basic services to Baghdad and other cities in Iraq. Today’s Iraq, thanks to you, is a living hell. No one is safe, including your puppets in the Green Zone in Baghdad. People have been kidnapped, murdered and executed on a daily basis. In addition, they are gradually dying because of diseases, starvation and poverty. Hail America’s model of imported democracy. What a nightmare. What a sad joke.

Agent X: Would you have preferred for Saddam to remain in power?

Subject Z: Why are you Americans like this?

Agent X: Like What?

Subject Z: Looking at any issue from two extremes only, either black or white. So, for Iraq there was no choice other than Saddam or occupation? You cannot think of any other solution?

Agent X: Like what?

Subject Z: Like Iraqi people themselves being capable of getting rid of Saddam and having their own national government?

Agent X: Then why were Iraqis unable to topple Saddam during the 30 years of his grip on power?

Subject Z: Are you kidding me?

Agent X: Excuse me?

Subject Z: Who helped support Saddam to stay in power for such a long time?

Agent X: You tell me.

Subject Z: The United States' government. It was you who gave Saddam the technology to build his weapons of mass destruction. It was you who trained Iraqi security with surveillance and supplied them with updated equipment. Because of you and your support, and because of the help of the petro-dollars from the Arab sheikhs, Saddam was able to stay in power for 30 years. So, do not blame Iraqis for failing to take him out. Yet, and despite the odds, we continued fighting him and resist the Baathist regime. Abu Ghraib prison witnessed the torture and murder of some of the best sons and daughters of Iraq. This same prison that your government used to torture Iraqi patriots like myself who resist your occupation now.

Agent X: You keep calling yourself a patriot. Are you delusional or in denial? You are a terrorist who was caught in an act of terror. That is why you were in Abu Ghraib. That is why you are here in Guantanamo Bay. You killed innocent people. So, do not call yourself a patriot.

Subject Z: May I ask you something?

Agent X: Yes, go ahead.

Subject Z: Do you think the British called George Washington a patriot when he led the American Revolution against them, or did they, too, call him a terrorist?

- Agent X: Are you now making yourself equal to George Washington?
- Subject Z: No. I am only drawing similarities between the American Revolution against a foreign and illegal occupation and the Iraqi resistance against a foreign and illegal occupation. Both are justified in refusing foreigners from taking over their lands.
- Agent X: George Washington did not target civilians, especially those of his own countrymen. You did.
- Subject Z: I never targeted a civilian, especially Iraqis. I fought Blackwater mercenaries who came to Iraq in order to profiteer from war. To this, I am proud to admit and even die for.
- Agent X: What makes you think that we are going to kill you?
- Subject Z: I do not think you will let me leave here alive.
- Agent X: If you cooperate with us, there is a possibility that you may be set free and return to your homeland.
- Subject Z: So, if I cooperated with you, you will allow a “terrorist”, as you identify me, to go free?
- Agent X: I did not say you are a terrorist. You are here because we suspected that you had some contacts with a few terrorist groups, especially because we caught you in Fallujah, the haven for Jihadi terrorists.
- Subject Z: Which groups?
- Agent X: Al-Zarqawi, for example and other Al-Qaeda members.
- Subject Z: I hate Al-Qaeda and I hate the criminal Al-Zarqawi more than I hate you.
- Agent X: Why do you hate me?
- Subject Z: I do not hate you as a person. Rather, I hate what you represent.
- Agent X: I represent the people of the United States. Do you hate the American people?
- Subject Z: No, I do not hate the American people. Do not twist what I said.
- Agent X: You said that you hated what I represent. I represent the people of the United States.

Subject Z: No. You do not represent the people of the United States. The American people do not support wars of choice based on lies, torture and illegal occupation of a sovereign nation. You represent the American government.

Agent X: So, you hate the American government, right?

Subject Z: I hate some of the foreign policies of the American government.

Agent X: Like what?

Subject Z: Like occupying Iraq based on lies. Like staying in Iraq permanently and refusing to leave. Like considering your war on Iraq as another crusade, as stated by your president who hates Islam.

Agent X: This is not true. Former President Bush is a good Christian and does not hate Islam or any other religion.

Subject Z: Former?

Agent X: Yes. George W. Bush is no longer the president of the United States. He completed his two terms as president. We had an election and now we have a new president. It may interest you to know that our new president's middle name is Hussein and his father was a Muslim. Not that this matters to our conversation today.

Subject Z: I do not believe you. You guys elected a Muslim for president? Get real.

Agent X: I did not say he is a Muslim. His father was a Muslim.

Subject Z: Then why his middle name is Hussein if he is not a Muslim?

Agent X: Because his father named him so.

Subject Z: Is he Christian?

Agent X: Yes.

Subject Z: And his middle name is Hussein?

Agent X: Yes.

Subject Z: This is weird.



- Agent X: Why? Don't you have Muslims with Christian or Jewish names? I know of two Iraqi Muslims whom I met in Baghdad. One's name was Mosa (or Moses), and the other's name was Isa (or Jesus).
- Subject Z: *(remains silent)*
- Agent X: So, since our new president has a Muslim father and a Muslim middle name, are you still against our government?
- Subject Z: Do you think a person's name makes a difference? What good is a name if the policy still is the same?
- Agent X: Just for your information, wise guy, our new president's policy toward Iraq is different from that of President Bush.
- Subject Z: How so?
- Agent X: Well, for a starter, President Obama decided to pull most US combat troops out of Iraq by August 2010.
- Subject Z: Yeah right! I do not believe you. It is a bluff.
- Agent X: It is not a bluff. It is our new policy.
- Subject Z: What about the 13 permanent military bases throughout Iraq that Bush constructed, would you abandon them?
- Agent X: I do not know. Perhaps. Or, we may keep a small number of troops there to support the Iraqi government before a final pull out.
- Subject Z: I do not think America will ever leave Iraq. You are there to stay as long as there is oil in Iraq. You will leave once you have exhausted siphoning all of the oil out and shipping it to your country.
- Agent X: As I told you before, we are not in Iraq because of the oil.
- Subject Z: B.S.
- Agent X: Watch your mouth.
- Subject Z: Or what? What else you will do to me that you have not done already? Waterboarding? Sleep deprivation? Beating? Forced sodomy by other prisoners? I had it all.

Agent X: We do not beat detainees at Guantanamo Bay, nor force them to commit sodomy. This is a lie.

Subject Z: I was exposed to waterboarding and sleep deprivation here at Guantanamo Bay. The other stuff I was exposed to at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq.

