
Review Essay: Rohr, Frederickson and Wolin on the "Big Questions" and the Future of Public Administration

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Abstract

This article reviews the writing of three major public administration scholars to develop insights into these big questions regarding the democratic polity, the instruments of collective action, and societal learning. The three author's—Frederickson, Rohr and Wolin—offer contrasting viewpoints in addressing the big questions for reconciling public administrations past and future.

Primary attention is focused here on the important questions for public administration in a democracy, particularly the United States. Four criteria the big questions of public administration in a democracy must satisfy are: (a) achieving a democratic polity; (b) rising to the societal level, even in terms of values, also important at the level of individual public organizations; (c) confronting the complexity of instruments of collective action; and (d) encouraging more effective societal learning.

John J. Kirlin

Kirlin's 1996 Public Administration Review article on the "The Big Questions of Public Administration in a Democracy" addresses the importance of public management within the democratic polity. His big questions focus on enduring public administration themes: historical

traditions and attitudes; leadership; federalism; collective action; and societal learning. Kirlin thus provides useful questions for addressing the role and function of public administration in the democratic administrative state.

Kirlin's Big Questions (*Kirlin, 1996, p. 417*)

1. What are the instruments of collective action that remain responsible both to democratically elected officials and to core societal values?
2. What are the roles of nongovernmental forms of collective action in society, and how can desired roles be protected and nurtured?
3. What are the appropriate tradeoffs between governmental structures based on function and geography?
4. How shall tensions between national and local political arenas be resolved?
5. What decisions shall be "isolated" from the normal processes of politics so that some other rationale can be applied?
6. What balance shall be struck among neutral competence, representativeness, and leadership?
7. How can processes of societal learning be improved, including knowledge of choices available, of consequences of alternatives, and of how to achieve desired goals, most importantly, the nurturing and development of a democratic polity?

Kirlin's questions are focused on three major areas that concern public administration's past, present and future. First, regards the nature and role of democratic polity. What are the responsibilities of the public administrators to democratically elected officials? What are the administrators' responsibilities toward societal values? Second concerns the instruments of collective action in a democracy. What instruments belong to the administrative state? Which instruments are in the sphere of nongovernmental relations and address the mix of public and private institutions? The debate regarding the nature of federalism continues. What roles belong at the national, state and local levels? And how best to resolve

the resulting conflicts and tensions between the levels? Related is the question of what decisions to isolate from the political process. Is it possible to determine areas that should remain in the private sector exclusively? If so, then what is the administrative state's role in protecting these private decisions? Third are the issues regarding societal learning. What is the role of public administrators in nurturing and developing the democratic polity? Are there historical lessons that provide guides for the future? How best to enable citizens to know the choices and their consequences in current and future policy debates? What are the goals of the democratic polity? Can society learn how to achieve those goals?

This article reviews the writing of three major public administration scholars to develop insights into these big questions regarding the democratic polity, the instruments of collective action, and societal learning. The three author's—Frederickson, Rohr and Wolin--offer contrasting viewpoints in addressing the big questions for reconciling public administrations past and future.

The Democratic Polity

Responsibilities to Democratically Elected Officials

In New Public Administration Frederickson provides a useful starting point for addressing the public administrator's role in the democratic polity. Frederickson views public administrators as an important force in politics. New public administration began as a movement in response to the turbulence of the 1960s and 70s. (*Frederickson, 1980, p. x*) Frederickson argues that public administrators must know the citizens' needs through direct and routine interaction with elected officials and legislative bodies. (*Frederickson, p. 46*) The public official serves as a processor and facilitator, along with elected officials, in managing the government's response to rapid social, economic, and political change. The bureaucrat has major coordination responsibilities and must serve within the context of elected, democratic government, with its plural power centers. (*Frederickson, p. 53*) In addition, the official must be an advocate for all Americans--the underprivileged minorities, the organized powerful minorities, as well as the majority.

Change is a major theme in Frederickson's writing. The public organization must chart a course to adapt to changes in elected

representatives and executives, and in response to the majority's will. At the same time public administrators must work with minorities and interest groups, and be responsive to the particular needs of the disadvantaged. (*Frederickson, p. 54*) The public administrator can improve the responsiveness of public services by more fully involving citizens to develop policy. By sharing responsibilities with democratically elected officials, public officials will encourage greater citizen involvement in the political process.

