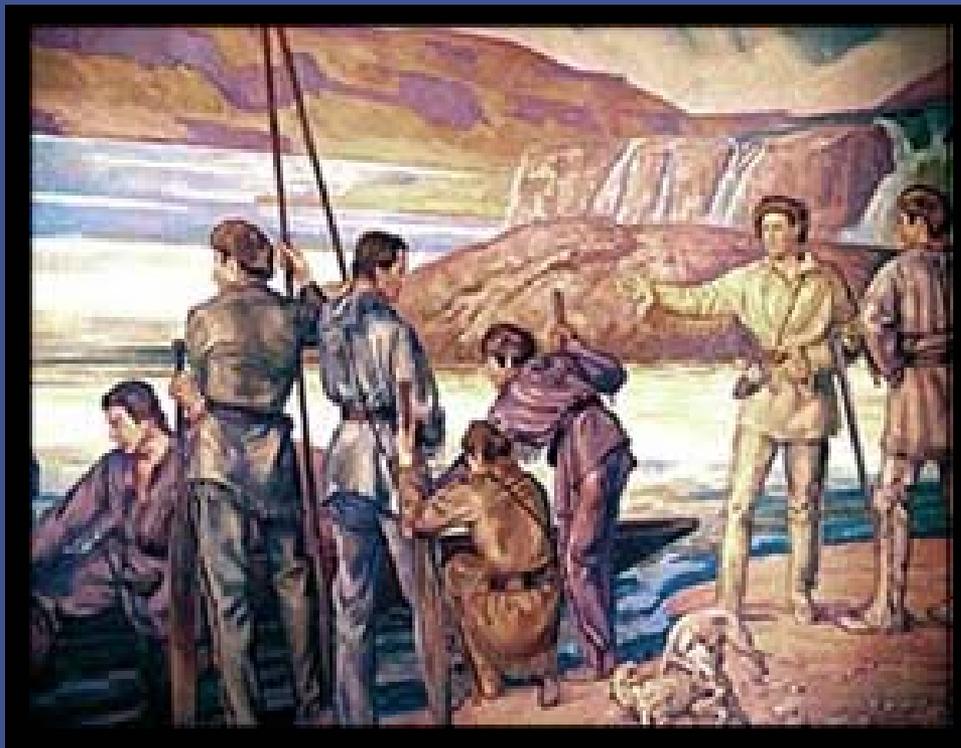


Public Voices



Public Voices

Editor-in-Chief: Marc Holzer, Rutgers University – Campus at Newark
Managing Editor: Iryna Illiash, Rutgers University – Campus at Newark
Book Review Editor: John Phillips, Springfield College in Illinois
University of Illinois – Springfield

Editorial Board

| | |
|--|---|
| Robert Agranoff, Indiana University | Glenda Kirkland, Isaiah House |
| Danny Balfour, Grand Valley State University | Carol W. Lewis, University of Connecticut |
| Geert Bouckaert, Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium | Richard Loverd, Northeastern University |
| Jeffrey Brudney, University of Georgia | Thomas D. Lynch, Louisiana State University |
| C. Gregory Buntz, Iowa Peace Institute | Robert A. Maranto, Villanova University |
| Frances Burke, Suffolk University, Boston | Gerald J. Miller, Rutgers University - Campus at Newark |
| Lawrence L. Downey, University of Baltimore | Michael Miller, City of Phoenix, AZ |
| David John Farmer, Virginia Commonwealth University | Dalmas H. Nelson, University of Utah |
| Vatche Gabrielian, American University of Armenia | Kenneth Nichols, University of Maine |
| Terence M. Garrett, The University of Texas at Brownsville | Valerie Patterson, Florida International University |
| Charles Goodsell, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University | Michael W. Popejoy, Pfeiffer University, NC |
| Mary Grisco, Development, One Sky International Production | Beryl Radin, American University |
| Anne J. Hacker, Western Michigan University | John B. Regnell, Metropolitan State College |
| Rachel Hadas, Rutgers University - Campus at Newark | Wilbur Rich, Wellesley College |
| Arie Halachmi, Tennessee State University | Stephen R. Rolandi, City of New York Department of Records and Information Services |
| Candace Hetzner, Boston College | Mark Rutgers, Leiden University |
| Elizabeth Hull, Rutgers University - Campus at Newark | Richard W. Ryan, San Diego State University |
| Ralph Hummel, University of Akron | Dolph Santello, University of New Haven |
| | Philip Schorr, Long Island University |
| | Lynette Shaw-Smith, Springfield College in Illinois |
| | Richard Swaim, University of Baltimore |

Assistant Editor: Portia M. Diñoso, Rutgers University - Campus at Newark

Public Voices

Editor-in-Chief

Marc Holzer

School of Public Affairs and Administration (SPAA)

Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey-Campus at Newark

Managing Editor

Iryna Illiash

School of Public Affairs and Administration (SPAA)

Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey-Campus at Newark

Volume IX

Number 2

Publisher

Public Voices is published by the National Center for Public Performance at the School of Public Affairs and Administration (SPAA), Rutgers University-Campus at Newark.
Copyright © 2007

Front Cover

Remington, Frederic. "Lewis and Clark on the Columbian River." Illustration. *Collier's Weekly*. May 12, 1906. From Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Online Catalog. http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/I?mtfront:1:/temp/~intl_d1_vx3r::displayType=1:m856sd=mtfph:m856sf=g0019:@@/mtfron. (accessed February 21, 2007).

Back Cover

Ownby, Robert, and Maria Ryan. "Leadership." Collage. 2004.

Subscriptions

Subscriptions are available on a per volume basis (two issues) at the following rates: \$36 per year for institutions, agencies and libraries; \$24 per year for individuals; \$12 for single copies and back orders. Noninstitutional subscribers can make payments by personal check or money order to:

National Center for Public Productivity
School of Public Affairs and Administration (SPAA)
Rutgers University
701 Hill Hall, 360 Dr. Martin Luther King Blvd.
Newark, NJ 07102-1801



All members of SHARE receive an annual subscription to *Public Voices*. Members of ASPA may add SHARE membership on their annual renewal form, or may send the \$20 annual dues at any time to:

ASPA
C/o SunTrust Bank
Department 41
Washington, DC 20042-0041

ISSN 1072-5660

Contents

Back Cover Notes 1

Analysis and Commentary

**Lewis and Clark’s “Corps of Discovery:”
What US Public Administrators Can Learn from this American Epic..... 2**
Donald Klingner

The Lewis and Clark expedition is arguably the greatest American epic – a narrative about a journey intended as a set of moral lessons or instructions. While circumstances today are different than those the Corps faced 200 years ago, contemporary US public administrators can still learn some valuable lessons from this American epic by analyzing what fundamental assumptions, values and practices underlie the Corps’ success.

**The Artist as Environmentalist: Ansel Adams,
Policy Entrepreneurship, and the Growth of Environmentalism..... 9**
John C. Morris

The role of the policy entrepreneur in the policy process forms an integral part of our understanding of the formulation and implementation of policy in the United States. For all its theoretical importance, however, little work has been done to develop or test the propositions of entrepreneurship offered by Kingdon (1984). By examining the life of Ansel Adams (1902-1984), this paper explores more fully the concept of policy entrepreneurship and seeks to develop a more robust concept that accounts for the

long-term, diffuse series of activities that precede Kingdon’s “stream coupling” in the policy process. The analysis suggests that such an approach offers some promise for capturing a broader spectrum of policy activity.

When Politics Overwhelms Administration: Historical Proofs for Fesler’s Maxim against State-based Federal Regions, 1934-1943.....25

Mordecai Lee

This is an historical inquiry into the events that led to Fesler’s 1949 maxim that federal field administrative regions should always be larger than an individual state. When he proclaimed that principle he concluded that state-based regions caused political problems for personnel and locational reasons, but only presented a single contemporary example for each of those reasons. Relying on primary and archival sources, this article provides additional historical proofs for Fesler’s maxim. It discusses several largely forgotten political controversies that occurred during the Presidency of Franklin Roosevelt regarding state-based federal administrative regions. This reconstruction is a form of forensic public administration history, seeking to give a clearer understanding of why Fesler addressed the subject at all and providing additional factual substantiation for his axiom.

Fuzzy Lines: Using the Best-Selling Novel to Illustrate the Blurring Boundaries of “Public”46

Nolan J. Argyle and Gerald A. Merwin

Privatization, contracting out, and a host of other current trends blur the line between public and private—they create what at best is a fuzzy line. This study examines yet one additional area where the lines between public and private have gotten even fuzzier—the best selling novel. It uses the writings of Tom Clancy and Clive Cussler, two authors whose names on a novel guarantee best-seller status. It will do so in the context of what a civic community and civil society are, and how they relate to the public-private question, a question that has renewed life in public administration.

Wonks and Warriors: Depictions of Government Professionals in Popular Film.....61

Beth A. Wielder and David Schultz

The importance of studying public service portrayals in popular film lies in the importance of popular culture itself. Popular culture defines generations, both creating and reflecting trends. It provides a window to worlds that may otherwise be a mystery. Popular film messages merge with other media and environmental factors to form a perceived reality for many (Kelly and Elliott 2000).

This article examines the depiction of non-elected public servants in movies. It seeks to identify how these individuals are depicted in film and to determine if there are any

specific stereotypes or patterns that emerge regarding how Hollywood describes non-elected government officials. It will do this by undertaking a content analysis of a small sample of recent government-themed feature films, ones that have entered into the popular culture mainstream since the late 1980s and early 1990s, as well as certain earlier films that have entrenched themselves into the popular culture vernacular.

Community and the American Village on Paradise Drive83
Christopher M. Duncan

The author argues that at the root of American culture is an apparent, though illusory, paradox of a people who are at one and the same time thoroughly individualistic and voraciously communal. This paradox is not only part of the American cultural fabric, it is built directly and purposefully into the U.S. constitutional system itself. By using their individual choice to choose various forms of community, Americans were able to sustain and reproduce the social capital necessary to remain the functional *community of communities* the constitutional scheme depended upon and prevent the slide into egoism and narcissism that would result in their own personal alienation. In this way, what was once thought to require virtue, discipline and obedience could seemingly be produced by self-interested individualism, the pursuit of happiness and the willingness to respect the rules (read rights of others) of the larger political game.

The author explores this idea on two recent “texts” that capture in very general ways a dominant trend in the relationship between community and culture in the contemporary United States. The first text is the recent film by the current master of suspense in American movies M. Night Shymalan *The Village* (2004). The second is the recent work of non-fiction by the conservative political journalist and regular news commentator David Brooks titled *On Paradise Drive: How We Live Now (And Always Have) in the Future Tense* (2004).

Fiction

Fire Surfing92
Michael W. Popejoy and Daniel P. Popejoy

This is a short story of fiction developed to illustrate teamwork, leadership, camaraderie, the impact of uncontrolled urban growth and poor budget planning. It also demonstrates the darker side of public bureaucracy in decision making and how it can result in tragic consequences.

Book Review

**Mary Parker Follett, Prophet of Management:
A Celebration of Writings from the 1920s111**

Edited by Pauline Graham

Reviewed by John Phillips

Back Cover Notes

Leadership

Back Cover Collage

Robert Ownby and Maria Ryan

Circles represent departments within the organization. The absence of corners signifies the desire to avoid paradoxes and reduced morale from being backed into a corner.

Rope symbolizes the leader. It creates unity and strength by gently binding and strengthening the whole with a single, central vision. The rope connects /interacts with every department, but does not cut into any; communicating, but not micro-managing.

The lower-profile lines reveal an infrastructure that sustains and connects the departments in the absence of the leader. Lines connecting each circle demonstrate the communication and interdependence among all departments.

The interior lines form a star; symbolic of sharing credit for success. Departments, not the leader, should star. The exterior pentagon represents 5 fundamentals of daily problem-solving—who, what, why, when, and where.

The overall design simplicity reminds us to seek simplicity by eliminating duplicate processes and unnecessary steps.

At the time of creating the collage, **Robert Ownby** and **Maria Ryan** were undergraduate students in Political Science 340, Introduction to Public Administration and Policy, at the Department of Political Science, University of Tennessee – Knoxville, TN.

Lewis and Clark's "Corps of Discovery:" What US Public Administrators Can Learn from this American Epic

Donald Klingner

The Lewis and Clark Expedition began in 1803 after President Thomas Jefferson asked Congress to approve the Louisiana Purchase. Jefferson and others had initially been interested in acquiring New Orleans so as to avoid the possibility of a hostile European power denying US ships the right to export goods down the Mississippi River, at that time the country's major western commercial artery. But circumstances made a grander vision possible. Napoleon needed cash for his war against England. With the British navy constantly threatening supply lines to France's Caribbean possessions, he could not defend even Santo Domingo (the army he had sent there to put down a slave rebellion had been decimated by malaria and yellow fever), much less New Orleans or the Mississippi river valley. Rather than let it fall by default into British hands, and shrewdly realizing that selling it to the US would eventually enable that country to contest Britain's supremacy in North America, his emissaries asked Jefferson to consider purchasing the entire Louisiana Territory. Jefferson had long been entranced by dreams of westward expansion. Astounded at what he considered the country's good fortune, he put aside his strict constructionist principles and asked Congress to approve the purchase.

Immediately following the Louisiana Purchase, Jefferson asked his personal secretary Meriwether Lewis to plan and lead an expedition sponsored by the national government to explore the Louisiana Territory by following the Missouri River upstream from St. Louis to its source, and from thence to the Pacific Ocean. The expedition's primary purposes were to map this uncharted region and to promote trade with Native Americans, following the example set by British and French fur traders in Canada. Jefferson's other goals were to explore the geography, flora and fauna of an unknown continent, to fulfill or refute the dream of a Northwest Passage by water from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and to counter British and Spanish efforts to lay claim to the area.

Lewis asked William Clark to be his co-commander. Lewis then spent six months in Pennsylvania taking a crash course in science celestial navigation, geography, medicine,

botany and zoology, while at the same time working round-the-clock to accumulate supplies for a two-year expedition, keep a recalcitrant boat builder on schedule, and recruit volunteers. Clark finally left Pittsburgh in September 1803 aboard a 55-foot keelboat with 22 men at the oars, a large pirogue or dugout paddled by eight French émigrés, and a smaller pirogue manned by six soldiers. By November, they had made it – barely – down the slackening Ohio River to their winter camp near St. Louis, where Lewis had been busy collecting supplies and information about the unknown West.

After a frustrating wait for last-minute supplies and spring weather, the Corps started poling and paddling up the Missouri River in May 1804. By November the boats had traveled over 1,300 miles. They wintered at the Mandan villages, an Indian encampment northwest of what is now Bismarck, ND. There they met the French fur trader Charbonneau and his pregnant Shoshone wife Sacagawea, who as a girl had been captured by the Hidatsa. When spring returned in April 1805, they resumed their journey, working laboriously upstream towards the continental divide. By August 1805, near Lemhi Pass in Montana, they had reached the limits of navigation, and needed to find horses and guides to help them cross the mountains. By an incredible coincidence, they met a Shoshone hunting party whose leader Sacagawea recognized as her long-lost brother Cameahwait. He gave them food and supplies and guided them west over the Bitterroot Mountains, where they avoided starvation through the friendship of the Nez Percé Indians. By October 1805 they were finally through the mountains, paddling downstream for the first time since leaving St. Louis on the Snake and then the Columbia River, eating salmon instead of bison and pronghorn. They reached the Pacific in time to winter at Fort Clatsop, near what is now Astoria, Oregon. In May 1806, as soon as the snow had melted enough to make travel possible, they started the return trip home, again crossing the Bitterroots with the help of Nez Percé guides. They arrived triumphant in St. Louis in September 1806, 28 months after their departure.

What we know about the expedition is based on the journals kept by Lewis and several others. These records indicate that the Corps traveled almost 8,000 miles of uncharted territory, mapped its position with amazing accuracy using celestial navigation, and returned with priceless knowledge about the American West. The success of the expedition strengthened the US claim to the Columbia River basin, which, in turn, helped make possible a century of Western expansion for the United States. Lewis and Clark were experienced and resourceful military commanders who took care of their men. The expedition's only casualty was Sergeant Charles Floyd, who unavoidably – given the primitive state of medical treatment available at that time – died of a ruptured appendix and is buried on a bluff overlooking the Missouri River near Sioux City, Iowa. They were naturalists, geographers and Native American ethnologists before these professions had even been invented. They were diplomatic emissaries on a trade mission, who took seriously the necessity of maintaining peaceful and positive relations with various tribes that were sometimes hostile to one another. Though they had many potentially dangerous confrontations with Indians, only one led to loss of life. The only disappointment was unavoidable because of geographic realities. Their two-month struggle through the Rockies in August and September 1805, surmounting range after range of almost impassable mountains only with the help of skilled Nez Percé guides, ended

the centuries-old dream of the Northwest Passage, a continuous (or even an easily portaged) water-level route from the Atlantic to the Pacific. After the Corps' return, Clark went on to a distinguished career as superintendent of Indian affairs for the Louisiana Territory, dying in 1835. Lewis committed suicide in 1809. Sacagawea disappeared from history, reportedly dying in St. Louis in 1812.

The Lewis and Clark Expedition as an American Epic

As great as this story is, there is more here than meets the eye. The Lewis and Clark expedition is arguably the greatest American epic, a narrative about a journey that can be understood and interpreted on several levels. First, every epic is a quest – an account about a protagonist who leaves home, travels to a distant destination, confronts adversity, overcomes obstacles, and returns in triumph. (Think of Tolkien's Lord of the Rings.) Second, every epic is also a morality play intended to transmit and reinforce lessons about the nature of the world or of human nature. Finally, it is a set of instructions about how to apply these lessons to our daily lives. For example, Homer's ancient epics (The Iliad and The Odyssey) provide advice that is still considered sound today. Though few can identify Homer's epics as the source of this advice, we know that everyone has hidden weak points (an "Achilles heel"), and that we should be wary of Greeks bearing gifts (like the Trojan Horse!).

Viewed in this context, the Lewis and Clark expedition qualifies as a genuine epic, perhaps the greatest in American history. First, it is a riveting story about the quest of an intrepid band of adventurers who journeyed past the end of the known world, laboriously crossed thousands of miles of uncharted territory, surmounted innumerable obstacles to reach the Pacific Ocean, and returned in triumph. Second, it is a morality play that links the Corps' success to quintessential American values such as courage and resourcefulness. Even more, it inaugurates the expansion of the United States from a post-Revolutionary confederation of Atlantic colonies to a transcontinental nation, and presages the era of Manifest Destiny. And finally, it presents some operational guidelines for how to conduct such undertakings. For the Corps' members and subsequent chroniclers, success was based on having a mission with a clear goal, reaching it through skill and perseverance, taking care of one another, and – at the times when disaster or failure seemed unavoidable – relying on fate (or God) and the kindness of strangers.

Ideals and Practices that Guided the Corps of Discovery

If epics are indeed intended as moral lessons or instructions, what fundamental assumptions, values and practices underlie the Corps as an American epic?

First, vision matters. US negotiators initially approached their French counterparts with the intention of purchasing New Orleans so as to ensure the continued right of passage for US ships down the Mississippi River. This was a necessary and laudable objective, given that this

river was the major transportation artery for goods exported from the Ohio and Mississippi river valleys. The expansion of the US beyond the Appalachians depended on access to this artery. When he became aware that France was interested for its own reasons in selling the entire Louisiana Territory, President Jefferson seized the opportunity to not only ensure shipping rights on the Mississippi, but also to expand the United States' western boundary far beyond the Mississippi River. Without this vision, Spain or England (or both) would undoubtedly have increased their influence in this vast area, and the United States would not now be a transcontinental nation. Vision is always risky; successful visioning is determined only by hindsight. Vision never gives clear answers to the policy issues or operational questions that inevitably follow. But without it, planners never consider the big changes or possibilities that result from thinking "outside the box."

Second, for Lewis and Clark and the other members of the Corps, the world was an uncharted wilderness, largely unknown and at times dangerous. Almost everything about the Missouri River basin and the Rocky Mountains (size, topography, flora and fauna, and Native American inhabitants) were unknown or misperceived in 1804. The expedition would have been long and arduous in any event. The risks and hardships were multiplied because numerous circumstances or obstacles – rapids, mountains, hunger, cold, insects, accidents, disease, and marauding Indians – were unknown and unpredictable.

Third, the Corps had two clear and measurable objectives that reflected core national interests. The first goal – reaching the Pacific Ocean from the headwaters of the Missouri River and returning safely – was readily measurable, and achieved. The second – collecting and compiling information essential to trade with Native Americans – was arguably less so, for much of the information collected was lost to history (never recorded, lost, or unpublished) for a variety of reasons. The Corps was a public enterprise, created by President Jefferson and funded through Congressional appropriation. Its purpose was clearly to gain the information needed to promote trade and commerce, not to make its members wealthy. Lewis and Clark were commissioned Army officers. Other Corps members were often drawn from the ranks of Army enlisted men, and always paid according to their pay scale. The Corps hired outside contractors when specialized skills (translators or guides) were needed, but remained essentially a public enterprise under military command and presidential leadership.

Fourth, the expedition demonstrated that good planning and preparation are necessary but not sufficient. Lewis spent months supervising the construction of boats, purchasing provisions, and studying medicine, science and navigation. As the scope of the expedition's mission became clearer, Lewis and Clark increased the size of the Corps from a dozen men to almost 30. Transporting this many people and their gear required a 55-foot iron-framed keelboat and two smaller pirogues. By the time they started, the keelboat labored under 50 kegs of salt pork, seven barrels of salt, 600 pounds of grease, 3,400 pounds of flour, several hundred gallons of whiskey, replacement clothing, and 176 pounds of gunpowder stored in 52 lead containers that were to be melted and molded into bullets. Yet once the Corps was under way, it still had to face and adapt to unforeseen conditions and difficulties. It used up almost everything just reaching the Pacific. Its open-ended letter of credit from President Jefferson

remained unused because the expedition encountered no European or American supply sources on the Pacific Coast. Some equipment like the keelboat proved unsuitable, and substitutes (i.e., the dugout canoes constructed for their trip down the Columbia River) had to be improvised using Native American technology. Language barriers often threatened even basic communication. For example, in the Mandan Villages, each of Lewis or Clark's questions or statements had to be translated from English into French (by Charbonneau), from French into Hidatsa or other Sioux dialects (by Sacagawea), and back again. Frankly, it was often a wonder they could even talk to each other at all.

Fifth, environmental uncertainty and limited resources meant that the expedition was absolutely dependent on the timely and unexpected help of strangers, and on what can only be described as good luck or God's grace. Without adding Charbonneau and Sacagawea (thus setting up their amazing encounter with Cameahwait), and without Cameahwait's help providing supplies and horses, and interceding with the Nez Percé to guide them through the Bitterroots, the Corps would have perished from cold and hunger long before reaching the Pacific. Without the chance intercession of a woman who had had positive experiences with other Whites in Canada, the Nez Percé would have killed them for their weapons and other supplies. When Lewis or Clark did commit tactical errors (e.g., splitting the Corps to investigate alternative routes through the Mariah Mountains on their return home, or prolonging their confrontation with a Blackfoot Indian hunting party), a combination of skill and luck meant that these errors were not fatal.

Sixth, the expedition's success depended on sound administrative practices like effective human resource management and situational leadership. Lewis and Clark had complementary leadership styles, and respected each other's skills and judgment absolutely. Though official Army records said otherwise, Lewis accorded Clark equal rank as Captain. The Corps' effectiveness depended on leadership that combined and balanced obedience to orders, democratic decision-making, and individual and group initiative. Because Corps' co-commanders and members were all accustomed to military organization and discipline, Lewis and Clark used authoritarian (command-and-control) leadership in most routine situations, in ceremonial or diplomatic encounters with Native Americans, and in emergencies where instant obedience and coordinated action were essential to survival. They used democratic decision-making in situations where environmental uncertainty required pooled information, and where shared risk required informed participation and buy-in. Thus, critical choices (like the decision to winter at Fort Clatsop) were preceded by lengthy discussions and universal voting, with everyone's vote being equal (including Sacagawea and Clark's slave York, who would both have been denied the right to vote in national or state elections for at least another 60 years). The Corps depended on individual or small-group initiative in situations where authoritarian or democratic decision-making was not possible or practical.

Lewis and Clark were skilled platoon commanders who had selected volunteers to join the Corps based on skills and resourcefulness, carefully instructed and trained them, and provided them with both discipline and positive reinforcement (from an extra ration of whiskey to favorable mention in Lewis's journal). The commanders personally modeled the conduct they

desired; liberally shared the credit for the Corps' successes, unavoidably shared in its triumphs and hardships, balanced control and discretion, and consistently emphasized team performance rather than a hierarchy of authority. The extent to which the Corps' participative and flexible management style differed from the relationships prevalent in American society at that time is evident from the difficulties many Corps' members faced upon their return to civilization. York went back into slavery (Clark denied his request to be freed as a reward for his work as part of the Corps), Sacagawea disappeared from the historical record, and Lewis was relatively ineffective as a political appointee. Others (like William Clark) adjusted more successfully or (like John Colter) opted to avoid organizational authority by becoming trappers and Mountain Men.

Conclusion

While circumstances today are different than those the Corps faced 200 years ago, contemporary US public administrators can still learn some things from this American epic:

- Vision is still necessary, and still risky.
- Many Americans still consider the world to be *terra incognita* (speaking culturally if not geographically) that is at times dangerous.
- Successful public organizations still require clear and measurable goals, shared political and administrative commitment, and alignment with national interests.
- Good planning and preparation are still necessary but not sufficient.
- Because our contemporary environment is uncertain and our resources limited, success still depends on fate (Divine Providence) and the kindness of strangers.
- Teamwork, effective human resource management, and flexible, situational leadership are still essential to successful public organizations.

References

Ambrose, Stephen (1996). *Undaunted Courage*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Burns, Ken (1997). *Lewis & Clark: The Journey of the Corps of Discovery*. Burbank: Time-Warner. PBS Home Video (B3499).

www.nps.gov/lecl (Lewis and Clark Historic Trail, National Park Service).

Dr. **Donald Klingner** is Professor at the Graduate School of Public Affairs, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs (UCCS); international public management consultant (UN); visiting professor, UNAM (Mexico); and Fulbright Scholar, Central America. He has co-authored *Public Personnel Management* (5th edition 2003), also published in Spanish and Chinese, and co-edited *Comparative Technology Transfer and Society*. He has served as American Society for Public Administration Vice President, International Coordinator, and past chair, sections on Personnel Administration and Labor Relations, and on International and Comparative Administration. He also was with the US Civil Service Commission from 1968 to 1973.

The Artist as Environmentalist: Ansel Adams, Policy Entrepreneurship, and the Growth of Environmentalism

John C. Morris

Introduction

The role of the policy entrepreneur is seen by many as an important factor in the formulation and initiation of public policy in a democratic setting (Kingdon, 1984). While few would argue that successful policy formulation is enhanced by the presence of a person (or group) that acts to “shepherd” a policy through the tangle of barriers present, the policy literature provides little clue as to the characteristics of policy entrepreneurs, and spends little time developing an understanding of the specific roles played by entrepreneurs.

The purpose of this paper is to explore more fully the concept of the policy entrepreneur through the theoretical “lens” of Kingdon’s work, and to seek a definition of the term that speaks to the multitude of potential roles played by people in the formulation of policy. The focus of the paper will be on Ansel Adams (1902-1984), an American photographer best known for his epic photographs of the American West (Shaeffer, 1999). In addition to his photographs, Adams codified a system of photographic visualization, exposure, and development known as the Zone System (Adams, 1978; 1982), and taught legions of photographers through his seminars, workshops, and photographic technique books (Adams, 1983; 1982; 1981; 1978). Less generally known about Adams, however, is his life-long involvement in the Sierra Club and his tireless work on behalf of both the Sierra Club and others to conserve the scenic lands of the nation (Turnage, 1989). Adams makes a particularly good case for this work for three reasons. First, Adams was involved in the policy formulation process at both the national and state levels throughout much of his adult life. Second, much has been written about Adams as an artist, and Adams himself completed a detailed autobiography shortly before his death. Third, Adams was an inveterate letter-writer and habitual pack-rat, and kept many of the letters he wrote over the course of his life. An examination of this material provides a fascinating insight into the interests and motivations of his life. Researchers thus have access to a broad range of examples of activity from which to develop explanations of behavior and motivation for political activity.

This paper is divided into three main sections. The first section develops a model of policy entrepreneurship drawn from the work of Kingdon, and suggests several important factors and indicators relevant for study. The second part of the paper examines that model in terms of the activities of Adams and offers an analysis of both the model and the subject. Finally, the conclusion offers an assessment of the model of entrepreneurship and offers several suggestions for the further development of the model.

Toward a Framework of Entrepreneurship

Kingdon's (1984) conception of a policy entrepreneur forms the basis for much of the current thinking about the definition and role of the policy entrepreneur, and is in turn based on the work of Jack Walker (1974). According to Kingdon (1984, 129), policy entrepreneurs are "advocates for proposals or the prominence of an idea." Like business entrepreneurs, policy entrepreneurs are willing to invest their available resources in the hope there will be some future payoff or benefit. While some may sense an impending problem and wish to solve that problem, Kingdon suggests that others search for problems to which they may attach their favorite solutions.

Kingdon also provides some insight into the specific incentives that may drive an individual to invest in policy activity. The promotion of personal interests, such as the promotion of one's career or the protection of bureaucratic turf, is one category of incentives. Second, some people may wish to promote policies that embody a specific set of values, or they may wish to have some specific impact on public policy. Finally, Kingdon suggests that some people simply like being a "part of the team—" people that enjoy the solidary benefits of organization. Termed "policy groupies" (Kingdon, 1984, 130), such people

enjoy advocacy, they enjoy being at or near the seat of power, they enjoy being part of the action. They make calls, have lunch, write memos, and draft proposals, ... [for] the simple pleasure they take in participating.

There are three particular qualities important to the success of an entrepreneur. First, a person must have some claim to be heard. While many may wish to weigh in on some important policy matter, only a few have some particular claim to be heard. Such claims may be based in recognized expertise, the ability to speak on behalf of others, or some position of authoritative decision-making. Second, the ability to draw on numerous political or personal connections is an important attribute. Finally, and most importantly, is persistence. Successful entrepreneurs are willing to fight through the range of roadblocks to achieve their goals.

For Kingdon, the major purpose of the policy entrepreneur in the policy process is to "couple" the "streams" of the policy process at the opportune moment.¹ In short, such a process

¹See Kingdon (1984) for a complete discussion of the different streams in the policy process, particularly chapters 5-8.

involves bringing the right resources to bear at the right time in such a manner as to affect (1) the possibility that policy activity will occur, and (2) that the outcome will be favorable to the position of the entrepreneur. In one sense, then, the entrepreneur acts as a policy “catalyst” to make policy action possible.

While Kingdon’s conception of a policy entrepreneur is interesting, it lacks the conceptual vitality to account for vast amounts of policy activity at other points in the policy process, activity that appears consistent with the activities of a policy entrepreneur. If this is, in fact, the case, then we need either to expand Kingdon’s concept, or to propose an alternative concept that both captures the essence of Kingdon’s work and extends the work farther. Because Kingdon’s work is fundamentally sound and empirically defensible, this paper will extend the concept to be more inclusive by seeking to account for policy activity prior to the formulation stage. The following section suggests ways to expand the concept.

Toward a Theory of Entrepreneurship

A policy entrepreneur seeks to influence the course of policy activity, the discussion surrounding the policy activity, and the terms and boundaries of that discussion. Since many policy discussions germinate for years in the “policy primeval soup” (Kingdon, 1984) before reaching the policy agenda, we might reasonably assume that policy activity takes place well before any serious discussion of policy alternatives in the political stream. Indeed, the problem stream must be present before there is a need for serious policy discussion; without an identifiable problem, there can be no claim for a public remedy (Stone, 1998). If we take as a given that such activity must take place early on in the policy process, then it follows that there must be a person or a group actively involved in problem definition and identification, and perhaps in the search for potential solutions to identified problems. Such people are likely to be members of issue networks (Hecl, 1978) or policy networks (van Waarden, 1992; see also Knoke and Kulinski, 1982), and thus have access to the resources of like-minded people. Policy entrepreneurs who participate early in the policy process may often find it necessary to work to convince others of the importance of an issue, to help define both the problem and potential solutions, and provide tangible evidence that public policy is the only reasonable remedy to the problem. Such work is likely to place a higher degree of emphasis on personal contacts or a claim to expertise than on an authoritative position.

The approach used to illustrate and examine this hypothesis will be a single case study; specifically, the activities of Ansel Adams in the ongoing process to protect scenic lands and conserve natural resources. As noted at the outset, Adams provides a somewhat unique opportunity for this work because of the volume of information and analysis of his life, both as an artist and as a conservationist. The next section of the paper traces the life of Adams, and points to the series of activities and events relevant to the discussion of policy entrepreneurship.