Agent X: That was not us.

Subject Z: Who then, the Martians?

Agent X: No. It was a few misguided soldiers who were brought to court martial and received their just punishments for what they did in Abu Ghraib. The United States do not condone torture of any kind.

Subject Z: Who is in denial now? I was exposed to seven days of sleep deprivation and six waterboardings right here at Guantanamo. What do you say to that? Those who tortured me here were agents like you, not a few misguided soldiers. May I also add a comment about the so-called misguided soldiers who committed acts of torture at Abu Ghraib? They did not do so on their own. They were ordered to do so by their commanders.

Agent X: How do you know that?

Subject Z: One or two soldiers may go out of their way in doing something bizarre. But to have something going on for a long time systematically as it happened in Abu Ghraib is not an isolated act of a few misguided individuals. Those who you said were tried are tokens to divert responsibility from those at the top who gave the orders. You guys are no different than Saddam.

Agent X: The United States does not torture. Get this into your head.

Subject Z: Then at least take-off my blindfold.

Agent X: It is against the law to uncover the identity of a CIA agent.

Subject Z: What are you afraid of? I am going nowhere.

Agent X: Not according to our new president. This facility will be shut down soon.

Subject Z: Shut down? How about us, where would we go?

Agent X: Disneyland.

Subject Z: Would we be set free and allowed to go home?

Agent X: Not exactly.

Subject Z: Not exactly? What then?

Agent X: Guantanamo Bay detainees will be moved to federal detention centers inside the United States and will be tried in federal courts, instead of military courts.

Subject Z: Says who?

Agent X: Says our new president.

Subject Z: Mr. Hussein?

Agent X: The president’s name is not Hussein. That is only his middle name. His name is Barack Hussein Obama.

Subject Z: What kind of name is Obama? Is he Irish?

Agent X: No.

Subject Z: English?

Agent X: No.

Subject Z: Italian?

Agent X: No.

Subject Z: Do not tell me he is of French descent?

Agent X: Wrong again.

Subject Z: Arab descent?

Agent X: You wish.

Subject Z: Iranian?

Agent X: Give it up. No.

Subject Z: German?

Agent X: (smiling). No. Just to save you and myself time, he is also not Russian, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Scandinavian, Polish, Austrian, Australian, Pakistani, Indian, Native American, Indonesian, or Turk.

Subject Z: None of those, heh. You left out African. Is he black? Is he African-American?

Agent X: Bingo.

Subject Z: No way!! America elected a black man for president? I don't believe you.

Agent X: Yes.

Subject Z: And he wants to pull American troops out of Iraq and shut down Guantanamo Bay?

Agent X: That what he promised.

Subject Z: Wow. You guys have made a 180 degree turn. You have elected the negative image of Bush.

Agent X: *(remains silent)*.

Subject Z: I hope it is not only an image thing, though. I hope he is truly different from Bush in his policies.

Agent X: *(remains silent)*.

Subject Z: I must say, I sensed a bit of a difference.

Agent X: How so?

Subject Z: Well, for one thing, no one had tortured me in the past three months. Did Mr. Obama order this?

Agent X: Yes. It was an executive order signed by the president.

Subject Z: So, you do admit that there was torture going on here before Mr. Obama was elected as president?

Agent X: I am not aware of any torture taking place here at Guantanamo.

Subject Z: You are protecting your kind. Be brave. Own up to what you have done.

Agent X: I have done nothing illegal. I am here to protect my country.

Subject Z: By keeping a man like me in prison for five years?

Agent X: Freedom has a price.

Subject Z: Am I it?

Agent X: If it has to be.

Subject Z: What have I done to be in prison and be tortured for the past five years?

Agent X: You were caught in an act of terror against United States interests.

Subject Z: I was caught fighting Blackwater mercenaries in Fallujah. I was caught fighting for the liberation of my country. You will do the same thing if another country occupied the United States. What would you do if China invaded your country tomorrow? Would you surrender and accept the foreign occupation of your land or fight for its liberation?

Agent X: No one is capable of invading the United States.

Subject Z: I am just saying it as hypothesis.

Agent X: Even as a hypothesis, it is virtually impossible.

Subject Z: Nothing is impossible. No one, for example, thought that the Soviet Union would collapse one day. Well, it did. So, do not be comforted in such an arrogance to believe that America’s power will remain forever.

Agent X: I am not here to discuss history with you.

Subject Z: What do you want from me then?

Agent X: I want you to cooperate with us.

Subject Z: How?

Agent X: Give me the names of those whom you were associated with. I want to know who trained you? Where do you get your weapons? How do you communicate among yourselves? And, where your hideouts are located?

Subject Z: I will never betray Iraq for the CIA.

Agent X: You will not be betraying Iraq in divulging this information. You will be helping us and the people of Iraq to fight terrorists such as the Al-Qaeda.

Subject Z: I thought you also thought of me as a member of Al-Qaeda!

Agent X: We had to make sure.

Subject Z: That I was not Al-Qaeda?

Agent X: Yes

Subject Z: Through torture?

Agent X: We do not torture.

Subject Z: *Kathab* (Arabic, for liar).

Agent X: Let us leave the past behind us. This is war. During war, ugly things happen. You were caught in Fallujah, fighting us. Al-Qaeda was in Fallujah, fighting us. You draw the conclusion.

Subject Z: Guilt by association?

Agent X: Exactly.

Subject Z: But I was not associated with them.

Agent X: We did not know this at the time.

Subject Z: And you know it now?

Agent X: Yes.

Subject Z: How about the past five years of my life that you destroyed and almost got me killed?

Agent X: We are in a war against a vicious enemy. We cannot take risks. Remember, we were attacked on September 11 and 3000 innocent Americans were killed because of that barbaric act of terror.

Subject Z: What did Iraq or Iraqis have to do with September 11? What did Iraq or Iraqis have to do with Al-Qaeda? You brought these bastards to our country, not us.

Agent X: We brought Al-Qaeda to Iraq?

Subject Z: Yes. Prior to 2003, there was no Al-Qaeda in Iraq. Now, thanks to you, they are coming from all over the place to fight you in Iraq.

Agent X: It is better to fight them there than on American soil.