Frederickson proposes doing this through increasing "neighborhood control" with the administrator serving in "street-level bureaucracies." (*Frederickson, p. 54*) For the new public administrator the objective is to broaden the scope of public institutions and include elected officials, citizens, and clients in organizational policy and decision making. (*Frederickson, p. 69*) In a section on the normative context within which the public organization must function Frederickson stresses that the ultimate responsibility of public administration is assisting public officials in making public choices. (*Frederickson, p. 113*) While the new public administration seeks to expand the scope of decision making, it recognizes the primacy of the democratically elected official, and the public administrator's supporting role.

John Rohr, in To Run a Constitution, also calls for an activist public administration. He provides a more complex vision for the role of the administrator. Rohr bases his ideas on the debates of the Founding Fathers, and looks at both the Federalist and Anti-Federalist arguments in detail. In Rohr's view, public administration would serve to join what the separation of powers principles keep apart. (*Rohr, 1986, p. x*) His book reviews three major periods of American history: 1787-1788 and the framing of the Federal Republic; 1887-1900 and the founding of the administrative state in word; and finally the New Deal period and the founding of the administrative state in deed. Rohr writes that current problems stem from the ways in which the reform movements of Woodrow Wilson and Frank Goodnow, and the New Deal period, distorted the principles of the Founding Fathers. The cumulative effects of these government reform periods have caused the decline in governmental legitimacy. The causes for this decline are due to a perversion of the idea of popular sovereignty and individual rights, as will be discussed in the next section.

Rohr's approach to correct the problem of governmental legitimacy centers on the argument that public administration must be seen as a

separate institution of government. (*Rohr, p. ix*) In Rohr's view, the administrative state, led by the senior executive service of the federal civil service, must fulfill the roles the Founders intended originally for the Senate. These civil service roles would include: blending legislative, executive and judicial powers; becoming part of the executive, working with and checking the president; performing long terms of public service; maintaining wisdom and expertise greater than the House of Representatives; resisting popular whims; remaining in constant session; conducting affairs outside of the legislative chambers; supervising personnel matters; and expressing the permanent will and national character of the American people. (*Rohr, p. 38*) Rather than being captured by whichever branch of the government has the upper hand at a particular moment in history, Rohr elevates and expands the position, roles and responsibilities of the senior administrator.

Rohr's prescription is for public administration to maintain "principled autonomy" from the three separate branches of government. Public administration should be the instrument of the Constitution. Instead of responding to democratically elected officials Rohr prefers professional, statesmanlike administrators who consider delivering their agency to the master of their own choosing. Their choice would depend on which branch needed the strength to maintain the correct Constitutional balance and achieve the ends of the Constitution's preamble. (*Rohr, p. 89*)

Rohr acknowledges that public administration should remain subordinate to all three branches. However, in a given time and for given issues, the senior civil servants would choose their Constitutional master. He urges public administrators to think in Constitutional terms and not follow the low art of organizational survival. (*Rohr, pp. 182-183*) For Rohr, the steward of the American people is the Constitution and not the president or other elected officials. The public administrator has an overarching role--to think like the judicial, legislative, and executive: "In a regime of separation of powers, administrators must do the work of statesmen." (*Rohr, p. 185*)

Sheldon Wolin's collection of essays, in the Presence of the Past, falls within the category of critical political theory. Like Rohr, he bases his ideas on an analysis of the Constitutional Convention and the writings of the Federalists. While Rohr emphasizes the importance of individual rights in the democratic polity, Wolin focuses on power relationships. For Wolin political theory is a critical engagement, or traditional discourse, about

collective existence and the political experience of power. (*Wolin, 1989, p. 1*)

