TRAINING PROFESSIONAL CITIZENS: 
GETTING BEYOND THE RIGHT ANSWER TO THE WRONG QUESTION 
IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS EDUCATION

by

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Introduction

I am deeply honored by the invitation to speak to you today, and also deeply grateful. For, this presentation has given me an opportunity to reflect on my long association with public affairs education stretching back to my undergraduate years in the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton, my engagement in the debates that led to the formation of the Kennedy School at Harvard, the years I spent at the Institute for Policy Sciences at Duke, my experiences in the Office of Management and Budget, and finally, the effort I made to fashion what we like to think is the first of a second generation of policy programs at Johns Hopkins.

I have titled my remarks “Training Professional Citizens: Getting Beyond the Right Answer to the Wrong Question in Public Affairs Education.”

The touchstone for my comments is the extraordinary wave of governmental reform that has swept the world over the past two decades. From the U.S. and Canada to Malaysia and New Zealand, governments are being reinvented, downsized, privatized, devolved, decentralized, deregulated, de-layered, subjected to performance measurement, and contracted out, all in an effort to improve public sector performance.1 As the United Nations Development Programme (1997: 1) noted in a recent report, “The discourse on the role of government” has moved to “the center of international and national debate. “The question is no longer how to shrink government,” UNDP notes, “but how to improve governance.” What better time, therefore, to be reflecting on the structure and content of the education needed to achieve this objective.

My message to you today, however, may be a bit unsettling, for I am convinced that:

• Much of the recent public sector reform movement has advanced the right answer, but to the wrong question.

• What is more, I believe that public affairs education bears a part—perhaps a significant part—of the responsibility for what I believe has been the misfiring of the reform agenda.

• To get things back on track, therefore, I believe public affairs education needs to change.

1 See, for example, World Bank 1997; Kettl 1997; Plimptre 1993.
More specifically, it will have to come to terms more explicitly with what I call the “new governance,” the new ways in which we are approaching public problems in this country and around the world. These new ways have been portrayed in much of the reform literature as simpler and easier than traditional public administration, but I am convinced that they are in many respects harder and more complex. At the very least, they require very different skills, skills that are not yet adequately incorporated into the public affairs curriculum;

- More specifically, we need to move from training “public servants” or “policy analysts” towards training what I call “professional citizens.”

In the time I have available to me this morning, I want to put a bit of meat on the bare bones of these rather bald assertions. In particular, I want to address three major issues:

- First, what is the central question that has been dominating the government reform movement over the past two decades or more, and why do I think it is the wrong question?

- Second, what question should we be asking, and how well does what we are now doing in public affairs education respond to it?

- Finally, what could, and should, be done to respond to this question more effectively?

**What Is the Question Being Addressed by the Current Reform Agenda?**

Let me begin, then, with the first issue: “What is the central question dominating the government reform movement over the past decade or more and why do I think it is the wrong question?”

Underlying much of the recent government reform surge is a set of theories that portrays government agencies as tightly structured hierarchies insulated from market forces and from effective citizen pressure and therefore free to serve the personal and institutional interests of bureaucrats instead. Even defenders of government like David Osborne and Ted Gaebler concede that we are saddled with what they call “the wrong kind of governments” at the present time, industrial-era governments “with their sluggish, centralized bureaucracies, their preoccupation with rules and regulations, and their hierarchical chains of command.…”

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2 Salamon 2002a: 1-47.
3 Included here is the “new institutionalism” associated with the work of Oliver Williamson and the public choice theories associated with the work of Gordon Tullock. See: Williamson, 1975; Tullock, 1965). For excellent summaries of these theories and their application to public bureaucracy, see: Moe, 1984; and Garvey, 1993.
4 Gaebler and Osborne 1992: 12.
The central question addressed by the reform effort, therefore, has been: “How can hierarchical government bureaucracies be reshaped and re-invented to improve their performance?”

The answer advanced by the so-called “new public management” has essentially been to inject market-type principles into governmental operations, to break large departments into smaller components, to outsource activities to private vendors, to build performance incentives into government personnel systems, and generally to move government from rowing to steering.

Largely overlooked in the reform debate, however, has been the extent to which the operation of American government, and to a marked extent government in other countries, already embodies many of the features that the reformers are proposing. Indeed, a veritable revolution has taken place in the operation of the public sector over the past fifty years or more both in the United States and, increasingly, in other parts of the world.