- Subject Z: How about the innocent Iraqis who are caught in the middle and killed? Have you no regard for them? Do you consider them sub-humans that their lives are less worthy than those of Americans?
- Agent X: As I said before, freedom has its price.
- Subject Z: At the expense of others?
- Agent X: Do you think America’s security is at the expense of others?
- Subject Z: Yes, and you call it collateral damage.
- Agent X: What were you before you joined the Iraqi Sunni resistance?
- Subject Z: There is no Sunni or Shiite resistance in Iraq. There is only one Iraqi resistance of all sects, religions and ethnicities.
- Agent X: What of the sectarian violence between Sunnis and Shiites in Iraq? You guys fight because for the first time in Iraq’s history the oppressed Shiites and Kurds are allowed to have voice in government. Before 2003, only the Sunni Arabs were in charge. Do you deny this?
- Subject Z: Before 2003, there was no sectarian violence in Iraq. Shiites and Sunnis lived side-by-side in peace, and even inter-married. The occupation brought sectarian violence to our country.
- Agent X: Just blame everything on us.
- Subject Z: I am not saying that the Iraqi Shiites or Kurds were not persecuted before. We all were persecuted, including the Sunnis. Saddam did not differentiate between a Shiite, a Sunni or a Kurd to maintain his grip on power. Just because he was a Sunni Arab it does not mean that all Sunni Arabs were happy and prosperous under Saddam. This shows how much you know about Iraq.
- Agent X: But you cannot deny that the Kurds and the Shiites, by and large, were more persecuted under Saddam than the Sunni Arabs.
- Subject Z: I also do not deny that some of Saddam’s henchmen were Shiites, Kurds and Sunnis.
- Agent X: Do you know about the gassing of 5000 Kurds in Halabcha by Saddam in 1988? I do not remember any Sunni village or town being bombed or gassed by Saddam.
- Subject Z: And who gave Saddam the mustard gas to begin with to gas the Kurds? It was

your government. Why didn't you speak out against him then? Was it because he was serving your interests in fighting Iran?

Agent X: We are moving in circles here. I am not interested in discussing ancient history with you.

Subject Z: Ancient history? Do you call 1988 ancient history? It seems to me that when it comes to covering up your wrong-doings you call it ancient history, but when it comes to our right to defend our nation, you call it terrorism.

Agent X: Back to my original question, what did you do before 2003?

Subject Z: I was a school teacher.

Agent X: Were you member of the Baath Party?

Subject Z: Yes, so were most Iraqis. We had to join by force or we would not be able to have jobs. People joined the Baath Party just to survive and avoid being arrested or tortured, not because they believed in the Baath ideology.

Agent X: What happened to you after 2003?

Subject Z: I was fired from my job because of your stupid de-Baathfication policy. You made thousands of Iraqis unemployed because of such stupid policy without realizing that not all Iraqis who had to join the Baath Party did so on their own accord. You turned Iraqis against you with such dumb action.

Agent X: We made a mistake. Get over it.

Subject Z: Get over it? Say that to those who lost their lives. Say that to those who lost their homes, income, and were driven to poverty or had to flee the country and become refugees in other places.

Agent X: Why didn't you leave Iraq, as well, like the others?

Subject Z: I decided to stay and fight. My life meant nothing to me anymore.

Agent X: Is this why others like you are fighting us?

Subject Z: What do you think?

Agent X: What if I find you a job, if I helped you get appointed back to your previous job, would you then cooperate with us?

Subject Z: A bribe?



Agent X: I do not call it a bribe. Rather, consider it a corrective action.

Subject Z: My issue with you is not about jobs. This is secondary. My issue with you is about freedom. Leave my country. You do not belong in Iraq. Go back to where you came from.

Agent X: We will leave when our job is done. As I told you before, President Obama’s policy is to pull the US troops out of Iraq. This war will be over soon.

Subject Z: I will believe that when I see it.

Agent X: How did you first join the resistance? Was there someone who recruited you? How did you know whom to contact in order to get involved? Who told you to go to Fallujah? What are the names of those who were in your group? How did you get the explosives and the weapons that you were caught with? How did you get funds? Who ordered you to commit suicide bombing?

Subject Z: You ask a lot of questions. If I did not say anything under waterboarding and sleep deprivation, what makes you think I will tell you anything now?

Agent X: So, do you want me to order your having such experiences again?

Subject Z: I thought you said that the United States does not torture? Yet, you just threatened me with more torture?

Agent X: You seem to like mentioning torture, so perhaps it is something you would like to experience.

Subject Z: You are sadistic. Who would like to be tortured?

Agent X: You guys are all alike. Being nice to you doesn’t work. You are only accustomed to being dealt with by force. Perhaps you deserve someone like Saddam to put you in your place.

Subject Z: So much for the champions of freedom.

Agent X: Are you going to answer my questions?

Subject Z: Or what, waterboarding?

Agent X: Listen, I am only trying to help you. Don’t you want to go back home to your family?

Subject Z: What family? All my family members were either killed or escaped to Syria or Jordan as refugees. I have no one.

Agent X: How about Iraq? You can go back to Iraq and help rebuild it.

Subject Z: With what? With the Iraqi oil that your Halliburton is stealing or with the American tax dollars that enrich the pockets of the Iraqi puppets at the Green Zone?

Agent X: You can make a difference and start by putting an end to both.

Subject Z: Me alone? Are you joking?

Agent X: No. You and me.

Subject Z: You? How?

Agent X: Do not worry about how. I promise you that if you will cooperate with me, I will channel all my efforts to help Iraqis like you take charge of their country.

Subject Z: You are only an agent within a large bureaucracy. How can you do such a thing?

Agent X: Because this is the new direction of my government. This is the new policy of the United States. We want Iraq to succeed and be secure. We want Iraq be governed by its people. We made mistakes in the past. So did you. Together, we can join efforts and rebuild Iraq. Together, we can fight our common enemy: the Al-Qaeda network. What do you say, are you with me in this?

Subject Z: So you are willing to befriend someone whom until yesterday was fighting you?

Agent X: You had your reasons, and we had ours. Let us both learn from our past experiences. Let us both help each other. I am not your enemy. Rather, I am the best friend you may ever have.

Subject Z: You always befriend your enemies?

Agent X: Things change. Yesterday's enemy may be today's friend. Look at Russia and Vietnam. They were our enemies before. Look at the Sunni Arab tribes in the Anbar Province in Iraq today. They were our enemies before. Today, they are our friends. Did you know that General David Petraeus, Commander of US forces in Iraq, had befriended the Sunni tribes in Anbar Province, armed them and together they were able to wipe out Al-Qaeda? If the general can do that, you and I can do the same.

Subject Z: You are not the Commander of US forces in Iraq and I do not speak on behalf of the Iraqi people or the Iraqi resistance.