In Wolin's view of the American polity competing and cooperative structures of power advance and secure their self-interests. Societies express what they are about as political collectivities by appealing to and constructing pacts with the present arrangements of power. Thus, as a political event, the Constitutional Convention was a struggle concerning power and conflict among the dominant economic, class, sectional and ideological elements. This set in motion a form of politics that allows social forces to organize for political ends--and drive to expand their power and selfish interests. In Wolin's theory, the uniqueness of the American political experience in the late eighteenth century, as the state and Constitutional theory developed, was to assign the state a strategic role in the development of economic life. (*Wolin, pp.3-5*) Following Wolin's argument the state is essentially anti-democratic. He implies that public administration, which serves the state, would be expected to extend its own bureaucratic power. Continuing this logic: if it would serve the bureaucracy to be responsible to elected officials, the bureaucracy would do so if it expanded its self-interest. The reverse would also be true, and "powerless" interest groups and the elected officials serving them would have little clout in the political process.

Returning to arguments about the Founding Fathers and the Federalist and Anti-Federalist debates allows Wolin to reinforce his arguments. Wolin explains the paradox of the American Constitution as the dialectic between the separation of powers and the notion of popular sovereignty. (*Wolin, p.8*) He describes Hamilton's expansive view of the Constitution as a way to organize and generate power to achieve great national objectives. Hamilton and the majority of the Framers won the debate to limit popular influence and increase state power through the formation of the government bureaucracy. (*Wolin, pp.11-14*) Thus, the power of the people, the material power of the collectivity, became the power of the state.

In Wolin's view, state power has continually evolved and expanded from the Founding of the Republic, through the New Deal, to the contemporary welfare and warfare state. This is captured in three elements of the new American collectivity which stress: (1) regulation--enlarging and managing rationality for a capitalist society; (2) welfare--the pursuit of self-interest; and (3) empire--the post World War II quest for world hegemony. (*Wolin, p.21*) In sum, the New Deal began a process in which politics

dominated society to extend and consolidate state power resulting in the "social legitimization of state power." (*Wolin, p.22*) The result is the development of the political-economic Megastate, whose interests are served by the bureaucracy as its primary instrument. (*Wolin, p.183*) Thus, public administration, in service to the Megastate, supports those "democratically" elected officials who serve their self-interests in acquiring and expanding power.

Responsibilities to Societal Values

Frederickson has a different view of the role of public administration in a democratic polity. He stresses the importance of social equity as a value for public administration. His major themes for new public administration include: (1) being relevant; (2) practicing post-positivism; (3) adapting to a turbulent environment; (4) experimenting with new organizational forms; and (5) developing client-focused organizations. (*Frederickson, p. xii*) These themes, in Frederickson's view, will enable public administration to pay attention to contemporary problems and issues in the areas of urbanization, race relations, energy, environment, health care, transportation, etc. Frederickson does not reject the classic public administration values of efficiency, effectiveness, and economy. Instead, he argues for adding the value of social equity to the traditional public administration values.

Frederickson argues that the pluralistic government system discriminates in favor of established stable bureaucratic structures and specialized minority clients against those minorities lacking political and economic resources. (*Frederickson, p. 7*) Public administration should redress the grievances of minorities. To do this public administration cannot attempt to be value-free. Administrators cannot be neutral and must commit to values of good management as well as social equity for society at large. (*Frederickson, p. 8*) Finally, public administration must be committed to the process of change. To enhance the objectives of society requires organizational and political changes, including changing those organizational forms with the capacity for continuing, flexible and routine ways to adapt to change. By emphasizing inequality and change, and demolishing attempts to be value-free, Frederickson sees a major role for public administration in addressing society's values.

Frederickson views public administration as a vehicle for implementing values or preferences for individuals, groups, social classes and society in general. (*Frederickson, p. 31*) The new public administration must be humanistic, decentralized, and democratic--all oriented towards the equitable distribution of public services. This is in contrast with the classic public administration values of efficiency, economy, productivity and centralization as practiced in bureaucratic behavior. New public administration values are oriented towards bureaucratic responsibility, citizen and worker participation, social equity, and citizen choice. Political and administrative organizations will protect public values and morality if they are "open, public, and participatory." (*Frederickson, p. 36*)