- The heart of this revolution has been a fundamental transformation not just in the scope and scale of government action, but also in its basic forms—in the tools of public action, the instruments or means used to address public problems.

- Where government activity used to be restricted largely to the direct delivery of goods or services by government bureaucracies, increasingly it has come to embrace a dizzying array of additional tools—loans, loan guarantees, grants, contracts, social regulation, economic regulation, insurance, tax expenditures, vouchers and many more.

- Each of these tools has its own operating procedures, its own skill requirements, its own delivery mechanism, indeed its own “political economy.” Each therefore imparts its own “twist” to the operation of the programs that embody it. Loan guarantees, for example, rely on commercial banks to extend assisted credit to qualified borrowers. In the process, commercial lending officers become the implementing agents of government lending programs. Since private bankers have their own world-view, their own decision rules, and their own priorities, left to their own devices they will likely produce programs that differ markedly from those that would result from direct government lending, not to mention outright government grants.

- What is more, like loan guarantees, many of the most rapidly expanding tools turn out to share a common feature: they are highly indirect. They rely on a wide assortment of “third parties”—commercial banks, private hospitals, social service agencies, industrial corporations, universities, day care centers, other levels of government, financiers, construction firms, and many more—to deliver publicly financed services and pursue publicly authorized purposes.

- What is involved here, moreover, is not simply the delegation of clearly defined ministerial duties to closely regulated agents of the state. That is a long-standing feature of
government operations stretching back for generations. What is distinctive about many of the newer tools of public action is that they involve the sharing with third-party actors of a far more basic governmental function: *the exercise of discretion over the use of public authority and the spending of public funds*. Thanks to the nature of many of these tools and the scale and complexity of current government operations, a major share—in many cases the major share—of the discretion over the operation of public programs routinely comes to rest not with the responsible governmental agencies but with the third-party actors that actually carry them out.

In part, this development reflects important facts of American political life. Given our fragmented political system and general hostility to government, in order to move forward with government action in any policy sphere, it is typically necessary to cut the key interests involved into a piece of the action—so private hospitals gain a major role in the implementation of Medicare, private banks in the implementation of the FHA’s mortgage insurance programs, and now private insurance companies in the operation of the new Medicare drug benefit.

But it’s not just political necessity that accounts for the increasingly indirect character of governmental action. There are substantive virtues as well. Indirect government allows government to mobilize other institutions and other energies in pursuit of public objectives. It has become clear, for example, that going after complex non-point sources of pollution requires the mobilization not only of governmental capacities, but broader citizen capacities as well. The result has been the rise of a new “civic environmentalism” that takes the form of complex partnerships among government agencies at various levels and diverse citizen groups organized into watershed alliances, land trusts, stream teams, and many more. And along with this has come a new role for policy professionals as the mobilizers and organizers of this citizen activism.

The upshot is an elaborate system of “*third-party government*” in which crucial elements of public authority are shared with a host of non-governmental or other-governmental actors, frequently in complex collaborative systems that sometimes defy comprehension, let alone effective management and control.

Nor is this an entirely new phenomenon. Rather, third-party government has been a central feature of the American approach to public problems for decades. This is how we built our railroads and canals, fought our wars, established our colleges, built many of our cultural institutions, revolutionized our agriculture, promoted homeownership, and dealt with the influx of immigrants into our cities.

We tend to forget, for example, that behind the potent myth of voluntarism through which we now view nineteenth century America lies a solid reality of extensive collaboration between local governments and private nonprofit groups.

- As of 1898, for example, 60 percent of the funds the City of New York was spending on

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the care of paupers and prisoners went to private benevolent institutions, and similar practices were evident in all but four American states;\textsuperscript{7}

- The very first social service program at the federal level also took the form of a grant-in-aid to a nonprofit social service organization, and a sectarian one at that—the Little Sisters of the Poor in Washington, D.C., and this program was enacted in 1874.\textsuperscript{8}

While such collaborations have long characterized the American approach to public problems, however, they have grown massively in scope and scale in recent decades. Instead of the centralized hierarchical agencies delivering standardized services that is caricatured in much of the current reform literature and most of our political rhetoric, what exists in most spheres of policy is a dense mosaic of policy tools, many of them placing public agencies in complex, interdependent relationships with a host of third-party partners.