Agent X: Nevertheless, what I mean is that yesterday’s enemies can be today’s friends.

Subject Z: The same as yesterday’s friends can be today’s enemies, right?

Agent X: What do you mean?

Subject Z: I mean people like Saddam Hussein and Osama Bin Laden. They were your friends before. Later, they became your enemies.

Agent X: That is different.

Subject Z: Why?

Agent X: Neither Saddam or Osama were our true friends. We only used them temporarily for tactical reasons.

Subject Z: And that in return came back to bite you in the ass. You need to choose your friends carefully.

Agent X: As I said before, we all make mistakes.

Subject Z: But these are costly mistakes. Don’t you agree?

Agent X: Perhaps.

Subject Z: Is this the price of freedom?

Agent X: No. It is the price of being a super-power.

Subject Z: I wish the United States did not have this obsession with power. It is the source of America’s problem.

Agent X: Excuse me?

Subject Z: Do you see people expressing hostilities toward Sweden, Canada or Costa Rica, for example?

Agent X: Come again?

Subject Z: Because these countries are not obsessed with power like you guys. You do not see Canada, Sweden or Costa Rica going to another country and occupying it.

You make enemies for yourselves because of your obsession with power, with your hunger to dominate the world. Give it up and you will see different results.

Agent X: People oppose us because they do not like the American way of life. They are jealous and envious of us. They dislike our freedom.

Subject Z: Do you mean American way of life or America's freedom is better than those in Canada or Sweden? I do not think so. Yet, no one is jealous of Canadian or Swedish success. So, why does anyone have to be jealous of you? The problem is not jealousy. It is your foreign policy. You thumb your nose everywhere at the world. Because of that, people react to your constant interferences.

Agent X: We intervene because no one else does so. If it was not for the United States, no one will defend freedom in the world, not your favorites Canada or Sweden.

Subject Z: Do you call orchestrating coups, supporting tyrants, and occupying countries defending freedom?

Agent X: If it wasn't for the United States and President Clinton, for example, the innocent Muslims in Albania were going to be massacred by the Serbs. I say that is an example of defending freedom. Sweden or Canada did not come to the aid of the defenseless Albanians. It was 'good ole USA and Uncle Sam.'

Subject Z: Then where were you when thousands in Rwanda were murdered? Why didn't Clinton come to their aid and stop the massacre? Was it because there was no oil in Rwanda to peak your interest?

Agent X: Where were Sweden and Canada also? Why didn't they do something to stop the massacre?

Subject Z: I cannot answer for them.

Agent X: No, but you are good and quick in attacking us and targeting the United States as the source of all evil in the world. Let me tell you something. Despite our many faults, we are the defenders and beacon of freedom on earth. No one else. Not your Sweden, not your Costa Rica, not your Canada. It is us, the United States of America. Yes, we make mistakes. But, if it was not for us, the world would be in much worse condition.

Subject Z: You have less than a third of the world's population but consume more than two thirds of the world resources. Is this fair? You are also the biggest polluters, warmongers, gun-crazed and self-absorbed nation on earth. You care nothing about the rest of the world. All you care about is yourselves and your narrow interests.

Agent X: Do you know that the government of the United States, the one that you are criticizing and hate so much, gives billion of dollars in aid to other nations for nothing in return?

Subject Z: Like giving billions to the corrupt regime of Mubarak in Egypt?

Agent X: It is useless arguing with you. Your views are so tainted I cannot change them through this conversation.

Subject Z: A conversation in a prison while blindfolded!! Hurray to the American sense of dialogue.

Agent X: We do not have a dialogue with terrorists.

Subject Z: I see that I am once again considered being a terrorist.

Agent X: You are what you are. You will never change. I promise you, you will rot here. You will never see the light of day.

Subject Z: So be it. I hope that makes you feel more powerful tonight when you go home and be with your wife. Perhaps this interrogation was a good alternative for a few Viagra pills.

Agent X; Go to hell.

Subject Z: I am already in hell. Where do you think I have been in the past five years?

Agent X: (to MP) Come and take this detainee back to his cell. I am done with his interrogation for the day. I am through with it.

*Enters an MP and guides Subject Z out of the interrogation room.*

## **The End**

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# Twizzek

*M. E. Nolting*

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*Disclaimer: The author wrote this piece for a ghost story fiction contest. It contains exaggerations and stereotypes. It is not meant to be a realistic portrait of public service nor of the many dedicated people who work as public servants.*

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The paperless office. Yeah, right. Mine has stacks so high they're architecturally significant. Columns that could support the tenth floor, for Pete's sake. Thing is, when you work for the Bureau of Obscure Regulation, everything is public record. And when bureaucrats are not sure of whether to keep or discard, guess what? We keep! CYA, OK? You'll see.

You younger folk have these little tag lines on your emails—"Please think of the environment before you print this message." Every time I get one, I wanna say, "You gonna trust the state computers to keep electronic records safe? *Our computers?* They probably still have 386 microprocessors. I mean—come on, people!"

Freddie – you met Freddie before he retired, right? Great guy. The way *he* tells it, just carting boxes from the old Redmond Avenue building to here took days.

Freddie goes back 34 years here. Seen it all. He's in South Carolina, playing golf every day.

Good old Fred.

It's not the same here without him. More and more folk are retiring lately. I could you know. But Justine will be in college soon. And when it's all said and done, man, I have to say the BOR has been good to me. I could have made more at the insurance company. Yeah. Once, one of their VPs even offered me a job. We were standing right down the hall. Man, that guy

had quite a pair! I mean, at the time it was *me* leading the staff analysis of their annual financial review.

But here's what I figure: I come to work every day. I go home at night and forget it. I see my kid. I read my medieval history books. I play basketball. Bonnie's corporate. She makes way more than me and lemme tell you, that don't hurt *my* manhood! No way. So bottom line is I like government service. Call me crazy.

Now Fred, he was the BOR's Jackie Robinson. First Brother to work here. Yep. They used manual typewriters. Ribbons and carbon paper. It was the late '60s. A different era. Looser. Liquid lunch every Friday. When they'd have a fire drill? If the weather was nice? Folks'd just leave—go home! Freddie says the building would be like a ghost town.

Hey, listen. I *have* to tell you Freddie's ghost story. Well, it wasn't exactly a ghost – but something creepy at the Redmond Avenue offices. Where BOR used to be. About 20 years ago, they moved here from across the street. You see that silver and glass monstrosity over there? I think it is actually empty, even now. Freddie says to this day none of the old timers will set foot in that place. He says the move back then wasn't really about overcrowding. It was because of this guy named Twizzek. That's what Freddie says.