Rohr also wants to rekindle ties between the state and its citizens. He calls for renewing the legitimacy of American government beyond legality--building bridges of confidence, respect, warmth, and affection in popular support. (*Rohr, p. x*) Rohr focuses on Anti-Federalist concerns regarding the importance of civic virtue. Citing the writings of George Mason, Rohr notes that the Anti-Federalists desired that the government achieve the love, affection, and attachment of citizens to the laws, and the country's freedom. (*Rohr, p. 48*) Mason and others preferred a strong and effective government, but not a strong executive. According to Rohr, the strong administrative state should be responsible for societal values. Civic virtue, as practiced by public employees in the systematic execution of public law, would mediate the will of a single, powerful executive. (*Rohr, p.48*) Returning to Rohr's interpretation of the Constitutional heritage would release the high civic purpose in the public administration. The result, according to Rohr, would be government employees, guided by the Constitution, instructing society on the correct "ways of citizenship." (*Rohr, p. 53*)

Rohr criticizes Woodrow Wilson and Frank Goodnow, who wanted to protect administration from politics and public opinion, and also favored vigorous parties to unite executive and legislative powers. (*Rohr, pp. 73,86*) Unlike those reformers, who distorted the vision of the Founding Fathers, Rohr returns to James Wilson's arguments for popular sovereignty. The state must return to the notion of the sovereignty of the people, with public administration as the honest broker among the three branches. According to Rohr, society's values are furthered by a professional civil service that combines the ideals of James Wilson's Federal Republic, where the people are sovereign, and individual rights are protected. (*Rohr, p. 133*) Thus, Rohr

dismisses Woodrow Wilson and Frank Goodnow's ideas regarding a British model of parliamentary government, with a strong legislature backed by a party structure. (*Rohr, p. 88*)

Wolin also criticizes the Progressive reformers, as well as the Founding Fathers, for their promotion of the state over the individual. Wolin views the Constitution fundamentally as an instrument for enhancing state power. In his critique of American politics he acknowledges a need for promoting societal values. But he doubts the capability and will of public administration to further individual values.

His first argument criticizes discussions about the Constitution during the Bicentennial celebrations. Wolin's view of the Philadelphia Convention was as a revolutionary strategy for establishing a central government that broke with the established direction of political development and the experience of the Thirteen Colonies. (*Wolin, p. 87*) Rather than stress the compromises in Philadelphia, which he calls a myth, he counters with the fratricidal story of Romulus and emphasizes the victory of the Federalists over the Anti-Federalist positions. (*Rohr, p. 88*)

He presents two dialectic notions--tending and intending--in political culture. (*Rohr, pp. 85-90*) Tending concerns active care, skill and concern. Wolin notes that this American behavior was observed by deTocqueville. Tending was preserved through the mores and habits of moral and religious beliefs, and through local communities with their political associations. Intending concerns straining towards the future. The politics of intending requires that concerns about power subordinate historical identity and service. It subordinates the collective identity to the drive to achieve objectives--which in turn stresses the classic public administration values of efficiency and effectiveness.

In Wolin's history, the Founding Fathers won two revolutions. First they defeated the British. Second they defeated the Anti-Federalist position and the Articles of Confederation, which favored a populist orientation centered on the state legislatures. Hamilton's "organizationalist ideology" won the day and the politics of intending overcame the politics of tending. (*Wolin, pp. 92-94*) Thus, the Federalists were intent on seizing the future, envisioning a single, unified society with a strong governing state. According to Wolin the Founding Fathers regarded democracy as anachronistic and unsuited for the size and scale of the New World politics. To enlarge the orbit of government they defeated the tending orientation of

small-scale democracy. Madison's "extensive Republic" would dominate diverse, democratic social values and, in Wolin's words, make democracy practically impossible. (*Wolin, p. 95*) Thus, a conscious choice was made in favor of republican over democratic government structure.