- Almost none of the Federal Government’s more than $300 billion annual involvement in the housing field, for example, bears much resemblance to the classic picture of bureaucrats providing services to citizens;

- Rather, nearly $190 billion takes the form of \textit{loan guarantees} to underwrite mortgage credit extended by private commercial banks;

- Another $114 billion takes the form of tax subsidies that flow to homeowners through the income tax system;

- And more than $20 billion takes the form of housing \textit{vouchers} administered by semi-autonomous \textit{local} housing authorities to finance housing provided by private landlords.

More generally,

- The direct provision of goods or services by government bureaucrats now accounts for only 5 percent of the activity of the U.S. Federal Government.

- Even with income transfers, direct loans, and interest payments counted as “direct government,” the direct activities of the federal government amount to only 28 percent of its activities.

- Far larger in scale are the more indirect instruments of public action—contracting, grants-in-aid, vouchers, tax expenditures, loan guarantees, insurance, and regulation, to name just a few. The total monetary value of these activities was in the neighborhood of $2.5 trillion as of Fiscal Year 1999, two-and-a-half times higher than the roughly $1 trillion in direct activities in which the Federal Government is engaged, and one-and-a-half times higher than the total amounts recorded as outlays in the Federal budget that year since many of

\textsuperscript{7} Fetter 1901/02: 376, 360.
\textsuperscript{8} Warner, 1908: 402.
the indirect forms of action are also invisible in the budget.\(^9\)

- While it’s true that more direct activities are carried out at the state and local level, third-party government is a familiar and widespread practice at these other levels as well.

The "marble cake" metaphor that political scientist Morton Grodzins conjured up in 1966 to describe the interplay of federal, state and local government roles in the actual operation of American federalism, thus now applies more generally to the relations not only among levels of government but also among the different sectors.\(^10\) As former Independent Sector President Brian O’Connell once put it, we are increasingly making a "mesh" of things in field after field of public action, combining public and private action in ever more imaginative, and more complicated, ways.

In short, the solution to the problem of government performance recommended by the “new public management” is already in place, and has been for some time. If we still have problems with effective performance in solving our public problems, then the prescription offered by this school of thought doesn’t seem to hit the mark.

**What Question Should We Be Asking and How Well Are We Addressing It?**

All of this suggests that recent reformers may be asking the wrong question in their efforts to improve government operations. At the very least, there may be a prior question that needs to be asked in deciding how best to achieve effective responses to our public problems, and this question may lead us in a different direction. That question is this:

*What is the central challenge confronting efforts to resolve our most pressing societal problems at the present time and how can this challenge be addressed?*

I would submit that the answer to this question today is not how to improve the structure and management of government agencies. That challenge has been more than met.

What then is the central challenge we face in addressing pressing public problems? The answer, I would suggest, is learning how to comprehend, and to manage, the reinvented government that we have created, how to design and manage the immensely complex collaborative systems that now form the core of public problem-solving, and that seem likely to do so increasingly in the years ahead.

For, far from the panacea that the new public management advertised, these indirect forms of action turn out to entail enormous problems.

**The Management Challenge.** There are, first of all, problems of management. Each of the different “tools” of public action has its own decision rules, its own rhythms, its own agents, its own management requirements, and its own challenges. The more indirect the tool,
moreover, the greater the management challenges. With power dispersed and numerous semi-autonomous entities involved in the operation of public programs, matters that could be dealt with internally on an ad hoc basis in direct government have to be anticipated far in advance through legally binding contracts under “third-party government.” Similarly, incentives have to be devised sufficient to induce desired behavior but not so substantial as to yield windfall gains; concurrence has to be secured at numerous points in complex decision chains; and disparate organizations have to be forged into effective networks capable of integrated action. Each of these tasks requires not only extensive programmatic knowledge but also considerable diplomatic skill, detailed knowledge of the operational parameters of the different tools and the internal dynamics of the entities that the tool engages, and a sophisticated appreciation of the context in which the tool is being deployed.

**The Accountability Challenge.** Side-by-side with this management challenge is the accountability challenge that “third-party government” poses. As noted, many of the newer tools of public action vest substantial discretionary authority in entities other than those with ultimate responsibility for the results, and often entities with their own autonomous sources of authority that allow them to operate with considerable independence: they are sovereign state and local governments, private commercial banks, independent nonprofit organizations, profit-seeking companies, universities and hospitals with powerful governing boards, and many more. Each of these enters its relationship with governmental authorities on its own terms, with its own expectations, objectives, and bottom line. What is more, the choice of the instrument that structures these relationships is often dictated as much by political considerations as by the appropriateness of the instrument for the purpose at hand.