Twizzek worked in Accounting. His name was really Allan or Roger or something. Had been at the BOR for years. Skinny guy. Adam's apple sticking out. Never made eye contact. Nerd. He had everything but the pocket protector. At some point they started calling the guy Twizzek 'cause of the sound he made when he was sleeping. No shit. In the afternoon, Fred says they would walk by the guy's cube and find him there, sleeping. His head would be way back, jaw dropped, his boney nose sticking straight up like the Matterhorn. And he would make this wheezing sound. Somebody said it sounded like "twizzek, twizzek." Name stuck.

Maybe some supervisor had something to say about it, but, you know, the friggin' guy was Civil Service, man. Tough to fire. Besides, he was some math whiz, apparently.

Anyway, according to Fred, Twizzek's cube was right next to this *huge* file room. A place filled with rows and rows of cabinets. You know the ones with the little metal window for labels? Big, old green and gray types? Heavy as shit. The room had something like eight rows of these cabinets, all stuffed with motions, lawsuits, judgments, and filings. An accumulation of people's fights, complaints, anger, and dishonesty. Maybe all that bad karma had something to do with what happened. I don't know.

Fred said the room had those old-type fluorescents that made you look like a corpse or about to be one. It was this office-style dungeon. No windows. Just one door. Nowadays you'd *never* get away with that. Uh-uh. Fire inspector would *not* let that happen. One exit in a room full of paper? I mean, come *on*, People! But, like I said, it was different then.

There were these poor ladies who did nothing but go in and out of that room, opening drawers, shoving paper in, shoving them shut. Sometimes, there'd be a request for some file



or another, usually from some attorney suing because the company denied coverage for the family of some poor slob who got killed wiring a house or something. Well, those ladies – they were always ladies, yep -- had to go and fish those files out of there. What a job! Man, I would shoot myself!

And where Twizzek was, he would see all these comings and goings. Well, one day, the way Freddie tells it, this young woman named Candace starts working at the BOR. She is *really* pretty. Stacked. (And let me tell you, Freddie would know. He has quite an eye for the ladies.) She is a bit of a flirt, too, apparently. Freddie said she'd wink at guys in the halls and such.

At first she works in the secretarial pool up front. But then they figure out that this young lady can't type to save her life. Can't take short hand very well, either. Who knows how she got hired. So they send her to Records to do filing. She ends up walking back and forth past ole Twizzek's desk, with all her curves and shit. Twizzek takes a *liking* to her. He turns red every time the woman walks past. He buys her Junior Mints, leaves them on her desk all the time. This was before sexual harassment rules, you know?

One day, Twizzek goes to the supervisor, this guy Gary Fleck. Him, I knew. A bear of a guy. Huge. Union thug, too. Oh, excuse me, I meant to say *representative*. Hah! If you did not show up at the union rally, you had to answer to Gary, man.

So anyway, Twizzek says to him, "I want to inform you of a problem with the file room." Just like that.

"Really?" Fleck says, acting all serious. Pushes back from his desk. Lights a cigarette. Already, he is enjoying the hell out of it. "What problem is that, Twiz?"

And so Twizzek answers him: "It's got something evil in it."

"Something evil. Like a ghost, Twiz? Like Casper? That what you're sayin' Twiz?" The guy was laughing his ass off telling it to Fred over drinks later on at Renaldi's.

Twiz gets all huffy. "No not exactly a ghost. Just a...a.. *presence*. It's evil. It's dangerous."

"Dangerous? Now Twiz, how do you know this?"

"Because I can feel its....its *malevolence*."

"Whoa, whoa. That's a big word there, Twiz. *Malevolence*?"

Twiz's back gets real straight, real stiff. His chin is poking out. "I am concerned about the safety of ...of .... the secretaries."

So Twizzek tells Fleck the lights flicker and he hears the file drawers opening and slamming shut when no one is in there. He says he can hear deep voices, mumbling.

So then, Fleck asks him, “Twiz, what’s gonna happen? Ghost hasn’t hurt the secretaries.”

Twizzek gives him this kind of “are-you-stupid-or what?” expression and says – get this, he actually says, “Whatever it is might hurt Candace.”

Well, Fleck tells him to get lost. Figures the guy’s a nut job.

Twizzek decides to take matters into his own hands. Starts telling Candace don’t go in there. She’s asking him, why and he’s telling her it’s not safe. She’s like, what do you mean it’s not safe, and Twizzek tells her there’s something in there that could hurt you. At first Candace says oh come on now.

But *then* I guess she starts to think about it. And soon she is thinking about it every time she goes in there. You know how that is? Power of suggestion or maybe she actually feels it too. And so she’s getting all nervous. She says it gets hard to breathe in there, when she’s in the K’s.

So Twizzek starts following her in there, tailing her around the room, squinting his beady eyes on the lookout for the “presence.”

This goes on for several days. Every time Candace goes into the room, old Twizzek follows her. She doesn’t know whether to be scared or just creeped out by him. Finally she has had enough. Walks out with a drawer full of K’s still open. A whole pile of cases just left there on the floor. Goes to Fleck pointing her spiky red fingernail at him and says she refuses to go into that room anymore. Well, Fleck’s a pushover for her. Says, ok Candace, you don’t have to file! She starts giving her piles to the other secretaries. They start getting really pissed off, and *no one* is happy — except maybe Candace. Hah! The secretaries start refusing to use the file room, Fleck can’t stand the uproar, and Twizzek doesn’t get to play knight to his damsel in distress.

So apparently, Twizzek figures the only way he is going to get Candace “back” is to get rid of the, uh, *presence*. He starts trying a friggin’ exorcism. Freddie says one day he is walking past the room, and Twiz is standing in the doorway, facing into the room. He’s like some cleric, waving his arms up and down, holding a little glass bottle.

“Hey Twiz, what’s that? Holy water?”

He ignores Freddie. Every morning, the guy marches around this file room, sprinkling holy water. He even nails a cross to one wall! No kidding, man. That raised a few eyebrows, let me tell you. Even in those days, religious displays in a government office were a no-no. And besides, Twizzek was Jewish, according to Freddie.

So apparently when Fleck asks him how come all the Catholic stuff, Twizzek says they have the best methods. That just kills me! The guy was his very own one-man Ghost Buster service, way before Dan Akroyd and Bill Murray in the movie. (I know — you probably did not know the video game was a movie first, did you?)