Wolin's construct of the Megastate also diminishes public administration's regard for societal values. In effect, the American polity is portrayed as a political economy. (*Wolin, pp. 147-150*) It emphasizes order and limits politics. Politics is set by the needs of the corporation, and the state is organized collaboratively with corporate leadership. So, the "idea of a democratic state is a contradiction in terms." (*Wolin, p. 149*) The state, through its bureaucratic means, concentrates power at the center. This favors elitism and experts over the citizen; order and stability over experimentation and spontaneity; and science and rationality over democratic participation. He notes that in this century corporate money and mass media have taken over genuine democracy based on voting, elections, and popular political parties. (*Wolin, p. 150*) Societal values, such as democratic participation, would require a citizenry oriented on cooperation with others, with accessibility to political experience. Individual citizens would have to deal with complex interests and conflicting claims over current politics and the bureaucracy. Wolin implies that this will not happen any time soon.

These differing views--of Frederickson, Rohr, and Wolin--continue in their writings on the American polity's instruments for collective action.

Instruments of Collective Action

The Administrative State

Frederickson borrows from Herbert Kaufman in noting several threads of public administration. These include the pursuit of three values--neutral competence, representation, and executive leadership. In Frederickson's history, the calls for greater citizen representation led to Jacksonian reforms, which contributed to the excesses of the spoils system. This in turn led to calls for neutral competence in the reform movement spearheaded by Woodrow Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt. Finally, it led to the desire for centralized executive leadership, which resulted in the New Deal reforms of FDR. Today, according to Frederickson, there is an

ongoing revolt against the three administrative state models and the value of social equity must be added.

However, the new public administration does not seek to reverse the trends in public administration history. New public administration continues to uphold the strong administration provided by executive government. Frederickson endorses Alexander Hamilton's call for "energy in the executive." (*Frederickson, p. 9*) The new public administration favors legislative mandates to improve the quality of life for all citizens. It also seeks to correct public administration's drift from problems to institutions. According to Frederickson, classic public administration emphasized developing and strengthening institutions to deal with social problems. New public administration should address the social purposes of agencies in meeting problems rather than focusing on the well being of administrative state agencies. (*Frederickson, p. 10*)

Public administrators must get back to addressing society's problems, not simply improving the efficiency and effectiveness of existing organizational structures. For the future, leadership will play a key role in creating the ability to mobilize government institutions to change. Leaders, as public servants, must master the ability to mobilize and distribute public services fairly and equitably. To do this they must plan the process of change in a systematic way. Frederickson offers the concept of buffered rationality as the way to do this. (*Frederickson, pp. 58-59*)

Frederickson builds on the writing of other public administration writers to build his case. Simon provided the positivist approach to rationality as the conscious application of knowledge to achieve agreed objectives. Lindbloom added an incrementalist approach and Etzioni introduced "mixed scanning." (*Frederickson, p. 58*) Frederickson draws on all three, but most heavily on Etzioni's idea of rationality as a two-level process. Fundamental decisions must be viewed in depth for dealing with problems, but also with a wide-angle appreciation for the marginal increments. So for buffered rationality, public administration professionals, elected officials, and citizens decide what is valued relative to agreed upon goals. In the short term, buffered rationality develops a commitment to low risk activities within the range of loosely prescribed overall objectives. The process is intended to wed plans to action, buffering the extremes of policy analysis and planning. (*Frederickson, p. 61*) Social experiments are to be made on the margins.

Leaders with a sense of direction must be long-range planners. In the new public administration, change is a leadership responsibility and requires developing institutions with criteria to link and measure planning, change, and management. (*Frederickson, p. 65*) Moreover, effective public administration in the administrative state requires systems and procedures to routinely interact with citizens. The job of public administration "begins at the ballot box." (*Frederickson, p. 67*) The public administrator must shift direction from the care and feeding of the bureaucracy (although human relations within organizations are important and require effective interpersonal skills, group decision making, and organizational democracy). (*Frederickson, p. 69*)

Human relations are necessary, but not sufficient for public administration. Administrative agencies need to work less within the organization and more with boundary problems--between the organization and the client to meet the demands for citizen participation and representation in the public sector. (*Frederickson, pp. 66-67*) Returning to an earlier theme regarding value-free officials, Frederickson argues passionately that administrators cannot be neutral robots carrying out public policy. Instead they must be players, experts at carrying out the public will, and enabling the fullest expression of public sovereignty for the widest range of citizens. (*Frederickson, p. 114*)