Adams, Environmentalism, and Entrepreneurship

Early Influences

Adams was born in San Francisco, California, on February 20, 1902, the only child of Charles and Olive Bray Adams (Adams, 1985, 4). Charles Adams had reluctantly inherited a timber business from his father (Newhall, 1963), a business that flourished in the turn-of-the-century American West. Increasing populations and the expansion of cities created a substantial demand for timber, and the Adamses were well positioned to provide a product to meet that demand.² A four-year-old during the great earthquake of 1906, Ansel and his family survived the quake, although a fall sustained during an aftershock broke Ansel's nose. The fracture was never set (Adams, 1985, 6) and left him with a distinctively-shaped nose.

Although apparently a bright young boy, Adams nevertheless developed an aversion to formal education. After attempting enrollment in several private schools (Adams, 1985; Alinder, 1996), the elder Adams decided to tutor his only son at home. Hyperactive, sickly, and easily bored (Alinder, 1996), Ansel had little luck relating to the series of tutors hired to provide his education. After some frustration, Charles Adams presented his son with a year-long pass to the Panama Pacific International Exposition for his thirteenth birthday, and decreed that Ansel's education for the coming year would be to learn at the exposition (Spaulding, 1995).

At age fourteen, Adams was sick in bed with a cold when he was presented with a copy of J.M. Hutchings' *In the Heart of the Sierras* [sic] by his aunt. The young Ansel became immediately enthralled with the descriptions of the wonders of the secret valley (Adams, 1985) and begged his parents to make Yosemite the destination for the upcoming family vacation (Alinder, 1996). His parents relented, and after a somewhat strenuous trip across the state by train, the family arrived in the valley and a tent in Camp Curry. Adams immediately fell in love with the splendor of Yosemite (Newhall, 1963). Shortly after their arrival in the valley his parents presented Ansel with his first camera, a Kodak Box Brownie (Adams, 1985). Adams prowled the valley taking pictures with his new camera, and became enchanted with the process of photography (Newhall, 1963). The family returned to Yosemite for their vacation the following year, and Adams went by himself the year after.

The epiphany for Adams came the following year. Struck by the influenza epidemic sweeping the country in 1919, Adams became fixated on the disease of leprosy and was convinced he would surely contract the disease. He begged his parents to allow him to return to Yosemite – there would be no leprosy in such a wondrous place (Adams, 1985, 44). After some discussion, Adams was allowed to travel to the valley. His recovery began, and its importance is best summed up by Adams' own description:

²It is somewhat ironic that the family wealth had initially been created by cutting a great deal of old-growth timber in the American Northwest, using practices that were inconsistent with conservationist ideals. The firm ceased conducting business in the 1920s due to a spate of bad luck, bad business decisions, and treachery on the part of Charles Adams' business partners (Alinder, 1996; Adams, 1985).

The following day I walked the two miles to Happy Isles and back and another mile to see Mr. Holman [a family friend] at his riverside camp. Within the week I was able to walk to the top of Nevada Fall, and the following week I climbed Half Dome. Yosemite had cured me! (Adams, 1985, 44)

This early experience and attachment to Yosemite Valley formed, in large part, Adams' personal interest in scenic lands. Combined with a lack of traditional religious exposure (Alinder, 1996), an early interest in the work of Edward Carpenter (Spaulding, 1995), and an early attachment to the Sierra Club as the caretaker of the LeConte Lodge in Yosemite Valley (Adams, 1985), Adams' own experiences began to shape his worldview.³ Furthermore, Adams developed several friendships both in Yosemite and the San Francisco Bay Area that served to reinforce his love of the natural scene. By the time he was in his early twenties, Adams was spending a great deal of time in Yosemite and had hiked to many different parts of the High Sierra in conjunction with the annual Sierra Club outings (Newhall, 1963).

In the Sierra Club of the time Adams found a cadre of people who enjoyed the outdoors, and who wished to preserve the natural scene for recreation and enjoyment. As he entered the third decade of his life, photography had become a much more serious enterprise for Adams, and he began to wonder whether photography would be a better career pursuit than music, his ordained choice (Alinder, 1996). In 1927, at age 25, Adams created what would become one of his best-known photographs— *Monolith— the Face of Half Dome*—, and his course became clear. In 1929 Adams married Virginia Best, a lifelong resident of Yosemite,⁴ and began his career as a professional photographer.

Although Adams is best known for his fine art photography, he made his living for many years as a commercial photographer. As his reputation grew, he began to accept assignments from clients all over the country. Ever interested in capturing the beauty of the natural scene with his camera, he often arranged his trips so as to have an opportunity to visit and photograph some particularly interesting location. At the same time, he actively immersed himself in the burgeoning art world of the 1930s, where he met people such as Georgia O'Keefe, Alfred Steiglitz, Edward Weston, Paul Strand, John Marin, and others (Adams, 1985). Early contacts with patrons of the arts, including Albert Bender (Alinder, 1996) and Mabel Dodge Luhan (Adams, 1985), encouraged Adams to pursue photography as an art form. Adams was the co-founder of Group *f64*, a group of West Coast photographers who believed photography could be an original art form and who practiced "straight photography"

³Westerbeck (1993) suggests that much of Adams' early upbringing was a clash of the Victorian age and a precocious nature. Transcendental in its approach, Westerbeck suggests Adams was, at heart, a Romantic whose view of the world was shaped largely by his attempt to escape the confines of his Victorian upbringing.

⁴Virginia Best was the only daughter of Harry Best, the owner and proprietor of Best's Studio in Yosemite. Adams met Virginia when he was given permission to practice on the Best's piano, the only piano in the valley. Early letters from Adams to Virginia (Adams, 1922; 1925; 1926; 1927) indicate a shared interest in the splendor of nature, and during their courtship they often traveled together on Sierra Club outings and day trips in the park (Alinder, 1996).

(Adams, 1985) – a form of photography that placed great emphasis on clear, carefully-focused images created with large-format view cameras.⁵ The clarity and craftsmanship in these images would later become important in his efforts to communicate the splendor of the natural scene to both policy makers and the general public.

These contacts and experiences early in his career helped convince Adams of two important ideas. First, photography could (and should be) an art form unto itself, and one he had great hopes and visions of developing and nurturing to the fullest extent. Second, art itself could be an extension of nature, rather than a reflection of nature. Adams' experiences in the Southwest and his contact with a range of artists who employed different media to express their inner vision convinced Adams that photography was on par with these other art forms, and could be used to create powerful and emotive works of art. The fact that Adams' "assignments from within—" (Adams, 1984; 1982) the self motivated assignments – drew him to the natural scene is thus no particular surprise. It was this natural connection, along with a strong emotional and spiritual attachment to Yosemite Valley, that drove Adams to meld his art with his politics for a cause in which he held a deep personal conviction. This he accomplished by leveraging his talent (and later his stature) as an artist to foster contacts with policy makers at both the state and national levels.

It is interesting to note that Adams regularly debated the validity of his art with other artists, particularly other photographers. During the 1930s, for example, the Farm Security Administration hired many well-known photographers, including several close friends of Adams', to document the plight of farmers in America due to the Depression. Adams' work was often criticized by these colleagues as lacking in social relevance (Spaulding, 1995), and thus was unworthy as an artistic endeavor (Adams, 1985). While Adams seemed genuinely sympathetic to the work of those documenting poverty during the Depression (Alinder, 1996), he saw his own personal artistic vision connected with the landscape and the meaning of the landscape, rather than the people who inhabited that landscape. For others, he argued, their calling and interest in social justice was just as valid as his own artistic vision, but clearly different (Adams, 1985). Adams' one successful foray into the social justice realm was his 1944 book entitled *Born Free and Equal*, in which he documented the plight of the Japanese-Americans interred at the camp in Manzanar, California, during World War Two. He had planned to follow *Born Free and Equal* with a book about African-American education but abandoned the project after failing to attract a publisher (Spaulding, 1995).

Early Entrepreneurship

Although Adams had been involved with the Sierra Club since his teens, to this point he had not taken any overt policy action as an entrepreneur. Most of his early years in the Club were

⁵“Straight photography” was an intellectual and stylistic response to pictorial photography, the prevailing style of photography until the 1920's. Pictorial photography sought to create photographic images using techniques and effects similar to painting, such as soft focus, abstract and heroic images, and fantasy settings that bore little resemblance to reality. The finished photographs often looked like monochromatic paintings. See Adams (1984) for a further critique of pictorialism.

spent as caretaker of the Club's LeConte Lodge in Yosemite Valley, offering photographic workshops to Club members and leading Club outings into the Sierra back country (Adams, 1985). Struggling to support a young family, much of his effort was aimed toward making ends meet as an artist. His affinity for the High Sierra drove both his art and his passion, but he was largely apolitical (Spaulding, 1995). These early years, however, served to solidify his deep personal conviction in the importance of the conservation and preservation of the natural scene. It also solidified his position and relationships in the Sierra Club, particularly among Club members that would later be instrumental in transforming the Club from primarily a social club with an interest in recreation to an environmental interest group.⁶

Adams' first foray into the policy world was, not surprisingly, on behalf of the Sierra Club. The Club had been trying on and off since 1912 to convince Congress to establish a national park in the Kings Canyon area of California, an area Club founder John Muir felt was equal in stature to Yosemite (Cohen, 1988, 34). In 1936 Adams traveled to Washington, DC to lobby on behalf of the Sierra Club for the establishment of Kings Canyon National Park. Having met with representatives of other conservation groups in New York, Adams arrived on Capitol Hill with a portfolio of his work in hand and a list of arguments to be made on behalf of the park (Spaulding, 1995, 129-134). Adams met with members of Congress, using his portfolio of photographs from the King's Canyon region to illustrate the unique beauty of the area. Although the legislation to establish the new park failed that year, the trip was far from a failure. Indeed, it marked Adams' entry into the national political scene. In addition to his meetings with members of Congress in both chambers, Adams met Harold Ickes, then Secretary of the Interior. Ickes was much impressed with both Adams and his work, and contacted Adams shortly thereafter with an idea that would become, some years later, the Mural Project.⁷ For his part, Adams nurtured the relationship, sending Ickes a copy of his recently-published first book, entitled *Sierra Nevada: The John Muir Trail*. The burgeoning relationship was productive on both fronts: Ickes was a true believer in the conservationist ideal, and was looking for new and productive ways to further those goals (Spaulding, 1995). Adams was seeking recognition for both his art and his ideals, and in Ickes found a sympathetic target for both. Between his contacts in the Sierra Club and the Department of the Interior, Adams established a network of friends, acquaintances, and contacts that would serve him well in future policy activity. It is important to note that while Ickes and Adams

⁶Even from its early days, the Sierra Club and its founder, John Muir, actively campaigned for the conservation of areas of the High Sierra and the establishment of a national park in the Yosemite region. The Club's broader agenda of environmentalism did not manifest itself for a number of years after the death of Muir.

⁷Begun in 1941, the Mural Project was Ickes' plan to redecorate the halls of the Department of the Interior with artwork depicting the natural scene. Although his first inclination had been to use painted murals (Alinder, 1996), Ickes was so impressed with the photographs Adams had prepared for the Kings Canyon effort that he contacted Adams about the possibility of using photographs in place of paintings, and Adams became a contract artist in August 1941 to create the murals. The project was interrupted by World War Two later that year, and to the regret of Adams (Adams, 1985), never continued after the war. In addition to being a financial windfall for Adams (Alinder, 1996), the contract was a chance to spread his images (and interpretation) of the natural scene to an important audience and location.

shared a conservationist ideal, it was the quality and power of Adams' photographs that provided the initial basis for the relationship.

Adams' ongoing work with the Sierra Club led to additional contacts with others in the conservation movement, particularly those on the West Coast. At the same time, however, Adams continued to use his developing artistic celebrity to foster relationships at the national level. For example, Adams met every president from Eisenhower through Reagan (Alinder, 1996), and used these opportunities to discuss environmental and conservation issues. Lyndon Johnson asked Adams and Nancy Newhall to produce a book entitled *A More Beautiful America* (1965) as a venue to promote Johnson's interest in the environment. The book, which coupled photographs by Adams with text from speeches made by Johnson (Adams, 1985; Spaulding, 1995), was modeled after an earlier Adams-Newhall collaboration, *This Is the American Earth*. A scheduled 10-minute meeting with Gerald Ford, for example, turned into a afternoon-long visit (Adams, 1985). During this visit Adams presented Ford with a memorandum listing ways to address deterioration in the national parks resulting from the Nixon era; Ford later called to arrange for his daughter Susan to attend one of Adams' photographic workshops in Yosemite Valley (Adams, 1985). In addition to being the first photographer asked to create an official presidential portrait (for Jimmy Carter), Carter also bestowed on Adams the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1980. His citation read:

At one with the power of the American landscape, and renowned for the patient skill and timeless beauty of his work, photographer Ansel Adams has been visionary in his efforts to preserve the country's wild and scenic areas, both on film and on Earth. Drawn to the beauty of nature's monuments, he is regarded by environmentalists as a monument himself, and by photographers as a national institution. It is through his foresight and fortitude that so much of America has been saved for future Americans (reprinted in Adams, 1985, 295).

A more profoundly disappointing meeting took place in Los Angeles in 1983 between Adams and Ronald Reagan. Angered by comments made by Adams in an interview in *Playboy* earlier in the year, the White House requested the meeting to discuss the environment and Adams' opposition to then-Secretary of the Interior James Watt. Told to expect only fifteen minutes of the president's time, the meeting with Reagan lasted nearly an hour (Adams, 1985, 297). Adams apparently felt a great deal of pressure prior to this meeting; Reagan had yet to meet with a major figure from the environmental movement (Adams, 1985), and was faced with criticism for an unpopular Secretary of the Interior (James Watt) and EPA Administrator (Anne Gorsuch Burford). Adams fully intended to cover a range of topics related to the environment and conservation ideals, but was surprised to find a defensive president more intent on providing Adams with a monologue on his own environmentalist tendencies (Adams, 1985; Alinder, 1996). Adams left the meeting hugely unimpressed (Adams, 1985, 298), and disappointed that he had not been able to raise what he felt to be important issues with Reagan.

Until the end of his life, Adams worked actively to further the ideals of the conservationist movement. Working in conjunction with Senator Alan Cranston (D-CA), Congressman Leon Panetta (D-CA), and William Turnage (Executive Director of the Wilderness Society), Adams spent a great deal of effort in his last years of life to establish the area around Big Sur on the California coastline as a protected wilderness area. It is perhaps fitting that in addition to the Big Sur area, two other monuments to the work of Adams are to be found in California—Mount Ansel Adams (located in the southeast corner of Yosemite National Park), and the Ansel Adams National Wilderness Area, located adjacent to the southeast side of Yosemite National Park.

An outgoing and friendly individual, Adams made friends easily (Alinder, 1996). Personal contacts are an important element of successful policy entrepreneurship, and Adams was naturally able to parlay these friendships into an effective personal network of well-connected and highly-placed policy actors that gave him access to the highest levels of the policy making process. While his stature as a conservationist and environmentalist grew over time, his initial *bona fides* were limited to his talent as an artist. As his reputation as an artist grew, so did his network of friends, and thus his reputation as a policy entrepreneur. Adams fostered these relationships by regularly corresponding with these people, using the opportunities to raise policy questions, problems, and potential solutions. Some of his letters seem to contain policy content almost as an afterthought (see examples in Alinder and Stillman, 1988), but the persistent nature of both the correspondence and the message kept the issues alive over the years.

Books and Photographs

Adams spent a great deal of his adult life promoting himself, his work, and the ideals of the conservation movement. A stream of books and publications featuring Adams photographs were published beginning in 1933. While some of these were intended to provide mementos to visitors of Yosemite Valley and were sold through Best's Studio (later the Ansel Adams Gallery), others were meant to reach a broader audience. Perhaps the best known of these is *This is the American Earth*, first published in 1960 as the first Sierra Club Exhibit Format book. *This is the American Earth* was conceived as a companion to the hugely successful photographic exhibition of the same name first installed in 1955 at San Francisco's Academy of Sciences (Featherstone, 1993). While the majority of the photographs were by Adams, the book (as did the exhibition) featured the work of several other well-known photographers. The text, written by Nancy Newhall (a long-time friend of Adams and collaborator on many projects beginning in 1951), is poetic in nature, and weaves its conservation message with both romantic and nationalist messages in the tradition of Walt Whitman and the historian Frederick Jackson Turner (Spaulding, 1995). Nature is seen as the source of American democracy and freedom, and calls upon Americans to think of conservation as a means to preserve basic American values. With the end of the frontier, the text argues, Americans need a new vision of nature, one that seeks to end exploitation of our natural resources. More importantly, the presentation of the message changes the terms of conservation from a fringe movement to a struggle to retain and strengthen the core values of the nation (Spaulding, 1995).

This is the American Earth had a profound impact at a number of levels. First, it was a very successful book for the Sierra Club, one which sold 25,000 hardcover copies initially, some 50,000 softcover in a later printing (Spaulding, 1995, 313),⁸ and remains in print to this day. It has been a tremendous financial success for the Sierra Club over the years. Second, the success of the book launched the Sierra Club's publishing program, aimed at providing high-quality books with conservation themes to a public hungry for such work. The publishing program was the work of David Brower, for many years the Executive Director of the Sierra Club. Although Adams was initially a strong supporter of the program, he grew increasingly dismayed with both the topics of the books planned and the quality of the books produced. Coupled with serious questions about Brower's use of his position and club resources in the program, Adams led an unsuccessful move to oust Brower as executive director (Cohen, 1988).

Deeper behind this movement was a growing split in the Club, one highlighted by the book program and, ironically, by the publication of *This is the American Earth*. Newhall's text was clearly and unashamedly nationalistic; even the title of the work suggests the nationalism of the project. Although Adams regularly railed against the use of art as propaganda (Adams, 1985) and often boasted that he had never made a photograph specifically for a conservation message⁹ (Adams, 1985, 1; Alinder, 1996; Haip, 1993; Spaulding, 1995), Adams was also clearly a patriot.¹⁰ At the time of its publication, several of the younger members of the Sierra Club openly criticized both the title and the approach, claiming that "It isn't the American earth, ... it's the earth's earth."¹¹

It was also this experience that ultimately led to Adams' resignation from the Sierra Club Board of Directors in 1971 after some thirty seven years of service in that capacity. Although Adams had published other books under the auspices of the Sierra Club's Exhibit Book series, he became increasingly disenchanted with the way Brower was using Club resources. The debate polarized the Board of Directors, and Adams and his supporters moved to oust Brower from his position. A protracted battle ensued (detailed in Cohen, 1988), at the conclusion of which Adams felt he didn't have the strength to continue. He made the decision to step aside to make room for other, younger members to serve (Alinder, 1996). The net result of this

⁸Featherstone (1993, 63) reports that "the popular book sold over 200,000 copies in hard and soft cover before going out of print in the 1970s." The book was reissued by the Sierra Club in 1992.

⁹There is a subtle, but important, distinction here. Adams thought of himself first and foremost as an artist, and often stated that he photographed the subjects he did because of a deep personal interest—his "assignments from within." While he was more than willing to use his finished art for a greater cause, there is no evidence that he ever made a photograph with the idea that a particular photograph would have a policy use. His photographs were chosen for publication often many years after the initial photograph was made.

¹⁰For example, Adams was quite upset that he was turned down when he volunteered for service at the outbreak of World War Two, even though he was nearly 40 years old and the sole source of support for his wife, two children, and two elderly parents (Alinder, 1996).

¹¹Quote attributed by David Brower to "younger environmentalists," reprinted in Spaulding (1996, 314-315).

move was a perceptible change in Sierra Club policy and direction; the Club, which for many years operated on principles of negotiation and compromise in environmental matters, now began to change its tactics to a more confrontational approach (Spaulding, 1995). Although Adams continued his efforts on behalf of and in conjunction with the Sierra Club, he found himself increasingly at odds with the Club membership over issues such as nuclear power, as well as its increasingly confrontational and intransigent advocacy style. In his remaining years Adams also worked extensively with the Wilderness Society, in part because it offered a more moderate political position, and in part because of his close friendship with William Turnage, who had been Adams' personal assistant before his appointment in 1978 as Executive Director of the Wilderness Society.

Although the Sierra Club's book publishing program began the process that ultimately led to Adams' resignation from the Club's Board of Directors, the books themselves served to further spread Adams' vision of the American West and served as tools to recruit new Club members, as well as a mechanism to spread the Club's ideals to a broader public audience. The conservationist ideal found a new and expanding audience at a time when environmental awareness was growing, and roughly coincided with the publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962). His books ultimately served to further Adams' stature as both an artist and as an environmentalist, and thus increased his ability to be a force in his chosen policy arena.

Contradictions

Several observers have pointed out that in spite of Adams' appeal for wilderness areas, the areas he often photographed were not as wild and untouched as they appeared. For example, Yosemite Valley in the 1920s and 1930s was awash with vestiges of human comforts, including a bowling alley and a skating rink (Haip, 1993). Indeed, Yosemite to this day contains several restaurants, hotels, stores (including the Ansel Adams Galley, formerly Best's Studio), an auto repair shop, a post office, hospital, dental clinic, and the same skating rink (located at Camp Curry at the eastern end of the valley). Rather than draw attention to these objects, Adams chose to frame his photographs of the valley to edit these features out of the view of his camera. Thus the view portrayed in his photographs, that of a wild and untamed country, was often nothing of the sort.

During the 1920s and 1930s Adams led many Sierra Club outings into the Sierra back country. The purposes of the outings were to provide wilderness experiences for the participants, but were also designed to convince participants of the need to preserve wilderness areas for future recreation.¹² These outings often involved dozens of guests and guides, supported by mule trains to carry the provisions and supplies for the group. Firewood was cut at random, and trash was often buried or discarded without regard to its location or impact (Haip, 1993). Little thought was given to the impact of this human invasion into the wilderness, and it was not until the 1960s that the Sierra Club abandoned the outing practice because of its negative impact on the landscape.

¹²The important distinction here is the tension between recreation and conservation. The early focus of the Club was recreation, yet the recreational activities often had a negative impact on the landscape.

Somewhat tragically, Adams' own work to capture the splendor of the natural scene may have worked at odds with his attempts to preserve the natural scene. Drawn by the beauty of his photographs, visits to national parks have skyrocketed in recent years. Yosemite has instituted a shuttle bus system in an attempt to limit the number of autos in the valley, and the park has even resorted to limiting the number of people allowed in the park at peak times (Alinder 1996) by closing its gates. Much of Adams' early commercial work was for the Yosemite Park & Curry Company, who used the images on everything from menus in park restaurants (Adams, 1985) to brochures advertising Yosemite as a prime vacation spot (Alinder, 1996; Spaulding, 1995) in an attempt to boost customer traffic and revenues for park concessionaires (Haip, 1993). These efforts led to a growing number of visitors in Yosemite, which in turn put more strain on the fragile ecosystem of the park and strained the ability of the park's infrastructure to accommodate the increased visitation. Adams also did commercial work for Kodak (particularly the Coloramas displayed in New York City's Grand Central Station), who used the images of a wild, unspoiled American West as a mechanism to sell film. The Coloramas were displayed prominently in the station's Great Hall, where they were seen by millions of Americans (Alinder, 1996). Late in his life, Adams himself worried about the effects of his images (Adams, 1985), although he also fought a constant battle to limit development in the parks to serve the growing number of tourists flocking to the parks. As Hagen (1993, 98) points out,

Adams' own attitudes toward the land changed in the course of his career, from an early interest in encouraging people to visit the wilderness, to a later belief in the importance of conservation, of setting certain wilderness areas aside safe from development. Later still he adopted an environmentalist approach, in which he was concerned with the overall relationship between human society and the land. The remarkable changes that Adams experienced in his thinking parallel similar shifts that many other people— including photographers— made in that same period.

Adams also faced criticism later in his life for his willingness to lend his name, his images, and his endorsement to products ranging from automobiles to coffee to sporting goods (Haip, 1993). Adams had struggled financially for many years, and his growing celebrity allowed him access to a measure of financial security previously unavailable to him. Many of his critics suggested that he was "selling out" to the corporate world, although Adams believed he limited his endorsements to those companies that were environmentally responsible (Adams, 1985). As Adams (1985, 306) said in his autobiography, "I have been offered extravagant sums of money with the intention that *Winter Sunrise* [one his most famous photographs] be splashed across magazine pages and billboards on behalf of a whiskey. I chose instead to have images reproduced on behalf of the causes I believe in: creative photography and environmental protection."

The controversy over the use of Adams' images continued after his death. Shortly before his death, Adams created the Ansel Adams Publishing Rights Trust (AAPRT) to control the use and access to his name and his images. In late 1985, defense contractor Rockwell

International asked for and received permission to use several of Adams' best-known images in an advertising campaign for, among other things, the B1-B nuclear-capable strategic bomber. Although Adams' wife and several of his friends protested vigorously (Alinder, 1996), the trustees of the AAPRT went ahead with the campaign. The ads were placed in publications such as the *National Journal*, where, against a backdrop of Adams' iconic *Clearing Winter Storm*, appeared the words, "Like Yosemite National Park, Tactical Weapons Systems are a National Resource" (Rockwell/ *National Journal*, 1986, 2066-67). The advertising campaign caught the attention of the Associated Press (Alinder, 1996), and environmentalists were outraged. The trustees of the AARPT defended their position by suggesting that because Adams was clearly a patriot, he would have been in favor of the ads. Since this incident the AARPT has confined its permission to more traditional items such as books, posters, calendars, and "Special Edition" prints (printed by Adams' former assistant Alan Ross from Adams' original negatives).¹³

Adams as Policy Entrepreneur: Connecting the Dots

Overall, Kingdon's conception of a policy entrepreneur does much to explain the policy activities of Adams. Adams clearly was willing to invest a great deal of his time, energy, and talent in a cause he believed to be both just and important. The value of the wilderness ideal was also clearly a strong motivation, driven in large part by Adams' early experiences in Yosemite. While Adams was by all accounts a very social person – he was often the life of parties (Alinder, 1996; Newhall, 1963; Spaulding, 1995), there is little to suggest Adams' efforts in the conservation movement were solitary in nature, especially in his later years.

A more interesting analysis concerns Kingdon's qualities of entrepreneurship, particularly the importance of a claim to be heard. While Adams unquestionably came to be regarded as a *de facto* leader in the environmental movement later in life, it is just as clear he had little claim to be heard for his early work on behalf of the Sierra Club. Arriving in Washington in 1936 with little more than a portfolio of his prints, Adams was an unknown commercial photographer from the West Coast with no prior lobbying or political experience and no claim to prominence as either a conservationist or an artist. What he did have, on the other hand, was a set of compelling photographic images of the land he sought to protect, a burning desire to succeed, and a true belief in the importance of his task. These early attributes served him well, and helped form the basis of a series of friendships and relationships that provided him access for later endeavors. In spite of his connections, it was just as often his powerful images of the natural scene that provided him the access to the top levels of the policy world. Lyndon Johnson most likely became aware of Adams through the publication of *This is the American Earth*, which in turn led to another collaboration with Newhall for a volume with similar policy aims (Spaulding, 1995). Gerald Ford, not known as a strong supporter of the

¹³Early in the process, copy negatives were made from the original negatives. The prints are sold through the Ansel Adams Gallery in Yosemite Valley and Monterey, CA. The original negatives, along with most of Adams' other papers, letters, etc., are housed at the Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona.

environment, became aware of Adams after Harry Lunn, a well-known art dealer (Alinder, 1996), presented Ford with a copy of Adams' *Images 1923-1974* in 1974.

The major limitation of Kingdon's conception of the policy entrepreneur is the requirement that a policy entrepreneur act to couple policy streams at the opportune moment. Although policy entrepreneurs may certainly engage in such activity, the failure actively to create opportunities for new policies does not indicate a lack of entrepreneurship. Indeed, the brief synopsis of Adams' life presented in this paper indicates a lifetime of effort to influence public policy in a specific manner and direction, yet Adams' role was much different than many of the other examples of entrepreneurs offered by Kingdon (including Ralph Nader, Paul Ellwood, Alfred Kahn, and others). While most of these people were "insiders" who worked to push certain solutions to problems, Adams took a much less direct, more diffuse approach. Whether as a private citizen or a member of the Sierra Club, Adams worked behind the scenes, relying on personal friendships and contacts. Much of this work was done well before the policy streams converged, and cannot otherwise be accounted for in Kingdon's theory. Furthermore, it is unclear that any of Adams' efforts led directly to a specific policy outcome. Rather, his efforts helped form a backdrop that formed a panorama of ideas and information that influenced policy at a number of times and locations. This concept is much like Carol Weiss' (1989) conception of the "enlightenment model" of evaluation, in which a single evaluation does not cause policy change, but rather becomes a part of a mosaic of information that informs policy decisions.¹⁴

Thus policy entrepreneurship can (and does) take place at multiple points and stages of the policy process. Indeed, the conceptual lines between activist, lobbyist, and entrepreneur become somewhat blurred. The qualities that lead one to a claim to be heard must go beyond those suggested by Kingdon. In policy terms, Adams may be thought of as an entrepreneur who saw not one problem to be solved, or as a person with a solution to a problem yet to be created, but rather as an individual who saw multiple opportunities to influence the terms of the debate in a policy arena in accordance with his own deeply held beliefs. This, perhaps, is entrepreneurship of the purest sort. Like his art, Adams sought policy that reflected a higher vision of the capacities of mankind in a way that, knowingly or unknowingly, touched the souls of millions.

References

- Adams, Ansel. 1985. *An Autobiography*. Boston: Little, Brown.
- _____. 1984. *Examples: The Making of Forty Photographs*. Boston: Little, Brown.
- _____. 1983. *The Print*. Boston: Little, Brown.
- _____. 1982. *The Negative*. Boston: Little, Brown.

¹⁴I am indebted to an anonymous reviewer for drawing this apt comparison.

_____. 1981. *The Camera*. Boston, Little, Brown.

_____. 1978. *Natural Light Photography*. Boston: Little, Brown.

_____. 1974. *Images 1923-1974*. Boston: New York Graphic Society.

_____. 1944. *Born Free and Equal: Photographs of the Loyal Japanese-Americans at Manzanar Relocation Center, Inyo County, California*. New York: US Camera.

_____. 1922-1984. Assorted letters and telegrams. Reprinted in Alinder, Mary Street, and Andrea Gray Stillman, eds. *Ansel Adams: Letters and Images, 1916-1984*. Boston: Little, Brown.

Adams, Ansel, and Nancy Newhall. 1965. *A More Beautiful America*. New York: American Conservation Association.

Alinder, Mary Street. 1996. *Ansel Adams: A Biography*. New York: Owl Books.

Alinder, Mary Street, and Andrea Gray Stillman, eds. 1988. *Ansel Adams: Letters and Images, 1916-1984*. Boston: Little, Brown.

Carson, Rachel. 1962. *Silent Spring*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Cohen, Michael P. 1988. *The History of the Sierra Club, 1892-1970*. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books.

Featherstone, David. 1993. "This is the American Earth: A Collaboration by Ansel Adams and Nancy Newhall." In Read, Michael, ed. *Ansel Adams, New Light: Essays on his Legacy and Legend*. San Francisco: Friends of Photography.

Hagen, Charles. 1993. "Beyond Wilderness: Between Esthetics and Politics." In Read, Michael, ed. *Ansel Adams, New Light: Essays on his Legacy and Legend*. San Francisco: Friends of Photography.

Haip, Renee. 1993. "Ansel Adams: Forging the Wilderness Idea." In Read, Michael, ed. *Ansel Adams, New Light: Essays on his Legacy and Legend*. San Francisco: Friends of Photography.

Hecl, Hugh. 1978. "Issue Networks and the Executive Establishment." In King, Anthony, ed. *The New American Political System*. Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research.

Kingdon, John W. 1984. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*. Boston: Little, Brown.

Knocke, David, and James H. Kulinski. 1982. *Network Analysis*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

- Newhall, Nancy. 1963. *Ansel Adams: The Eloquent Light*. Boston: Little, Brown.
- Newhall, Nancy, and Ansel Adams. 1992. *This Is the American Earth*. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books (reissue of 1960 edition).
- Rockwell International. 1986. "Advertisement for Rockwell International." *National Journal* 18: 2066-67 (August 30, 1986).
- Shaeffer, John P. 1999. "Ansel Adams: Five Important Landscapes." *View Camera*, (January/February), 4-14.
- Spaulding, Jonathan. 1995. *Ansel Adams and the American Landscape: A Biography*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Stone, Deborah. 1998. *Policy Paradox*. Glenview, IL: Scott Foresman.
- Turnage, Robert. 1980. "The Role of the Artist in the Environmental Movement." *The Living Wilderness*, (March 1980), 13.
- Van Waarden, Frans. 1992. "Dimensions and Types of Policy Networks." *European Journal of Political Research* 21: 29-52.
- Westerbeck, Colin. 1993. "Ansel Adams: The Man and the Myth." In Read, Michael, ed. *Ansel Adams, New Light: Essays on his Legacy and Legend*. San Francisco: Friends of Photography.
- Walker, Jack. L. 1974. "Performance Gaps, Policy Research, and Political Entrepreneurs." *Policy Studies Journal* 3, 112-116.
- Weiss, Carol. 1989. "The Many Meanings of Research Utilization." In Chelimsky, Eleanor, ed. *Program Evaluation: Patterns and Directions*. Washington, DC: American Society for Public Administration.

Dr. **John C. Morris** is Associate Professor of the Department of Urban Studies and Public Administration, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA.