Under these circumstances, the traditional notions of accountability embodied in administrative law, with their emphasis on controlling the discretion exercised by governmental agencies, do not quite suffice. This is so for the obvious reason that governmental agencies are no longer in control of the programs they administer. Indeed, third-party government fundamentally changes the meaning of accountability in government programs: it institutionalizes and legitimizes multiple perspectives on the goals and purposes of programs. Under these circumstances, the diversion of national goals in a nationally financed grant or contract program may not be a problem to be solved after all but rather a desired consequence of the structure of the program.

Instead of trying to control discretion by making its exercise transparent within administrative agencies, third-party government splinters the discretion and parcels it out to the variety of third-party partners who come to share with government administrators the authority to shape program operations.\(^{11}\)

**The Legitimacy Challenge.** Finally, and perhaps most significantly, for all its political appeal third-party government may ultimately pose even more serious challenges for democratic theory, and potentially for popular support of government. In a sense, third-party government substitutes the indirect tools of public action for the traditional mechanisms of democratic control

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\(^{11}\) For further detail, see: Salamon 2002c: 603-5.
posited in classical public administration. Those mechanisms presumed that elected officials, acting in accord with the will of the people, set policy directions and then hold administrators to account through the hierarchic controls of administrative agencies.

Indirect tools of government, by contrast, shred those hierarchic controls, leaving agency administrators, and the elected officials who lean on them, ill-equipped to ensure the results they want. In the process, the link between the taxes citizens pay and the services they receive is attenuated since third parties end up delivering many of the services that government finances. Third-party government may thus de-legitimize government in the very act of enabling it to operate in new ways.

The Role of Public Affairs Education

To what extent is public affairs education responding to this challenge?

Regrettably, the answer to this question to date must still be: “Not much.” At the very least, it is certainly: “Not nearly enough.”

Public Administration. The most likely venue for training the border managers for our vastly expanded systems of “third party government” are the schools of public administration throughout the country. Regrettably, however, public administration has been slow to pick up on this new reality. Rather, public administration remains preoccupied with the internal operations of public agencies—their procedures for staff recruitment, budgeting, and task accomplishment. Largely lacking, as a recent survey of public administration textbooks by Beverly Cigler makes clear, has been an explicit recognition of the extent to which the public administration problem has leapt beyond the borders of the public agency, of:

- The multiple instruments through which public action now proceeds;
- The distinctive management challenges that these different instruments entail; and
- The multiple non-governmental or other-governmental institutions that are consequently involved in the implementation of public programs.12

“Much of the time, when ‘government’ does something, it is the [government] employees who really take action,” one recent text thus notes,13 conveniently overlooking the fact that in the current era it is mostly government’s third-party partners that take the action instead.

Although some public administration programs have added courses on the nonprofit sector, these still tend to be afterthoughts tacked on to existing curricula but not fully integrated into the teaching program and certainly not related to any basic re-conceptualization of what the nature of public administration has come to be.

12 Cigler 2000, 48-51.
**Public Policy.** Nor have the newer schools of public policy done much better. The field of public policy emerged not out of a concern about the management of public programs, but out of a concern about the failure to apply sophisticated economic and statistical analysis to the comprehension and solution of public problems, and this orientation persists in most of these programs, giving the field a technocratic cast that it has still not really shaken.

- Even though the new field of public policy studies was just taking shape and beginning its struggle for academic legitimacy during precisely the period when the system of "third-party government" was experiencing its most explosive growth—i.e., the 1960s and 1970s—far from stressing the overwhelming, new management challenges that this third-party system posed and devising ways to train personnel to staff it, public policy studies largely ignored the "implementation" side of the policy process or gave it very short shrift. Not until the mid-1970s was this "missing link" even acknowledged in a serious way.\(^\text{14}\)

- In the process, little explicit attention was given to the distinctive management challenges posed by the numerous new instruments of policy action coming into widespread use. The one possible exception was the attention lavished on the policy instrument of *regulation*. But even here the focus was less on the *management* of regulatory programs than on the formulation of economic alternatives to them.