Rohr agrees with Frederickson's calls for rejecting neutral competence and encouraging representativeness in public administration. While Frederickson stresses the importance of the administrative state's role in addressing social equity, Rohr emphasizes the importance of a Constitutional protection of individual rights. Rohr and Frederickson part company on the necessity of strong centralized executive leadership. Rohr criticizes the New Deal's expansion of presidential power. He also believes that judicial decisions during that period, in interpretations of the Commerce Clause, General Welfare Clause, and Necessary and Proper Clause, further distorted the Founding Fathers' intentions as argued by both Federalists and Anti-Federalists. (*Rohr, pp. 117-132*) According to Rohr, the New Dealers weaved the intent of the Framers into constitutional arguments in support of their proposals. And by judicial interpretations they attempted to make the federal government and the Executive Branch supreme over the nation's economy, Congress and courts. (*Rohr, pp. 112-117*)

In Rohr's history, these distortions were reflected in the Brownlow Committee's report. Rohr argues that the Committee, which included public administration experts Brownlow, Merriam, and Gulick, attempted to work the equivalent of a new Constitutional Convention. (*Rohr, p. 136*) The supremacy of the Executive Branch--as evolved in the practices of strong presidents from Jackson through Nixon--enabled the presidents to expand the power of their office to centralize planning, personnel and financial management; using the budget to control general policy. (*Rohr, p. 135*) All of this has resulted in a mutilation of the Founders' intent. In the Federalist Papers the authors regarded "leader" as a pejorative term that would lead to demagoguery. Instead they preferred terms like officer, statesman, and representative. (*Rohr, p. 145*) Rohr argues that the Framers actually intended for the president to serve as the leader of Congress. Their fear of a legislative vortex swallowing the other two branches led them to form the two houses. Subsequently, during the New Deal, "The founders of the administrative state substituted an executive vortex for the legislative vortex of the framers." (*Rohr, p. 146*) Again, in Rohr's view, the Brownlow Committee and the expansion of the managerial control of government by the Executive Branch are at odds with Constitutional design. This explains the change in American political attitudes from 1787 to 1937 that has undermined governmental legitimacy. (*Rohr, p. 146*)

Wolin would agree that contemporary political attitudes are rightfully critical of the administrative state. However, he blames the state structure itself and not a distortion of the Founding Father's intent. Especially since the Cold War, Wolin writes of the "triumph of the state." (*Wolin, p. 80*) Today, he regards state action as responsive to the needs of the evolving corporate economy--national markets, predictable consumers, and a minimally educated work force. The rapid rationalization of the state has reduced politics to management.

Wolin also cites the 1937 President's Report on Administrative Management. He views it as the work of technocrats and corporate executives, along with like-minded academicians. He criticizes the pervasive state, the rise of the technocratic elite, and the rise in meritocracy as signs of postmodern society. In America today, Wolin views democracy as "rhetorical" with no correlation to official institutions, or presumably with the practices of public administration. Democratic participation, localism and egalitarianism are a counterthrust to statism and return democracy to its feudal element. (*Wolin, p. 81*) Wolin offers these

democratic ideals as an antidote to the current republican, capitalist, domineering and imperialistic administrative state.

Other anti-democratic influences are apparent in executive-legislative relationships. Again, citing pro-state arguments from Hamilton, Wolin interprets the Federalist's position as seeking to insulate the executive from the irrationality of the legislature. The doctrine of "reason of state" requires the executive, through the bureaucracy or administration, coupled with the president in a strong leadership role--to meet the demands of war, diplomacy and the unpredictable nature of politics itself. (*Wolin, p. 117*) In effect, "The executive becomes the embodiment of disinterested administration as the vital center of the state." (*Wolin, p. 118*) This passion for reason led to the search for a science of politics that would discover pure politics in accordance with impersonal law and objective knowledge. This strong revulsion to the give-and-take of politics led from political questions to administrative solutions. Thus the bureaucratic, rational state under the Executive Branch, wedded to efficiency, stands elevated above the discredited parties, legislature, popular participation and the like. In Wolin's view the administrative state, as served by the public administration, is the problem today and in the future.