When Politics Overwhelms Administration: Historical Proofs for Fesler's Maxim against State-based Federal Regions, 1934-1943

Mordecai Lee

Introduction

James W. Fesler (1911-2005) was a prominent professor of public administration. He had been editor-in-chief of *Public Administration Review* from 1958 to 1960, was elected a fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration and received the Dwight Waldo Award of the American Society for Public Administration in 1986 “for outstanding contributions to the professional literature of public administration over a life-time career” (Front Matter, 1988, ii). One of his life-long interests was field administration. Fesler had written his Harvard dissertation on the topic and quickly established his academic expertise. Having already published several articles in refereed journals on the subject (Fesler, 1936a; 1936b), he was then appointed to the staff of the President’s Committee on Administrative Management (1936-37, aka the Brownlow Committee) because of his specialization. His assignment for the Committee was to prepare a report with recommendations for improving federal field administration, especially focusing on the work of the National Emergency Council (NEC).

At that time, NEC was the major coordinating agency for federal field activities. President Roosevelt had created it as a “super cabinet” and coordinating body with a presence not only in Washington but also in each state. NEC quickly established offices in most states, appointing a state director in most cases (Lee, 2005, 19-20). The responsibilities of state directors included coordinating the field activities of the various federal relief programs and liaising with state government to assure coordinated and cooperative program delivery. (Other duties related to public relations and information dissemination.) Eventually, Fesler submitted a report to the Brownlow Committee recommending abolishing NEC’s field operations (including its information functions) and replacing it with presidential representatives.¹ He expected that these official agents of the chief executive would have the standing and prestige to assure successful agency coordination in the field (Fesler, 1937; 1987). A contemporary assessment of Fesler’s report identified his key focus as creating “stronger unity within the executive by means of improving public sector management at the highest levels of

government and within the federal field service” (Newbold and Terry, 2006, 543). Fesler’s report was accepted by the three members of the Committee and many of its principles were incorporated into its final report and, over the long run, had “a marked effect” on subsequent developments in federal field administration (Emmerich, 1971, 192). For example, in 1943, BOB established a field service to perform some of the functions Fesler had identified.² However, regarding Fesler’s specific recommendations for NEC, President Roosevelt personally intervened to protect its information activities and field network from being affected by Fesler’s report (Lee, 2005, 33-37). This ultimately led to the 1939 transformation of NEC into the Office of Government Reports (OGR), one of the five original agencies of the new Executive Office of the President. NEC’s field network was preserved, but largely as an informational and reporting mechanism rather than the earlier emphasis on field coordination activities.

During World War II, Fesler headed the Policy Analysis and Records Branch of the War Production Board (WPB). Given the national scope of that agency, Fesler had an insider’s view of the field administration activities of the board. He later was named the Board’s Historian and led the postwar team that wrote the official history of wartime industrial mobilization (Auxier, 1969, v).

Fesler’s Maxim

In 1947, as he was finishing the WPB history project, Fesler was invited by the University of Alabama public administration program to be the featured speaker for its fourth annual program of visiting scholars who delivered a week of guest lectures.³ He spoke on field operations in public administration and his lectures were published two years later (Fesler, 1949). The volume came to be viewed as the seminal statement on the subject (Fesler, 1964).⁴ In one of the passages in the book, Fesler enunciated a cautionary warning that the boundaries for federal field administration should never be co-terminus with each of the states nor cover a region wholly within one state.⁵ Instead, federal administrative regions should always embrace more than one state. He provided two reasons for that maxim.

First, *personnel decisions* about the position of a state director would always attract the interest and involvement of other elected officials who are elected on a statewide basis, especially senators and governors. The constituency of those state-based politicians was identical to the area of responsibility of the state director and therefore senators and governors would feel a special authority and standing to involve themselves in those selections. According to Fesler, “Claims to patronage are always most insistent from political organizations and leaders whose constituencies embrace the total area within which a prospective appointee will have administrative jurisdiction. Where the 48 states are made field service areas by an agency the requirements of political clearance for area directors are most insistent” (1949, 57).

Second, *geographical decisions* about in which city to locate the headquarters office for a state or sub-state region would always attract the interest of local elected officials, especially members of Congress and mayors. In particular, closing a state office or, worse, transferring it from one city to another within the state, would trigger no end of complaints and bickering, regardless of the small size of an office. Such decisions were perceived as symbolic of the importance, or lack of, of a particular metropolitan area. All politicians elected from those cities would feel an obligation to weigh in and fight to protect 'their' city's interest, such as mayors and members of Congress. Fesler noted that "political pressure, reflecting in turn the pressures of local interests, severely handicaps the moving of field service area headquarters from one city to another or the complete discontinuance of some offices" (1949, 58).

Fesler presented only one example for each of the two reasons underlying his maxim. Regarding the thicket triggered by personnel decisions about state office directors, he noted the 1942 controversy regarding the selection of state directors for the Office of Price Administration (OPA).⁶ For the problems caused by the location of state or sub-state regional offices, he described the political heat caused by WPB's effort that same year to reduce its field offices from 120 to about 70.⁷ Certainly, a social scientist of Fesler's stature would not have posited an axiom based on only a single incident regarding personnel and geographical decisions, respectively. Other similar incidents would presumably have occurred, enough to justify the generalization he made. Given the breadth of the subject he sought to cover in the entire volume, it would be understandable that he was precluded for space reasons from providing further historical justification for his cautionary warning about state-based federal administrative regions.⁸

The purpose of this article is to give additional contemporaneous historical proofs for Fesler's principle, some in the public record that he would have known about and others from archival materials that he wouldn't have had access to at that time. There were several prominent, but largely forgotten political controversies that occurred during the Presidency of Franklin Roosevelt regarding state-based federal field administration. The reconstruction of several specific historical events is intended to give a clearer and more textured understanding as to why Fesler felt compelled to address the subject in his 1949 volume. It documents with a more extensive factual basis the justification for his axiom beyond the two examples he had glancingly enumerated.

In a sense, this is an effort at forensic public administration history, in that it attempts to reconstruct historical developments based on information that was both known and unknown at the time. While the literature has since absorbed the surface lessons and moved on, such an effort at 'pure history' seeks to add detail and greater understanding of major developments in the discipline, even if those issues later became absorbed into the profession as conventional wisdom. That there was a time they were not is the justification for the pure history and forensic approach.

A recent pedagogic review noted that public administration "relegates the history of public administration to the dusty backbench of the discipline's intellectual structure" (Gibson and

Stolcis, 2006, 67). Lacking a journal dedicated solely to public administration history, some other journals have sought to overcome this vacuum by publishing occasional historical articles, though largely on matters that are still considered relevant to contemporary times. This journal is one of the few that is interested in ‘pure history,’ i.e. history for its own sake. The research methodology for this inquiry involved mainstream techniques of public administration historical research (McNabb, 2002, chap. 23; Raadschelders, 2000). Primary sources included official publications of the US government, especially the *Journal of the Executive Proceedings of the Senate of the United States of America*, *Congressional Record*, *United States Statutes*, transcripts of Congressional public hearings, Congressional committee reports, and contemporaneous newspaper coverage. These are all sources of information that would have been available to Fesler. Further, this inquiry also relied on archival materials located in the Roosevelt Presidential Library in Hyde Park, NY, and the National Archives II site in College Park, MD. These archival documents provide a behind-the-scenes view of public events and give additional independent confirmation of Fesler’s observation from sources that were inaccessible to him when he formulated his maxim.

Civil Works Administration, 1934

After his inauguration in March 1933, President Franklin Roosevelt established a multiplicity of programs intended to provide both financial assistance (called relief) and employment to the large portion of the population that was unemployed. One of the earliest organizational metamorphoses of the New Deal was the Civil Works Administration (CWA), which focused on large construction and public works projects. CWA used the states as the basic form for its national geographical organization, as was the practice of almost all of FDR’s alphabet soup of agencies as well as of the ‘traditional’ federal agencies (Fesler, 1936b, 16). This meant CWA had 48 state offices and directors. The first incident that led to Fesler’s 1949 maxim against states as regions occurred less than a year after Roosevelt had become president.

In early 1934, the Senate was debating a bill to fund CWA for a second year of operations. On February 8, Senator Pat McCarran (D-NV) proposed amending the bill to require Senate confirmation of all CWA state directors as well as state directors of the related Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA). He explained that “the administration should have a voice in nominating those who will spend the public money; but the Senate of the United States would not have permitted for a moment in years past, and should not permit even today, anyone to disburse \$950,000,000 without first having passed upon the responsibility and the eligibility of the man or men who are to disburse that money. Because of the emergency, in view of the publicity that has gone forth, in view of the charges of scandal and fraud that have cut into the allotments, there is no reason now why we should not scrutinize those who will spend the public money.”⁹

Senator Huey Long (D-LA) asked McCarran to clarify the scope of his amendment. McCarran’s answer was that it would cover “the public administrators.” With no further debate, the amendment was adopted by a vote of 42-19.¹⁰ It was the only significant floor

amendment to the bill that was adopted (\$950,000,000, 1934). The lopsided roll call vote (which many senators missed) reflected less a partisan or ideological lineup and more of an institutional perspective, namely of a legislative body asserting its interests in face of an aggressive and activist chief executive.

With the two houses having passed differing versions of the bill,¹¹ a conference committee was appointed to resolve the differences, in this case four items. The Committee was able to resolve all the differences except the McCarran amendment (US Congress, 1934, 4). The conferees from the House were so opposed to the amendment that they weren't even interested in possible compromise versions of it. They "refused to discuss the matter, and refused to give it consideration," claimed a senator.¹² With the conference report noting the lack of agreement on the amendment, one house would have to recede from the position its conferees had taken or another conference committee would have to be appointed. Without any floor debate (suggesting partisan, ideological and institutional consensus), the House of Representatives refused to accept the Senate version.¹³ This was likely due in part to the House's greater willingness to support the Administration's opposition to the amendment and partly due to inter-house rivalry, of not wanting to give senators more clout with the program than members of Congress would have.

But the Senate was in no mood to compromise either. McCarran's amendment had invented a whole new approach to increasing the leverage that senators could have regarding CWA's operations in their state. Given that senators represented a whole state, they would be especially interested in having influence over their state's CWA director. With the original adoption of the McCarran amendment by the Senate, some members were already beginning to anticipate the benefits of requiring senate confirmation of all CWA state directors. The debate over receding or refusing was extensive, lasting three days. As the floor manager of the bill, Senator Kenneth McKellar (D-TN), who was a senior member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, felt obligated to follow the leadership's preferences, which in turn reflected the White House preferences. He moved that the Senate recede from its position, i.e. reverse its approval of the amendment.

McCarran and other senators spoke vehemently of the need to insist on retention of the amendment. Senator Tom Connolly (D-TX) stated the issue baldly when he said the McCarran amendment would "require the President to get the consent of the two Senators from each State before he can appoint such a man [as state director]. That is all there is to it. This amounts to a demand of the President to turn over and make political patronage out of the State directors."¹⁴ Here was the exact issue that Fesler's maxim addressed. Senators presumed that they automatically had the prerogative to control the appointments of all federal agency state directors from their home state who faced Senate confirmation. Eventually the tide of the debate turned, in part because any further delays in enactment of the bill would have prevented CWA payrolls from being disbursed to the millions working for it. By a vote of 64 to 19, the Senate receded from the McCarran amendment.¹⁵ According to a front page story in the *New York Times*, even though the Administration's position had ultimately prevailed, the Senate's initial adoption of the McCarran amendment was a "major

defeat suffered by President Roosevelt in the Senate this session – and at the hands of the...Democrats” (Pay Restoration, 1934, 1). It had been a close call. But McCarran had opened a Pandora’s Box that could not be undone.

Resettlement Administration, Works Progress Administration and Public Works Administration, 1935

FDR had dodged a bullet with the defeat of McCarran’s amendment in 1934. But McCarran was nothing if not persistent. The next year, when the Emergency Relief and Appropriation Act of 1935 was being debated on the floor of the Senate, he successfully proposed an amendment that required Senate approval of *all* federal positions with an annual salary of \$5,000 or more funded by the bill.¹⁶ This time, the House conferees decided to accept the provision in principle, but worked to limit its scope and applicability. The conference committee report limited the McCarran amendment by replacing the standard based on salary and instead required Senate confirmation of only senior officials with “general supervision” over federal programs and all “State or regional administrators.” This greatly narrowed the coverage of the Senate provision. The conference committee also added a ‘grandfather clause,’ exempting all officials in those categories who were serving in those positions before the new law would go into effect (US Congress, 1935a, 3, 7).

However, even with that narrowing of the language, Roosevelt was still extremely concerned about it. He made a personal appeal to the Democratic members of the House asking that they reject the conference committee report for two specific reasons, one being the Senate confirmation issue. His intervention was successful and the report was rejected by the House (Congress Storm Breaks, 1935). FDR knew how politicized such appointments could be and wanted to prevent any precedents from being set. He intuitively understood the underlying political dynamic that Fesler would articulate more than a decade later. Eventually, the second conference committee further narrowed the McCarran rider. It only covered senior and regional officials with \$5,000+ annual salaries and who were located in the capital (US Congress, 1935b, 3-4, 7). Roosevelt reluctantly signed it into law in April, unwilling to veto the bill just for that.¹⁷

The new law particularly affected all the New Deal agencies funded by relief appropriations, including the Resettlement Administration, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the Public Works Administration (PWA). The kind of incidents that led to Fesler’s maxim, although not mentioned by him in 1949, quickly began occurring. For example, in July, a political brouhaha developed over the appointment of the Illinois state director for WPA, with the state’s two Democratic Senators in disagreement over who it should be. When the President nominated someone supported by only one of them, the other put a hold on any confirmation vote to express his pique (Associated Press [AP], 1935). In another case, the next month, McKellar reported that the Senate Appropriations Committee “adversely” recommended the nomination of a regional director for the Resettlement Administration and another senator asked to delay the consideration of a different regional director of the same

agency.¹⁸ Three days later, a third senator flatly objected to the appointment of the WPA state director proposed for his home state.¹⁹ Problems caused by Senate confirmation of WPA and PWA state and regional directors became a running problem and a seemingly permanent political issue (Macmahon et al., 1971, 269-80; Harris, 1968, 357-59).

National Emergency Council, 1935-37

The White House knew that Senate confirmation of NEC state directors would be politically tricky. After all, even before the requirement of Senate confirmation, the appointment of NEC state directors had been a cause of political controversy. For example, in mid-1934, when the White House announced the direct appointment of 43 state directors, the anti-New Deal *Chicago Tribune* gleefully reported how Illinois' two US Senators had grudgingly "assented" to the White House's preferred choice, but weren't happy about it. Further, the directors for Wisconsin and Iowa were not named in that batch ostensibly because "political animosities have prevented an agreement on the candidates for the posts," the newspaper claimed (Boettiger, 1934). Formal Senate confirmation would compound the already highly politicized situation of naming state directors.

Archival records provide an inside view that meshes with the public record regarding the impact the 1935 law requiring Senate confirmation. The White House quickly scrambled to minimize its effect. Based on an informal opinion obtained from Attorney General Homer Cummings, the only NEC state directors who would need to be confirmed by the Senate were those who were not already in office on the day the law went into effect, which was April 8, 1935. Also, any state directors appointed after that, but who had a salary lower than \$5,000 a year, would not need to face Senate confirmation.

With those two caveats White House staff identified only five state directors who would need to have their nominations sent to the Senate.²⁰ Those nominations were sent to the Senate on June 15, 1935 along with the nomination of Frank Walker, NEC's Executive Director. However, there was no logical committee to refer the nominations to because NEC was not an agency with statutory authorization. (Instead, it was funded through annual relief appropriations.)²¹ Eventually, the Finance Committee was selected as having jurisdiction over NEC nominations.²² The political implications of the requirement for Senate confirmation of NEC state directors became clear with this very first group of appointments. Fesler had noted that these problems were often based on *personnel* matters. While five of the six appointments quickly sailed through the confirmation process,²³ one didn't. Senator Harry Byrd (D-VA) was a member of the Finance Committee and he delayed consideration of the nomination for Virginia state director for a week.²⁴ While he eventually let it go through, he had demonstrated that Senators now held a virtual veto power over the appointment of directors for their home states. FDR would therefore need to be sure to have the approval of the home state senators for anyone being considered for NEC state director.

Similarly, in March 1936, Roosevelt nominated George H. Combs, Jr. to be the state director for New York (Combs's Nomination, 1936). However, when the Senate adjourned in June 1936, the nomination was still bottled up in Committee (Post for Kelly, 1936). In an effort to neutralize the inaction, Roosevelt named Combs to the post in August 1936, when the Senate was no longer in session.²⁵ It was a recess appointment, made after Congress had adjourned and therefore Congress would not be able to act on it. Finally, on January 26, 1937, the Finance Committee of the next Congress recommended Combs' appointment²⁶ and he was confirmed on January 27.²⁷ From June 1935 to June 1937, the Senate eventually approved all 11 nominations for NEC state directors.²⁸

Even when Senate confirmation would not be required, internal White House documents indicated the added attention given to such appointments due to the inevitable political considerations in the selection of state-based federal officials. In February 1937, NEC's acting head sent a memo to FDR noting his desire to appoint a new Wyoming state director and carefully noted that the Democratic senator of the state had "recommended" the person under consideration. Even though the person's salary would be less than \$5,000 and therefore would not require Senate confirmation, he still sought FDR's personal approval in case other political considerations may come into play that he was unaware of.²⁹ The president approved the appointment.

President Roosevelt then ceased making any further appointments subject to the McKellar amendment for the remaining two years of NEC's existence.³⁰ No archival documents were identified to explain the moratorium, but it is likely it reflected a deliberate effort to minimize the impact of the law. For example, as of May, 1938, NEC maintained 35 state offices. (Matters relating to the other 13 states were handled by the nearest state office.) Of those 35 state directors, only eleven had annual salaries over \$5,000, thus requiring Senate confirmation. Six state directors were exempt because they were paid \$4,500 a year, under the limit but not suspiciously so (as \$4,950 would appear). In several state offices, the senior official was an acting state director, assistant state director, executive assistant or special assistant, all paid less than \$5,000 due to their lower rank and therefore exempt from Senate review (US Congress, 1938, 304-10).

The second reason that Fesler listed for his maxim were *geographical* considerations, whether moving an office or, especially, closing a state office. These issues, too, came up within the privacy of the White House regarding NEC's field apparatus. A briefing document from early 1938 for NEC officials who were about to testify on the Hill about NEC's budget request for Fiscal year (FY) 1939 listed 11 states where the state office had been closed in late 1937 due to budget cuts.³¹ A few months later, at precisely such a hearing, Senators were most interested in the status of 'their' office. The senator from Delaware expressed his unhappiness that there was no state office in his state and the senator from Louisiana wanted to know why the Louisiana state office had recently been closed. The governor of Louisiana had personally lobbied NEC's acting executive director by coming to his Washington office in an effort to keep the office open, even though it employed only three or four staffers (US Congress, 1938, 296-7, 315). But, as Fesler later warned, the symbolism of the closing propelled the seemingly

minor event into a major political issue for the state's politicians, whether those in Washington or back home.

The most delicate political situation relating to state-based federal officials, blending both personnel and geographical factors, arose in December 1937. Due to the aforementioned budget cuts, NEC's head sought to close the state office in Connecticut. However, that state's director had been endorsed by both of Connecticut's senators and because his salary was over \$5,000 had subsequently been confirmed by the Senate. So, the action would not only close a state office (tough to do politically), but also lay off a local appointee who was under the political protection of both of the state's senators and who had the status of a senate-confirmed official. Taking care not to step into political quicksand, the NEC Acting Director was cautious and consulted in advance with FDR about the possible implications and fallout of closing that state office. He was doing more than giving a 'head's up' to the President. He needed the President's approval or disapproval, in case the political price of the proposed action would be judged as too high. It could be that Roosevelt would decide that the action wasn't worth the political price he'd have to pay with the two senators. FDR eventually decided to approve the action, writing "OK" on the memo and then initialing it.³²

Office of Government Reports, 1941-42

In the meantime, Senator McKellar had reversed course, getting on the bandwagon of requiring Senate confirmation of federal officials (including state directors). He quickly became the leader of that effort. In 1934, he had been willing to be the good soldier for the CWA bill by opposing the McCarran amendment. No longer. He was a very patronage oriented politician (Pope, 1976, 356ff) and quickly saw a way to expand the scope of the McCarran language to encompass many middle- and high-salaried federal appointees, not just state directors. As a senior member of the Appropriations Committee, he was in a position to offer such amendment to *every* funding bill during the Committee's executive sessions. He introduced riders to appropriations bills to require Senate confirmation of all higher-salaried federal officials funded by that particular bill in 1937 (President Chides Senate, 1937) and several times in 1938 (AP, 1938; Assails 'Spoils' Move, 1938; Roosevelt, 1972, 11:205-06).

As NEC's successor, OGR had been established by presidential executive order in mid-1939 and similarly was funded by money contained in relief and deficiency appropriations bills.³³ For FY1942, OGR's annual funding was included in the Second Deficiency Appropriation Bill of 1941. When the Senate Appropriations Committee reported the bill out, it contained a version of the McKellar amendment, this one specifically requiring that the Senate confirm all new appointments of OGR state directors (US Congress, 1941a, 2). In conference, the House delegation accepted the McKellar amendment (US Congress, 1941b, 4). Again, notwithstanding his distaste for such provisions, FDR signed the bill into law in early July 1942, not wanting to veto the whole bill based on that single objection. The new law stated that "no part of this appropriation shall be used for the payment of compensation to any State

director hereafter appointed unless such person is appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.”³⁴

However, no nominations were sent to the Senate for the rest of that calendar year. Testifying at a Congressional hearing in December 1941 (only two weeks after Pearl Harbor), agency director Lowell Mellett said “It so happens” that he had not nominated anyone during that period, a wording suggesting a deliberate tactic (US Congress, 1941c, 40). By declining to nominate state directors, Mellett was lowering the agency's profile on Capitol Hill, reducing contacts with the Senate and minimizing the opportunities for the conservative coalition there to continue its attacks on the agency. However, just as its predecessor had acted, the law didn't prevent OGR from employing new personnel in its field offices. The loophole it used was to appoint senior field officials to positions lower than state director. For example, in the New Jersey office in Newark, a new staffer was hired, but without the title of the state director (US Congress, 1941c, 42). The deliberateness of avoiding Senate confirmation became apparent later when OGR eventually began submitting multiple nominations of state directors to the Senate. It then nominated that same New Jersey staffer to be the State Director.³⁵

The sharp expansion of OGR after Pearl Harbor included plans to re-establish a field service with offices in all 48 states. With such a goal, OGR could no longer avoid sending nominations of state directors to the Senate. On February 2, 1942 Mellett submitted to FDR a slate of 16 recommended appointments.³⁶ In each case, he summarized the man's background and qualifications as well as which senators and other local politicians supported the appointment. Roosevelt approved the slate and the 16 nominations were sent to the Senate a week later.³⁷ When the nominations arrived in the Senate, they were referred to the Appropriations Committee, McKellar's lair.³⁸ Five days later, 12 of the 16 nominations were reported out of the Committee favorably.³⁹ The speed with which the Committee acted conveys the cursory nature of most reviews, holding only the ones that caught the attention of specific senators – precisely what prompted Fesler's maxim against state-based federal administrative regions. Two of the remaining four nominations were approved later that week. The other two nominations were never approved. One faced overt opposition from one of the two senators from that state, even though (or perhaps because) the nominee had the endorsement of the state's Democratic governor.⁴⁰

In early June, Mellett proposed appointing eight more state directors, one of them in lieu of the nomination that had been withdrawn. Again, he listed all the legislators and politicians who supported each potential nominee.⁴¹ The President reviewed them, scribbled “OK” on the list and then dictated a note to aide Marvin McIntyre saying, “As far as I can see these are all right.”⁴² Separately, Mellett wrote Roosevelt that the Maryland state director-designate was “endorsed” by one of the state's senators and was “acceptable” to the other.⁴³ That was just good enough to pass muster in the Senate. That passel of nominations was transmitted to the Senate on June 11⁴⁴ and six were eventually approved.⁴⁵ Even though the Senate approved most of the nominations to OGR's state offices, the personal involvement of the president in each personnel decision as well as the occasional Senate rejection of a nominee were further demonstrations of the personnel aspect of Fesler's maxim.

OGR's state based field service also provides tangible examples of the geographical aspect of Fesler's maxim, especially regarding closing offices. The agency's files are replete with correspondence from politicians lobbying FDR and Mellett about opening, re-opening or not closing offices; along with the patronage-style letters endorsing or vetoing specific individuals for state director. For example, in 1939 (before Senate confirmation was required by law), Mellett had selected the state director for North Carolina in response to "the insistent pressure" of one of the state's senators.⁴⁶ Once in office, the director's performance was sub-par, but it was politically delicate to discharge him. Therefore, Mellett tried to finesse that by announcing that the office would be closed due to budget limitations. Predictably, several state politicians complained to the President.⁴⁷ Roosevelt eventually sent them a letter (drafted by Mellett) stating softly that "I wish it were possible to meet your request, but I can see no way to do it at this time" due to funding cuts.⁴⁸ On other occasions, the senator from Washington State lobbied to open a second OGR office in Spokane to supplement to work of the Seattle office⁴⁹ and Nebraska's (Republican) senator lobbied to reopen the just-closed state office in Omaha.⁵⁰ The White House was caught in the cross-fire between the Mayor of Boston and a Boston Congressman (who happened to be House Majority Leader) who were lobbying for their favorite, but different, candidates for their state's director.⁵¹ That the OGR Massachusetts state office remained closed for several years was an indication that this was the only way to avoid the political problems that Fesler later identified.

In 1943, BOB's War Records Section asked staffer (and political scientist) Harold Gosnell to draft for the files a history of OGR. (By then OGR was no longer in existence, having been merged in mid-1942 into the new Office of War Information.) Never published, it was intended to be used primarily as a background document for an eventual official history of the federal government's wartime civilian effort, largely by the agencies within the Executive Office of the President (US Bureau of the Budget, 1972, xi, chap. 8).⁵² In his biography of the agency, Gosnell dryly remarked that "the requirement of Senatorial confirmation did not always facilitate the search for qualified State directors" (1974, 35). It was an apt characterization that also confirmed Fesler's maxim.

Fesler Affirmed

Controversies over Senate confirmation of administrators continued throughout the war, although usually identifying the affected officials by salary, not by titles of state or regional director. They were aimed at various agencies including the Housing Authority, Commerce Department, Selective Service System, Tennessee Valley Authority, Social Security Board, Office of Civil Defense and the War Manpower Commission (Macmahon, 1943). The issue came to a head in 1943, when the Senate passed a McKellar bill requiring confirmation of all executive branch employees earning \$4,500 a year or more. Senators opposing the bill conceded that Senate confirmation should be always be required of the "heads and assistant heads of regional, area, or *State offices*" of all federal departments and agencies (US Congress, 1943, 3, emphasis added). The Senate passed a version of McKellar's bill, but a House committee refused to act on it at all, thereby killing it (Harris, 1968, 368-74). McKellar

also introduced a companion proposal to abolish all existing regional offices of federal agencies and departments. The bill required that after this abolition of regional offices “only Congress may establish them and declare their sphere of operation” (US Library of Congress, 1944, 81). It didn’t pass either.⁵³

In 1949, Fesler had articulated his maxim that federal agencies faced inevitable political entanglements when organizing field services in state-based administrative regions. However, notwithstanding the classic status that his book has since earned, he only thinly documented the underlying justification for his axiom, providing but one example each of the personnel and geographical aspects of the political problems inherent in state-based regions. This article has sought to expand and broaden the documentation justifying Fesler’s maxim by presenting narratives from primary sources of the experiences of several federal agencies with this precise problem. As documented by both contemporaneous public documents and then-private archival records, the experiences of NEC/OGR and several other agencies during FDR’s presidency confirmed Fesler’s warning to public administration about the overwhelming political considerations that were automatically intertwined with state-based federal field administration.

As these examples all occurred prior to the publication of Fesler’s 1949 book, they serve as further confirmation and documentation of the accuracy of his principle, even though he didn’t mention them. In that respect, the additional case examples presented in this article give greater detail and additional texture to Fesler’s generalization, warning against organizing federal field administration based on states. Through this inquiry, his axiom has been independently affirmed by other proofs, including from archival documents, which had not been accessible when he was formulating it. This gives greater validation to Fesler’s 1949 warning that state-based field administration was inextricably linked to politics.

While the underpinning for Fesler’s maxim occurred more than half a century ago, the political dynamic he identified can be presumed to be a permanent one. Even conceding that politics and administration can never be truly separated, Fesler’s premise was that some structural and organizational approaches to public administration are more vulnerable to politics than others. As a generalization, his underlying concern continues to be relevant. The contemporary task is to identify newer manifestations and permutations that similarly give politics a built-in advantage over professional administration.

Acknowledgements

My thanks to the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute for a travel grant to conduct research at the Roosevelt Presidential Library and to the Golda Meir Library of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee for the 33rd annual Fromkin grant, which financed research at the National Archives II site. Grateful appreciation to the librarians and archivists of those institutions for their cheerful assistance.

Endnotes

Explanation of Referencing Style: Along with asides to the text, endnotes are used here to cite archival materials, statutes and federal serials (such as the *Congressional Record*) because the traditional author-year referencing style is ill-fitted for such sources.

¹ As part of his field research for the Brownlow Committee, Fesler visited four NEC state offices. In each, he was greeted cautiously and gingerly because it was assumed that his report would influence the fate of the state-based office network. In 2002, he amusingly recalled his 1936 visit to NEC's Michigan state office in Detroit:

the deputy director somehow persuaded me, then 24 and a bachelor, that a secretary there was much taken with me and would love to have a dinner-dance evening with me. I took her, by taxi, and we had a good evening. But, returning to her address I told the taxi driver to wait which obviously surprised – I may even say disappointed – her and I properly escorted her to her door and got back in the taxi. Unless I was and am very dull, I was being set up for a seduction that in turn would assure my favorable report on Detroit's administration of its responsibilities. Anyway, she had a lot of stuffed dolls and animals cast around her daybed.

For the letter's subscription he wrote, "I remain, purely, Jim Fesler" (email to the author, June 20, 2002, author's files).

² For a mid-1940s review of BOB's field service, see Latham (1945, 19-26). BOB's field staff morphed into the Federal Field Service, but was terminated in 1954. For a history of the BOB's field efforts and the Federal Field Service, see Kiely (1982, 119-73).

³ The first book in the series was a compilation of guest lectures in 1944 by six prominent public administration scholars and practitioners to students in a training program co-sponsored by the University of Alabama (White et al., 1945). By the next year, the series settled into a fixed pattern of hosting one leading academician who delivered a daily lecture for a week, usually on a common theme. The lectures would then be compiled and published a year or two later by the University of Alabama Press. As the fourth in the annual event, but the third as the sole lecturer, Fesler had been preceded by John Gaus (2006 [1947]) and Luther Gulick (1971 [1948]) and would be followed by Paul Appleby (1975 [1949]). Through 1970, the Press published a volume from the lecture series nearly every year. The series continues, now called the Boyne Lecture Series and takes place at Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery (AL). However, the lectures are longer consistently published. As of 2007, the two most recent volumes issued by University of Alabama Press in the series were Stillman (1998, xi-xii) and Rosenbloom (2000, xiii).

⁴ The book is now (2007) out of print and the lowest price for a used copy was \$75 (retrieved December 1, 2006: <http://www.alibris.com/search/search.cfm>).

⁵ The same year as Fesler's lectures, Latham raised the identical question that Fesler addressed. He wondered, "Does the establishment of organizational levels corresponding to state boundaries tend to expose federal administrators to partisan pressure and influence?" (1947, 16). As a report that focused mostly on suggestions for future public administration research, Latham didn't try to answer his own question. However, that he raised the question about this very specific aspect of field administration implies that he expected the answer would be yes. In 1952, Redford echoed similar concerns, noting "the danger that political factors will govern in the making of field appointments is always present" (1952, 169).

⁶ The OPA controversy was also discussed by Mansfield (1948, 213-14) and Harris (1968, 367-68). While Fesler limited his OPA reference to 1942, the controversy continued into the next year. Civil service status was extended to OPA employees because "politicians told the regional and State directors whom to appoint" (Kluttz, 1943).

⁷ The WPB field office controversy was also discussed by Shaw (1947, 43-44) and again by Fesler (1969, 267).

⁸ Fesler continued his interest in the subject, mostly comparatively (1962; 1965; 1973). He included a short section on "Field Administration" in his public administration textbook (1980, 52-55). None of his subsequent writings referred to his no-state-regions principle. Contemporary writing on the subject of field administration has been very limited. For an example, see Seidman (1998, chap. 9).

⁹ *Congressional Record (CR)* 78:2 (February 8, 1934) 2197.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, 2198.

¹¹ The Constitution requires that all spending bills begin in the House.

¹² *CR* 78:3 (February 12, 1934) 2423.

¹³ *Ibid*, 2429.

¹⁴ *CR* 78:3 (February 13, 1934) 2452.

¹⁵ *Ibid* (February 14, 1934) 2492.

¹⁶ *CR* 79:4 (March 23, 1935) 4364-65.

¹⁷ 49 Stat. 118.