- The idea that schools of public policy should be training the border managers for the complex systems of public and private action increasingly being relied upon, that they should equip these managers with an understanding not only of how public agencies operate but also how the private agencies on which government is increasingly relying operate—these notions were rarely in evidence in a prominent and explicit way.

- Indeed, the very choice of name for the new field—"public policy"—with its emphasis on government action, signaled precisely the opposite message—that government, the public sector, is the exclusive, or at least the major, vehicle for addressing public problems when in fact it is a combination of public and private actors that is really involved.

**Nonprofit Management.** Finally, the new programs of nonprofit management have themselves failed to come to terms with the problem.

- At a time of growing reliance on complex collaborations between government and the nonprofit sector to cope with our public problems, and against the backdrop of the formation of a set of public policy programs at such places as Harvard, Princeton, Duke, the University of California at Berkeley, and the University of Michigan, the advocates of nonprofit management training created free-standing programs of nonprofit management at places like Case Western Reserve University and the University of San Francisco.

- In the process, they may have made it harder to tackle what I have identified as the major challenge confronting our efforts to address complex public problems at the present time:

\(^{14}\) Hargrove 1975.
− By splitting the training of nonprofit managers off from the training of the public managers with whom they will increasingly interact;
− By forcing students interested in public problems to choose between government and nonprofit careers when in fact for many their careers will take them into both sectors; and
− By reinforcing the misleading myths of voluntarism and splendid isolation that have kept us from understanding the true position of the nonprofit sector in American society for some time.

In short, public affairs education has hardly helped focus our attention on the central characteristic of current public action and hence on the central challenge confronting our efforts to solve public problems. It is no wonder, then, that recent efforts at public sector reform have significantly mis-fired.

What Should Be Done?

How, then, should we respond to the central challenge we face in addressing public problems at the present time? More particularly, what are the implications of this central challenge for public affairs education, the focus of this association?

Clearly, there is no one answer to this question.

Focus on the Career: The Professional Citizen

I would submit, however, that at least one of the more important answers must be to devise a form of training that focuses on preparing people not for a particular type of organization—be it government, business, or nonprofit—nor with a particular technique, such as the technique of policy analysis, but for a particular type of career.

The career I have in mind is that of what I call the “professional citizen.”

• The career of a “professional citizen” is broader than that of a public servant as traditionally conceived;

• It embraces all those positions that are centrally involved in addressing public problems. This includes positions in government, but also positions in nonprofit organizations, foundations, and even corporate community affairs programs. It even embraces voluntary citizen action.

I use the term "professional citizen” to depict this career because it conveys the two central defining features. First, the term “citizen” suggests the fundamental content of the role—its dedication to work for the common good, for the identification and solution of public problems. Second, the term “professional” conveys the reality that such citizen roles have become increasingly complex in recent years and therefore require specialized training to perform them effectively. It also conveys the notion that, increasingly, people perform these roles as their
remunerative job, though this is by no means required.

A “professional citizen” is thus a person who works, and is trained to work, whether in a paid or volunteer capacity, on public problems—to identify them, to analyze them, to devise solutions to them, and to implement actions that alleviate them—whether they are employed in governmental agencies, nonprofit organizations, or even for-profit companies in roles that focus on the solution of public problems.

**Training Professional Citizens**

What type of training does the career of “professional citizen” require?

Fundamentally, I believe it should involve at least three crucial features in addition to the analytical and quantitative skills already embraced in the public affairs curriculum.

1) **First, it should train nonprofit and public managers together, not apart, and include an introduction to both sets of organizations.**

   This conclusion flows from the fact that:

   - Professional citizens are not only likely to be working on similar problems, but to be involved in implementing the same programs, regardless of the sector they are in. This is a function of the collaborative tools that have become the fundamental feature of government operations;
   
   - In addition, aspiring "professional citizens" often don't know whether they are likely to end up in government or nonprofit institutions. To the contrary, they are likely to spend significant amounts of time in both;
   
   - Finally, and perhaps most important, these two sets of institutions share common objectives and common values. They are therefore likely to attract similar types of personnel, have the same ethos, speak the same language.

2) **The second key component of the training of professional citizens should be a serious introduction to the prevailing realities of contemporary public problem-solving.**

   This will require a new paradigm, a new conceptualization of how we respond to public problems, different from classical public administration, but different also from the privatization and reinventing government notions of more recent years.