Societal Learning as a Path to the Future

Developing society's ability to develop knowledge about wicked policy choices, and the consequences of the alternatives facing it in attempts to achieve goals, falls into the category of what Kirilin calls societal learning. Frederickson's new public administration is positive about the potential for developing organizational tools for learning about political, social and economic choices. In particular, he cites PPBS, policy analysis, productivity measurement, zero-based budgeting, and reorganization in a positive light, as portrayed by their proponents in the 1960s and 70s. Under new public administration these tools are useful for educating and encouraging citizen participation, neighborhood control groups, and the decentralized democratic work environment. In particular, these management tools can aid in determining the quality and distribution of public costs and benefits. (*Frederickson, p. 9*)

Along these lines Frederickson also suggests elevating bureaucratic over party politics. For societal learning, public administration must develop a better understanding of the "dominant theater of decision in the

modern state"--the bureaucracy. (*Frederickson, p. 15*) Bureaucrats--the least studied actors in American government--must be reappraised by public administration specialists, given the lack of interest they receive in political science. Public administration, as a field of applied social science, must bridge several disciplines, including political science. For the public administration specialists the values of rational decision making--of effective, efficient, economical and equitable public services--remains the question of learning about how to achieve the goals of new public administration when those values are in conflict.

Rohr would place public administrators in an exalted position for guiding society in determining how to settle conflicts over values, if not to make those decisions based on a careful interpretation of the Constitution. Senior civil servants would become the stewards of the American people, not the president. (*Rohr, p. 185*) High-minded civil servants would retain professional autonomy in choosing among Constitutional masters, while adherence to Constitutional principles would keep that autonomy within acceptable bounds. Government administrators would require human activity of the highest order as expressed by the oaths of office leading to a profound moral commitment. (*Rohr, pp. 188-190*) In Rohr's view, society would depend on the professionalism, independent judgment, restraint and moral character of the civil service. (*Rohr, p. 191*) Rohr envisions the Constitution as creating a community of political order. Through disciplined discourse society can discover, renew, adapt, and apply the fundamental principles supporting public order. (*Rohr, p. 192*)

Wolin's line of reasoning calls for radical political, economic and societal changes to reverse the forces that have shaped the American polity since 1776. In his review of history, since the time of the Founding Fathers, Americans have let democracy slip away. The cumulative effect of this benign neglect has been to forfeit democracy to the Megastate. Unfortunately Wolin offers no way out. A major shift in thinking about the state and the role of the individual citizen--as well as the relationships between the federal, state and local governments--and the dominance of power in U.S. politics and governance--would be required. Societal learning would be an essential element for reinterpreting, reordering and redefining the state and citizen's roles in the American political system.

The three major books reviewed in this paper have provided numerous insights regarding the big questions of public administration in a democracy--for examining the past and the future. Each author provides

significant ideas and concepts for the study of the future of public administration.

For Frederickson, the new public administration is a post-behavioralist approach. (*Frederickson, p. 11*) Like Simon and the logical positivists, Frederickson seeks an understanding, as scientific as possible, of organizational behavior. Beyond that the new public administrators are interested in the impact of their organizations on their clientele and vice versa. For the future, new public administration would be less generic and more public in the study of organizations; more prescriptive and less descriptive; more client-oriented and less institution-oriented; and more normative and less neutral. The end would be to foster citizen participation with a commitment for responsiveness and social equity in the distribution of the administrative states' public services.

Public administration's future must be change-oriented. Frederickson proposes that public administration develop criteria to judge organizational effectiveness. Next, it must develop institutions to bring about change and make organizations responsive to economic, political, and social changes. The criteria and solutions must consider the future context. This will include more emphasis on analyzing and overcoming the potential for institutional decline and the devolution of state agencies. In Frederickson's forecast, the post industrial economy will include zero population growth; an older population requiring increasing health care; and continuing problems with inequitable domestic and international economic distribution and employment. (*Frederickson, p. 52*) While the scientific study of public administration is important, politics and administration must gain control over changes in science and technology. For instance, political decisions are necessary for controlling the environment and pollution. (*Frederickson, p. 53*) For the future, the new public administration urges a focus on boundary problems regarding management-citizen relations over concerns of the bureaucracy's management-worker relations. (*Frederickson, p. 68*) Frederickson says to expect conflict, but for leaders to overcome it through accommodation.