¹⁸ *CR* 79:13 (August 19, 1935) 13663.

¹⁹ *Ibid* (August 22, 1935) 14112.

²⁰ Memo from Fred A. Ironside, Jr., Administrative Assistant to the President, to Rudolph Forster, White House Executive Clerk, June 13, 1935, Official Files (OF) 788, Roosevelt Presidential Library (RPL).

²¹ Congress has a two-step process for funding federal agencies. First, the standing committee with jurisdiction over the agency *authorizes* a maximum amount of money that the agency can spend, usually on a multi-year basis. Funding authorizations are approved through the full law-making process, leading up to a presidential signature or veto. Then, the Appropriations Committee *appropriates* a specific funding level for the agency for the upcoming fiscal year that is up to the authorization cap. An appropriation must also be enacted through the full lawmaking process. In the Senate, presidential nominations to positions in an agency would be referred to the standing committee that handled the agency's authorizations.

²² *Journal of the Executive Proceedings of the Senate of the United States of America (JEPS)* 76:1 (June 15, 1935) 711.

²³ *Ibid* (June 20, 1935) 744; (June 21, 1935) 755-56.

²⁴ *Ibid* (June 24, 1935) 761; (June 25, 1935) 768.

²⁵ NEC press release, August 15, 1936, OF 788, RPL.

²⁶ *JEPS* 78 (January 26, 1937) 128.

²⁷ *Ibid* (January 27, 1937) 132.

²⁸ The last appointment was for West Virginia's NEC state director, who was confirmed in June, 1937 (*JEPS* 78 [June 29, 1937] 463).

²⁹ Memo from Eugene S. Leggett, NEC Acting Executive Director, to President Roosevelt, February 13, 1937, Box 890, Record Group (RG) 44, National Archives (NA) II.

³⁰ NEC was abolished and replaced by OGR effective July 1, 1939.

³¹ NEC list, untitled and undated (probably early 1938), Box 889, RG 44, NA II.

³² Memo from Eugene S. Leggett, NEC Acting Executive Director, to President Roosevelt, December 29, 1937, Box 890, RG 44, NA II.

³³ In mid-1941 Congress authorized funding for OGR, making it eligible for funding from the annual Independent Offices Appropriation Bill, beginning with FY1943.

³⁴ 55 Stat. 542.

³⁵ CR 88:1 (February 9, 1942) 1131.

³⁶ Memo from Lowell Mellett to the President, February 2, 1942, OF 788, RPL.

³⁷ CR 88:1 (February 9, 1942) 1131.

³⁸ *JEPS* 84 (February 9, 1942) 71-72. The nominations were sent there because, until the previous June, OGR had lacked Congressional authorization and was funded from appropriations in relief and deficiency appropriation bills. The agency hadn't had a standing committee that *authorized* its funding. Senator Lister Hill (D-AL), Chair of the Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments, requested that in the future OGR nominations for state directors be referred to his committee, given that it was his committee which had handled the authorizing legislation the previous year (*ibid* [February 17, 1942] 100).

³⁹ *JEPS* 84 (February 13, 1942) 91.

⁴⁰ Philipps Nomination, 1942; letter from Senator William H. Smathers (D-NJ) to Lowell Mellett, March 13, 1942, Mellett Papers, RPL. This author was unable to locate any public or archival record explaining the lack of approval of the other nominee. Both nominations were eventually formally withdrawn (Memo from Lowell Mellett to the President, June 30, 1942, OF 788, RPL; CR 88:5 [July 6, 1942] 5990).

⁴¹ Memos from Lowell Mellett to the President, June 3 and 6, 1942, OF 788, RPL.

⁴² Memo from the President to Mac [Marvin H. McIntyre], June 8, 1942, OF 788, RPL.

⁴³ Memo from Lowell Mellett to the President, June 6, 1942, OF 788, RPL.

⁴⁴ *JEPS* 84 (June 11, 1942) 359.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 383, 410. Two days later, Roosevelt signed an executive order creating the Office of War Information by merging OGR and several other communications agencies.

⁴⁶ Memo from Lowell Mellett [to the President?], September 29, 1939, OF 788, RPL.

⁴⁷ Telegram from A. D. Folger, National Democratic Committeeman for North Carolina, to the President, September 27, 1939, OF 788, RPL.

⁴⁸ Letter from the President to A. D. Folger, September 29, 1939, OF 788, RPL.

⁴⁹ Letter from Senator Mon C. Wallgren to Lowell Mellett, February 20, 1941, Mellett Papers, RPL.

⁵⁰ Letter from Senator Hugh Butler to Lowell Mellett, January 14, 1942, Mellett Papers, RPL.

⁵¹ Letter from Boston Mayor James M. Curley to the President, June 13, 1941, OF 788; letter from the President to Congressman John W. McCormack, November 24, 1939, Mellett Papers, RPL.

⁵² Most of the wartime civilian agencies were created by executive order, not statute. They were created as subunits of the Office for Emergency Management, the sixth agency of the Executive Office of the President.

⁵³ CR 89:13 (Index) 675.

References

Emmerich, Herbert (1971). *Federal Organization and Administrative Management* (University: University of Alabama Press).

Fesler, James W. (1936a). "Federal Administrative Regions," *American Political Science Review* 30:2 (April) 257-68.

Fesler, James W. (1936b). "Standardization of Federal Administrative Regions," *Social Forces* 15:1 (October) 12-21.

Fesler, James W. (1937). "Executive Management and the Federal Field Service," in The President's Committee on Administrative Management, *Report of the Committee with Studies of Administrative Management in the Federal Government* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office) 273-94.

Fesler, James W. (1949). *Area and Administration* (University: University of Alabama Press).

Fesler, James W. (1962). "The Political Role of Field Administration," in Ferrel Heady and Sybil L. Stokes (eds.), *Papers in Comparative Public Administration* (Ann Arbor: Institute of Public Administration, University of Michigan) 117-43.

Fesler, James W. (1964 [1949]). *Area and Administration* (University: University of Alabama Press).

Fesler, James W. (1965). "Approaches to the Understanding of Decentralization," *Journal of Politics* 27:3 (August) 536-66.

Fesler, James W. (1973). "The Basic Theoretical Question: How to Relate Area and Function," in Leigh E. Grosenick (ed.), *The Administration of the New Federalism: Objectives and Issues* (Washington, DC: American Society for Public Administration) 4-14.

Fesler, James W. (1980). *Public Administration: Theory and Practice* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall).

Fesler, James W. (1987). "The Brownlow Committee Fifty Years Later," *Public Administration Review* 47:4 (July/August) 291-96.

Fesler, James W., et al. (1969 [1947]). *Industrial Mobilization for War: History of the War Production Board and Predecessor Agencies; Vol. I: Program and Administration* (New York: Greenwood).

Front Matter (1986). *Public Administration Review* 46:3 (May/June) i-ii, 191-94.

Gaus, John Merriman (2006 [1947]). *Reflections on Public Administration* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press).

Gibson, Pamela A., and Gregory B. Stolcis (2006). "Reenacting, Retracing, and Rediscovering History: Making a Connection in the Public Administration Curriculum," *Journal of Public Administration Education* 12:1 (Winter) 63-80.

Gosnell, Harold F. (1974 [1943]). "Office of Government Reports," typescript report prepared for the Committee on War Records Section, Bureau of the Budget, Reel 46 (microfilm), *World War II Administrative Histories* (New Haven, CT: Research Publications).

Gulick, Luther (1971 [1948]). *Administrative Reflections from World War II* (Westport, CT: Greenwood). Originally published by University of Alabama Press.

Harris, Joseph P. (1968 [1953]). *The Advice and Consent of the Senate: A Study of the Confirmation of Appointments by the United States Senate* (New York: Greenwood).

Kiely, Edward S. (1982). *The Evolution of Federal Field Coordinating Organizations, 1921-1982*, dissertation for Ph.D., University of Pittsburgh.

Kluttz, Jerry (1943). "The Federal Diary: Most OPA Jobs Subject To Civil Service Rules" (daily column for federal employees), *Washington Post* (June 22) B1.

Latham, Earl (1945). "Executive Management and the Federal Field Service," *Public Administration Review* 5:1 (Winter) 16-27.

Latham, Earl (1947). *The Federal Field Service: An Analysis with Suggestions for Research* (Chicago: Public Administration Service).

Lee, Mordecai (2005). *The First Presidential Communications Agency: FDR's Office of Government Reports* (Albany: State University of New York Press).

Macmahon, Arthur W. (1943). "Senatorial Confirmation," *Public Administration Review* 3:4 (Autumn) 281-96.

Macmahon, Arthur W., John D. Millett, and Gladys Ogden (1971 [1941]). *The Administration of Federal Work Relief* (New York: Da Capo).

Mansfield, Harvey C., and Associates (1948). *A Short History of OPA* (Washington, DC: Office of Temporary Controls, Office of Price Administration).

McNabb, David E. (2002). *Research Methods in Public Administration and Nonprofit Management: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe).

Newbold, Stephanie P., and Larry D. Terry (2006). "The President's Committee on Administrative Management: The Untold Story and the Federalist Connection," *Administration & Society* 38:5 (November) 523-55.

"\$950,000,000 in Aid Voted by Senate" (1934). *New York Times* (February 9) 8.

"Pay Restoration Voted By Senate" (1934). *New York Times* (February 22) 1-2.

"Philipps Nomination Withdrawn" (1942). *New York Times* (July 7) 15.

Pope, Robert Dean (1976). *Senatorial Baron: The Long Political Career of Kenneth D. McKellar*, dissertation for Ph.D., Yale University.

"Post for Kelly Unconfirmed" (1936). *New York Times* (June 22) 3.

"President Chides Senate in Message" (1937). *New York Times* (June 30) 8.

Raadschelders, Jos C. N. (2000). "Administrative History of the United States: Development and State of the Art," *Administration & Society* 32:5 (November) 499-528.

Redford, Emmette S. (1952). "Problems of Mobilization Agencies in Establishing Field Organizations," *Public Administration Review* 12:3 (Summer) 166-72.

Roosevelt, Franklin D. (1972). *Complete Presidential Press Conferences of Franklin D. Roosevelt* (New York: Da Capo).

Rosenbloom, David H. (2000). *Building a Legislative-Centered Public Administration: Congress and the Administrative State, 1946-1999* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press).

Seidman, Harold (1998). *Politics, Position, and Power: The Dynamics of Federal Organization*, 5th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press).

Shaw, Carroll K. (1947). *Field Organization and Administration of the War Production Board and Predecessor Agencies, May 1940 to November 1945* (Washington, DC: Bureau of Demobilization, Civilian Production Administration).

Stillman, Richard J., II (1998). *Creating the American State: The Moral Reformers and the Modern Administrative World They Made* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press).

US Bureau of the Budget (1972 [1946]). *The United States at War: Development and Administration of the War Program by the Federal Government* (New York: Da Capo).

US Congress (1934). House, Committee of Conference, *Continuation of Civil Works Program*, 73rd Congress, 2nd session, H. Rep. 700.

US Congress (1935a). House, Committee of Conference, *House Joint Resolution 117*, 74th Congress, 1st session, H. Rep. 523.

US Congress (1935b). House, Committee of Conference, *House Joint Resolution 117*, 74th Congress, 1st session, H. Rep. 609.

US Congress (1938). Senate, Committee on Appropriations, *Work Relief and Public Works Appropriation Act of 1938*, public hearings, 75th Congress, 3rd session.

US Congress (1941a). Senate, Committee on Appropriations, *Second Deficiency Appropriation Bill, 1941*, 77th Congress, 1st session, S. Rep. 493.

US Congress (1941b). House, Committee of Conference, *Second Deficiency Appropriation Bill, 1941*, 77th Congress, 1st session, H. Rep. 894.

US Congress (1941c). House, Committee on Appropriations, *Additional Appropriations Incident to the National Defense, Fiscal Years 1942 and 1943*, public hearings, 77th Congress, 2nd session.

US Congress (1943). Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, *Senate Confirmation of Officers and Employees of the United States: Minority Views*, 78th Congress, 1st session, S. Rep. 180, Part 2.

US Library of Congress (1944). Legislative Reference Service, *Digest of Public General Bills with Index, Seventy-Eighth Congress, First Session, 1943, Final Issue* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office).

White, Leonard D., Marshall E. Dimock, Donald C. Stone, Gordon R. Clapp, John D. Millett, and Arthur W. Macmahon (1945). *New Horizons in Public Administration: A Symposium* (University: University of Alabama Press).

Dr. **Mordecai Lee** is a Professor of Governmental Affairs at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. His research interests are governmental history and public relations in public administration.

Fuzzy Lines: Using the Best-Selling Novel to Illustrate the Blurring Boundaries of “Public”

Nolan J. Argyle and Gerald A. Merwin

*O I see flashing that this America is only you and me,
Its power, weapons, testimony, are you and me...
Walt Whitman*

Introduction

One of the authors first read the line by Whitman quoted above while studying poetry as part of his 7th grade Calvert School correspondence assignment while residing in Tabriz, Iran. “By Blue Ontario’s Shore” conveyed a special feeling to one several thousand miles from “home.” Reading those lines again in Barber’s *A Place for Us* (1998, 4) brought those feelings back. *America is only you and me*—which meant then and means now that “you and me” represent the best, and the worst, of what is America. This is something the authors try to instill in their students: as current and future public administrators, “you and me” have a responsibility greater than our private-sector counterparts; we exercise public power. As “Sayre’s Law” points out, public and private administration are alike in all unimportant aspects (see Allison, 1979). And, as Easton argued, what makes the difference important is the public sector’s “authoritative allocation of values for a society”—the exercise of sovereignty (1953, 65). Yet, as Frederickson tells us, “the sovereignty of jurisdictions, and particularly of nation-states, is evaporating out at the top, leaking out at the sides, and seeping out at the bottom” (2005, 8). Privatization, contracting out, and a host of other current trends blur the line between public and private—they create what at best is a fuzzy line.

Lopez-de-Silanes, Shleifer, and Vishny (1997) provided examples of the range of privatization:

A city or county government may contract with a private company to pick up garbage, to keep city parks clean, to manage its hospitals, to provide

ambulance services, to run schools and airports, or even to provide police and fire protection.

Markusen (2003) raises warnings about privatizing national security; indeed, she finds privatizing such services particularly troubling. She cites a small but growing trend to privatize military services, a trend that really begins to blur the line between public and private sectors.

This study examines yet one additional area where the lines between public and private have gotten even fuzzier—the best selling novel. It uses the writings of Tom Clancy and Clive Cussler, two authors whose names on a novel guarantee best-seller status. It will do so in the context of what a civic community and civil society are, and how they relate to the public-private question, a question that has renewed life in public administration.

Public is Different

In his classic work, *The Politics of Management* (1985), Douglas Yates, Jr. identified a number of key similarities and differences in management in public and private organizations, two of which are key points in this discussion: 1) divisions of authority and accountability and 2) openness and closedness.

The public sector is characterized by divided—some may say fragmented—authority and accountability. The authors of the *American Constitution* wanted to create a strong central government, but they also wanted to limit power—not an easy balance to pull off. From the start of our nation operating under the new government created by the Constitution, we have been pulled between the needs of a strong central government capable of taking decisive action and limiting governmental power to protect individual rights. Thus the Founding Fathers created a system of checks and balances. Public administration is primarily under the executive, but the legislative and judicial branches also play major roles in the administrative function.

Public administration not only operates under divided authority, it operates in a climate that is often distrustful of public power. Practitioners and students of public administration must take these facts into account to adequately understand their role in the American political system. Yet training in public administration seldom emphasizes this. Luther Gulick, writing for the 50th anniversary issue of *Public Administration Review*, argued (1990, 60):

.. most political science majors graduate with enough civic education to become effective citizens. But the focus of public administration programs has been increasingly on functional skills and techniques—health administration, transportation, budgeting methods, and so forth. Effective combination of civic values in general education with specialization in technical education still awaits attack

Few if any public affairs faculties have discovered how to counter the anti-government drift of the national culture.

This anti-governmental drift is defined, in part, by a shift in the way we view civil society, including how we define public and private spheres.

Civil Society and Democracy

Benjamin R. Barber argues that there are three ways of viewing civil society: 1) the libertarian perspective, which sees civil society as a synonym for the private sector, 2) the communitarian perspective, which argues that it is a synonym for community, and 3) the strong democratic perspective, which sees civil society as the domain between government and market (1998, 12-37).

The classic liberal or libertarian model sees the state as, at best, a necessary evil. In its extreme, this perspective views society as nothing more than the individuals who comprise it. Virtue is found with the people as individuals; governmental power is seen “as the nemesis of liberty” (Barber, 1998, 17). Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) presented a case for this view in his *A Discourse upon the Origin and the Foundation of the Inequality among Mankind* (2005). Pointing out that when philosophers speak of a state of nature, they fail to take it to such a condition, that when they “speak of savages they speak of citizens,” he argues that civil society is needed to become truly human. We develop language, indeed, all that make us human through intercourse with others. The state develops from these individuals in society, and in doing so the state creates inequality; inequality that may be overcome only through the common will, a conclusion that leads him to conclude that the only possibly virtuous state must be small enough for citizens to directly participate in establishing the rules and laws they will live by. He rejects John Locke’s (1632-1704) view, developed in his *Second Treatise of Government* (2005), that majority will determined through a representative body (legislature) is the best representative of natural law. Under his arguments, government serves as society’s agent, and retains its legitimacy only as long as it serves the interests of society.

The communitarian perspective assumes “that people are embedded in communities and tied to one another by bonds that precede and condition their individuality.” Civil society is defined by associations, many of which are “given (‘ascriptive’) rather than chosen (‘voluntary’)” (Barber, 1998, 23). For Barber (1998, 24.):

If the defining actor of civil society in the libertarian model is, in the founding phase, the rights-bearing rebel, and in established democracies the rights-bearing consumer, in the communitarian model he is the clansman: the bondsman tied to community by birth, blood, and bathos. Citizenship here takes on a cultural feel and marks its territory by exclusion rather than inclusion, often specifying anonymous “others” and

“outsiders” whose foreignness helps to define the excluding (thus exclusive) insiders’ community.

These communities are held together, then, by social glue. Such communities may or may not be democratic, depending upon the nature of the communities. Communitarians seek to subordinate the state to the community. They seek governmental policies that support the values of the “community”—as they define “their” communities.

The problem for this view in the United States is that we are a society made up not of a “community” but of “communities”—and the various communities define their own value structure. Fundamental Christians and other cultural conservatives define “family values” quite different, for example, than do many self-identified communitarians. Pat Buchanan is more than happy to tell Hillary Clinton where she can stick her “village.”

Barber’s third perspective—the strong democratic perspective—presumes a distinction between public and private sectors (1998, 34-35):

This strong democratic perspective on civil society distinguishes public and private realms—a state sector occupied by government and its sovereign institutions, and a private sector occupied by individuals and their contract associations in the “market”—and presumes a third domain mediating between them, sharing the virtues of each.

In this view civil society includes those groups that “mediate” between the public and private spheres, but recognizes the legitimacy of both in their place. These mediating groups include, for Barber, groups that “fall short of the pure democratic, voluntaristic ideal” such as churches (where baptism etc. may exclude non-members) and the N.A.A.C.P. (1998, 35).

In championing this third perspective Barber is calling for a pluralistic society—a “civic republicanism’...a model for an ideal democratic civil society: with citizens who are neither mere consumers of government services and rights-bearers against government intrusion, on the one hand, nor mere voters and passive watchdogs for whom representative governors are only vestigially accountable, on the other” (1998, 36-37). A society, in other words, that holds Whitman’s words in mind: that America is *you and me*.

Such a view requires a citizenry—a strong democratic civil society—that respects both public and private sectors. Governmental institutions are seen as “sovereign,” with the private sector governed by the marketplace within rules established by sovereign governments. Yet recent developments in Americans’ views of government seem to threaten that strong civil society—government has been increasingly seen as the “enemy;” we seem to be moving toward Barber’s first perspective, toward a more libertarian/classic liberal view competing with a fundamentalist communitarian view. For those who agree with Barber that the third perspective provides “thicker and more rewarding” social relationships than the first two

perspectives, current trends are disturbing (1998, 37). The implications for the legitimacy and accountability issues facing public administration are equally disturbing.

The New Public Management

In 1984 Francis E. Rourke argued that public administration had become the victim of anti-bureaucratic trends—government was seen as the problem, not the solution, to the problems facing American society. Rourke pointed out that public managers had come out well in the various scandals, including Watergate, which had rocked confidence in the public sector—that the careerists had served a strong democratic society well. In this he was a fading voice. Public choice theory and the new public management were emerging as dominant themes in public administration.

Public choice theorists argued that government needed to recognize that rational self-interested individuals could improve governmental performance by introducing market forces to governmental operation (Ostrom, 1974). Osborne and Gaebler (1992) called for “reinventing government” in part by creating a more entrepreneurial government—one that responded to market forces. The new public management came out of these movements

In many ways the “new public management” fits within the libertarian/classic liberal perspective of civil society. It is a product of the reinventing government movement, rooted in public choice theory, and gained popularity in part due to the fiscal pressures facing governments at all levels during the decade of the 70s. Seeking “a government that ‘works better and costs less,’” (Denhardt, 2004, 136) the movement began to blur the line between public and private sectors. Bozeman (1987) raised questions about the meaningfulness of the legal distinction between public and private. This blurring found expression at the federal level in the National Performance Review (NPR) during the Clinton administration and to similar moves in many state and local governments. It also led to an increased reliance on the marketplace—efficiency and effectiveness were to be primary values—as an evaluative mechanism and upon the private sector to implement public policies. As Haque states (2001, 65):

Public service itself has undergone businesslike transformation, especially under the influence of current global context characterized by the triumph of market forces and the reorientation of state policies toward deregulation, privatization, and liberalization.

And, as Haque points out, the new public management, under a variety of labels, is now found in countries from Belgium to Zambia.

The federal government has created a number of hybrid organizations as part of the new public management—organizations that possess characteristics of both governmental and private sectors. Koppell defines these organizations as “an entity created by the federal government ... to address a specific public policy purpose. It is owned in whole or part by

private individuals or corporations and/or generates revenue to cover its operating costs” (2003, 12). There are hundreds of these organizations associated with the federal government today. Their growth has been fueled by at least four major factors (Moe, 2001, 290-291):

1. Current controls on the federal budget process that encourage agencies to develop new sources of revenues;
2. Desire by advocates of agencies and programs to be except from central management laws, especially statutory ceilings on personnel and compensation;
3. Contemporary appeal of generic, business-focused values as the basis for a New Public Management; and
4. Belief that management flexibility requires entity-specific laws and regulations, even at the cost of less accountability to representative institutions.

Factors 2 and 4 raise interesting questions for substantive democracy—for the *America is only you and me* view raised by Whitman.

As pointed out above, Yates argued that issues of authority and accountability were key distinctions to the differences between the public and private sectors. The Constitution created a complex system of checks and balances that divided authority in a manner designed to promote accountability. Public managers are part of the executive branch, but are also held accountable to the legislative and judicial branches—they are to operate as constitutional officers—to “maintain the constitutional balance of powers in support of individual rights” (Rohr, 1986, 181). Efficiency remains a value under this view, but it is clearly subordinated to accountability.

These issues have received a great deal of attention in recent years, more attention than can be given in this study.¹ The blurring boundary between the public and private sector have been well-documented, arguments pro and con for the new public management well-made, and the questions of how these issues affect civic society and substantive democracy explored. The fuzziness of the line is well-established; we now turn to the best-selling novel as one way of illustrating just how fuzzy that line has become.

Fuzzy Lines and the Best-Selling Novel

The use of fiction to illustrate administrative truths is well established (Argyle and Allen; Holzer, Morris, and Ludwin; Marini). A wide range of fiction has been used as case studies as well as used to illuminate specific concepts. Sophocles’ *Antigone* can generate a discussion on the meaning of justice, *Catch-22* to explore bureaucratic pathologies, and *Covenant* to illustrate the role of bureaucracy as a control mechanism.

¹ Laurence E. Lynne, Jr.’s *The Myth of the Bureaucratic Paradigm: What Traditional Public Administration Really Stood For* provides perhaps the best single overview of the questions between “traditional” public administration paradigms and the new public management.

Some view the popular, best-selling novel as questionable in this regard—one should stick to those works that have stood the test of time. Indeed, one of the authors presented a paper on using two novels as case studies: Asimov's *The Caves of Steel* and Clancy's *Clear and Present Danger*. One member of the audience indicated that the presentation dealt with **class** and **crass**—with Clancy clearly representing the “crass” part of the presentation. Yet students are much more likely to be familiar with the works of Clancy than of Asimov—let alone Sophocles. And both Clancy's and Cussler's works reach a far wider audience than any text on administrative theory. Their works may help shape the popular image of the public sector—or they may reflect that image; either way, they tell us something of how the many in the general public view the public sector.² As McCurdy points out, “good administrative fiction is fiction that works. It should be relevant to the reader's experience, lively and creative, and skillful in relating current events to fundamental issues” (1973, 54). Clancy's and Cussler's novels fit these requirements.

A number of best-selling authors deal with the relationship of public and private sectors, and many of those authors have seen their work translated into movies. Helen MacInnes wrote a series of novels where ordinary people get caught up in extraordinary events involving agents for evil and agents of government—the good guys; Alistair Maclean's *The Secret Ways* provides excellent insights into the origin and nature of the Cold War. Ian Fleming gave us Bond—James Bond—a British agent equally at home fighting agents of other governments or of powerful—and evil—private organizations.

While each of the authors listed above has something to offer the student of public administration, none has the direct relationship that both Clancy and Cussler have to illustrating the increasingly fuzzy line between the public and private sectors. Both produced a series of novels in which the central protagonist was a public administrator. Both then wrote or co-authored novels where the protagonists worked for private firms, doing “what the U.S. can't” (Ludlum 2005, 190).

Clancy made Jack Ryan something of a household name through a series of books, many of which were turned into popular movies. While the novels weren't set in a strict time sequence—the first in its chronological setting, *Patriot Games*, was not the first published—the novels do see Ryan progress up the ladder as a public employee. He begins as a university professor (naval history) at The Naval Academy in *Patriot Games*—a prequel. He works as an analyst for the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), becomes an Assistant Director and then Director before moving to the political actor arena. He is appointed to fill out a term as Vice President, then becomes the ultimate public administrator: President of the United States. In film he is played first by Alec Baldwin (*The Hunt for Red October*) but is really personified by Harrison Ford. He comes across, both in print and in film, as a strong individual, but one who does have doubts and weaknesses. He works within the system, even though he finds the system quite flawed at times.

² The issue of whether the popular media in any form leads or reflects public views is an interesting one, but one beyond the scope of this paper.

Cussler’s hero, Dirk Pitt, is a modern-day (actually near future in each novel) version of a swash-buckling Errol Flynn. He has none of the doubts and weaknesses that show up in Ryan—a fact that may help explain why the one attempt to take him to the wide screen (*Sahara*) lacked the success of the Ryan movies. Pitt is an Air Force Major on detached service to the National Underwater Maritime Administration (NUMA), a fictional federal agency concerned with everything under the world’s oceans—and, as it turns out, most of what is above them. He eventually ends up as NUMA’s Director.³

From Jack Ryan, Public Servant to Jack Ryan Jr., Private Assassin

Clancy is not a fan of government or of politicians; he is a fan of the CIA, the FBI, the military, and of covert operations. Clancy seldom misses a chance to praise the virtues of the private sector over the public. As just one example, Ryan’s wife is a surgeon at Johns Hopkins, and Clancy uses her role to blast governmental involvement in the provision of medical care. This reaches a peak in *Red Rabbit* (2002), a novel in which Jack and his family are based in England. Clancy spends far more time than can be warranted by the novel’s plot line bashing socialized medicine in Britain. At the same time his hero, Jack Ryan, is often frustrated by “the system,” but he works within it.

Ryan has a supporting cast while working his way up through the ranks of the CIA. Some of these characters, such as the CIA’s Ritter (*Clear and Present Danger*, 1989), are career administrators using their position for their own advantage with little regard for rule of law or the public interest. Most of the supporting cast, however, is portrayed as honest, hard-working, underpaid individuals committed to public service.

Two of Clancy’s books—*Clear and Present Danger* (1989) and *The Teeth of the Tiger* (2003) illustrate the change from a clear line between public and private sectors and the development of a very fuzzy line. The first deals with what appeared to be one of America’s bigger problems at the time: drug cartels and the inability to effectively deal with the illegal drug trade. The second deals with what has been seen as *the problem* by the current Bush administration since 9/11: terrorism. *Clear and Present Danger* has politicians and some career administrators going too far in pursuit of an arguably good policy. Ryan, along with other career administrators, emerge as the “good guys” of the morality tale—they fill the role that Francis Rourke argues was filled by career bureaucrats on more than one occasion (1984).

Clear and Present Danger has a president frustrated by his inability to make an effective dent in the drug trade. His National Security Advisor, Vice Admiral James Cutter, USN, has been

³ Cussler also introduces another NUMA team headed by Kurt Austin in a series co-authored with Paul Kempres. The characters in this series include several introduced in his original series, and all work within government.

pushing for direct action against the Columbian drug cartel—action outside that sanctioned by Congress. The book opens with the following conversation between the two (1989, 16):

“I promised the American people that we’d do something about this problem,” the President observed crossly. “And we haven’t accomplished shit.”

“Sir, you cannot deal with threats to national security through police agencies. Either our national security is threatened or it is not.” Cutter had been hammering that point for years. Now, finally, he had a responsive audience.

Another grunt: “Yeah, well, I said that, too, didn’t I?”

“Yes, Mr. President. It’s time they learned a lesson about how the big boys play.”

That lesson was to be taught by inserting US Special Forces into Columbia in a covert operation to take the battle to the cartel along with using other military forces to damage their ability to operate. This included a covert air strike that wiped out much of the top leadership of the cartel—along with women and children. Thus in 1989 Clancy predicted the types of action the United States is currently taking along the Afghan-Pakistan border. One big difference: the action in Columbia was secret, deniable, and without the knowledge of either the American people or its elected representatives.

Ryan, as Deputy Director Intelligence (DDI) at the CIA, is not one of the few people who know about the President and National Security Advisor’s private little war, but he begins to suspect something is wrong. He works within the system to uncover the covert operation and bring it to a halt. He faced down the President in the process (1989, 651)

“You allowed this to happen, sir.” Ryan tried to look him straight in the eye, and on the moment of wavering, it was the President who looked away. “My God, sir, how could you do it?”

“The people wanted to stop the flow of drugs.”

“Then do it, do just what you tried to do, but do it in accordance with the law.”

“It won’t work that way.”

“Why not?” Ryan asked. “Have the American people ever objected when we used force to protect our interests?”

Ryan and the other career officials working with him effectively play the role noted by Rourke. It is a role consistent with Barber’s third view of civil society: a strong democratic civil society, a view absent in his later novel.

The Teeth of the Tiger paints a different portrait of civil society. Government is seen as incapable of acting effectively in the national interest—the private sector must step in and save the day. A private “consulting firm,” Hendley Associates, headed by a former senator and a close friend of now ex-President Jack Ryan is set up to handle jobs government cannot do. American intelligence is too hampered by turf battles between agencies, American operations are being too heavily scrutinized by an unfriendly Congress. “God himself might be able to fix it,” one character remarks, “but even he would have a really good day to bring it off” (2003, 26). Hendley thinks about what led him to set up a private firm to carry out foreign policy (2003, 31):

Maybe it was this simple: any newly elected official was seduced into the game the same way Cleopatra had snookered Gaius Julius Caesar. It was the staffs, he knew, the “professional” political helpers who “guided” their employers in to the right way to be reelected, which had become the Holy Grail of public service. America did not have a hereditary ruling class, but it did have plenty of people happy to lead their employers onto the righteous path of government divinity. And working inside the system just didn’t work. So, to accomplish anything, you just had to be outside the system. Way outside the system.

One of the recruits—or rather an enlistee—to Hendley Associates is Jack Ryan, Jr., the ex-President’s son. Jack Jr. deduces what Hendley Associates is and pays it a visit. He and Hendley discuss his upbringing, his recent graduation from college, and then his career plans. Jack Jr. indicates that he thinks Hendley Associates is more than it seems. Hendley asks him what he thinks it is, and Ryan replies (2002, 44-45):

“...Senator, I think you’re a spook, and I think Hendley Associates is a privately funded spook shop that works off the books—completely outside the federal budget process. So, you don’t have to worry about senators and congress-critters snooping around and leaking stuff because they think you do *bad things*....”

Jack Jr. joins the firm as an analyst—the same start his father had at the CIA.

Ryan is instrumental in learning that Islamic terrorists and Columbia drug lords—the old enemy in *Clear and Present Danger*—are about to team up. He, along with others, foil a number of terrorist plots. Finally, Jack Jr. operates in the field, where as a result of unexpected circumstances he becomes the only one in a position to assassinate one of the terrorists. He does this with little remorse. The final statement in the book comes from his thoughts (2003):

They’d killed four people who had struck out at America, and now American had struck back on their turf and by their rules. The good part was that the enemy could not possibly know what kind of cat was in the jungle. They’d hardly met the teeth.

Thus the transition was made; a transition from covert operations being the domain of the public sector to the private—from a clear to a very fuzzy line.