   Fortunately, such a paradigm is available in what I have called “the tools approach” or the “new governance.”

   Central to this approach are two fundamental ideas:

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15 Salamon 2002a.
• First, that public problem-solving is now deeply collaborative, that it involves far more than government. Hence the use of the term “governance” instead of government to depict it; and

• Second, that, contrary to what the “new public management” has suggested, these collaborative approaches entail enormous management and design challenges and are therefore very difficult to operate. They must therefore be approached in a new, more sensitive way.

More specifically, the “new governance” shifts the focus of attention in the policy field in five different ways:

• **From Agency and Program to Tool.** In the first place, the “new governance” calls for a shift in the focus or the “unit of analysis” in policy studies and public administration from the public agency or the individual public program to the distinctive tools or instruments through which public purposes are pursued.
  
  − A tool, or instrument, of public action for these purposes is an identifiable method through which collective action is structured to address a public problem.
  
  − Underlying this approach is the notion that the multitude of different government programs really embody a more limited number of basic tools or instruments of action that share common features regardless of the field in which they are deployed.
  
  − Each tool has its own operating procedures, its own characteristic tasks, and its own rules of engagement;
  
  − Each tool also has its own set of implementing agents. The choice of tool thus defines the set of actors who will be part of the cast during the all-important implementation process that follows program enactment, and they determine the roles that these actors will play. Since these different actors have their own perspectives, ethos, standard operating procedures, skills, and incentives, by determining the actors the choice of tool importantly influences the outcome of the process.
  
  − Because of this, however, tool choices are not just technical decisions. Rather, they are profoundly political: they give some actors, and therefore some perspectives and values, an advantage in determining how policies will be carried out.

Instead of experts on different institutions, we need experts on the different tools through which these institutions interact.

• **From Hierarchy to Networks.** In shifting the focus in public problem-solving from agencies and programs to generic tools, the new governance also shifts the attention from hierarchic agencies to organizational networks. The defining characteristic of many of the most widely used, and most rapidly expanding, tools, as we have seen, is their indirect
character, their establishment of interdependencies between public agencies and a host of third-party actors. As a result, government gains important allies but loses the ability to exert complete control over the operation of its own programs.

Unlike the new public management, however, which views such networks as easy to manage, the “new governance” acknowledges the considerable challenges they pose. As such it builds on two other bodies of theory: “principal-agent theory” and “network theory.”

Principal-agent theory helps us explain one of the central paradoxes that arises in relationships between principals and agents in contractual or other third-party arrangements of the sort that third-party government entails—namely, the tendency of agents in principal-agent relationships to gain the upper hand over their principals even though the principal controls the purse-strings. Principal-agent theory explains this in terms of the superior access to information that the agent enjoys and the cost of such information to the principal. Under these circumstances, “who pays the piper” may not really “call the tune” at all, at least not without considerable effort.

What “network theory” adds to this insight is the observation that the principals in such relationships may have difficulty getting their way even when the agents share their basic goals. This is so, network theory explains, because of four crucial attributes that commonly characterize complex networks:

- First, their pluriformity—the fact that they engage a diverse range of organizations and organizational types, many of which have limited experience cooperating with each other and limited knowledge of each other’s operating styles;
- Second, their self-referentiality—the fact that each actor has its own interests and frame of reference and therefore approaches the relationship with a different set of perspectives and incentives;
- Third, their asymmetric interdependencies—the fact that all the actors in a network, including the state, are dependent on each other, but rarely in a fully symmetrical way. Even when all the parties want the same thing, therefore, they may still not be able to cooperate fully because they may not all want it with the same urgency, in the same sequence, or at the same time; and
- Finally, their dynamism—the fact that all of these features change over time even as the network seeks to carry out its mission.

What the “new governance” and its “tools approach” add to this network theory is a clearer understanding of the commonalities of various network arrangements. In a sense, tools significantly structure networks: they define the actors that are centrally involved and the formal roles they will play. When policy-makers choose a loan guarantee, for

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17 de Bruijn and ten Heuvelhof 1997.
example, they choose a network that involves a structured interaction between a public agency and the commercial banking system. When they select a grant-in-aid, by contrast, they choose a different network that engages state and local governments. By shifting the focus from hierarchies to networks and specifying more precisely the kind of network a program embodies, the “tools approach” of the new governance can thus offer important clues about the kinds of management challenges that particular programs will confront.