So now the situation is weird. The secretaries won't file. Twizzek is dousing the room in holy water every day. The case files are piling up. Fleck, well, he hated to have to deal with anything. So he just lets it go. Secretaries and Candace are as happy as shit, because they don't have to do the friggin' filing!

Eventually though, Conlon, the director of the section, hears that cases aren't getting filed. Apparently some attorney keeps requesting a file and not getting it. He calls Conlon and complains. Conlon reads Fleck the riot act and says get that filing going again. Fleck then sits the secretaries down — and Candace—and says you gotta go in there. Twizzek's nuts. Starting Monday, you guys go back to filing.

Well, Candace goes around, mad as hell, says she's scared. How if the ghost don't get her, Twizzek will. How she wants to quit, but she needs the money. The other secretaries are mad too, but all Twizzek cares about is Candace.

So like the day after Fleck's announcement — this is a Thursday now — apparently Twizzek goes to Candace, says that by Monday he will "clear the room."

Freddie says no one is sure what happened after that because Friday, when everybody leaves, Twizzek is still there. File room door is open, lights are off. They come in Monday morning, file room door is shut. *Locked*. But the darn keys don't work. They have to call a locksmith, and they finally get the door open. At this point, the entire office is right behind him, craning their necks to see. Freddie was at some meeting that day, but he knows lots of folks who were there. Says they could not believe their eyes. *Every friggin'* file cabinet is *pushed* over. One toppled against another, like dominoes! All those files and paper that had been stored on top just slid off. There's paper all over the place — all those records of discord and cheatin' and extortion and malfeasance. Cases, depositions, memos. Scattered everywhere. A big mess. And there, trapped between the grimy wall and the last beat up old file cabinet, directly underneath the cross, is Twizzek. Squished. He was dead, man.

The secretaries start screamin' and cryin'. Candace the loudest of all. A bunch of the men go in and start tag teamin', tryin' to get the file cabinets up so they can get to poor Twizzek. They're slippin' and trippin' on paper, grabbing hold of the cabinets somehow, to lift 'em. They have to get reinforcements from maintenance. The police come. Ambulance guys come with a stretcher. They take ole Twizzek away.

Well, maintenance somehow manages to get all the cabinets up. Must have been quite an operation. And somebody has to have the sorry-ass job of picking up all those papers and files. It ain't gonna be Candace or the secretaries. No way. They don't give a darn whether

Fleck, Robinson, or the Governor orders them into that room. They are not taking even a step into that place, man!

Well, the BOR was just lucky Twizzek had no family around to speak of, to make a stink. They managed to keep the fact that a guy *died* in their file room low-profile. And someone must have had the nerve to pack up all that paper. But even so, the way Freddie tells it, they immediately started talking about moving.

So *that's* why they moved the BOR out of the Redmond Boulevard office. Twizzek and the *presence*. True story. Fred saw it all. My man Fred. I miss him.

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The author has been a journalist and an elected official, and she works in communications and policy development within state government. Several years ago, she completed a graduate fellowship at the Eagleton Institute of Politics, and she has a master's in public administration from Rutgers-Newark.

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# Public Administration in Perspective: Theory and Practice through Multiple Lenses

By David John Farmer  
Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2010

Reviewed by *Breena E. Coates*

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This textbook, *Public Administration in Perspective: Theory and Practice Through Multiple Lenses*, written by David John Farmer (M.E. Sharpe, 2010) is an erudite and thoroughly readable text that will capture the interests of a broad audience of scholars, teachers, students and the general public. The book's scholarship is compelling and hard to resist. One is frequently inclined to pause and more slowly savor the richness of its contents. The author provides unique and, hitherto, unexplored perspectives from which to view the multiple faces of public administration. In this sense, within its pages lies a *Minnowbrook*-type discourse on the perennial question for the field: "*What is public administration?*"

Professor Farmer's phrase for the dialog he wishes to generate about public administration is "epistemic pluralism." In other words, he wants the reader to come to an understanding of Public Administration through a "*consilience*" (unity) of economic, political, psychological, ethical, feminist, and other structures of knowledge. Today, in our networked, globalized environment we are more than ever coming to the realization that there is an interdisciplinary basis for understanding truth, and that each discrete branch of knowledge studies is a merely a subset of a larger reality. To fully apprehend this reality depends on syntheses of particularized knowledge streams. Dr. Farmer argues that to study public administration from one, or just a few dimensions, produces a mere caricature of reality.

One of the most interesting, and unexpected, lenses that David Farmer uses to come to a "knowing" of public administration is neuroscience. Just as neural networks in the brain are essential to understanding how the brain manages the living human being in his/her ability to achieve specific goals within a very complex and diverse structure of strategies, so, too, Farmer's epistemic plural lens illustrates how discrete knowledge streams can coalesce into a holistic view of the discipline of public administration, even while appreciating how a specific set of circumstances are being simultaneously resolved in the public sector. Here David Farmer argues that "Reality" or "Truth" (within which all knowing resides) benefits from

“deterritorialization,” rather than balkanized (and hence modified, and perhaps distorted) modes of knowing. This is analogous to the metaphor of Indra’s Net—a Vedic model applicable to our globalized age. Within this infinite net, a pearl is said to be nested in each of the net’s multiple knots. Each separate pearl reflects every other pearl in the network.

The book is in three parts, and in all parts the reader is nudged toward the notion of epistemic pluralism and synthesis. The first part is an overview of strengths and weaknesses of selected perspectives as they relate to public administration theory and praxis. The second part synthesizes the assortment of perspectives. The third part concludes with ways that readers can think more synthetically and creatively about public administration. How does an instructor, or a curious reader, pull together a synthesis for himself or herself? Here Professor Farmer’s book thoughtfully provides us with a useful tool. He structures each chapter’s subsections as inquiry. Thus, the textbook does not become a lecture coming down from David Farmer to us, but a bottom-up inquiry that cajoles the reader to join the author in casting additional new lights onto administrative and managerial concepts. One might safely say that this unique book is really a public administration inquiry system. As such, it is an excellent tool for students and teachers inside and outside the classroom.

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# Indian Affairs and the Administrative State in the Nineteenth Century

By Stephen J. Rockwell  
New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010

Reviewed by *Cynthia A. Lindquist*

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When I received the book and read the title, my initial reaction was “Oh no, another white man historian trying to tell our (Native) story.” Fortunately his opening chapter dispelled my bias. “He knows; he gets it!” Those were my thoughts. He is not trying to tell ‘our’ story; he has, instead, written an in-depth analysis of how the management of Indian affairs as this country was colonized was an integral component in the development of the administrative state.