Nevertheless, Frederickson calls for the continuation of "old" public administration's concerns with traditional values. Public administration must retain its normative context, which includes: (*Frederickson, p. 113-116*)

1. Ultimate responsibility to elected officials in making public choice.

2. Constitutional authority of public law.
3. Legitimacy of special interest groups.
4. Rights and dignity of each citizen (dignity, worth, and importance of individuals within organizations and those served by organizations).
5. An economic system of full employment and fair wages.

To these normative political, social and economic values, Frederickson adds the importance of more responsive public organizations capable of rapid response to change. Writing in 1980 Frederickson foresaw the coming cutbacks to government revenues and expenditures. He insists that forward looking public administration would have to address that environment while remaining cognizant of the rights of individual citizens, especially their right to receive an equitable share of public services.

Rohr provides a formula for examining future public administration issues. Public administrators, who possess professional competence and can develop a "sense" of what is constitutionally appropriate, must study policy questions. (*Rohr, p. 193*) Public administrators should become constitutionalists and examine history over the present, insight over advocacy and argument over law. Through this examination public officials will develop a sense of propriety, operate on a principled basis, and know when to bend and when to hold-- "They will know statesmanship when they see it." (*Rohr, p. 194*) Whether public officials can focus on high-minded civic purpose instead of the requirements and responsibilities to their particular agencies remains to be seen. Perhaps ongoing reinventing government efforts can serve to rebuild the legitimacy of the administrative state in the eyes of the American people. Moreover, to follow Rohr's lead and develop a national debate on Constitutional issues regarding popular sovereignty and individual rights will require major educational initiatives. Developing these high-level dialogues on complex political, legal and moral subjects will require an innovative way to hold the nation's attention.

Wolin concentrates his arguments at the national level. Power in the form of the Megastate seems indivisible. What would an analysis with a more "disaggregated" viewpoint tell about public administration in contemporary politics? Why not look into the complexity and multiplicity of power centers at the national, state and local levels? What are the implications of privatization initiatives that crosscut all three strata of government? This would be a more complex analysis than a single focus on

the Megastate. A further study of federalism and public-private partnerships would be an appropriate step for comprehending the various collective activities of the contemporary and future administrative state.

One aspect of Wolin's critical theory does provide an azimuth for the study of public administration, and for reconciling the past with the future. Wolin does this in an essay critical of college curricula shaped by a concern for jobs at the expense of the study of literature, philosophy, history and art. (*Wolin, p. 63*) Again using a dialectic method of inquiry, he compares interpretive and scientific modes of inquiry. (*Wolin, p. 64*) The scientific, or postmodern mode, is parsimonious, abstract, and reductive. The scientific mode's icon is the razor. This mode uses logical discovery to add new items while discarding the past. The logic of discovery finds its theoretical counterpart in a modernizing mentality. This frame of reference seeks comprehensive theories; an ever-expanding economy (consider the popular image of the corporate takeover); and the Megastate in pursuit of global power.

In contrast, the interpretive mode is diverse, universal, and rich in history. It stresses the historical study of ideas of philosophy, theology and political theory; as well as artifacts through art, architecture, music and archeology; and practices in anthropology, church history, and the study of political, social and economic institutions. Interpretive thought seeks to accumulate knowledge and guards plurality and differences. Its patron is Hegel. Interpretive modes are crucial to education, especially for understanding postmodern forms of power. Interpretive modes educate students in the art of handling power and develops sensitivity to the mishandling of power--including the memory of monstrous historical acts.

For the future, the study of public administration should seek a synthesis of the strengths of both modes of inquiry. Interpretive modes stress the importance of the study of public administration in the broadest context of governance and politics. They provide the holistic and historic base of experience for analyzing and evaluating current and future forces and trends. Scientific modes provide the basis for empirical research and analysis. Blending, as well as contrasting, interpretive and scientific modes of inquiry will assist in providing historical insights and analytical tools to address big questions about the democratic polity, the instruments of collective action, and societal learning.

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