Dirk Pitt Needs Help?

A similar transition occurs in the novels by Clive Cussler, but, as Pitt is to Ryan—far more colorful—Cussler’s “Corporation” is to Hendley Associates. Cussler first introduces the central character to his private NUMA in *Flood Tide* (1997). Juan Cabrillo steps in to provide assistance (Cussler and Dirgo, 2003, frontispiece):

Cabrillo ran a ship called the *Oregon*, on the outside completely nondescript, but on the inside packed with state-of-the-art intelligence gathering equipment. It was a completely private enterprise, available for any government agency that could afford it. It went where no warship could go, transported secret cargo without suspicion, plucked data out of the air—it was the perfect complement to NUMA.

The idea that Pitt might need assistance seems strange for anyone familiar with the character Cussler created, but he apparently did.

Pitt has a career similar to Jack Ryan, Sr. He doesn’t teach at Annapolis, he is, however, an Air Force officer; he doesn’t make a fortune on the market due to his financial expertise, he does collect a fortune in antique vehicles; he has not only a son but a son and daughter who follow in his footsteps; he doesn’t move to the head of his agency and then on to vice president and then president of the United States, but he does move up to the head of his agency when his boss becomes vice president. Who knows what the future may hold in store? Also like Ryan, Pitt works within the system.

Cabrillo heads what is simply called “the Corporation.” It controls a number of “legitimate” private firms from mining to a jet charter service, all of which are profitable. Cabrillo heads a team of mercenaries—guns for hire. All were specialists in their own field and all had served in the armed forces. They were for hire, they worked for profit, but that didn’t “rule out good works at the same time....” (Cussler and Dirgo, 2003, 20). Nor are their good works on a small scale. In *Golden Buddha* (2003) they manage to wage a small war, wrest Tibet from China, and put the Dalai Lama back on the throne. Nothing small here. In *Dark Watch* (written with Jack DuBrul, 2005) they save the world from a deadly international conspiracy involving a slave-trade.

Cabrillo’s excesses are nothing new for Cussler. After all, Pitt saves the world from extinction while finding the lost Atlantis in one novel (1999); the difference is in who and what they work for. Pitt works within Barber’s strong democratic system; Cabrillo is a libertarian.

The Danger of Fuzzy Lines

Fuzzy lines between public and private are a reality, they aren't just something created in works by Clancy and Cussler. The new public management moves us toward Barber's libertarian perspective. It promotes Gulick's "anti-government drift of national culture" (1990, 60). This drift is reflected in many ways, from the negative views of government reported in public opinion polls to the rise of "militias" linked to the Oklahoma City bombing and the "Freemen" standoff in Montana. In the 2000 election George W. Bush stated that his opponent, Albert Gore, "trusted Washington" while he, "W," trusted "the people." He continued that theme in the 2004 election, portraying John Kerry as a beltway insider. This anti-government bias is not a new phenomenon. Americans have always been somewhat "antigovernment" (see Argyle, 1999). We want the benefits that come from governmental action, but, at the same time, we want to be free of "governmental interference." We want government to stay out of our personal lives-but we want it to make our kids pray in school. Government was viewed more favorably in the immediate aftermath of the attacks of 9/11, but we're already seeing that begin to dissipate.

The best selling novel may be used to illustrate the extent of this drift. Jack Ryan Jr.'s acceptance of his role as a private-sector assassin as in the public interest may be contrasted to his father's arguments (1989, 653):

This is supposed to be a democracy. We let the people know something, or at least we let *them* know." He waved at the Congressmen. "When a government decides to kill people who threaten its interests or its citizens, it doesn't have to be murder. Not always. I'm just not sure where the line is. But I don't have to be sure. Other people are supposed to tell us that.... You don't make public policy this way, damn it!

"Other people." American citizens, either directly or through their representatives make public policy, they establish a clear rather than fuzzy line—accountability must be present for Ryan. He recognizes Whitman's admonition: *America is only you and me, its power, weapons, testimony, are you and me....*

To those who agree with Barber, those who think that a strong democratic civil society is what America should be, the best-selling novel should serve as a warning. Whether it reflects or leads trends in society is immaterial; it does reflect what the authors of this study find a disturbing trend. Not all best-selling novels of this genre reflect this drift however. Perhaps no popular author highlighted the dangers of private organizations acting in what they perceived the best interest of the state more than did Robert Ludlum. After his death the novels issued under his name continue that warning. Thus *The Ambler Warning* (2005) has the *Strategic Services Group*, ostensibly a consulting firm but actually a group specializing in covert operations that, as their head, Paul Fenton, states: "can do what the U.S. can't." The hero of the book thinks (2005, 190):

Zealots like Paul Fenton were all the more dangerous because they viewed themselves in a heroic light. Even as their lofty rhetoric could justify every kind of inhumanity, they quickly lost the ability to distinguish between self-interest and the Great Cause to which they devoted themselves. They suckled their corporate entities on public funds while sermonizing about the virtues of private enterprise. True believers ... placed themselves above the laws of men, above justice itself—which made them a threat to the very security they prized.

A warning, indeed—a warning absent from the works of Clancy and Cussler.

References

Allison, Graham. (1979). Public and Private Management: Are They Fundamentally Alike in all Unimportant Respects? *Proceedings for the Public Management Research Conference*, 27 - 38.

Argyle, Nolan J. 1999. Mr. Findley, the Whiskey Rebellion, and Public Administration. *Public Voices* 4.

Argyle, Nolan J. and Lee M. Allen. 1996. Science Fiction and Administrative Truths: The Short Story and Novella as Administrative Cases. *Public Voices*, 2, 61-76.

Birkland, Thomas A. 2001. *An Introduction to the Policy Process: Theories, Concepts, and Models of Public Policy Making*. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharp.

Box, Richard C., Gary S. Marshall, and B. J. Reed. 2001. New Public Management and Substantive Democracy. *Public Administration Review* 61, 608-619.

Bozeman, Barry. 1987. *All Organizations Are Public: Bridging Public and Private Organizational Theories*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Clancy, Tom. 1989. *Clear and Present Danger*. New York: Putnam.

_____. 2002. *Red Rabbit*. New York: Putnam.

_____. 2003. *The Teeth of the Tiger*. New York: Putnam.

Cussler, Clive. 1999. *Atlantis Found*. New York: Berkley.

_____. 1997. *Flood Tide*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Cussler, Clive and Craig Dirgo. 2003. *Golden Buddha*. New York: Berkley.

Cussler, Clive, and Jack DuBrol. 2005. *Dark Watch*. New York: Berkley.

- Denhardt, Robert B. 2004. *Theories of Public Organization, 4th ed.* Belmont, CA: Thompson/Wadsworth.
- Easton, David. 1953. *The Political System.* New York: Knopf.
- Eikenberry, Angela M. and Jodie Drapal Kluver. 2004. The Marketization of the Nonprofit Sector: Civil Society at Risk? *Public Administration Review* 64, 132-140.
- Frederickson, H. George. 2005. Transcending the Community: Local Leadership in a World of Shared Power. *Public Management* 87 (10), 8 – 15.
- Gerston, Larry N. 2002. *Public Policymaking in A Democratic Society: A Guide to Civic Engagement.* Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe.
- Gulick, Luther. 1990. Reflections on Public Administration, Past and Future. *Public Administration Review*, 50, 599-603.
- Haque, M. Shamsul. 2001. The Diminishing Publicness of Public Service under the Current Mode of Governance. *Public Administration Review* 61, 65-82.
- Holzer, Marc, Kenneth Morris, and William Ludwin. 1979. *Literature in Bureaucracy: Readings in Administrative Fiction.* Wayne, NJ: Avery.
- Kettl, Donald E. 2000. The Transformation of Governance: Globalization, Devolution, and the Role of Government. *Public Administration Review* 60, 488-497.
- Koppell, Jonathan G. S. 2003. *The Politics of Quasi-Government: Hybrid Organizations and the Dynamics of Bureaucratic Control.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Locke, John. 2005. *Second Treatise of Government.* Available at www.gutenberg.org/etext/7370.
- Lopez-de-Silanes, Florencio, Andrei Shleifer, and Robert W. Vishny. 1997. Privatization in the United States. *RAND Journal of Economics* 28, 447-471.
- Ludlum, Robert. 2005. *The Ambler Warning.* New York: St. Martins.
- Lynn, Laurence E., Jr. 2001. The Myth of the Bureaucratic Paradigm: What Traditional Public Administration Really Stood For. *Public Administration Review* 61, 144-160.
- Maclean, Alistair. 1975. *The Secret Ways.* New York: Harper-Collins.

Marini, Frank. 1991. Literature and Teaching Ethics for Public Administration. In *Proceedings of the 14th National Teaching Public Administration Conference*. Knoxville, TN: East Tennessee Chapter, American Society for Public Administration, 146-152.

Markusen, Ann R. 2003. The Case Against Privatizing National Security. *Governance: An International Journal of Policy, Administration, and Institutions* 16, 471-501.

McCurdy, H. E. 1973. Fiction, Phenomenology, and Public Administration. *Public Administration Review*, 33, 52-59.

Moe, Ronald C. 2001. The Emerging Federal Quasi Government: Issues of Management and Accountability. *Public Administration Review* 61, 290-312.

Osborne, David, and Ted Gaebler. 1992. *Reinventing Government*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Ostrom, Vincent. 1974. *The Intellectual Crisis in American Public Administration*. Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press.

Rohr, John. 1986. *To Run a Constitution*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas.

Rourke, Francis E. 1984. *Bureaucracy and Public Policy*, 3rd ed. Boston: Little Brown.

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. 2005. *A Discourse Upon the Origin and the Foundation of the Inequality Among Mankind*. Available at www.gutenberg.org/etext/11136.

Yates, Douglas, Jr. 1985. *The Politics of Management*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Dr. **Nolan J. Argyle** is a professor of political science and coordinator of the MPA program at Valdosta State University, Valdosta, Georgia.

Dr. **Gerald A. Merwin** is an assistant professor of political science at Valdosta State University, Valdosta, Georgia.

Wonks and Warriors: Depictions of Government Professionals in Popular Film

Beth A. Wielde and David Schultz

Introduction

A holiday party. Co-workers huddle for eggnog and attempt awkward conversation that inevitably careens back toward work – the only thing they have in common. These co-workers, which could be from any company in any location, are Cabinet members for the President of the United States and are dealing with the widowed President’s attempts to date an environmental lobbyist. Exasperated with the shop talk, staff member Robin McCall snaps, “Fellas, we haven’t slept in three years. Can’t we forget about work for one night, take some time, and enjoy each other as friends? It’s Christmas!” Her co-worker is baffled, “It’s Christmas?” Another co-worker interjects, “Yeah, you didn’t get the memo?”

This scene from Rob Reiner’s 1995 film *The American President* seems like a small comic exchange to be played and moved past, but professional public administrators and other non-elected government officials may have laughed a little longer. Like a morality play, narrative film is not shy about pigeonholing groups into a stereotype, sending a message about what their life is like.

The importance of studying public service portrayals in popular film lies in the importance of popular culture itself. Popular culture defines generations, both creating and reflecting trends. It provides a window to worlds that may otherwise be a mystery. Popular film messages merge with other media and environmental factors to form a perceived reality for many (Kelly and Elliott 2000).

This article examines the depiction of non-elected public servants in movies. It seeks to identify how these individuals are depicted in film and to determine if there are any specific stereotypes or patterns that emerge regarding how Hollywood describes non-elected government officials. It will do this by undertaking a content analysis of a small sample of recent government-themed feature films, ones that have entered into the popular culture

mainstream since the late 1980s and early 1990s, as well as certain earlier films that have entrenched themselves into the popular culture vernacular.

Based upon a content analysis of these films, two conclusions emerge. First, contrary to what some might believe, not all movie depictions of public servants, both administrators and appointees, are negative; instead, the pattern is more mixed. Contrary to what was assumed, many popular bureaucratic portrayals in film since the late 1980s actually provide *positive* role models and moral lessons for public servants. Second, this study of these films tentatively reveals five distinct types of public servant depictions, with each sending a very strong message about the people who carry out government policy. Overall, while this article is merely a preliminary or initial study and classification of public servants and movies, it provides hypotheses and a methodology for a fuller examination of how films describe government officials and what messages about them are communicated in popular culture. And most importantly, it develops a language that may be used to discuss how public servants are being portrayed to the public, as these film portrayals become a “pseudo-reality” to the general audience.

Scene I: What’s the Big Deal? The Relevance of Popular Culture

Popular culture’s has a big impact on large segments of society. Ask the average person who Benjamin Harrison is, and what the Monroe Doctrine was, and you’re liable to get a blank look. Ask who Harrison Ford is and who Marilyn Monroe was, and you’re liable to get a prompt and accurate response. Films introduce ideas, creating for many their windows into or their definition of reality (Schultz, 2004).

Popular culture has historically provided a frame of reference that can affect how individuals view or think about the world. Harriet Beecher Stowe’s slavery tome *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1852) humanized slavery to those who may have considered it conceptually but never humanized it. Upton Sinclair’s *The Jungle* (1906) prompted new sanitary standards in food production after its shocking narrative about disgusting practices (exaggerated or not) in the meat packing industry. *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest* (1962), a tale of the patients at Bellevue psychiatric center, illustrated a world of mistreatment and cold bureaucracy. Outrage at the themes in the film brought about outcry and subsequent policy reforms in psychiatric treatment (Holley, 2000, McCurdy, 1995).

In addition, popular culture films such as Oliver Stone’s *JFK* (1991) impacted the way many of its viewers thought about President’s Kennedy’s assassination (Kelly and Elliott 2000), and there is ample evidence that Hilary Clinton’s 2000 appearance on David Letterman’s show changed public attitudes about her, eventually assisting her in successful bid to become a United States Senator (Schultz 2004). Overall, pop culture, including movies, can affect how people think about the world.

Scene II: Government and Public Servants in the Movies

Volumes of literature have been written about the way popular culture, including movies, depicts politicians, concluding that they have not fared well. Until 2000, only three characters on television depicted elected officials favorably; for example (Gladstone-Sovell 2000). In American filmmaking, several authors have reached similar conclusions about the negative depictions of politicians (Holzer, 1995; Holzer, 1997, Goodsell and Murray, 1995; Combs, 1993). But few have extended the study to look at career public servants.

It is easy to understand why the politician is most often the lead character in films depicting government. Politics is a very showy, very public way of life. Candidates on the campaign trail are basically allowing their lives and opinions to be exposed to the voting public.

Once politicians arrive in office, their life is an open book in a way that a public administrator or appointed officials are not. Everything politicians do in their profession becomes a matter of public record, and words have to be weighed very carefully.

And then there's the other world, that of the public servant, whether it's a career position or a non-elected appointment. Christensen (1987) and Combs (1993) agree that exposure to government de-mystifies it, but 97 percent of respondents in a 2002 National Elections Study survey responded that they still feel people in government waste taxpayer money some or a lot of the time (National Election Survey, 2002), indicating little trust in the ability of public servants to carry out their duties in an efficient, cost-effective manner. But while politicians are a frequent subject or character in films, what about public administrators?

Public servants in film are usually regulated to a secondary character, one supporting an elected position. They are shown more as devices to move the plot along or pump up the main character (usually the politician) into a greater role. But this might actually be an accurate depiction of public servants – it *is* designed to carry out the duties and policies set forth by lawmakers and elected officials.

Spicer (1995) and Holzer (1997) express concern about the potential impacts of negative portrayals of the bureaucracy in popular culture, particularly as it impacts the profession itself. Spicer says film images have given rise to “bureaucrat bashing” that became prevalent in the post-Vietnam, post-Watergate era. Holzer and Slater (1995) believe lack of public understanding of the “other side” of bureaucracy contributes to negative portrayals in entertainment media. They contend, “If the public is constantly presented with the media image of mediocre bureaucrats who are unprofessional and inflexible, that in essence is what those bureaucrats become – not just in the eyes of the public but in the bureaucratic professional identity.”

Yet it appears things are changing, a change that few aside from Larkin (1993) and Lee (2001) have noticed, toward a more positive image of public servants in film. Lee's article reviewed public servants roles in 20 films, finding several examples of positive bureaucratic

portrayals. The title of his article, “Strange but True: The Bureaucrat as Movie Hero” implies that the movie bureaucrat is usually a negative character, that the bureaucrat-as-hero is a deviation from the norm.

Given that those such as Holzer and Slater contend that movies depict public servants in poor light and others, such as Larkin and Lee, see more positive images emerging, the question to ask is how has Hollywood cast public servants in recent films? Is it positive, negative, or is there a balance?

Scene III: Methodology

The goal of the study in this article is to examine how movies depict public administrators and to determine what images about these individuals are being articulated. To undertake this study, the first step was to identify government themed films in a variety of genres. Films were primarily, but not exclusively, selected from the late 1980s to the early 2000s because of their more recent impact on popular culture, and to pick up where much of the analysis of bureaucratic-themed films ends, based upon arguments by Holzer, Larkin, and Lee.

The focus is on mainstream and recent releases, films shown in multiplexes and theater chains rather than smaller, independent films. The broad release films are more likely to reach a wide demographic and not limited to larger urban areas and art houses.

There are milieu divisions of the general bureaucracy, including the military, CIA, FBI, the judicial branch, and front-line staff such as park rangers and public safety workers, the investigation would become bogged down trying to cover all these branches, trying to compare apples and giraffes. This study excludes portrayals of law, criminal justice, public safety, foreign governments, education, hospital, or NASA/ space program professionals because depictions of personnel and characters in these areas implicate often distinct movie genres such as science fiction, cops and robbers, or spy thrillers that have their own themes and character stereotypes. For this preliminary study, identification of government-themed films was made based on the researchers’ personal recollection of movies with depictions of professional public servants in them. Twenty sample government themed films with known public administration and non-elected staff member content were viewed that fit the requirements of a substantial public servant character.

When viewing government-themed films, the researchers employed a content analysis methodology to each movie. Content analysis is a standard tool of research in communications to ascertain and categorize information in messages such as films (Carney 1972; Krippendorff 1980). The researchers sought to do two things. First, to ascribe an overall rating (positive, negative, or mixed) to each film in terms of how it depicted public administrators. Second, to look for specific portrayals of public servants to see if any patterns emerged.

One problem consistently arose- how to define “public servant.” Since this study is focused on developing a taxonomy for career government staff, characters examined included non-elected government positions, including non-elected or appointed public officials.

Narrowing the research field to public servants posed a particular challenge to the study. There are distinct levels of public service; there’s the career public administrator, whose position is not tied to a political figure and is generally obtained through a straightforward “send the resume and hire” process. They are expected to implement the policies and carry out the duties mandated by the elected body. These positions tend to be merit based and may last until retirement. A public administrator can be a planner, a city administrator, a librarian, a CIA agent, or departmental secretary, among others.

Then there’s the appointed official. These positions are generally directly tied to an elected official and may end when the politician is out of office. Yet, like the public administrator, appointed officials are expected to implement and administrate the policies created by the politicians. These positions include Chief of Staff, Deputy Mayor, Press Secretary, among others.

The challenge in studying public administrators vs. appointed officials is that there is no across-the-board determination of which positions are appointed and which are career hires. In many cases, what is a career administration position in one city, county, state, or agency is an appointed position in another.

The other challenge is in public perception. No previous literature has been found that has studied whether general audiences distinguish a career administrator from an appointed official. In the sample films, the distinction is not clearly made; the positions are simply shown as part of the general bureaucracy that carries out the duties of government. The only way to know for certain whether the position is career or appointed is to have prior knowledge about governmental structures, or to research it after the film is viewed.

Because of these blurred lines, both in actual governmental structure and in the way the bureaucracy as a whole is portrayed to the general public, this study will focus on the “public servant,” rather than make the distinction between public administrators and appointed officials. The public servant will be defined as anyone employed to carry out the policies or duties set forth by the elected body.

Upon review of the twenty films, trends in public servant portrayals emerged quickly, with each one yielding unique defining characteristics.

Scene IV: The Five Species of Public Servant or Government Staff

In the animal kingdom, individual animals are grouped based on a hierarchy; kingdom, phylum, class, order, family, genus, and species, allowing the scientist to make

generalizations to gain a broader understanding of each one. A similar theory is applied to film depictions of public servant. Each film uses different character types and traits; yet comparing these depictions against other government-themed films reveals similarities in messages that public administrators can use to evaluate their own professional activity.

Administrator types in narrative film run the gamut from Taylor-esque automaton to champion for the common good, from bland ‘yes’ person to comic relief. Review of the film sample reveals very distinct characteristics of the public servant and non-elected official being shown in the sample of popular culture film. These characteristics have been categorized into five character types, or “species.” Typically if a behavior pattern was detected in five or more films from the sample, or it a behavior seen in two or more films was depicted so strongly yet did not fit into other categories, it became a new taxonomy, a “species” worthy of its own category. Based upon viewing the twenty films selected, five distinct depictions of public servant characters emerged. This is a new method of trying to understand government portrayals in film; the authors have found no other studies that offer similar categorization of politician or public servant depictions in popular culture film.

Power Mongers

The Power Monger category was developed after seeing several characters in the sample films with massive professional egos and trying to dominate other characters by flaunting their position. After seeing this trait occur in at least six films, it became worthy of its own categorization.

Film theorists often cite Ivan Reitman’s 1984 film *Ghostbusters* as a perfect example of power gone rampant. The Ghostbusters, who built a successful supernatural containment system for the ghosts ‘caught’ throughout the film. In walks the Walter Peck, the Power Monger, an agent of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) who states the containment unit does not meet code. Peck shuts down the containment unit without making any attempt to determine the ramifications of his actions. He releases all the contained ghosts into New York City, heralding a chain of events that would ultimately result in the near end of the world – and the jolly-faced Stay-Puft Marshmallow Man going on a rampage throughout the city. Peck’s arrogance eventually comes back to bite him, though, and he is rudely dismissed by the Mayor of New York and escorted from the building.

Power Mongers have great passion—for serving themselves or exerting power for its own sake rather than serving the citizenry. Power Mongers use their position to enforce the rules a little too hard, influence decisions with their “expert knowledge,” or just plain try to crush underlings or colleagues.

The Power Monger’s message to citizens is that public servants who reach a certain level of achievement are suck-ups to the power structure in order to achieve their personal career goals, and care very little about actual public service. More importantly, the message is that

these people hold influence over the political structure, serving as advisors and confidants, and wield their power over “the masses” for the sheer pleasure of it.

Ivan Reitman seems to delight in creating bad-guy bureaucrats. In his sequel *Ghostbusters II* (1989), the inflexible, snarky bureaucrat Hedemeyer is the assistant to New York City’s mayor. He ridicules the Ghostbusters relentlessly, not bothering to check whether their claims of subterranean slime charged by negative energy has any merit. To demonstrate power, he has the Ghostbusters locked up in a psychiatric ward despite their panic over a major supernatural event about to occur. He gets a comeuppance - being fired by the Mayor for blocking the Ghostbusters efforts and is forcefully required to leave the premises.

In Ivan Reitman’s 1993 comedy *Dave*, President Mitchell, played by Kevin Kline is replaced by an imposter (also played by Kevin Kline) after a debilitating stroke. Two staff people, Chief of Staff Bob Alexander, and Communications Director Alan Reed guide his adventures. Alexander eyes elected office for himself and is determined to use the Mitchell cover-up as a springboard. When his lies are exposed, it is done in a big way – at a joint session of Congress, humiliating him in front of all his colleagues and killing hopes of elected office.

Some Power Mongers are purely wrapped in a bundle of self-interest. In Steven Spielberg’s 2004 film *The Terminal*, aviation officials detain Tom Hanks’ Viktor Navorski when civil war invalidates his passport both in the United States and his home country, and must legally remain in JFK terminal. Anxious for his upcoming promotion, and wishing to push the Navorski problem onto “someone else,” Director of Airport Security Frank Dixon shows the stateless wanderer where the exits areas are located, when they would be unmanned, and how to slip out of his jurisdiction entirely.

Power Mongers make for great comedy because of the potential for pointing out the utter absurdity in their actions. In the 1996 film *Mars Attacks!* Martin Short plays a woman-crazy press secretary who is thrilled by an alien invasion because of its newsworthiness. He prefers platitudes to providing accurate information to the public about the true nature of the aliens. Short’s comeuppance is the most thorough of all – after seducing a woman by bringing her into the White House, he is vaporized by her as she scuttles to murder the First Family. Surprise! The woman is a violent alien.

The Power Monger depiction is most blatantly exaggerated in the gray ethical area. They always seem just on one side of becoming another species, the Bureaucratic Criminal. Every profession has their ambitious professionals; even some who use power for personal gain (Caro,1974, Dean, 1976, Halberstan,1972), seen in the real-life government scandals of Tammany Hall, Watergate, the Iran-Contra affair. But the Power Monger’s exaggeration is rooted in their seemingly “kill or be killed” attitude of stepping on co-workers or members of the public they are duty-bound to serve.

Savvy professionals know that working *with* co-workers and the public to resolve conflict is much more effective than steamrolling them. Even though public service is supposed to be

separate from the political realm, public servants often have to use the same cooperative set of skills to bring together people or organizations that otherwise would not work together. They could not do that effectively by rampant alienation of their colleagues and those they serve.

Bureaucratic Criminal

When viewing the sample films, five had plot lines revolving around crimes committed or aided by a public servant. They were shown not only breaking the law, but trying desperately to cover it up or trying desperately to profit from it. Because the viewer is often treated to watching a crime being committed by the public servant, the category of Bureaucratic Criminal was developed. While Power Mongers used their position for personal or professional gain, they did not blatantly break any laws. Not so with the Bureaucratic Criminal.

Bureaucratic Criminals are the (more) evil twin of the Power Monger. While clinging desperately to the power they have achieved so far, they are willing to commit clear ethical crimes, whether for the benefit of themselves or the political figure they are affiliated with. 1999's Watergate spoof *Dick* serves up a satiric look at the Nixon administration's darkest hours. In *Dick*, G. Gordon Liddy is first shown as a shadowy figure on a darkened stairwell at the Watergate Hotel, misinterpreting two giggly high school girls' attempt to secretly mail a "Win a Date with Bobby Sherman" letter as an attempt to meddle with the break-in. Liddy admonishes them, "As far as you're concerned, I have no identity at all. In fact, I'm not even here!" The Liddy character gives the impression of guilt; knowing what he did was wrong and trying to blend into the crowd to cover it up.

Most of the President's staff is involved in stalking, and terrorizing the girls to keep them quiet and keep the cover-up going. They chase the girls with cars, bug their homes, and give them honorary "titles" to keep them from disclosing what they know. Every move the Bad Guys make puts another layer on their criminal activity, sinking them further into the hole of felony.

The Bureaucratic Criminal often acts in a panic and spends the rest of the picture covering up their crimes. It shows the worst of the worst, where beyond the power-monger-automaton lies a lack of ethics, caring, and any emotion that might resemble scruples, along with a paranoia of being caught (or having their associated "power center," the politician, caught).

This portrayal is clearly an evil caricature, telling the public that covering up flaws and professional errors becomes consuming to public servants to the point that they will lie, cheat or breach any ethical boundary to protect their reputation. It screams that bureaucrats are self-interested above all, and have no regard to the consequences or impact to others. The public service profession can use the Bureaucratic Criminal as a warning, as it shows the pitfalls and dilemmas of using their position to break the law.

In *Absolute Power* (1997), White House Chief of Staff Gloria Russell has a panic reaction to a murder of passion committed by the President. Her instinct – cover it up. This starts a chain reaction of lies, cover up, and treading on colleagues to cover the President’s crimes and her involvement in the cover-up. Clint Eastwood’s good-guy robber with the heart of gold attempts to thwart the crimes being committed by the government officials, providing the proper level of action and close calls, including accidentally wearing the victim’s bracelet at a press-heavy public function. Her crimes are eventually exposed, for which she is arrested.

All the President’s Men (1976) is littered with Bureaucratic Criminals. An implied threat hangs over anyone who wants to break the Watergate scandal. The most intense scenes are meetings with Deep Throat in a dark, clammy parking ramp. Every move by the Nixon administration is shown burrowing themselves deeper into the mess, until exposed by Woodward and Bernstein.

While most of the bureaucratic portrayals in *Air Force One* (1997) focus on loyal and brave Presidential staff, there is the deviant bureaucrat who allows terrorists aboard the First Airplane. In this film, one renegade bureaucrat exists among a larger staff full of positive images. And, in the tradition of the Bureaucratic Criminal, the villain gets his punishment in a truly spectacular death scene, one that also manages to save the President’s life.

The Bureaucratic Criminals’ exaggeration is their clear use of their office to breach ethics, with no interest in trying to rectify the situation. Rather than trying to come clean or even trying to quietly right the wrong, there are layers upon layers of ethical and legal breaches heaped upon the original crime.

If anything good came out of Watergate, it was a lesson for public servants on what *not* to do. Although the crimes perpetrated by staff members are dramatized in *All the President’s Men* and *Dick*, it is clear that these public servants had not learned a fundamental, basic life lesson: Breaching ethics is wrong, and will not come to a good end, and the audience is told that message quite clearly.

The Plight of the Power Monger and the Bureaucratic Criminal

In the end, film bureaucrats almost always have a character climactic moment. These species serve as a moral warning signal to professional public servants to not let power go to their heads, to act within the realm of the law – or suffer the consequences. Power Mongers are most often fired, jailed, or have a moment of truth that changes their character from nasty to nice. While films send the message that there are Power Mongers among the bureaucracy, it also seems films of late are showing that these people will get their comeuppance in the end. Showing examples of arrogance and power has some merit to the profession; it demonstrates that such negative behaviors are not rewarded in the end; that using their authority to diminish others does not pay off.

Like the Power Monger, the Bureaucratic Criminal also typically gets a comeuppance during the course of the picture, usually by being fired or arrested. Again, the comeuppance may actually benefit to the profession, telling public servants that ‘truth will out,’ and that crime truly does not pay. Audiences see that a government staff position does not come with perks that extend beyond the law, that if a bureaucrat commits a crime, there will be ramifications.

Ghostbusters Power Mongers are abruptly dismissed by New York City’s mayor, and are escorted from the building. *Dick*, *Absolute Power*, and *All the President’s Men*’s criminals are exposed in national scandal. *Air Force One* and *Mars Attacks!*, rid themselves of their problem bureaucrats by simply killing them off, usually in a dramatic, messy manner. Truth will out, crime does not pay, and moral lessons are played out to the fullest in modern government themed films; this is a good message to send to the public.

Hyper Loyalist

Two films had such bold depictions of the public servant who devotes themselves almost exclusively to their careers that it warranted a category unto themselves. They were not necessarily heroes, but they were not negative characters, either. The depictions showed levels of loyalty to the profession that it was appropriate to give them a distinctive category, the Hyper Loyalist. The Christmas Party scene from *The American President* beautifully sums up one of the most pervasive stereotypes; public servants are automatons whose life is essentially defined by their job with no discernable personal life.

The alien-invasion film *Independence Day* (1996) reveals that Press Secretary Constance Spano gave up her marriage to take the White House appointment. This despite still being in love with husband David Levinson, played by Jeff Goldblum. Yet at the end of the film, during preparations for a final battle with the aliens, she is shown making the decision to follow her heart.

Scenes like these might be a turn-off to potential public servants who value personal lives, who enjoy being able to leave the job at the office and spend an evening at home or at play., and who see very little reward as a result of this dedication depicted in films. The Hyper Loyalist is a dramatized moral message to make sure public servants balance their private and professional lives.

In *City Hall* (1996), John Cusak’s character, Deputy Mayor Kevin Calhoun, starts out as the consummate Hyper Loyalist. A recurring joke is for the Mayor (played by Al Pacino) to ask Calhoun what his plans were for the evening. The constant response, “I don’t know, I haven’t thought about it.” His Hyper Loyalty is best illustrated by a later exchange in which Pacino admonishes Cusak to “Get a life!” and Cusak retorts, “I’ve got yours, that’s good enough.”

The Hyper Loyalist is a more positive image, showing intelligent, dedicated staff who care both about their job, serving their elected officials to the fullest capacity, and public service. The fact is public servants are people, with lives, families, hobbies, interests, and a sense of

fun just like everyone else. Providing effective, efficient government service does not mean being all work and no play.

But in a way, the Hyper Loyalist has some truth. In times of crisis or disaster, good public servants will remain at their posts to do their duties and ensure the public is safe and secure. Like any profession, they would not abandon their post just because they are off the clock if there is something urgent to be done.

Public meetings are another example of “above and beyond” for public servants. Public meetings are often held in the evening as a convenience to citizens, most of who work during the day. Some projects require longer hours for the public servant, but they are critical to gathering public input. There is a certain Hyper Loyalist element involved in public service, but certainly not to the extent that one needs a memo to remember that the holidays have arrived!

Action Hero

The sample yielded five films where the public servant seemed to have superhuman qualities, where their service to the elected official or to the public went, physically, far beyond the call of duty. The public servant was shown as an action hero, different from the Hyper Loyalist by their physical prowess and amazing abilities, yet differing from the upcoming Ethics Hero by the use of brawn over policy.