Even as an educator, one sometimes forget that there is always another side to the story and that one value of careful historical studies is that they can indeed provide new or fresh perspectives. Stephen J. Rockwell provides us with an articulate dissection of the influence of Indian Affairs in building a powerful and intrusive national administrative state. Rockwell describes the importance of Indian affairs in the creation of a vibrant and complicated federal administrative state and provides a meticulous look at Indian affairs in relation to other national policies managing and shaping the expansion westward in establishment of the new republic. (As a Dakota educator, I would use the term colonization instead of expansion but I do not recall Rockwell using the word colonization at all.)

The main subject of this book is national administration in expansion policy and Indian affairs. Chapter one sets the stage and provides the foundation for the discussion that is rooted in the national, romantic *myth* of North America as a largely uninhabited wilderness with expansion an inevitable result. Rockwell correctly asserts that this romantic myth omits the federal government’s critical role in promoting, coordinating, and managing expansion and development of this country’s bureaucratic administration. Rockwell defends his premise that big government (defined as the “capacity, discretionary authority, and administrative autonomy to plan, to innovate, and to effectively implement policies and programs”) (p. 303) won the West. Understanding of this myth remains mostly hidden except to historians of the West but now Rockwell has produced a study that more readily lays out the facts and depth of the interconnections of the story.

The two most significant aspects of expansion were land and trade policy. The need for indispensable coordinating activity and administrative structures to manage expansion is described and carefully articulated in his myth-busting first chapter. There Rockwell describes the foundation of a strong, intentional and influential role by the national government, via Indian Affairs, in establishing the administrative state of this country. "The national government not only managed and regulated; it intruded." (p. 36.) This was accomplished by controlling critical aspects of public policy such as military planning, land and trade policies, communications, and infrastructure.

With the context having been set in this first chapter, the remaining chapters have three broad themes with each chapter focused on a particular era and topic, and yet they all are related. The three themes are: (1) national authority over a coordinated set of policies to manage expansion and Indian affairs, (2) the broad discretion given to the executive branch and its field agents; and (3) the persistent and sometimes carefully crafted illusion of failure that plagued the administrative activity of the Indian Office in the nineteenth century and remains a problem in the twenty-first century. Rockwell examines expansion, Indian affairs, and the administrative state in the eras of the factory system, Indian removal, and the reservation system.

These various eras are well known to Natives with many stories about each and questions about their efficacy but sometimes also discussed in humorous ways, which is a cultural survival characteristic of Native story-telling. For example, "BC" is 'before Columbus' or 'before casinos' and most Natives can describe their respective treaties as the basis for sovereign status and the unique political relationship we have with the federal government. The treaty era moved to the factory era which was essentially a network of trading houses that were government-run, not-for-profit systems that intentionally undersold private traders in dealings with the Indians. The intent was to bind Indians to the expanding United States via healthy trade relations. "...By underselling private traders and pushing them out of the trade, policymakers hoped that Indians would be less likely to be wronged (or feel that they had been wronged) by unscrupulous independent profit-seekers; as such, the likelihood of conflict could be reduced" (p. 61).

Indian removal is possibly a little more widely known (e.g., Cherokee Trail of Tears) to the American public but it is also part of the hidden story of expansion or colonization of America. Removal was the taking of Indian homelands by moving the indigenous Tribal communities to new areas. This is usually told as the moving of Indians from the East to the West of the Mississippi. Rockwell explains and describes many stories of removal but as a planned and coordinated activity of the federal government and led by the executive branch:

...Yet the government forcibly moved tens of thousands of people thousands of miles, all the while maintaining existing programs for education and training and beginning new ones. Removal was tragic; aspects were bungled; 'civilization' was problematic in aim and results (p. 187).



Likewise, the reservation era was an attempt to neutralize the “Indian problem.” The goal was isolating and containing Native populations. The original idea was to create two giant reservations in the West, but that evolved to a broader policy needed to address the diverse land mass, territorial, and geographic structures as well as the different environments and unique populations. Containment of the Indians was essential to the managed expansion across the continent. The reservation system multiplied administrative tasks to deal with economic matters (payments, supplies, tools, services, etc.), health, and welfare, as well as the morals of the Natives (via ‘civilizing’ them through Christianity and assimilation programs.)

National authority evolved based on evidence that multiple jurisdictions (developing States, territories, and local authorities) were unable to manage Indian affairs effectively without some semblance of oversight and a national policy agenda. The evolution pushed the federal government to consolidate and expand its authority to control and regulate land and trade policies among the Indian peoples:

The treaty system, regulations governing land purchases, and formal boundary lines addressed issues of land policy. Management of trade policy included licensing systems, regulation of entry to markets and behavior within markets, and a network of government-run trading posts called the factory system. The factory system extended federal influence over Indians’ internal affairs through civilization initiatives and social policies, and served as an institutional cornerstone for organizing disparate administration efforts (p. 51).

While scholarly attention to the era emphasizes a strong, viable Congress and many presidential scholars emphasizing a weak executive branch, Rockwell shows how Congress actually delegated control of Indian affairs to the Executive branch for oversight and implementation. The President in turn delegated this role to the various department Secretaries (e.g., of the War Department and Department of the Interior) and they, in turn, delegated that responsibility to various field agents.

Tremendous land transfer programs, through treaties and allotment, were implemented by the federal government but based on the social policies of time. This created an organizational culture based on local decision making. Rockwell explains in numerous ways how the military played a subordinate role in the managing of the Westward expansion which underscores the intent for peaceful engagement as the country was colonized. He also carefully describes how, though the Indian office (today the Bureau of Indian Affairs) has been continually degraded and criticized, it was effective in accomplishing its specific mission, which was expansion. There is ample detail in each chapter and a plethora of cited references providing evidence in support of Rockwell’s argument.

Rockwell’s book is scholarship at its best and relevant to the teaching and learning of public administration. It is historical and academically researched (scientific) as well as reflective via the lens of today. The book is a challenging read that requires serious consideration and thought, and yet its insights and history vignettes used to illustrate Rockwell’s interpretations, enlighten and inform us to new perspectives. As a result of his work, I now have a much

deeper understanding of just how orchestrated colonization occurred and how significant the impact was for not only my ancestors but for its continuing impact on how and why we live the way we do today. Alcohol use and alcoholism is a particularly good example: The long-term and continuing effects of the organized and planned purchase of alcohol for treaty negotiations stunned me. While I knew that alcohol played a part, I did not understand the full extent as documented by Rockwell in describing costs but also the planning efforts that went into the systematic use of alcohol in treaty making: “McKenney estimated in 1826 that a month long conference attended by 5,000 Indians on his tour of the Great Lakes required at least 225,000 pounds of beef and a like amount of flour; supplies for a treaty near Green Bay in 1827 included 116 barrels of whiskey.” (p. 90.)