- **From Public vs. Private to Public + Private.** In moving the focus of public management and policy analysis from the program and the agency to the tool and the network, the new governance also brings a new perspective to the relationship between government and the other sectors.
  
  - Traditional public management posits a tension between government and the private sector, both for-profit and nonprofit. Many of the central precepts of classical public administration flow from this central premise and are designed to ensure that administrative officials respond to the public’s will and not the partial will of some private group.\(^\text{18}\)
  
  - Many of the new tools of public action defy these precepts rather fundamentally, however. Instead of a sharp division between the public and private spheres, they blend the two together.
  
  - *Collaboration* replaces *competition* as the defining feature of sectoral relationships. Rather than seeing such collaboration as an aberration or a violation of appropriate administrative practice, moreover, the new governance views it as a desirable byproduct of the important complementarities that exist among the sectors.

- **From Command and Control to Negotiation and Persuasion.** In emphasizing the shift from programs run by public agencies to cooperative action orchestrated through complex networks, the “new governance” also underlines the need for a new approach to public management.
  
  - Unlike traditional public administration, which emphasizes “command and control” as the principal modus operandi of public programs, or the privatization school, which downplays the need for administrative management altogether, the “new governance” suggests a third route for achieving public purposes in the world of third-party government that now exists—reliance on *negotiation and persuasion*.
  
  - Instead of issuing orders, public managers must learn how to create incentives for the outcomes they desire from actors over whom they have only imperfect control. Indeed, negotiation is even necessary over the goals that public action is to serve since part of the reason that third parties are often cut into the operation of public programs is that such clarity cannot be achieved at the point of enactment.

All of this suggests the need for a new body of administrative “doctrine” that makes collaboration and negotiation legitimate components of public administrative routine rather than regrettable departures from expected practice. Reconciling such an approach with long-standing prohibitions against excessive administrative discretion will be no easy task, but interesting examples of how this can be done are already apparent in such approaches as “negotiated regulation” and “cooperative contracting”.  

- **From Management Skills to Enablement Skills.** Finally, because of the shift in emphasis from command and control to negotiation and persuasion, the world of “third-party government” necessitates a significantly different skill set on the part of public managers and those with whom they interact. Both traditional public administration and the “new public management” emphasize essentially management skills, the skills required to manipulate large numbers of people arrayed hierarchically in bureaucratic organizations. These are the skills summarized nicely by Luther Gulick in the class administrative acronym POSDCORB—Planning, Organizing, Staffing, Directing, Coordinating, Reporting, and Budgeting. The “new public management” moves the emphasis considerably from control to performance, but it remains preoccupied with internal agency management and with the public manager as the key to success.

Unlike both traditional public administration and the new public management, the “new governance” shifts the emphasis from management skills and the control of large bureaucratic organizations to enablement skills, the skills required to engage partners arrayed horizontally in networks, to bring multiple stakeholders together for a common end in a situation of interdependence. Three rather different skills thus move into the center of attention as a consequence of this shift:

- **First, activation skills,** the skills required to activate the networks of actors increasingly required to address public problems. These actors include different units of government, but also private nonprofit organizations, private businesses, and, increasingly, citizens and community groups. Various tools require the cooperation of such players, but sometimes fail to offer enough incentives to get them involved. This was the case, for example, in the early years of the college student loan guarantee. Professional citizens therefore need to be informed about the characteristics and dynamics of these various other actors and how best to mobilize their involvement in complex inter-sectoral partnerships. We teach a Partnership course in our Nonprofit Certificate Program for precisely this reason.

The task of activating networks for public problem-solving is not an exclusively governmental function, moreover. Other actors can also often take the initiative. In some cases, these are nonprofit organizations or community groups.

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19 See, for example: deHoog 1990; Denhardt, 2003.
21 See, for example, Hughes 1998: 1489-90; Pollitt 1993: 6-10.
mobilized by grassroots activists who bring the other stakeholders to the table. Increasingly, private foundations have played this role in the United States, either on their own or in cooperation with corporate and community partners. Rather than wait for government to act, in other words, private institutions are taking the initiative instead. This proliferation of a sense of responsibility for activating problem-solving networks is, in fact, one of the more hopeful facets of the “new governance.”