Looking at the sample films, it appears that government officials and staff as movie hero has quietly gained steam over the past ten years. The Action Hero has its roots in the rebellious heroes shown in two classic films, *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1962) and *All the President's Men*. In *To Kill a Mockingbird*, the local law enforcement administrator skews the facts of a homicide despite the letter of the law because of the circumstances of the case; it would be more justice to let the report not match the facts. The Action Hero evolved from this, adding the extra element of physical threat, as seen in 1976's *All the President's Men*, where administrative staff swallowed their fear and slowly unraveled the inner workings of the Watergate scandal, despite terror for life and limb. This sent a message that truth will out, and that ethics overcomes dirty play every time.

The Action Hero is an amazing blend of loyalty, brut strength, intelligence, and dedication to the profession and the public. The Action Hero often not only casts aside the books and breaks procedure, but does so under great physical danger. The Action Hero is a stronger, more intense version of the Hyper-Loyalist, only shown in much more dangerous situations.

Where the Hyper-Loyalists give the impression that they are dedicated to the job, almost obsessively so, Action Heroes show a focused loyalty with the spark of fight that only comes with true belief in what they are doing, rather than any sense of career advancement. There is no self-interest more fundamental or understandable than self-preservation, and these fictitious public servants throw off this instinct to serve a greater good.

The films often show the heroic decision made only in the context of the job; the characters rarely weigh the impact on their personal lives, families, etc. This may be less than realistic and may be reminiscent of the Hyper-Loyalist, indicating that the profession is the only facet to the public servant.

In our research, the negative connotation of the term “bureaucrat” is a way to set the stage for discussion of negative portrayals. If this terminology holds fast, then the Action Hero essentially becomes an Anti-Bureaucrat by not fitting the criteria of a typical paper-pushing automaton, a Power Monger, or a Bureaucratic criminal. They refuse to follow bureaucratic rules if it will mean breaching ethics of a situation or putting lives at risk, but will fight to the death for the cause they believe in.

In the action thriller *Air Force One* (1997), President James Marshall is in peril aboard the hijacked Air Force One. While President Marshall conducts a resistance fight against the hijackers, he finds a way to evacuate the staff still aboard. A small, loyal group of staff joins President Marshall’s fight to regain control of the plane and save the First Family. These staff people could fall under the Hyper Loyalist category but they are classified as heroes because they are willing to risk their lives for their President. In one scene, a staff person throws himself in the path of an oncoming bullet to save the president. As a reward, this administrator lives in the end.

Dante’s Peak (1997) is a perfect example of anti- bureaucrat Action Hero. Rather than serving merely in a support role, the USGS bureaucrat both rebels against a by-the-book system *and* rescues a local family, whose matriarch also happens to be the town’s mayor. USGS staff member Harry Dalton, played by Pierce Brosnan, argues with his superiors about how to time a warning that the local volcano is about to erupt. His superior wanted to wait, afraid of a local panic with no actual event. The warning is too late and the event is catastrophic. His superior, who was merely overcautious but never a true bad guy, still gets his comeuppance by being swept away by a bridge that collapses in a rampaging river.

Jaws (1975), as described by Lee (2001) is a predecessor to the anti-bureaucrat Action Hero in *Dante’s Peak*. The police of beach town Amity refuse to close the beach down despite the threat of shark attack, fearing loss of tourism and its income. The police chief defies the town board and uses discretionary power to close the beach to protect public safety. And he does it with a determined, “I can do anything, I’m the chief of police!”

Action Heroes win in the end. Even if the characters don’t survive the situation, they are typically the valiant martyrs for public service ethics and have retained their professional and personal honor. If a negative connotation of the term “bureaucrat” holds fast, then the Action Hero essentially becomes an Anti-Bureaucrat by not fitting the criteria of a typical paper-pushing automaton, a Power Monger, or a Bureaucratic criminal. They break bureaucratic rules even if it will mean breaching policy or putting lives at risk, and will fight to the death for the cause in which they believe.

The Action Hero displays both superhuman strength and almost a frightening amount of luck. Public servants are people with varied skills, strength, and abilities. While it might be fun to have the public image of being a Super Hero, it most likely does not reflect the real picture, that public servants truly are more Clark Kent than Superman.

Ethics Hero

The Ethics Hero, seen in six of the sample films, emerged as a category as it became clear that not all heroic public servants used their brawn to save the day like the Action Hero does, but they do save the day nonetheless. Not all Action Heroes face an action and special-effects laden adventures. In a previous example, the 1993 comedy *Dave*, Chief of Staff Bob Alexander got caught up so deep in the quest for personal gain that it left him with nothing when the dirty deeds were exposed. And then there was the Communications Director Alan Reed, who initially knew of the plot to undermine the (fake) President. Reed goes along with it for a great while, but has a change of heart and played a key role in exposing villain Alexander's Power Mongering. Such is the life of the Ethics Hero.

Ethics Heroes are officials who would prefer not being put into the conflict situations unfolding around them, but since they are, they will choose ethics over any ill-gotten gains. They send the message that there are renegade public servants who will defy the lures of personal gain and choose to serve the public by demonstrating what's right versus what the policy is or what is in their greedy self-interest.

As *City Hall* uncovers Mafia connections to the political machine, Cusak's dedication to public ethics override his Hyper Loyalty to the politician he serves, even though he is aware that crossing the mob could result in his demise, at it had for several other characters involved in the plot. He flatly refuses the Mayor's offer of greater power and prestige, no matter how sweet the deal.

All the President's Men features an anonymous, yet equally stunning Ethics Hero in Deep Throat. It is implied that this person is deeply embedded in the scandal, even though it is unclear whether this individual is on the election committee or presidential staff. Despite the obvious threat to career and possibly even life, this Ethics Hero manages to deliver crucial evidence that eventually exposes the wrongdoings of the Nixon administration. Ethics overrides personal interest, at it did for the real-life "Deep Throat."

1984 (1984) is a frightening example of government gone unchecked. It is Big Brother policy rules with an iron fist and does away with dissenters with frightening ease. Yet the Ethics Hero weighs the dangers to himself to stand up against what he feels is an inherently evil government. The Ethics Hero, whose job it is to re-write history after the Big Brother takeover, struggles with the morality of the job and has the nerve to actually fall in love – an explosive crime. Like Deep Throat, his sense of ethics overrides self-interest. At the very least dissenting means career suicide, at the most an unmentionable punishment.

Perhaps the primary exaggeration of the Ethical Hero are the situations in which they find themselves. *Dave's* 'swap the President with an imposter' would be impossible to achieve in reality. In *City Hall*, Cusak goes to a shipyard to meet a Mafia connection. Alone. Without a bullet proof vest or police backup. Not something a street-savvy person would do. In *1984*, it is unfathomable and frightening to think that a Big Brother style government would be allowed into power – and allowed to survive.

If a message is going to be sent to the public about public servants, the Ethics Hero is probably the species of choice; dedicated to public service, adapting ethics to situations based on the situation rather than the rule books, and more dedicated to doing what is right than in any personal gain.

Scene 5: Analysis of Sample Films

Government has been a popular theme in popular culture film. In a larger study being completed concurrently with this one, key words from movie synopsis for films from 1945 to 2004 reveals that of top 20 domestic grossing films, approximately 44% of the sample had government themes. This indicates the prevalence of government in popular culture – and when a theme is *that* prevalent, there must be a moral message that can be derived from it (Wielde, 2005). Previous studies have reiterated, “Public servants have been treated poorly by Hollywood.” Holzer (1997) argues that public servants and bureaucrats are often ridiculed in movies and television, a concept that could extend to the appointed public official. Analysis of the twenty films sampled for this study challenge this idea and agrees more with Lee, who sees trends as somewhat less dire. Classification of the films examined in this study is presented in Table 1, Chart 1, and Chart 2.

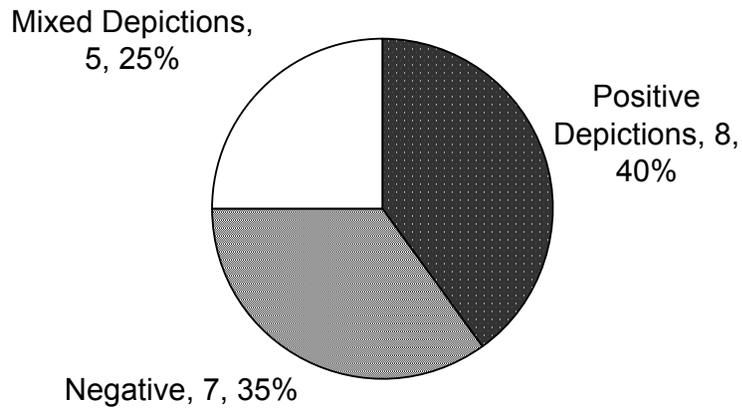
Table 1
Sample Public Service Film Chronology and Classification

Ratings: P= Positive, N= Negative, M=Mixed, more than 1 species present

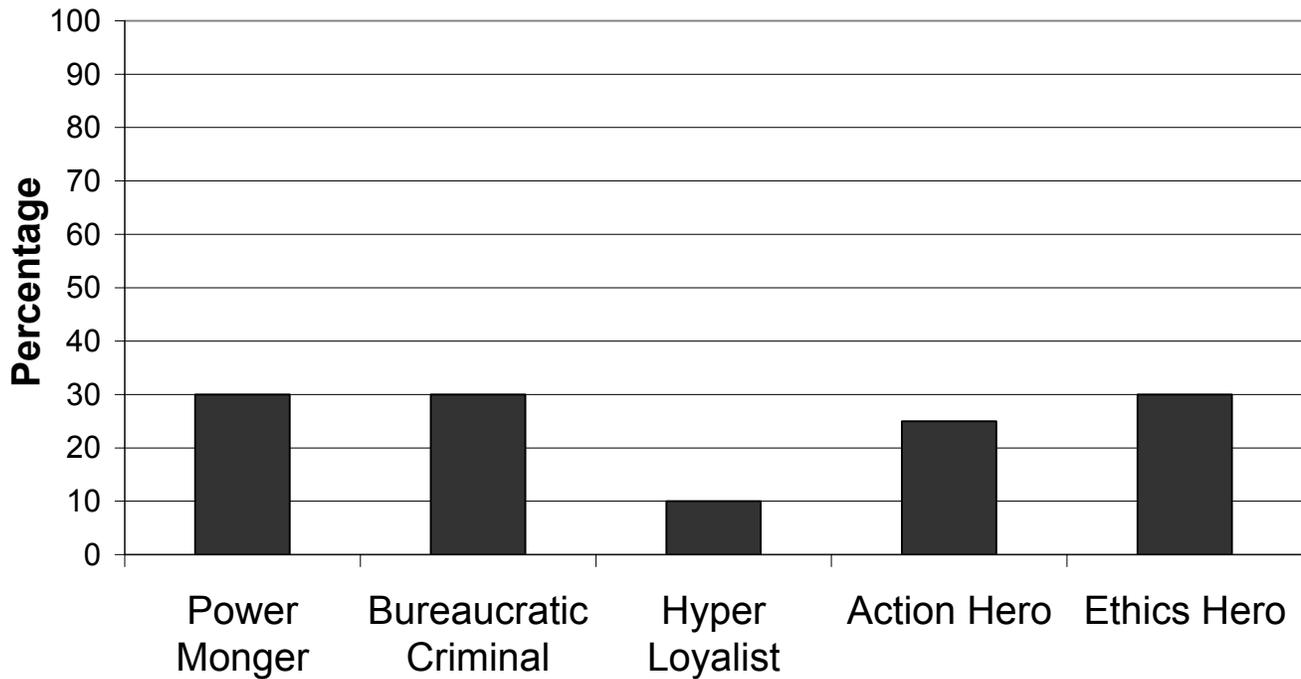
| Year | Film | Species | Rating | General Assessment |
|------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------|--|
| 1984 | 1984 | Ethics Hero | P | Big Government is portrayed negatively. |
| 1997 | Absolute Power | Bureaucratic Criminal | N | There is a moral lesson that crime is punished. |
| 1997 | Air Force One | Action Hero Bureaucratic Criminal | P | Loyalty and support win over ethical violations. |
| 1976 | All the President's Men | Ethics Hero Bureaucratic Criminal | M | Shows negative behavior having legal consequences. |

| Year | Film | Species | Rating | General Assessment |
|------|--|--------------------------------------|--------|---|
| 1995 | American President | Hyper Loyalist | P | Implication that bureaucrats give up their own lives in service to another. |
| 1996 | City Hall | Ethics Hero | P | Ethics wins over spoils of crime. |
| 1997 | Dante's Peak | Action Hero | P | Bureaucrats will risk life and limb to save citizens. |
| 1993 | Dave | Ethics Hero Power Monger | M | The Power Monger is not rewarded while the Ethics Hero is. |
| 1999 | Dick | Bureaucratic Criminal Ethics Hero | N | There are positive examples of ethics winning, and breaching ethics losing. |
| 1998 | Enemy of the State | Bureaucratic Criminal | N | There is a spectacular comeuppance for the criminal. |
| 1996 | Executive Decision | Action Hero | P | The bureaucrat is shown willing to risk his life to protect others, even though he doesn't have to. |
| 1984 | Ghostbusters | Power Monger | N | After a disastrous exertion of power, the EPA agent is humiliatingly escorted from City Hall. |
| 1989 | Ghostbusters 2 | Power Monger | N | After a disastrous exertion of power, the Deputy Mayor is humiliatingly fired from position. |
| 1996 | Independence Day | Hyper Loyalist | M | Elements lie within the same character; while shown as willing to give up her life to the job, she changes her mind in the end. |
| 1975 | Jaws | Roots of Action Hero | P | Public safety overrides political clout and money. |
| 2003 | Legally Blonde 2: Red, White, & Blonde | Power Monger | M | Shows a former Power Monger can be redeemed. |
| 1996 | Mars Attacks! | Power Monger | N | Negative behavior is punished – via laser obliteration. |
| 1997 | Murder at 1600 | Bureaucratic Criminal Action Hero | M | Some work to cover up murder, others go out of their way to expose the truth. |
| 2004 | The Terminal | Power Monger | N | Administrator afflicted with rampant self-interest |
| 1962 | To Kill a Mockingbird | Roots of Ethics Hero | P | There is flexibility in government that justice isn't always what's written in the law books. |

Balance of Portrayals in Film Sample



Frequency of Bureaucratic Species in Film Sample



Overall, since 1990, depictions of public servants have achieved a mix of positive and negative portrayals, and even the negatives images come with messages that punishments are dealt to those acting improperly. Of the twenty films sampled, eight (40%) depicted public servants in a positive light, seven (35%) negatively, and another 5 (25%) offered mixed messages. For films since 1990, five have positive, five negative, and four and mixed messages. The trend in the 1990s and 2000s shows strong, exciting roles for public servants, which may ease Spicer and Holzer's concerns about recruiting and retaining new faces to public service professions. The moral message public servants can absorb from Action Hero and Ethics Hero is that while public servants don't live in the public eye to the extent of the politicians, there are a plethora of exciting careers in public service, well beyond 'paper jockey.' Just because they are not in the media limelight as often does not mean there is not glamour and bravery in the job. The emerging species and the shift toward positive portrayals and comeuppance for bureaucratic wrongdoing illustrate the necessity for re-examining the concerns of scholars.

Scene 6: Using the Character Types

The five taxonomies may be used as the face of public service; a marketing tool to determine what messages the general audience has been receiving. If the portrayals are weighed toward the more negative side, the Power Monger or the Bureaucratic Criminal, and even the Hyper Loyalist, public servants could increase their public presence to ensure that these negative portrayals are not the public's main image of the bureaucracy. This increased presence could include open houses at city hall or state government buildings, community volunteerism, presence at neighborhood meetings or events, "Meet your Staff" sections of web sites, newsletters, or other governmental marketing. Public servants could hold Internet chat sessions at set times and dates, allowing the public to "talk" to them online. This increased public presence could de-mystify the profession and combat negative messages being sent via popular culture film.

The language of the public servant species helps set the tone for these interactions. Public servants can use the taxonomies anecdotally, "I know a lot of films today show the bureaucracy as inflexible Power Mongers, but I'm here to tell you that we actually do care about citizens..." Public servants can use the taxonomies to spot-check their behavior, "There's no crisis in my department, yet I'm in the office from 7 am to 10:30 every night. I haven't spent an evening with friends or family in three weeks. I am a Hyper Loyalist!" Public servants can even use them as a way to give public service some of the glitz and glamour that politicians have basked in, "You may not have thought about it before, but look at Pierce Brosnan outrun that lava flow! USGS Geologists are cool! Sure, most will never ride a boat through a lake of acid, but they may figure out how to predict earthquakes!" or "Look at how John Cusak stood up to Al Pacino in *City Hall!* What an Ethics Hero! Public servants often have to make tough decisions that have no personal benefit – and doing so can be heroic!" Even though the screen portrayals are highly dramatized, they can serve as a forum for discussion of *real* public service.

The language of public service in film is intended to get these images in the public realm, and create an identifiable ‘common ground’ between the public and the bureaucracy, and to help public servants contextualize their own behavior – giving a name to their professional dealings. Popular culture is that common ground, and should be used as more than a tool for entertainment.

Scene 7: Conclusion

Content analysis of a preliminary sample of twenty government-themed films that depict public servants yielded two conclusions. First, contrary to the expectations or fears of some, not all movies depict government servants negatively. Second, the films revealed five species of public servants and suggest how these officials can use the species to evaluate their professional interactions. These five depictions indicated a definite shift away from the negative and towards positive, or at least moralistic, portrayals of the public servant.

While a study of twenty films is not conclusive, this research and its conclusions challenge notions that all depictions of public servants are adverse. This study also has created a preliminary classification of character types that can be employed in future research on a larger number of films to see if the same patterns emerge. Additional research can use these character types to see if there are any trends or connections between film depictions of public servants and historic events, such as 9-11 or wars, and how the depictions might affect public attitudes towards government. In effect, future research should ask what messages these films are sending and how government and servants can use these as a tool for self-evaluation of their own job performance.

Finally, evaluating the five species of public servants, then, brings about the question of whether public servants need to be aware of the moral messages being sent by popular culture film. Given the diversity of personalities shown, the moral message seems to be a message of rewarding ethical behavior and punishing the unethical. The findings from this pilot study lay the foundation for future content analysis research into the role of popular culture in the public administrative profession and other non-elected governmental positions, and how the five species can be used to understand the moral messages being sent to public servants and the public.

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to the following colleagues who shared their ideas and comments at the ASPA District IV Regional Conference in South Sioux City, Nebraska, October 28 - 30, 2004: Craig R. Christiansen, Nebraska State Education Association; Matthew R. Fairhold, University of South Dakota; Nancy Kinney, University of Missouri, St. Louis; Jodee Kluver, University of Nebraska, Omaha; Marilyn O’Neil, University of Nebraska, Omaha; Dr. Russell L. Smith, University of Nebraska, Omaha.

References

- Bernstein, Arnyan., Katz, Gail., and Shestack, Jonathan (Producers), and Peterson, Wolfgang (Producer/ Director) (1997). *Air Force One* [Motion Picture]. United States: Columbia Pictures.
- Boorstin, Jon., Coblenz, Walter (Producers), and Pakula, Alan J. (Director) (1976). *All the President's Men* [Motion Picture]. United States: Warner Brothers.
- Brillstein, Bernie (Executive Producer), and Reitman, Ivan (Producer/Director) (1984). *Ghostbusters* [Motion Picture]. United States: Columbia Pictures.
- Brillstein, B., Medjuck, J., Gross, Micahel.C., (Executive Producers), and Reitman, Ivan (Producer/Director) (1989). *Ghostbusters 2* [Motion Picture]. United States: Columbia Pictures.
- Bruckheimer, Jerry, Davis, Jennifer A., Oman, Chad, Skotchdopolole, James W. (Producers), and Scott, Tony (Director) (1998). *Enemy of the State* [Motion Picture]. United States: Touchstone Pictures.
- Brown, David, Zanuck, Richard D. (Producers), and Spielberg, Steven (Director) (1975). *Jaws* [Motion Picture]. United States: Universal Pictures.
- Carney, Thomas F. (1972). *Content Analysis: a Technique for Systematic Inference from Communications*. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press.
- Caro, Robert A. (1974). *The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York*. New York: Knopf.
- Christensen, Terry (1987). *Reel Politics: American Political Movies from 'Birth of a Nation' to 'Platoon.'* New York, NY: Basil Blackwell Ltd.
- Coatsworth, David, Hurd, Gail (Producers), and Fleming, Andrew (Director) (1999). *Dick* [Motion Picture]. United States: Columbia Pictures.
- Combs, James E. (1993). Introduction. In J. Combs (Ed.), *Movies and Politics: The Dynamic Relationship* (pp. 3-26). New York, NY: Garland Publishing, Inc.
- Dean, John W. (1976). *Blind Ambition*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Douglas, Michael, Zaentz, Saul (Producers) and Foreman, Milos (Director) (1975). *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. [Motion Picture]. United States: United Artists.

Emmerich, Ute, Fay, William (Executive Producers), and Emmerich, R. (Executive Producer/Director) (1996). *Independence Day* [Motion Picture]. United States: Twentieth Century Fox.

Franco, Larry J., (Producer), and Burton, Tim (Producer/ Director) (1996). *Mars Attacks!* [Motion Picture]. United States: Warner Brothers.

Gladstone-Sovell, Tracy L. (2000). "Criminals and Buffoons: The Portrayal of Elected Officials on Entertainment Television," in Schultz, David A. (ed.), *It's Show Time! Media, Politics, and Popular Culture*. New York, NY: Peter Lang, 117-132.

Goodsell, Charles T., and Murray, Nancy (1995). *Public Administration Illuminated and Inspired by the Arts*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishing.

Halberstam, David (1972). *The Best and the Brightest*. Greenwich, CT: Fawcett Publications.

Herzberg, Ilona, Hurd, Gail A., and Singer, Joseph M. (Producers), and Donaldson, Roger (Director) (1997). *Dante's Peak* [Motion Picture]. United States: Universal Pictures.

Holley, L., and Lutz, R.K. (2000). Public Administration at the Movies. *Public Voices*, 4(2), 3-10.

Holzer, Marc and Slater, L.G. (1995). "Insights into Bureaucracy From Film: Visualizing Stereotypes," in Charles T. Goodsell and Nancy Murray (eds.), *Public Administration Illuminated and Inspired by the Arts*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 75-87.

Holzer, Marc (1997). "Communicating Administrative Issues Through Creative Forms," in J.L. Garnett and A. Kouzmin (Eds.), *Handbook of Administrative Communication*. New York, NY: Marcel Dekker, Inc.. 203 – 226.

Kelly, Jim and Bill Elliott. (2000). "Synthetic History and Subjective Reality: The Impact of Oliver Stone's *JFK*," in Schultz, David A. (ed.). *It's Show Time! Media, Politics, and Popular Culture*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc, 171-196.

Kopelson, Arnold, Nathanson, Michael, Brown, Stephen, Milchan, Arnon (Producers), and Little, Dwight H. (Director) (1997). *Murder at 1600* [Motion Picture]. United States: Warner Brothers.

Krippendorff, Klaus (1980). *Content Analysis: An Introduction to its Methodology*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.

Larkin, J. (1993). "Movies: The Good, the Bad, and the Public." *Public Voices*, 1(3), 93-96.

Lee, Mordecai, Paddock, Susan C. (2001). Strange but True Tales from Hollywood: The Bureaucrat as Movie Hero. *Public Administration and Management: An Interactive Journal*,6(4), 166-194.

Lipper, Ken., Mulvehill, Charles, Pressman, Edward R. (Producers) and Becker, Harold (Producer/ Director) (1996). *City Hall* [Motion Picture]. United States: Castle Rock Entertainment.

McCurdy, Howard E. (1995). Fiction and Imagination: How They Affect Public Administration. *Public Administration Review*. 55(6), 499 - 506.

Medjuck, Joseph, Gross, Michael J., Shuler-Donner, Lauren (Producers), and Reitman, Ivan (Director) (1993). *Dave* [Motion Picture]. United States: Warner Brothers.

Milchan, Arnon, Ho, A. Kitman, Townsend, Clayton (Producers), and Stone, Oliver (Producer/ Director) (1991). *JFK* [Motion Picture]. United States: Warner Brothers.

National Election Studies (2002). Do People in Government Waste Tax Money (2002). Retrieved 24 September 2004, from <http://www.umich.edu/~nes/nesguide/gd-index.htm#4>.

Newirth, Charles J., Stott, Jeffrey, (Producers) and Reiner, Rob (Producer/Director) (1995). *American President* [Motion Picture]. United States: Castle Rock Entertainment.

Niccol, Andrew, Hoffs, Jason, Whitcher, Patricia (Executive Producers), MacDonald, Laurie, Parkes, Walter (Producers) and Spielberg, Steven (Director/ Producer) (2004). *The Terminal* [Motion Picture]. United States: Amblin Entertainment, Dreamworks Entertainment.

Pakula, Alan J. (Producer), and Mulligan, Robert (Director) (1962). *To Kill a Mockingbird* [Motion Picture]. United States: Universal International Pictures.

Perry, Simon., Clark (Producer), and Radford, Michael (Director) (1984). *1984* [Motion Picture]. United Kingdom: Virgin.

Perry, Steve, Fields, Karyn, Silver, Joel, Thomas, Jim, Thomas, John (Producers), and Baird, Stuart (Director) (1996). *Executive Decision* [Motion Picture]. United States: Warner Brothers.

Rooker, Tim, Rooker, Tom, Spiegel, Karen, (Producers) and Eastwood, Clint (Producer/Director) (1997). *Absolute Power* [Motion Picture]. United States: Castle Rock Entertainment.

Schultz, David A. (2004). "From Saxophones to Schwarzenegger: Entertainment Politics on Late-Night Television," in David A. Schultz, *Lights, Camera, Campaign: Media, Politics, and Political Advertising*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 215-238.

Sinclair, Upton (1906). *The Jungle*. New York: The Jungle Pub. Co.

Spicer, Michael W. (1995). *The Founders, the Constitution, and Public Administration*, Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.

Stowe, Harriet B. (c, 1851). *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Wielde, Beth A.S. (2005). *Wonks and Warriors: A Film Analysis*. Unpublished manuscript.

Witherspoon, Reese, Platt, Marc E., and Nicksay, David (Producers), and Herman-Wurmfeld, Charles (Director) (2003). *Legally Blonde 2: Red, White, and Blonde* [Motion Picture]. United States: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Pictures.

Dr. **Beth A. Wielde** is with the Urban and Regional Studies Institute, Minnesota State University, Mankato, MN.

Dr. **David Schultz** teaches at the Graduate School of Public Administration and Management, Hamline University, St. Paul, Minnesota.

Community and the American Village on Paradise Drive^{*}

Christopher M. Duncan

Despite the fact that Puritans and other early settlers of various religious orientations still had pronounced beliefs in a transcendent order, they were at their core modern men and women insofar as they felt perfectly free to reject most traditional forms of social, political and religious authority and set out on their own to create and remake the world according to their own ideals and sensibilities. While Americans have often focused on the repressive and seemingly stilted nature of Puritan settlements and Puritanism itself, they have often neglected what is the most important aspect of the phenomenon, namely its utopian, creative and voluntary nature (Duncan, 1995, ch.1). In this regard, however objectionable many contemporary Americans might find their particular communal choices, they should on closer inspection see in the form, if not the substance, of those decisions a mirror image of themselves. What is Massachusetts Bay circa 1630 if not the first American suburb?

Broadly understood, then, we can say that in its understanding of community as created through the voluntary choices of free individuals to accomplish agreed upon ends, America has been “liberal” in a general sense from its origin. While perfectly comfortable with the notion of a divine Creator who is the author of natural laws, Americans are probably the first people who believe that their personal happiness is among God’s highest priorities. In place of an older faith that demanded obedience and often suffering from the faithful, God in America is the defender of individual rights and liberties and, increasingly, is viewed as the facilitator of personal growth and worldly success (Bloom, 1992; Prothero, 2003). Among the most cherished—though probably least talked about—rights in the American scheme of liberty is the right of circumlocution, the right to move about unimpeded, to go where we want to when we want to go. At the root of American culture is an apparent, though illusory, paradox of a people who are at one and the same time thoroughly individualistic and voraciously communal. The reason the paradox is an illusion is that while notoriously jealous of their

^{*} This essay was originally presented at the Marianist University Meetings at the University of Dayton, June 2006, and was sponsored by the Association of Marianist Universities. The author would like to thank Brother Raymond Fitz, S.M., Judy Keyes, and Rick Ghere for their earlier readings of the manuscript.

individual prerogatives in general, Americans are particularly jealous of their prerogative to join together with others in community. They are equally jealous, however, of the alternative prerogative, namely to quit or exit any community when it no longer suits their needs or beliefs (Hirschman, 1970).

Oddly, this is not only part of the American cultural fabric, it is built directly and purposefully into our constitutional system itself, according to none other than James Madison. Where from virtually the beginning of political time nations had seen the multiplication of distinct groups within the whole as a threat to unity and a sign of communal weakness, the American founders actually sought the exponential multiplication of such groups in the name of stability itself (Madison, Hamilton & Jay, [1789] 1988). Hence, the maxim *E Pluribus Unum* (out of many one). Unity *in* diversity. Till this day no one has captured this unique aspect of American culture better than one of its earliest observers, Alexis de Tocqueville. In his famous work, *Democracy in America* ([1835] 1988), Tocqueville worried openly about the pervasive individualism in America, which he differentiated initially from an older term like egoism, writing:

Individualism is a calm and considered feeling which disposes each citizen to isolate himself from the mass of his fellows and withdraw into the circle of family and friends; with this little society formed to his taste, he gladly leaves the greater society to look after itself. Egoism springs from a blind instinct; individualism is based on misguided judgment rather than depraved feeling. It is due more to inadequate understanding than to perversity of the heart. Egoism sterilizes the seeds of every virtue; individualism at first only dams the spring of public virtues, but in the long run it attacks and destroys the others too and finally merges into egoism (506-07).

The end result of this process for the person him- or herself was that they would become increasingly isolated from both their ancestors, their own children and even their friends and become “shut up in the solitude of [their] own heart[s]” (508). However, Americans, according to Tocqueville, thwarted this process by their robust penchant for forming and joining various groups and associations. In other words, by using their individual choice to choose various forms of community, Americans were able to sustain and reproduce the social capital necessary to remain the functional *community of communities* the constitutional scheme depended upon and prevent the slide into egoism and narcissism that would result in their own personal alienation. In this way, what was once thought to require virtue, discipline and obedience could seemingly be produced by self-interested individualism, the pursuit of happiness and the willingness to respect the rules (read rights of others) of the larger political game.

This system, as we know, has not always worked perfectly. Relying in large measure on something as fluid and self-referential or solipsistic as the virtually unfettered creative and inventive communal experimentation found in American culture to foster and maintain stability is, to say the least, a little Pollyannaish. The only alternative, however, was to resort to coercion and various forms of repression in a more traditional attempt to forge stability

through communal uniformity and individual conformity. This, however, is at its simplest an anti-modern, un-American (and illiberal) solution to the problem. Those few times in our history that we have actually tried to go that route have typically resulted in huge ruptures in the American social and political landscape. While perhaps necessary on occasion, the witch trials in Salem, the carnage of the Civil War, the lawlessness of Prohibition, and the general unrest of the 1960's have made us cautious and reserved in our demands for national unity. By the time John F. Kennedy uttered those memorable words: "Ask not what your country can do for you, but rather what you can do for your country," we know that the national communal game was more or less already lost. The fact that no president since has really tried to make "sacrifice" a prominent theme of his campaign or administration with any success is also quite telling. Much like "God" in America, presidents have made the personal happiness and material success of their constituents their first priority.

At this historical point and in this socio-political context, "community" has become simultaneously all-pervasive *and* nebulous at the same time. The following definition of community adapted from *Habits of the Heart* (Bellah et al., 1984) seems sound enough upon a first hearing:

A community is a group of persons who are socially interdependent, have a shared history and shared interests, participate together in conversations of discernment, decision making and action, and share certain practices that both define the community and are nurtured by it (see glossary).

However rich this definition potentially is, it remains precarious for those for whom the idea of community carries a certain amount of normative or even moral weight. There are numerous groups who meet this definition of a community who many would agree are lacking something essential. For example, an organized crime "family," or a devoted gang of drug addicts, or even the old KGB fit the general definition of a community above. Obviously, there can be widely varying types of communities, not all of which strike the average observer as equally compelling, legitimate or desirable. The postmodern dilemma, of course, is what standards, if any, can we agree to that would allow us to talk about "good" forms of community and "bad" forms of community without violating the principle of toleration and respect for individual autonomy that a liberal culture demands?

While the sorts of extreme examples of aberrant communities above can be dealt with rather easily, and in multiple ways, i.e., their devotion to illegal practices, their own rejection of the rights of similar groups to form and act on them the way they act on others, the fact that their form of community cannot sustain itself without treating others within society as means and so on, what can we say about other forms of community that flourish without violating liberal norms and yet which themselves undermine through their own self-absorption and indifference to the common good? What, if anything, can we say to individuals who through their free choices undermine and diminish— often without any malicious intent— the choices others have made or would like to make?