Thanks to Rockwell’s book, I have a much better appreciation of the complexities of the times as well as a stronger foundation for our continuing fight for treaty/trust responsibilities of the federal government for its indigenous citizens.

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# The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America

By Margot Canaday  
Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009

Reviewed by *Jason Pierceson*

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The past and current hostility of the American state toward sexual minorities is well-documented, but Margot Canaday attempts to explain this state of affairs, especially in contrast to other marginalized groups, in the important book, *The Straight State*. As Canaday states, “The relationship of gays and lesbians to the national government, in short, stands apart from the parallel relationship between the federal government and most others who claim long histories suffering discrimination and prejudice (263). This dichotomy illustrates the importance of the study of sexuality for many disciplines, including history, political science, and public administration. For far too long, this politics has been largely ignored by my discipline of political science. In this meticulous and engaging book, Canaday makes a compelling case for the role of the state in this disparate treatment and signals that the study of sexuality in American Political Development (APD) may now be ready to systematically engage this topic and even revise some central assumptions about political development. Thus, it will long be seen as a foundational work. At the same time, Canaday’s approach is limited by a lack of treatment of a central element in the American politics of sexuality: the role of religion as a part of the state.

Through extensive archival work, Canaday documents the role of the American state in the creation and regulation of sexual minorities that began systematically in the 1940s through the 1960s. It was during this period that the state began to target non-heterosexual identity, rather than the sexual practices it had encountered earlier in the century, and about which it had less concern. Through an examination of immigration, military, and social welfare policy, Canaday documents how “the state’s identification of certain sexual behaviors, gender traits, and emotional ties as grounds for exclusion (from entering the country, serving in the military, or collecting benefits) was a catalyst in the formation of sexuality identity” (4).

Through the use of vivid examples, Canaday creates a sense of quiet moral outrage at the treatment of lesbians and gay men at the hands of the state. Indeed, she identifies with the words of a lesbian investigated by the military in the 1950s: “I don’t feel that I am being treated like an American citizen . . . I would like to know why.” This approach serves to

caution contemporary public administrators that even the most mundane of tasks can have tremendous consequences on the dignity of those who come into contact with the state. As Canaday humanizes her subjects, so should those who create and enforce state policy.

On immigration policy, Canaday documents that the state's treatment of those who violated gender norms in some way was strongly linked to larger social and political approaches, in particular individual autonomy (an aversion to immigrants who would be wards of the state because their gender or sexual behavior was not "normal"), gender (female immigrants were also seen as dependent), and race and ethnicity (sexual diversity was viewed as "degeneracy," and this was explicitly linked to race and ethnicity). It was not until the 1950s when the state viewed sexual minorities as a distinct group, afflicted with "psychopathic personalities," but it was that area of policy where the state's construction and enforcement of sexuality was most powerful. Immigration policy was "an arena where the state had the greatest administration discretion to act against a subject population, noncitizens who lacked basic rights of due process (214)."

The most fascinating chapter, among many, was a chapter on how early New Deal bureaucrats dealt with homosexuality in the Federal Transient Program and the Civilian Conservation Corps. On a certain level, a live-and-let live attitude prevailed, especially in the FTP, but the power of gender role was far too great to allow potential working men to be feminized, thereby creating an imperative for the creation of a privileged and rewarded heterosexuality, especially heterosexual marriage with the male breadwinner. However, as Canaday demonstrates, the FTP was a notable and interesting exception to this dynamic. "In between masculine and feminine tiers of entitlement and pity was a more androgynous one of emergency relief (133)."

A chapter on lesbianism and early Cold War military policy is a refreshing and important corrective to the literature on mid-twentieth century sexuality and its emphasis on gay men and their encounters with the state through sodomy laws, preceding the 1950s lavender scare in federal agencies. An intense policing of lesbianism in the military was both sexist and heterosexist. With more women joining the ranks of the military, it was necessary, according to Canaday, to construct and persecute lesbianism in order to preserve the military's heterosexual ideal. This chapter also illustrates the important contribution this book makes both to scholarship of sexuality and gender, as well as more general APD scholarship.

I now turn to what is missing in Canaday's approach. While a focus on the state and its relationship to sexuality is crucial for understanding political development relating to sexuality and the unique connection between sexuality and religion, especially given the role of religion in American political development. Obviously, one scholarly work cannot encapsulate all aspects of an area of study. However, having brought the state back in, many APD scholars give it exclusive prominence in their analysis, or take an excessively narrow view of the state's composition. A complementary approach is illustrated by the work of James Morone (2004) in his focus on the role of religiosity in American political development, and the tendency of religious culture to exclude groups perceived of as threats to the achievement of the city on a hill. While Morone disappointingly does not focus on sexual minorities in his study (a group that fits his thesis perfectly), this element cannot be

divorced from our understanding of the historical and contemporary treatment of sexual minorities. In other words, we cannot fully understand the unique politics of sexuality by focusing exclusively on federal bureaucrats.

Indeed, Gordon Babst (2002) has argued that the prohibition of same-sex marriage amounts to a “shadow establishment” of religion by states and the federal government. In this way, religion serves as an arm of the state through the explicit theological underpinnings of so many anti-gay policies. Given that Canaday’s larger goal is to understand the different treatment of sexual minorities versus other minorities, one must question the approach of focusing on the formal structures of the national state, especially when the national government changes policy but policy in many states remains hostile to sexual minorities, largely grounded in theocratic approaches to politics. Indeed, Canaday notes the progress that has been made in states benefitting sexual minorities, but she does not explore the continued resistance. In this regard, the politics of sexuality look more like the politics of gender, particularly the politics of abortion, rather than the politics of racial and ethnic minorities. For instance, while religion was central to the success of the African American civil rights movement, religion has been mostly hostile to the lesbian and gay rights movement.

Canaday shares this interest in exploring the unique development of the politics of sexuality, particularly because it diverges so notably from the case of race, and has given us a remarkably good foundation from which to continue this exploration. The high quality of the scholarship in this book will go a long way toward encouraging more scholars to explore the politics of sexuality as a way to understand American political development, one of Canaday’s states goals in pursuing this line of inquiry.

## References

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