− In addition to activation skills, the new governance requires *orchestration skills*, the ability not only to create a network, but to operate and sustain it. This is the skill required of a symphony conductor, whose job it is to get a group of skilled musicians to perform a given work in sync and on cue without, of course, playing any of the instruments. This role, too, is hardly an exclusively governmental one. Indeed, in major systems acquisition projects, government contracts out the orchestrating role to a general contractor who then mobilizes subcontractors to produce the components of the system, a model we have recently seen deployed as well to implement welfare reform.

− Finally, the new governance requires *modulation skills*, the ability to adjust the rewards and penalties in order to elicit the cooperative behavior required from the interdependent players in a complex tool network. Urban economic development specialists refer to this as *enoughsmanship*—the provision of just enough subsidy to get private parties to make investments in run-down areas they might avoid, but not so much as to produce windfall profits for doing what the developers would have done anyway. Eugene Bardach and Robert Kagan had a similar concept in mind with their notion of “the good inspector” who could overcome regulatory unreasonable through the exercise of appropriate discretion.22

The growing use of entire “suites” of tools in particular programs creates special opportunities for this modulating role, giving program managers the opportunity to assemble highly targeted blends of incentives and disincentives specially tailored to the circumstances at hand. While this opens opportunities for abuse, it also creates the potential for truly effective management of public programs.

To be effective, however, this approach requires site-level managers who can cope with the discretion involved, and who have a well-developed feel for what constitutes the appropriate mixture of penalties and rewards required to get a given job done. This underlines the fact that the new tools of public action, far from reducing the demands on public management, may increase them instead, necessitating more sophisticated management skills, requiring greater exercise of discretion, and calling for better information on performance and results. All of this suggests not the withering away of public administration, as privatization theories tend to assume, but its transformation and refinement instead.

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For this “new governance” paradigm to take firm hold, of course, we will have to continue to improve our base of knowledge about it. The “tools book” published in 2002 by Oxford University Press was a step in this direction. But a good deal more remains to be done. More specifically, three types of knowledge are still needed:

- First, **tool knowledge**, i.e., knowledge about the distinctive characteristics and likely consequences of the various tools now in widespread use.
- Second, **design knowledge**, i.e., knowledge about which tool is appropriate under which circumstance. The tools approach thus differs from some of the more ideological approaches to public sector reform that have surfaced in recent years, which assume that particular tools, such as privatization, constitute “the key to effective government,” as one recent book puts it.\(^{23}\)
- Third, **operating knowledge**, i.e., knowledge of how to operate the different tools.

3) Finally, in addition to equipping “professional citizens” with a paradigm that offers a clearer picture of how efforts to solve public problems actually operate, we also need to acquaint them with the values that should underpin their work.

- We originally did this in our program by focusing on the concept of citizenship, though some of our faculty had difficulty getting their heads around that concept.
- The key is to introduce students to the values at stake in collective responses to community problems.
- Inevitably, these involve various trade-offs among the values of Justice, Equality, Freedom, and Participation.
- These values provide the conceptual glue that connects people engaged in “public work,” in efforts to solve public problems. They should therefore form as critical a part of the training of professional citizens as microeconomics, statistics, and decision analysis.

**Conclusion**

In short, to meet the central challenge facing contemporary efforts to respond to the significant public problems of our day, we need a new type of public affairs training, one:

- That broadens the concept of the public service career to embrace private as well as public sector roles;
- That introduces students to the “new governance” that is now in operation; and
- That makes clear that the career of a professional citizen fundamentally involves issues of values and not simply issues of technique.

\(^{23}\) Savas 1987.
Lord Nathan, the chairman of a postwar commission on the voluntary sector in the U.K., pointed out some sixty years ago that "[w]hile a society is alive and growing it will not make rigid choices between state action and voluntary action, but both alike will expand as the common expression of its vitality."\textsuperscript{24}

We have taken this dictum to heart in the design of our public programs, blending public and private action in immensely inventive ways. What we have yet to do, however, is take it to heart in the design of our public affairs training.

NASPAA has an important opportunity, however, to take this needed step. By combining under one roof the public policy, public administration, and new nonprofit management education programs, NASPAA can at least provide the venue for pushing toward a new synthesis, a truly new form of combined public service training, one that recognizes more explicitly the multiplicity of tools of public action now in widespread use and the collaborative forms of public problem-solving to which they have given rise. That, at any rate, is the real public-affairs training challenge we face.

\textsuperscript{24} Quoted in Owen 1964:523
REFERENCES