To break this idea down a little, I would like to point to two recent “texts” that capture in very general ways a dominant trend in the relationship between community and culture in the contemporary United States. The first text is the recent film by the current master of suspense in American movies, M. Night Shymalan, *The Village* (2004). The second is the recent work of non-fiction by the conservative political journalist and regular news commentator, David Brooks, titled *On Paradise Drive: How We Live Now (And Always Have) in the Future Tense* (2004). While both function at the level of popular anthropology, the former also functions as a cautionary tale, while the latter is mostly celebratory and exultant. I will treat them in reverse order.

Brooks’ poignant and witty book takes us on a fast-paced tour of the contemporary social, cultural and geographic landscape of today’s America. His focal point, as the title suggests, is not theoretical, but practical—*how we live*. Brooks situates his observations in suburban America because that is now where most Americans live. He describes the transformation in American living patterns over the last 50 years as “the great dispersal.” In all spheres of life, including the religious—we are the most religiously diverse nation on earth with over 1600 different faiths, denominations and sects—as well as the secular, Americans are shoppers. As Brooks puts it, “Americans go shopping for the neighborhoods, interest groups, and lifestyles that best suit their life missions and dreams” (10). While this certainly is not the stuff of deep devotion or the sort of ideal most people who talk seriously about “community” have in mind, it is an apt description of how most Americans pursue the American dream today. That dream, as Brooks puts it, revolves around the mastery of “tension, hurry, anxiety, and disorder.” “The suburban knight tries to create a world and a lifestyle in which he or she can achieve that magic state of harmony and peace” (42).

Communitarian purists find such pursuits so shallow that they refuse to grant such places the status of communities and instead refer to them as lifestyle enclaves or some other such term of lesser status (see Bellah et al., 1984). To the extent that they are correct in doing so, however, they are also forced by that same logic to acknowledge that more *authentic* or less superficial forms of community are not seen as desirable by many. In something of a response to critics like those Brooks offers the following:

This common pursuit of the together life leads to the conformity that social critics have always complained about. On the other hand, the pursuit of tranquility is also a moral and spiritual pursuit. It is an effort to live on a plane where things are straightforward and good, where people can march erect and upward, where friends can be relaxed and familiar, where families can be happy and cooperative, where individuals can be self-confident and wholesome, where children can grow up active and healthy, where spouses are sincere and honest where everyone is cooperative, hardworking, devout and happy (44).

He closes the passage above with the simple question: “That’s not entirely terrible, is it?”

As suburbs turn into exurbs, even the old connection to big cities itself disappears as the new communities sprouting up in the middle of nowhere are increasingly self-contained. People do not even go into town to work anymore (90% of the office space built in America during the 1990's—a period of great economic growth—was built in the suburbs) (2). The people who make this move, according to Brooks, “are infused with a sense of what you might call conservative utopianism” (48). It is a tale as old as the beginning of American time itself. Claiming near the end of the book that Americans “still live under the spell of paradise” (270), Brooks argues that Americans are constantly pursuing a kind of mythic perfection that leads them to live in the future so to speak. Everything and everyplace could always be better, but rather than the fidelity one might expect to grow from such an orientation, Americans constantly look for the blank canvass. At his most critical, Brooks refers to this phenomenon as “The American Dream devour[ing] its own flesh” (273). This, in turn, leads to his observation that Americans increasingly live “provisional lives.” Provisional because the vast majority of us are vowed to nothing and no place for longer than it is useful and services our needs and desires as individuals. At its most blatant, this is summed up in Brooks’ observation that there are few if any real rules or limits to such a world view: “What may be true for you may not be true for me. What may be true for me now might not be true for me later” (277). While those of an older more traditional mindset might be inclined to see this “provisionality” as a sign of spiritual sloth and moral weakness—the transformation of infidelity to a virtue if you will, Brooks would be quick to remind them that it takes great pains, strenuous effort and its own kind of discipline to live this way. Americans are risk takers and their pursuit of this sort of communal perfection is not without personal and financial costs. Unfortunately, however, there are enormous social costs and communal losses that are generated which those “conservative utopians” are either not cognizant of, or do not feel inclined to grieve over.

No where has this process been more vividly on display in all its facets than in the recent popular movie, *The Village*. Although sold to the American public as a thriller with a surprise ending on par with Shyamalan’s first big movie, *The Sixth Sense*, the film is, on my reading, a metaphoric docudrama on contemporary American society disguised as a big-time Hollywood blockbuster. The high level of expectation generated by the film coupled with the generally poor reviews tells us that on some level people did not get what they expected. What they did get, if they were only willing to see it, was a penetrating glimpse into the contemporary American communal mind.

The film is set in the aptly named Covington Woods—a name that conjures up both the traditional notion of covenanted communities ala Puritan New England and suburban developments across the United States simultaneously—in what appears to be a pre-industrial time period judging from the clothing, mannerisms, language and general lack of material trappings (the newly made grave marker of a young boy’s reads 1890-1897). It is a seemingly pastoral and idyllic place of fraternity, peace, joy and happiness. The village is run consensually by a group of elders led by Edward Walker (played by William Hurt) and others who have fled to the village from the so-called “towns”—“wicked places where wicked people live”—with their families and friends to form a more perfect community. Over the

course of the film, the audience learns of a different character's tragic story of loss and suffering that have led them to the village from the towns. Time and again the upcoming generation of leaders symbolized by Ivy Walker, the blind, red-haired heroine (played by Bryce Howard) and her pensive and stoic love interest, Lucius Hunt (Joaquin Phoenix) are told by the elders of the murders, rapes and other crimes that have brought them to the village. This is done in an attempt to deter them and any other "innocents" among them from venturing in the towns. Despite this persistent socialization, the elders are still not sanguine enough to simply let the tales of decadence serve as the sole deterrent against temptation. They have also created a mythology about fierce creatures who live in the woods that will not only kill trespassers, but take revenge on the other members of the village as well should the border between the village and the woods be breached. To add realism to the tale, the elders periodically disguise themselves as the creatures and move about in the woods and occasionally leave stark evidence of their violent nature to be pondered by the members of the village. The creatures are simply known as "those we do not speak of."

The "farce," as Edward Walker will later call it, has obviously worked insofar as an entire generation of children has now come of age without having left the village. The fear of the creatures and the color red—the "bad color" that attracts "those we do not speak of"—has remained palpable throughout the village and engendered the conformity and achieved the desired measure of social control intended. Indeed, the only request they have had to leave the village was made by the brave and pure Lucius Hunt who was willing to assume the risk in order to procure from the towns items that might actually strengthen the village itself! The joyful, but quite passionless village, of course, is eventually rocked, first by a series of disturbances attributed to the creatures of the woods (but known by the elders to be a member of the community) and subsequently by the attempted murder of Lucius by Noah (the mentally challenged young man played by Adrien Brody) over the love of Ivy Walker. In short order, the film begins its fast paced march to the finish. Ivy is told that there are no monsters and given permission to go through the woods to the "towns" for the medicine needed to save her now fiancé—Lucius. She is told repeatedly not to tell anyone about the village lest they follow her back and destroy it. The movie's twist, of course, is the discovery of the audience—but not Ivy herself because she is blind—that the actual time period for the story is contemporary as she climbs the wall that surrounds the forest and is met by a friendly and helpful park ranger who is paid to keep others out of the "sanctuary." While she is gone, the elders weigh heavily their decision to leave and come to Covington Woods and ultimately decide to stay and continue with their plan. Despite some drama, Ivy returns—even more convinced now than when she left that the stories were in fact true—and one is left with the impression that the village will carry on.

Although sold as a thriller and reviewed as a commentary on 9/11 inspired xenophobia, my reading of the movie is a little more pedestrian and little more telling, I hope. On that reading, the village itself becomes *the* metaphorical embodiment of American communitarianism. Its origins, fittingly enough, are in the chance meetings of strangers in a therapeutic self-help group for those in grief. Their *community* is not the by-product of a shared life, but rather an abject creation of individual wills. They literally create a utopian community through the

acceptance of a “social contract” and an oath. The survival of the created community requires that they wall or “gate” themselves off from the dangerous towns-cum-cities and literally end all contact. They are homogenous for the most part—there are no African-Americans or other people of color in the village despite the fact that we learn at the end of the film that it is situated just outside of modern-day Philadelphia—and wealthy (though money plays no role in the village itself, it required an enormous outlay of capital to purchase it and sustain it). They are held together by a combination of their own dreams of perfection *and* their shared fear and distrust of others and difference—don’t go to the towns and “do not let them in” are the watchwords. With the exception of the needed medicine, the village is economically self-sufficient—what they do not have they have learned to not want or need. The grass is green and plentiful, pollution is non-existent, the children all more or less happy, content, obedient and even noble, and, until that fateful day, there was no crime (the absence of any jail beyond the “quiet room” attests to this). In other words, The Village is for all intents and purposes a stylish and slightly austere version of the American exurb taken to its logical conclusion.

While both Brooks and Shymalan (on my reading of him at least) can be accused of caricaturing their subjects, it would be a mistake to lose sight of the basic and forceful appeal of what they have offered. Though not everyone’s image of perfection to be sure, these places—and more importantly the process by which they come to be—are inviting and hold out the real potential for happiness, comfort and a certain kind of human flourishing. Though Shymalan is the less celebratory of the two—he acknowledges that whatever you do “sorrow will find you”—most of us, I believe, at least secretly root for the village’s survival by the end of the film. When the elders rise up and vote to continue we rise with them; the question is why? Perhaps the line delivered by Ivy Walker is true in this context as well as the one in which she uttered it: “Sometimes we will not do things we want to do so that others will not know we want to do them.” Honesty about motives is rare and often dissonant, cognitively speaking. We talk about what is to be gained—peace, safety, better schools, more green space, and so on. We do not talk about what we are leaving behind and what will happen to it and the others. As modern men and women our first duty is to the self; we owe it to ourselves to be happy we will often claim without much thought as to exactly where such a duty might have come from in the first place. It has what contemporary men and women love contained in its idiom—the sound of authority and tradition without the weight or moral force thereof.

The picture painted in the forgoing pages is one of the good news/bad news variety. On one hand, the idea of community is alive and well in the United States. Americans continue to create, form and reform themselves into numerous groups for widely divergent reasons and purposes. On the other hand, this is attributable, I am afraid, to the increasingly porous and fluid nature of what counts as a community in the modern world (see Bender, 1982). It is difficult to be sanguine about the future prospects for more demanding and less individualistic forms of community given the cultural orientation in which formation takes place.

Americans are not as shallow as they seem according to David Brooks, but they are “shoppers” or “consumers” who tend to view the various pieces of their lives in terms of costs and benefits and with at least one eye on the practical. It is not that we are somehow opposed

to the idea of the “common good,” but that we are just not sure that such a thing could really work in practice without creating pernicious consequences—intended or not—in the process. Hence, metaphorically, the idea dies for want of a second—it didn’t sell. Of course what we will not attempt collectively, we are all too ready to try individually or in our various enclaves. Unlike the whole, we believe that as individuals and in our groups we *are* perfectible; we believe that we are just one good autonomous choice, move, or “purchase” away from the best life. It remains fully seductive precisely because of its elusiveness. And, as the work of both David Brooks and M. Night Shyamalan illustrate, such lives are in fact very demanding in their own ways. Only in a country like this does the notion of utopian conservatism make any sense at all. As a people we are bred to love the pleasures of the chase or the pursuit rather than the catching or the keeping.

The existential philosopher Nietzsche once received a letter from a woman who claimed that she had no morality at all, to which he replied that he thought that was the most difficult and demanding type of morality there is. His point was that living provisionally or “deconstructively”¹ is hard work. As Edward Walker put it in his impassioned speech to the village elders—“I hope that I am always willing to risk everything!” The quest for order and stability—“par” for David Brooks—by committing oneself to a life of “disciplined tentativeness” is not altogether logical of course, but it is not without its charms. One of those charms, however, is not the call to heroic or selfless perseverance and constancy required to maintain something even in the face of difficulty and tedium. The special joys that are only available through the familiar and the time-honored cannot be purchased in the way that we buy “distressed” furniture or jeans that look well-worn right off the rack. In the greatest paradox of all, what we are often seeking can only be found by relinquishing our right to search any further.

References

Bender, Thomas. 1982. *Community and Social Change in America*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Bellah, Robert N., Richard Madsen, William M. Sullivan, Ann Swindeler, and Steven M. Tipton. 1984. *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*. New York: Harper & Row, Pubs.

Bloom, Harold. 1992. *The American Religion: The Emergence of the Post-Christian Nation*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

¹ From *Dictionary.com*.: “A philosophical movement and theory of literary criticism that questions traditional assumptions about certainty, identity, and truth; asserts that words can only refer to other words; and attempts to demonstrate how statements about any text subvert their own meanings: “In deconstruction, the critic claims there is no meaning to be found in the actual text, but only in the various, often mutually irreconcilable, ‘virtual texts’ constructed by readers in their search for meaning” (Rebecca Goldstein).

Brooks, David. 2004. *On Paradise Drive*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Duncan, Christopher M. 1995. *The Anti-Federalists and Early American Political Thought*. DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press.

Hirschman, Albert O. 1970. *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Madison, James, Alexander Hamilton and John Jay. 1988. *The Federalist Papers*. New York: Penguin.

Prothero, Stephen. 2003. *American Jesus: How the Son of God Became A National Icon*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Tocqueville, Alexis De. [1935] 1988. *Democracy in America*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers.

The Village 2004. Director, M. Night Shymalan, Touchstone Pictures.

Dr. **Christopher M. Duncan** is Professor and Chair in the Department of Political Science at the University of Dayton, where he teaches course in political theory and religion and politics. He is the author of two books in American political thought, and his work has appeared in journals including *Public Administration Review*, *Review of Politics*, *The American Political Science Review*, and *Polity*, among others.

Fire Surfing

Michael W. Popejoy and Daniel P. Popejoy

This story is about heroes. These are the heroes who save a piece of someone's world and walk away satisfied with a job well done—a job they love. There are rarely medals, few reporters, no headlines, never a tickertape parade, and none is ever expected. They aren't braggers or complainers. If you ask them what they thought of their life and death work, they would walk away with a shrug saying, "We're just doing the job." It has been said about firefighters that the greatest act of courage is taking the oath of office; everything else is in the line of duty. And, like the police, they just call it the Job.

This story is also about the bonding of people into a team; a concept mostly misunderstood by people who do not work together in danger. People who work together in harm's way, in extreme conditions of grave personal risk, who depend on each other for their very lives, become special friends. It is a trust that cannot easily be explained.

My name is Jack Baker, a rookie in the fire department, and my story begins and ends in the year I began my career as a firefighter-paramedic, and it is also the year of my death. My young life would end in a raging fire along with several of my fellow firefighters, all of us doing one of the most dangerous jobs in the world. I knew getting killed in the line of duty was always a possibility, but what I feared most was dying poorly—of not being a team player.

I was just 18 years old, in the best physical condition of my life when I joined the fire department; and I was about to become a made man in a trial by fire. I finished high school academically undistinguished. I had preferred to hit the beaches and surf rather than hit the books and study. I even looked like one of the Beach Boys. But, after being referred to vocational-technical school by my high school guidance counselor, I had a high school diploma, a state firefighter certificate, and had completed advanced paramedic training. I was ready to start my career at county fire-rescue. It was better than being a fry cook at the local burger joint.

I was the youngest firefighter-paramedic in the department and was known as kid, or rookie, or surfer-dude at the station—even with the freshly buzzed haircut, I still looked more like a lifeguard than a firefighter. All the other guys were older, married with kids, and weren't sure what to make of me—the young guy. Could they depend on me in a bad fire, or would I cut and run? Frankly, that was not a question even I could answer at this point. I had not yet been in the heat of a crisis situation. My moment of truth was coming sooner than anyone ever expected. I guess looking back on it all, working at the local burger joint would have been safer.

One of the advantages of being young and single is that I lived in the fire station—rent free. I had a bunk in the dorm and everything I owned in the world fit nicely in my crew locker, with room to spare. So, my home was Station 14 located in Fire District #2. Not exactly the kind of pad to bring a date back to, but then I had not been on a date in over a year. I was too busy getting the training and getting to know the job. I liked girls--soft hands, bright eyes and long silky hair, and the smell of perfume—too much Right Guard and Old Spice at the station—too much man stuff. Something was missing in my life. But, anyway I was fast becoming an adrenalin rush junkie and the girls could wait.

The fire district, the station, and the 48 men assigned to it—16 on each of the three alternate shifts, was located in a once rural, but still remote, and rapidly changing section of the county. These few men protected people and property for more than 186 square miles complete with a growing population and a shrinking county budget—it was shrinking at a time it should have been expanding—we needed more of everything—and nothing was forthcoming from our county planners and elected officials.

Certainly the tax base was expanding as many new homes and businesses blossomed and lots of new people fled the city and densely packed suburbs to build their lives in the last natural wilderness left in the county—so, where was our money? A new four-lane highway stretched through the once isolated district connecting the big city to the west and the Atlantic Ocean to the east. With the big new highway came increased traffic, higher speeds, and more crashes between cars, trucks, and pedestrians. There wasn't much of that wilderness left that wasn't crashed or trashed.

Some of the men who had been assigned to this district for years talked often of the spectacular increase in “runs” as the area grew unchecked. We responded to more car wrecks, crime victims, heart attacks, structural fires, forest fires started by careless campers, drownings, and boating accidents in the area's lakes and the fast moving river, a few lost children and an occasional cat up a tree. We rarely had time for the preventative work like building inspections and community education programs.

Unfortunately, we were in a county caught flatfooted in growth planning. We needed more men, more equipment, and another station in the district. None of which were in the “budget” according to the county commissioners—none of whom had to put their lives on the line with us. We knew when we got into a hot situation that backup units from other districts would be a long time getting to us. Most of the time, we were on our own in a county that took our

work and our risk for granted. We were underpaid, under staffed, and under equipped for the work. But, that was county politics, and the people had spoken; “no new taxes!” But, we were firefighters, not politicians—we did the job just doing more with less each year.

Station 14 resembled an oversized aircraft hanger; a large, ugly aluminum structure with a rounded dome roof. When it rained, every drop sounded like marbles hitting a snare drum. It served as the garage for more than two million taxpayer dollars worth of fire trucks and rescue equipment. We joked that the station itself cost less than the equipment it protected from the elements.

Attached to the hanger-type structure was a narrow brick structure extending the entire length of the hanger. The “fire house” contained the battalion chief’s office and a radio communications room, a small classroom, a dormitory with a large bathroom and shower, a well-equipped kitchen and crew TV room. Our kitchen was always stocked with an abundant amount of food—we were hard men and we liked to eat—when we had the time.

We slept only a few feet from our trucks. My primary truck assignment, Rescue 3 Medic, was just outside my “bedroom” door which opened directly into the garage bay. We usually ran more rescues than fires, so I and my driver, Rick Durkee, was the busiest crew in the station. Our boots were kept at the side of the bed with bunker pants tucked over them and the suspenders laid out over the top of the boots. When the klaxons sounded in the middle of the night, the station lights blinked on and the bay doors opened automatically as we scrambled into our boots, grabbed the suspenders and pulled the bunker pants up over our underwear. Our bunker jackets, helmets, and Scott air tanks were in the trucks waiting for us. At night, we could clear the station with all hands in about 60 seconds flat; 30 during the day. You quickly learned to be a light sleeper and a fast runner or you got run over especially if you slept nearest the door.

Our boss was the Battalion Chief, Captain Steve Lalonde—just Cap to all of us. He commanded the district, the station and the 48 men. He was 42 years old, not very tall, but heavily muscled, dark olive complexion almost Italian looking, thinning hair, and a serious man with a dry sense of humor if you took the time to watch for it. He was a veteran of County Fire-Rescue for nearly 20 years, more than half that time in this district. He knew it well—every street, every hydrant location, and every natural water source or swimming pool capable of hard draft suction from an engine company to pump water to the hose lines—our life lines.

The citizens who lived here or anyone passing through coming from somewhere and going to somewhere else were in his care, our care—and they never knew us. Cap was married with three children, and all of them wanted to follow in their dad’s footsteps including his teenage daughter. She was determined to be the first woman firefighter at county fire-rescue as soon as she graduated high school. Cap was unsure about taking retirement when he hit the 20 year mark. He could stay in, of course, as long as he stayed healthy—that was the key to the retirement plan, surviving the job. His wife wanted him out. A meager pension and a safer

line of work as a second career would be just fine with her. She was not at all happy about the career aspirations of their kids. Cheating death daily was not something she took for granted when she married a firefighter.

Cap wasn't a good politician so Battalion Chief was as far up the ranks as he would go in the department. One more promotion and he would have been a guy with a tie safe working in an office downtown—but that was not for Cap. He was a fire combat officer. He and his men were career smoke eaters. There were no firefighter-politicians at Station 14, just as there were no politician-firefighters on the county commission.

Next in command, was our tactical officer, a newly promoted lieutenant, David Couch, 33, married, kids, mortgage, and a live in mother-in-law—he needed the promotion. David was tall, blonde, thin and wiry, and a good guy. To help support his large family, he augmented his fire department salary by working his off-duty shifts for a private ambulance service in the city. He was a calm man in crisis situations, soft spoken, an excellent tactical officer, and he was being groomed for battalion command. He openly admired Cap and wanted to be just like him when he had a command of his own. David didn't want an office downtown either. He wanted to be on the truck and in the fire.

The rest of the men on my shift were engineers, who drove the trucks and ran the pumps at the fire scene; other paramedics, like me, who patched up the injured, delivered the babies, and rescued people trapped in their wrecked cars; and the firefighters who manned the hose lines. We were all cross trained in as many functions as possible—we were all skilled firefighters and medics with some men having more highly technical rescue training in emergency medical care, special operations and hazardous materials operations. If you were in trouble, we would be there for you, and we were the best.

Our 24 hour shift started at 7:30AM and on that day, like any other winter morning in the south, it was cool and crisp with the sun shining brightly. No rain in the forecast and no snow this far south, but we knew it would be a chilly night anyway. Wives, some with small children in the backseat of the family car, kissed their husbands goodbye. No one could have guessed how many lives would be changed forever in the next 24 hours—Station 14 would never be the same place again—neither would the survivors. The men of Station 14 were going to take a trip into hell and some would not be coming back. Some of these women would be widows before their husband's shift ended. Something they feared but hoped would never happen.

Everyone reported to the truck bay for roll call and shift change report from the outgoing "A" shift crew of sixteen men who would leave at 8:00AM for home or their off-duty jobs. The outgoing shift would always have coffee on. We took a few minutes to warm our hands over a hot cup of strong coffee and swap a few tall fire tales. Firemen love to tell their fire stories. It's an oral history of the fire service—from the bad car wreck the night before to that "big fire" back in '69.

Shift change was an informal ritual in the fire department—no standing at attention in formation and shouting “yo” when your name is called—that’s TV cop stuff. Cap knew everyone, knew who may be late, and usually why, who was hung over or was down with a bug. Cap also knew who may be having trouble at home. Wives and girlfriends did not always understand the job. Men never talked about it, would deny it if asked, but for all the macho talk, we watched out for each other. We were our own personal “protective association.” God knows, no one else cared.

I learned that lesson the hard way my first month on the Job. Durkee and I were on a tough, nasty rescue run near the river at the county line. After the rescue medivac helicopter from the city medical center’s trauma unit lifted off with our two critically injured patients, I was resting in the front seat of Rescue 3 Medic completing county paperwork called a “Run Report” of course in quadruplicate. It was a typical hot and humid day as it can only get in the south in the middle of summer so I switched on the engine to run the air conditioner. For some reason, unbeknownst to me, Durkee was behind the rescue truck with his head down near the tail pipe looking at something near the undercarriage when the engine turned over. I guess he thought I was going to drive off or back out and run him over. He jumped in the cab hell taking me by surprise with his anger.

“What the hell’re you doing startin’ up the rig while I’m under it, idiot?” he yelled with his face getting redder by the second.

“But Rick, I didn’t know you were under there” I whined. Being the new guy, I wanted to do well. By this time, I suspected that I had messed up pretty bad. Just in case I missed the point, he made it clear.

“I’m your partner. You should always know where I am—every minute when we’re on a run. I knew where you were. I just didn’t think you’d do such a stupid thing—then tell me you didn’t know where I was.” He emphasized the words for their instructional effect. “You better stay alert, Rookie. Letting your guard down gets guys killed on this job.” He added only slightly calmer, “We never work alone. We’re always a team. Always keep an eye on the other guys. We have to watch out for each other—every minute. Remember it.” He sighed his frustration at my inattentiveness, closed his door loudly, fastened his seat belt and slapped the still running rescue truck into drive for the long, silent trip back to the station. I felt pretty bad; like a little boy who just had a chewing out from his father—actually he was old enough to be my father or I should say I was young enough to be his son. I still had a lot to learn.

On the way back, I was going over in my mind all the things that could happen to me when Durkee wrote me up. I figured, at the very least, I would be called on the carpet by Cap—another fatherly chewing out. I guessed probably a memo would go into my permanent personnel record. I also thought that worse things could happen. Rookies can be fired at any time for any reason during their first year. Screw up bad, just once, and you’re out. No questions, no appeals, no second chances would be given to any weak link on the crew. If the men did not trust you, they wouldn’t work with you—the work was just too dangerous to

question who might let you down at the worst possible moment. I had heard stories about more than one firefighter who had reported for work and found his personal gear stacked in a neat pile at the back door of the station—a door that was locked. Once locked out by a crew, there was no getting back in.

Durkee was the senior engineer on the short list for the next officer slot in the department. A serious complaint from him about my performance could certainly end my career. The captain could fire me on the spot, the department chief could fire me from downtown with just a telephone call, or the men could lock me out. To my surprise, he didn't say a word to anyone. Maybe he thought I had potential.

As the morning wore on, we were working the “routine”—station duties—every truck and every piece of equipment had to be inspected daily. There were hundreds of items on the checklist. The entire station gets cleaned every day—you could eat off the bay floor where the trucks were parked. One man on rotation breaks off station routine at about 11AM to begin preparing lunch for the crew. If you didn't know how to cook when you started with the department, you would soon learn or you had better have a wife or girlfriend that would come over to cook. Rick Durkee's wife was a favorite visitor when it was his turn in the kitchen. Everyone took cook rotation.

By noon, the men would be cleaning up and wandering into the dining room for chow, good-naturedly hazing whoever had kitchen duty. No one complimented the cook, but there were never leftovers—that spoke volumes of appreciation. Plentiful amounts of hot food, strong hot coffee, and iced cold sweet tea were the order for the hour. For all that we ate each day, it was a wonder we weren't fat. The physical demands of the Job kept the pounds off.

After lunch, and between runs, we had work details consisting of rigorous fire and rescue training, inspection tours of businesses in the community, and physical training time—if we had the time—a disaster was always just around the corner. Cap made sure the crews on all three shifts were in tip-top shape. He insisted on an intensive physical fitness program. We ran laps around the station yard, did push-ups, lifted weights, and often, late in the afternoon, we played basketball. Cap knew we had to be physically able to handle an emergency by brute force if necessary—he'd been there too many times—he knew what it took to be a firefighter. He also made sure we worked as a team—a crew. Everyone knew, as I did now, after my chewing out by Durkee, that teamwork would give us an edge in staying alive. There were no cowboys in a fire—only dead firefighters.

Throughout the day, we ran several rescue calls—nothing major; a small brush fire which we mopped up in less than an hour, and we sprayed down a gas spill at a service station with a leaking pump. Overall, it had been an unusually quiet day for such a large district. We had dinner, buttoned up the station for the night, and watched television.

Fire department policy required that everyone remain up and dressed with the bay doors open to the public until 9:00 PM; then one by one we would drift off to the dorm for sack time.

Some nights were easy, others were pretty busy and you didn't get much sleep. Cap had already gone home for the night leaving Lt. David Couch as our tactical commander for the remainder of the shift. Battalion Chiefs work day hours and are on call throughout the night for anything the TAC Officers felt was big enough to get them out of bed. We didn't know it as we were turning in for the night that we would be seeing Cap again, and for the last time ever, before the sun dawned on a new day.

It seemed like we had just gotten into bed when the alert tones and klaxons for our station sounded piercing the quiet darkness of the night. The station lights came on blinding sleepy eyes and we could hear the three large aluminum bay doors screech as they were opening. Adrenalin was pumping as we jammed feet into boots, pulled up bunker pants, and hit the door running into the bay scattering for our assigned trucks. I jumped into the cab of Rescue 3 Medic, put on my bunker coat, grabbed my helmet and checked my watch—it was 2:26AM.

Durkee sat in the drivers' seat and immediately cranked the massive diesel engine, it roared to life as he and I both hit the many console switches that turned on dozens of emergency lights; and the radio, which was always left in the "on" mode, crackled voice transmissions from dispatchers sitting in their warm, cozy offices downtown. The entire crew was listening in each of the trucks as we blasted out of the station sirens screaming—surely waking the neighbors as we always did—letting them know their taxpayer dollars were up at work tonight, and the radio messages were also echoing through the loudspeakers in the bay, the dorm, everywhere in the station—no one misses the call.

“Battalion 14, Rescue 3, Rescue 14, Engine 4, Engine 5, Tanker 7, this is an all-call alarm—plane crash corner of Dickinson and Fairmont in Monterrey Homes subdivision. Repeat, plane crash corner of Dickinson and Fairmont. Further information en-route.”

Then we heard the twin tones for neighboring districts calling out their battalion chiefs and their truck companies and rescue crews. First we heard the second alarm, then a third. Headquarters either already knew this was bad or they were taking no chances with a plane crash. This call was unusual for us anyway since there were no airports anywhere near this part of the county. We did not have aircraft fire fighting and rescue equipment. Who would have ever thought that we needed it out here? We wouldn't have gotten it anyway.

Swallowing down excitement mixed with fear, I thought about what we would find on scene. Flaming jet fuel and smoking dead people were scary combinations no matter how many years on the Job, and this was only my first year. You just had to do it—be there-- to understand it.

We cleared the station with the entire complement of trucks in less than a minute—not a record, but not bad. We had just reached the first stoplight for our turn onto the major highway leading out to Monterrey Homes, more than nine miles from the station, when we saw Cap speeding flat-out down the highway in his chiefs' car, his red strobe lights flashing and the siren screaming in the yelp mode rushing through the darkness heading directly for

the maelstrom. He clicked his microphone key button twice to let us know he was on the run with us. His car was a fully loaded police interceptor cruiser purchased used from the Sheriff's department and could do over 160 miles per hour. He was moving pretty close to that top end when he roared by. He would be there well ahead of us. He would assess the situation on site and talk us in.

As we turned onto the highway like a speeding military convoy, two things happened at the same time that chilled our blood—headquarters had signaled a fourth alarm, followed immediately by a fifth. This meant that more than 30 trucks and at least 125 firefighters were on the way to back up the sixteen of us. But, we would be there a long time before any help arrived. Everyone was counting on us—just us. We instinctively looked out in the direction of the large housing development, still miles away, and saw the huge glowing fireball in the night sky. It looked like dawn there—but it was still many hours until daylight would shine on us. Not all of us would see the sunrise on this day. It was bad—real bad. Even the two “old timers” sitting in the back seat of the rescue truck were breathing quickly and saying things, quietly under their breath—I couldn't tell if they were prayers or obscenities of shock or surprise. I didn't say anything. I was in awe of the sight and pretty damn scared. I was unsure I even had a voice. If it looks this bad from this far away, it will be even worse when we get there.

Durkee sitting next to me at the wheel looked over and with his thick glasses with impact resistant lenses, saw me staring blankly at the inferno we were rushing to. His foot was pushing the pedal all the way to the floor as the large rescue truck growled in full acceleration. He must have sensed what I was feeling right about then because he said with a grin, “This is what we get paid the big bucks for, Jack. If this fire doesn't break our hearts it sure will give us new stories to tell.”

I did not look over at him as I said haltingly, trying to catch my breath, trying to avoid my rising panic, my eyes riveted on the sight of hundred foot flames arching into the night sky; “Yeah, but I wish...I wish I was off duty tonight...or in another line of work. Maybe I should have become a nurse or a lifeguard or something. Maybe I shoulda been a monk—religion's nice!”

Durkee chuckled as he quietly said, “I know that feeling, Jack. Some runs you just wish you were somewhere else.” He added, “but, look on the bright side, no one will call you a rookie after this one.” A few moments later, almost as an afterthought, he looked back over at me and added, “just remember everything we taught you, kid, stick with us, and you'll get through this—we all will.” I didn't find much comfort in his reassurance. I'm not sure he believed it himself as he stared ahead toward our destination—his smile was gone.

“OK” was all I dared say—I was busy maintaining my composure trying not to piss my pants, even though they would be plenty wet soon enough. I did not want to show cowardice or do anything stupid or careless in front of these firefighters—whom I lived with, worked with, and respected. If I had to die tonight—please God, let me die well. This was the Job and I

deeply in my heart needed to do it well. They didn't teach this at the Fire Academy. I don't think they could have; some things just have to be experienced, and survived, they can't be taught.

We were traveling at nearly 80 miles per hour down the wide, four-lane highway—no traffic was visible this time of night—so we opened up the rigs—the large, lumbering trucks with their huge fuel injected diesel engines strained to go as fast as we wanted. I found myself selfishly wishing that we would just break down, blow an engine, or get a flat tire and not get us out there until more help arrived. That is not the way firefighters are supposed to think—not heroes—maybe I wasn't cut out for the hero stuff. So, for a moment, I was ashamed of my feelings. I wasn't much of a hero tonight, I was only an 18 year old kid who wanted to see my nineteenth birthday—but what I didn't know then was that I was not going to get my wish. I wasn't even going to see tomorrow.

I knew perhaps more than a hundred people needed our help right now—they were desperate and counting on us. No matter how I felt, no matter how we felt, we were the best—we were their only hope and we were racing to get there. As fast as we were going, Cap was way ahead of us—we had lost sight of his flashing lights. We heard him call in on the radio that he had arrived on scene. I had only a few more miles to grow up and be ready for this.

“Battalion 14, Command 1 to County.” Cap was calling in. Now we would get a first hand picture of what to expect when we arrived in just a few minutes.

“County...go ahead 14 C1.” The cool, calm voice of the dispatcher was a bit irritating. It's easy for them to be calm—there's no danger in working the radio desk unless you spill a cup of hot coffee in your lap or get a paper cut.

“10-97 have arrived on scene. Signal out forest fire units. We have a plane crash as indicated with five homes fully involved with fire, the woods to the east are on fire and probably 20 homes total are directly threatened,” the Chief said, his voice strained but even—under control. This was not his first major fire.

“10-4, 14C1” after a pause we heard, “Battalion 14 C1 go to channel six and contact Division One.” Division One was the senior deputy chief of operations for the county fire department. This had to be big if the DCO was out of bed at this time of night. He's a suit and tie guy who hasn't seen a fire bigger than his family room fireplace in 20 years. He had a degree in fire science from a major university—which meant he technically knew how to put out fires, it's just that he had not actually done so throughout much of his career.

“10-4. 14C1 to channel six now.” Our chief would be off our frequency for a few minutes as he conferred with the suit.

We heard the call go out to Battalion Six. They were the station with the heavy forest fire fighting units including four-wheel drive woods fire fighting trucks and two huge yellow Cat

bulldozers on a flat-bed 18 wheeler truck. Both of the bulldozers had trail plows attached for digging firebreaks through the woods. However, like everyone else coming to help the Station 14 crew, they were a long way away. Even though we had more forest fires in our district than any other sector of the county, we didn't have bulldozers. Our station was not large enough to accommodate the equipment or the additional men. "Budgets are a bitch" was the Cap's favorite saying any time county government said no to his requests for more men and equipment and a better station—which was most of the time.

"14C1 to 14C2," Cap was back on frequency with us and calling the TAC officer, Lt. David Couch who was riding lead in Engine 4 just ahead of us.

"14C2, go ahead 14C1," David answered, sounding just as calm as Cap. I've got to admit, these guys were cool on the radio—I'd be screaming into the microphone. But, of course, they knew every transmission was being monitored and recorded. Never let them hear fear, frustration, or anger. It was embarrassing when you heard panic played back on the six o'clock news. I was beginning to think I was the only one about to launch my cookies the closer we got to the scene. It was best I stayed off the radio.

"David, come in at the west entrance and hit the hydrant on Curry Street with Engine 5. Lay lines forward to the corner of Curry and Dickinson. Park the engine there. You'll have to walk in to the fire zone from there. Bring in both two-and-a-half lines, and both inch-and-a-half lines with three teams from each truck You got that?"

"10-4, Cap."

"Engine 5 enter at the second entrance, come straight down Fairmont to within about one block of the leading edge of the fire zone. Hook hydrants and lay lines on your way in and bring all lines in with three teams, got that?"

"10-4. Where do you want the rescue trucks and the tanker?"

"Leave Tanker 7 near the entrance. The woods trucks can refill their tanks from it as needed—we'll have the hydrants in the subdivision pretty maxed out. The tanker crew can refill the tanker by hard drafting from the canal near the entrance. Park one rescue truck with each engine company and use the paramedics as backups on the hose lines. I don't think there's anybody left alive to rescue in there, but have them bring in medic kits—we might get lucky." Then Cap changed his tone—he said more quietly, reserved, almost sadly, "There's lots of fire in here—it's going to be a tough job tonight."

"10-4, Cap. We are still a few minutes out."

"Buster your ass, David. This fire is out of control and moving quickly."

"We're humping it, Cap. Keep your head down. The cavalry is on the way."

“10-4 and out.”

There wasn't much Cap could do until we and the equipment got there other than monitor the situation and communicate the attack plan back to the TAC officer coming in with the trucks and the crew. Mostly, he had to just sit tight and sweat it out until we arrived.

Just when things were about as out of hand as we thought they could get, it got worse. The cool, calm dispatcher—safe in her office downtown—in her sweet voice provided us with some follow-up information, “Battalion 14 and all units responding: Information just received that the aircraft is a US Air Force B-52 bomber. USAF units are responding at this time. ETA unknown.”

“14C1 to county—do we know if this bomber has nuclear weapons on board?” asked Cap.

There was a hesitation, in radio lingo—it's called “dead air” then the dispatcher responded quietly, “The Air Force people refused to answer that question. Security reasons. Assume that it is. County out.”

“10-4.” Cap said.

I couldn't help looking over at Durkee as we heard this exchange, looking for some reassurance that we weren't all going to be glowing in the dark before this was over. The two veterans in the back seat were really muttering now, “What?” “Damn” “Why me?” One of them, Paul Hooper, a hard core firefighter quipped, “Hey Durkee, pull over will ya, I'll walk home from here.”

Hooper was a strange character. He had been in the department for many years and never sought promotion through the ranks. He should have been a captain by now, but preferred shift work and always wanted to be the nozzle man on the first line in to any fire. No matter how bad things got, you could always count on Hoop to be standing there in the breach with a big grin, a cigarette dangling from his mouth, swinging the hose at a fire backstopping the 250 pounds per square inch pushing back from the force of the water pressure coming out of the nozzle. He always had a running commentary on the lighter side about whatever was going on. Hoop was dependable—he was a 100 percent kind of guy. He was big and strong enough to lift a car. It was comforting knowing he was on the run with us—but only a little bit.

Durkee just said, “Look you guys, remember what they said in special operations and HAZMAT training, nuclear warheads can't just cook off by themselves into mushroom clouds. Detonations have to be triggered by gobs of electronic gear and a personal thumb on the button from the President of the United States himself. So, stop worrying about a nuclear ice age tonight. We gotta a fire to fight! It's just another big ole fire.”

Of course, Hoop had to ask, “Yeah, well what if the containment shell in the warhead was cracked open by the impact or the explosion or the heat of the fire?” He added, “If I remember, that stuff is pure enriched plutonium with a half-life of about a kajillion years; very nasty stuff.” Well, it seems Hoop was actually awake during special operations training.

“Well then, I guess that’s a different story,” Durkee answered leaving it at that.

I looked over at him as I asked, “Whadda mean? What’s different? What happens to us if we get exposed to that?” I hadn’t been to the training course yet but I suspected I knew the answer anyway.

“Don’t worry about that, Jack. Your hair falls out, your skin festers like a boiled lobster, you barf your lungs up and shit out your intestines, and all your future kids will be mutants.” Durkee grinned from ear to ear. “If you get enough of it, you’ll just die quick and avoid the holiday rush.”

Hooper, smoking an ever-present cigarette said, “Thanks, Durk. You’re an inspiration to us all.”

Lt. Couch calling on the radio, broke in on our conversation, directing us to go in with Engine 4 in the first attack line. He would command from Engine 5 and take Rescue 14 with him. The tanker crew would join up with us after parking at the entrance to Monterrey Homes if we needed them. He wanted to make sure we left the keys in the truck. The fire may overrun our perimeter. We’d lost a truck to a fire once when someone parked it too close and took the keys. We had been a unit short ever since—no money in the county budget to buy a replacement. If you cook one, you’re short one was the county’s philosophy.

Durkee said 10-4 on the radio indicating that he got the message, then said to us, “looks like we caught the main line to hell, boys.” This was getting too theatrical for my taste, but we were trying not to overreact to the stress of what lay before us. The closer we got, the worse it appeared on the horizon.

I just responded sarcastically, “yeah, we’re so lucky.”

“Cheer up, Jack. This is the big one you can tell your kids and grandkids about.”

Hooper answered from the back, “You mean the mutants, Durk?”

“Yeah, those little green pizza-eaters with turtle shells—or maybe blue smurfs,” Durkee said laughing as we pulled into the main entrance. The inferno that awaited us was huge—larger than anything I had ever seen—or imagined. It was even larger than the “shock effect” videos they showed us at the Fire Academy.

Even with the siren on, Durkee had to hit the blast horn to get people out of our way so we could get down the street to our staging position. The fire was already moving rapidly through the woods to our west and through the tightly packed houses directly in front of us; yet, people fleeing the raging fire and other people arriving to see the action blocked our way. Some people were just wandering blindly—in shock. Some were terrified; screaming, calling out names—looking for lost family members in the crowd and confusion. We hadn't heard from Cap for some time so we were going on our last orders from him. Form up into crews and move out in a skirmish line against the widening fire zone. It was totally out of control so the attack zone was changing by the minute. Sixteen men and eight hose lines stood alone against overwhelming odds; a thin line, indeed. Where was our backup? Way down the street. How long could we hold out? Who knew?

Within minutes of arrival, we had formed into attack crews and were moving slowly forward against the raging firestorm. Two men, the engineers, one assigned to each engine, remained behind to make sure the pumps continued the uninterrupted flow of water out to our hose lines. The two engines and those two men, and they were experts at their jobs, would be our only life line once we were in the fire zone. That's why the equipment was checked daily—there was no room for failure or malfunctions. We would have plenty enough to worry about tonight.

In my mind, through the confusion—the blinding, choking smoke, a driving heat that sucked the breath from your lungs, and the flames—the only light in the darkness on our path into the fire zone—I thought—where was Cap? I remembered the lessons drilled into us—watch out for the other guy—never work alone. Well tonight, Cap was working alone somewhere out there. I knew no one should be working alone.

Durkee was on another hose line too far from me to ask him to check on Cap. I knew Durk had a radio—not all of us did—also not in the budget. I couldn't have seen him anyway. The smoke was so thick we had to physically feel for the man next to us—I was choking on acrid smoke and fumes—fighting for each breath of stinking superheated air. It smelled of kerosene. That odor was JP4, the fuel used in commercial and military jet engines, and the air also smelled of “crispy critters”—firefighter gallows humor for burned, charred bodies—an odor you never forgot.

It was impossible to see each other unless we were face to face, practically touching. I reached out blindly and grabbed a guy by the collar of his bunker coat. I didn't even know who it was at first as I pulled his face close to mine so I could yell into his ear—trying to make myself heard over the roaring noise of the fire. Through the smoke as his face passed close to mine, I saw a bright orange glow near his mouth just below his nose. My God! His face was on fire! I thought, and he just about burned my face with a glowing ember as we bumped into each other—when I got a closer look, it was Hooper, smoking a cigarette as usual. I yelled at him, “Christ, Hoop! What're you doin' smokin'? You almost burned my face with that damn thing.”

“Whatsa matter, Jack? ‘Fraid I’m goin’ to start a fire?” The glowing embers of his cigarette reflected off his toothy grin as we moved through the thick choking smoke into the heart of the fire.

“Where’s Cap?” I yelled at the top of my lungs.

“I dunno where the hell he is. Hell kid, I don’t even know where we are in this shit,” Hooper yelled back as he reached for the portable two-way radio clipped to the front of his bunker coat. “Probably time to do a head count anyway.” Without removing the cigarette, he put the microphone close to one side of his mouth and yelled loudly, “Rescue 3 Medic to 14C1. Report your position, Cap.”

There was no answer as he pushed the microphone that doubled as a small speaker up to his ear. He tried again, “Dammit, 14C1, come in. Give your position.” There was still no answer—nothing but static. Hoop didn’t worry much about proper radio procedure. He was never embarrassed about much of anything he didn’t consider important, and he was too senior in the department to get written up for anything short of stealing a fire truck to go out on a date, and didn’t watch the evening news anyway. He often used some light profanity over the air. And, about that fire truck he had borrowed for his date, it was off line at the time for pump repair anyway.

I yelled again as we continued our slow forward movement into the core of the fire zone, “Well, where is he?”

“He don’t answer—hell, he’s probably out somewhere throwin’ back a brewski waitin’ for us to get this shit knocked down—then show up for the press conference. That’s what I’d do if I was a goddamn officer.” Hooper said still sucking on his cigarette. “Now, mother, do you mind much if we get back to work? Cap’s a big boy—he’ll be OK.”

I forgot about Cap and Durkee and the others. I was working hard just staying alive and keeping track of my partner, crazy Hooper. Things were hairy, and were not getting better. We hit the fire and began to gain some ground knocking it down as we pushed forward. As soon as the cold water hit the hot gases roiling with the flames from the burning jet fuel, it flashed back at us—we were knocked around, battered by the fire storm of hot, blinding steam that stunk of jet fuel and burned flesh. It was difficult to maintain our footing—we couldn’t see ahead of us—didn’t know, didn’t want to know exactly what or whom we were stepping on as we moved forward.

As we pushed on into the core of the fire, nearing the actual crash site, the “worst case scenario” happened. An explosion probably from an unexploded fuel tank ignited and blew us apart. I lost my handhold on the hose line and lost contact with Hooper. I was thrown to the ground hard by the overpressure of the blast and fought to catch my breath. Blinded, ripping off my mask, I yelled for Hoop, but the noise of the fire wind was intense. My face was hot, I was afraid I was burning; my chest hurt from the impact. I was retching up whatever was left

in my stomach from dinner that night. Sitting on the ground, I struggled to put the mask back on hoping I had enough air left in the Scott Pak to back out of the inferno. I couldn't see to move forward or backward—disorientation can lead to panic. I knew I was nearing the moment of truth when someone tripped over me, reached down and pulled me up to my feet like I was weightless.

“Hey boy! This is no time for nappin’!” yelled Hooper as he physically dragged me back to where we had dropped the hose. He had shut down the water flow to come and look for me. “Where ya been? Am I supposed to do all the work myself?”

“I fell down and couldn't get up,” I said, my voice muffled through my mask. I noticed he didn't even have his on. I didn't know how he could breathe this stuff.

“How come you're not wearing your mask?” I asked.

“Can't smoke with the damn thing on.” Hoop said grinning back at me. He was searching in his bunker coat for his pack of smokes ready to light up and get back into the fight. “Well, if you are rested now, kiddo, let's get back to work.”

“Yeah, Hoop. I get your point.”

“Good, now get that mask off and save your air. You're might be needin' it later.” He then added, “and, if you're goin' to die on me, I expect reasonable notice so I can get someone else here to help me hump this goddamn hose all over this neighborhood. I ain't doin' it myself.”

“Gotcha, Hoop.” I said as I removed my mask and struggled to breathe what trace amounts of oxygen were left in the air.

“We're fire surfin' now, ain't we, dude?” Hooper laughed as he hauled the hose line forward into the fire with the nozzle now open to full pressure, he was moving steadily ahead with me backstopping his attack—my face pressed firmly against the cold steel tank of his Scott Pak. We were knocking down the really hot stuff and moving on rapidly not bothering to mop up the hot embers glowing brightly on the ground at our feet. Our thick bunker boots were so hot they began to smolder. Smaller flames licked up at our bunker pants. The heat was intense—it was getting beyond uncomfortable—it was pain—we were cooking.

But, I was right behind him. I was no longer afraid. I was no longer thinking of backing out of the fire, I was determined to become a firefighter—to pass the test—the trial by fire. This is the ultimate hazing to become a full-fledged member of the brotherhood. Unfortunately, some men did not survive the initiation of getting into this club. I was determined to become the firefighter these guys were with my own stories to tell at morning roll call. If these guys can do it—so can I. I wasn't going to wipe out again.

Hooper and I managed to fight our way around the main area of the airplane and pushed into the yard of a still burning house. We struggled as we cut between two houses and moved into the back yard and into another street where we met up with, bumped into would be more accurate, Durkee who was working another hose line with his crew.

“Hoop,” Durkee called to my partner, “I heard from Cap. He hasn’t hooked up with any fire teams yet, but said he was moving into a fringe area of the fire to the south of us searching for a small girl reported separated from her parents when they evacuated.”

“Well, I guess he gets the lead on the six o’clock news for saving a kid while we workin’ stiffs hump it through the hot stuff,” answered Hooper in his usual caustic humor. He looked over at me, “What’d I tell ya, kid?”

“With rank comes privileges, Hoop.” Durkee said as he wiped the thick grime from his face and blew thick black snot out of his nose onto the charred ground at his feet. “I’ll never get used to this damn shit up my nose.”

I quickly added, “He’s by himself?” I knew that was dangerous in this mess and pretty much against the rules. “Where’s his backup?”

“Yeah, he’s alone. No backups have arrived in his area yet.” Just you remember to never do that. But, he’s a captain and a battalion chief, and silly.” Durkee answered.

Hooper added sarcastically, “With rank comes stupidity. I guess we’ll have to save his ass, again.” For Hoop, it wasn’t the first time he had to pull Cap out of a bad situation.

Durkee and Hooper laughed for a moment then choked on the thick smoke as both said it was time to get back to the Job. I was concerned about Cap and nervous about getting out of this alive myself. This fire was still out of control. We were deep in the zone. What bothered me is that I did not know how far the fire had advanced outward cutting off our escape. There was no choice but to move forward and put this one into the record books. As long as water came out of the hose, we were moving forward.

What mattered most to us was the mission—stop this fire and save whomever we could. That’s what we did—what we were expected to do. We would take care of each other. I was now a firefighter—I made it—one of the guys. It was the Job. Cap was out there doing it, himself, right now. I yelled over to Hooper, “We’re fire surfin’ now, dudes!” He grinned back at me as we moved forward yelling, “Catch a flame, kid!” I think we were getting punchy from lack of oxygen. I put my mask back on. I needed the air.

We had circled around—back to the crash site—we had to keep it cooled down to prevent the heat from cracking the containment shells within the nuclear warheads. Radiation contamination can be a major disaster in a localized area. We were carrying the big hose line—Hoop was in the lead, on the nozzle as usual, Durk was behind him and I was behind

Durk. Suddenly, another massive explosion from the direction of the crash site lifted all of us off our feet and into the air. We crashed back down to the hot, flaming ground. It had caught us broadside from somewhere within the crash we couldn't have seen. It was a wipeout. All three of us, separated by the explosion, lay still where we fell.

It was totally black now. I was surprised I felt no pain. A sharp object crashed through the plexiglass face plate of the mask to my air pack—it hit me hard in the face. I sensed, more than heard, the sickening sound of bone crunching as my skull absorbed the high velocity impact ripping the helmet off my head. I didn't even feel the ground under me when I hit or where I now lay. I was blinded by something wet running into my eyes and had lost contact with the other men. But, I knew I was a firefighter now because I was down, blind, and badly hurt in the middle of a bad fire, yet, I was not going to panic—I was quite calm—surprising even myself. I was going to rest here for a while—I needed to take a time out.

I knew other crews would come looking for us. Watch your partner's back at all times. What we lacked in equipment, we made up for in teamwork. They would know we were missing. I knew they would be here soon. Don't panic. Wait. Rest.

Suddenly, from the eerie blackness of my very small world, a strange bright light penetrated through the dense haze of acrid smoke. A halogen light, I thought, but so much brighter. Yes, someone was looking for us. Hoop or Durkee must have gotten on their radios and got us some help in here. The cavalry had finally arrived and not a moment too soon. Backup from the other battalions were on the Job. I tried to smile, at least I thought I was smiling as I called out to the guy with the light—I tried to reach up to signal him—wave him over to me, but strangely I couldn't move my arms. It was a weird feeling not to be able to move, yet not feeling any pain now—just seeing the brightest light imaginable shining through.

"I'm here, hey, over here. There're three of us down." I thought I was calling out to him, but my lips were not moving—I was not breathing either. I did not yet know, and it would only dawn on me later, that I was already dead. The things I was seeing now were not of this life. I had, as they say, crossed over. It wasn't so bad. It was quiet and peaceful—no pain, no heat, no choking smoke; nothing really much to be afraid of.

I looked over and bathed in the powerful light was Durkee and Hooper; calm and expressionless, like me, slowly getting up from the charred ground where they had fallen not far from where I lay. Their masks were off, but they didn't say anything as they moved off slowly, almost floating, glowing, toward the warm, bright light. A figure approached me, came closer to me, silently beckoning me to get up and follow him. In a moment, I saw it was Cap, and he wasn't alone. He was wordlessly motioning to me slowly with his right hand, and there, next to him, clutching his left hand tightly was the little girl he had been searching for. Cap had found her. I knew he would get her out. She smiled at me even though she was sucking her thumb on her other hand.

Hooper and Durkee moved toward Cap and the bright light shining behind him. I couldn't see who was holding the light—it was only the light that was so brightly visible; it blocked out everything else. I sensed that I had gotten to my feet—moving forward toward them. There was no way I wanted to stay here alone. We had to get out of this—as a team—we would get out—together--we were all moving toward safety, where ever that was--moving toward a brighter light—a safe place—peace.

It was dawn of a crystal clear, cool winter morning and in the sunlight the carnage of a disaster was revealed. There were nine air force officers and enlisted airman dead, dozens of civilian casualties, a half dozen homes destroyed, most of the forest near the neighborhood was still smoldering within the confines of the firebreak plowed by the bulldozers; and now, back at the station, the exhausted firefighters, mourning their dead, crashed reluctantly into their bunks not to wake until well after noon. They needed sleep to cope with their loss. The next shift had already arrived and relieved the crew without report; Cap was gone. They cleaned up the trucks, reset the station, reloaded the hose beds, and kept the press away. The men now had a new fire story to tell—the bomber crash of '72.

Later in the week, all the county commissioners attended the official fire department funerals for the four men, so did all the fire department brass including the deputy chief of operations who actually never made it to the fire scene until about 9:00 AM—after it was all over.

A 21 gun salute was fired for the fire department captain and three firefighters that did not survive the night; the Job. The chairman of the county commissioners and the county budget director had gotten the fire chief off to the side on their way back to their cars as the caskets were still being lowered into the ground to ask if they could hold off hiring replacements until the next budget year—they wanted to save money on labor costs to help defray county funds expended on life insurance payouts for the dead men's families and the very costly public funeral.

The fire chief told the commissioners, “I think we can manage that. Sure, we can promote Lt. Couch to acting Battalion Chief. He can double as chief and TAC officer. He can rearrange the three shifts working each one man short.”

The chairman responded, “Excellent plan, chief. And, on another matter of business, I'm quite sure you'll be getting that new staff car in the next budget.”

A grieving David Couch was standing nearby with his family and overheard the private conversation. As the chief and the commissioners noticed they were being watched and looked over at him, he did what he thought Cap would have done, he voted his opinion with his middle finger. He shot them the bird. David had no political plans to be chief of department either.

Michael W. Popejoy, Ph.D., MPH, is Professor and Director of the Health Care Management Program at Pfeiffer University, Charlotte, North Carolina.

Daniel P. Popejoy is Dr. Michael Popejoy's son. He attends East Mecklenberg High School in Charlotte, NC.

Mary Parker Follett, Prophet of Management: A Celebration of Writings from the 1920s

**Edited by Pauline Graham, Preface by Rosabeth
Moss Kanter, and Introduction by Peter Drucker.
Washington, DC: Beard Books, 2005**

Reviewed by *John R. Phillips*

The original editions of Mary Parker Follett's books are as rare as hens' teeth and, when found, exceptionally expensive. The volume under review, *Mary Parker Follett, Prophet of Management*, was originally published in 1995 by the Harvard Business School Press. This reprint by Beard Books, in which editor Pauline Graham has assembled eleven of Follett's papers, is certainly a boon to those who wish to have a collection of Follett's most important lectures and articles available in a single volume. In addition, Graham has assembled a distinguished panel of scholars to provide an introduction to the book (Peter Drucker) and commentaries on each of the Follett papers. The commentators are John Child, Nitin Nohria, Warren Bennis, Henry Mintzberg, Angela Dumas, Tokihiko Enomoto, Sir Peter Parker, and Paul Lawrence. Rosabeth Moss Kanter provides the preface.

Follett came to the study of organizations late in life, having already made significant contributions to political and social theory in her books on the *Speaker of the House of Representatives* (1896), *The New State* (1918), and *Creative Experience* (1924). When she did turn her attention to organizational and administrative theory, the prevailing opinions of the day were those of Frederick W. Taylor, the Gilbreths, and others in the scientific management movement. While Follett always remained in close contact with the scientific management writers, she also moved away from their core tenets, developing a set of ideas that are often seen as a bridge between scientific management and the later human relations school.

As is often the case with difficult problems, the organizational issues with which Follett—and the scientific management writers—struggled still have not been settled. Humanity is a difficult problem. Human cooperation is a difficult problem. Motivation, management, and supervision are difficult problems. In organizational thinking, at least, the principles that Follett enunciated remain important both normatively (they state something akin to an organizational Golden Rule) and empirically (they remain open to investigation, reform, reformulation, or—potentially—rejection).

Some Persisting Themes of Contemporary Organizational Relevance: (1) *Humanizing the Use of Organizational Power*: Follett (Chapter 3, Power) distinguishes between power-with and power-over. Her understanding of power-over is about equivalent to what we would now call “Theory X,” Douglas Macgregor’s model of a directive and authoritarian managerial style. She rejected this style of management, arguing that what is really needed is to discover the “law of the situation” (Chapter 4, The Giving of Orders). Once the law of the situation is known, participants in the situation should be able to come to an agreed upon conclusion as to what ought to be done. (2) *Resolving Conflict*: Conflict to Follett was a neutral but inescapable concept (Chapter 2, Constructive Conflict). As it is an inevitable social phenomenon, we should try to make the best possible use of it. Thus, solutions to managerial or efficiency issues should not be one-way directives; they should be collaborative efforts (Chapter 5, The Basis of Authority; and Chapter 7, Co-ordination). Follett calls for people to discover, collectively, what must be done within the context of the existing situation, to integrate differences in such a way as to arrive at something new (Chapter 1, Relating: The Circular Response). (3) *The Concept of Power*: To Follett, power was purely a utilitarian concept. She thought that power should be expanded, that power should be spread throughout the organization, and that power should be held according to individual capabilities. (4) *Control and Authority*: Follett held that managerial control, conceived as directives and orders, was misguided (Chapter 5, The Basis of Authority; and Chapter 8, The Process of Control). Thought of in that way, it merely focused on something to be accomplished and forced people to do it. A more useful conception of control, she argued, was based on cooperation in relating the parts of something, in unifying a situation. In the processes of relating, cooperating, and unifying, everyone has some authority. It may not be the most authority, but within the context of the workplace, everyone does have some authority. Her concern then is to organize all that authority in the most effective way. (5) *Autocratic and Democratic Leadership*: While recognizing inherent differences in tendencies among those who sought leadership as opposed to those who were followers, she advocated replacing both autocratic and democratic leadership models with an emergent model of multiple leadership (Chapter 6, The Essentials of Leadership). This new model would replace the old notion of a single expert directing affairs with the idea of *Everyman-an-Expert*, all having specialized knowledge that presented the organization with the opportunity to relate or integrate all the sources of such expertise.

Anticipating the Future of Management: Graham’s subtitle for this volume, *Prophet of Management*, is an apt one for the various ways in which Follett’s work anticipates future developments in management is a theme that runs through the various commentaries. John Child (pp. 90-91), for example, notes that Follett’s approach to the process of conflict anticipates the development of structuration theory in contemporary sociology, that her emphasis on “constructive” conflict can now be explored more fully through developments in Information Technology (IT) that focus upon “contested learning,” and that her three-fold categorization of conflict resolution processes are well illustrated in the various ways that one nation in an international joint venture makes use of technology and management ideas from the external partner.

Nitin Nohria (pp. 157-160) points out that Follett's essays on the use of power and authority anticipate contemporary ideas such as the "knowledge-worker . . . [and the] learning organization," Macgregor's Theory X and Theory Y, decentralized rather than hierarchical administration, agency theory, job enrichment, and workplace democracy, among others. Henry Mintzberg (pp. 202-204), in a similar vein, argues that the development of managerial ideas likely would have advanced at a more rapid rate if Follett's ideas had remained in current discourse rather than slipping into obscurity. Such ideas as total quality management (TQM), "quality of work life," "group responsibility," "participative management," "collective responsibility," and others, he asserts, are all prefigured in Follett's work.

It may also be that Follett was the first thinker to focus upon what we now call empowerment. Nohria (page 157), for example, holds that Follett's essay on "Power" contains "one of the clearest statements of what the current buzzword 'empowerment' really means." The ways in which she approached organizational design and administration are ideas that emphasized personal strengths, ways to draw upon those strengths, ways in which those strengths could be encouraged. Follett wanted very much to depersonalize the business of giving of orders and the use of authority. This could be accomplished, she argued, by reliance on the law of the situation because that law took the personality out of the issue.

Anticipating Feminism and Gender Equality: Finally, a claim rather more difficult to substantiate is the assertion that Follett was an early feminist. Perhaps she was a precursor to feminism, perhaps she was not. It is difficult to reach a conclusion based on her written work. There is, for example, relatively little discussion of women in her work. From time to time she does write about "shop girls" and she often refers to her appointments to wage boards where she participated in deliberations on fair wages for these "shop girls." The very words "shop girls" are indicative of Follett's upper class status. How old were these "girls?" Does the term really refer only to the young, or does it encompass all females of working age who worked in "shops?"

This gender issue, however, must be considered within the historical context. It is fair to say of Follett, I think, that she was both a product of the gender attitudes of her day and a remarkable exception to their prevailing rules. If she appears to have largely accepted the prevailing gender norms of her time it was, I think, because, those norms had relatively little direct impact on someone of her social status. Unlike those from less advantaged circumstances, she encountered no insuperable obstacles to anything that she wanted to do.

Mary Parker Follett was unique. When one considers her life, her friendships, and her professional associates, her truly extraordinary status is clear. She came from old New England stock and she had the social standing and skills of the upper classes. She received a superb education at Radcliff and Cambridge. She operated within a uniquely powerful set of acquaintances and friends, from future Supreme Court justices to British cabinet members, business executives to university professors, and she associated with intellectual and cultural elites on both sides of the Atlantic. With such status, with modest wealth on an independent scale, and the ability to travel and study as she wished, she managed to cope with great

personal, psychological, and physical difficulties, to lead a life that in her day would have been the envy of women and men alike.

With such a background, Mary Parker Follett's life was consistent with Peter Drucker's (p. 3) assertion that, in her time, "there was no prejudice against the exceptional woman on the ground of gender." Indeed, such women, he says, saw themselves as "stars—not merely equal with the men but superior to them. And they were accepted as such by their colleagues and by the public at large."

For those interested in Follett's work, this is a volume to have. While one might reasonably have hoped for the inclusion of more of Follett's papers, those that Graham has selected are certainly among the most important. Of Follett's major works, only *The New State* (1918) can be obtained with relative ease. *Creative Experience* (1924), *The Speaker of the House of Representatives* (1896), and both editions of *Dynamic Administration* (1942 and 1973), her collected papers, have long been out of print. For those interested in Follett's work, *Mary Parker Follett, Prophet of Management* is the volume to get and to get while it is still available.

John Phillips is Professor of Political and Social Sciences at Springfield College in Illinois.

Call for Manuscripts, Book and Film Reviews

Public Voices is a unique journal that focuses on historical, artistic and reflective expression concerning public administrators and the public service. Published by the National Center for Public Performance (NCPP), it is now accepting submissions for volumes X and XI.

Public Voices is sponsored by the School of Public Affairs and Administration (SPAA) at Rutgers University – Campus at Newark.

Unlike traditional social science journals, *Public Voices* publishes unorthodox, controversial perspectives on bureaucracy in particular and the public sector in general. We seek submissions from public servants, writers, artists, and academics in all fields. In addition to analytical articles, submissions may include original fiction, poetry, photographs, art, critiques of existing works, and insights based on experience, observation and research. Especially encouraged are manuscripts that explore ethical dilemmas and public controversies, discuss value conflicts, or generate new ideas for improving public service and public organizations. Personal essays that relate fictionalized experiences in government agencies are equally welcome. We also welcome reviews of novels, literature, popular fiction, a series of works by one author, scholarly books, films, art, etc.

All submissions will be evaluated on a blind, peer-reviewed basis.

For manuscripts, submit five copies, with the author's name and affiliation on a separate cover page, to:

Iryna Illiash, Managing Editor, *Public Voices*
School of Public Affairs and Administration (SPAA)
Rutgers University
701 Hill Hall, 360 Dr. Martin Luther King Blvd.
Newark, NJ 07102-1801
Email: illiash@pegasus.rutgers.edu

Proposals for symposia, as well as movie reviews, photographs and art work should be sent to:

Dr. Marc Holzer, Editor-in-Chief, *Public Voices*
School of Public Affairs and Administration (SPAA)
Rutgers University
701 Hill Hall, 360 Dr. Martin Luther King Blvd.
Newark, NJ 07102-1801
Or for further information:
Email: mholzer@andromeda.rutgers.edu

Book Reviews should be sent to:

John R. Phillips
Professor of Political & Social Sciences
Springfield College in Illinois
1500 North Fifth Street
Springfield, IL 62702
Email: jphillips@sci.edu