Public Management in the Postmodern Era

NEW HORIZONS IN PUBLIC POLICY

Series Editor: Wayne Parsons
Professor of Public Policy, Queen Mary, University of London, UK

This series aims to explore the major issues facing academics and practitioners working in the field of public policy at the dawn of a new millennium. It seeks to reflect on where public policy has been, in both theoretical and practical terms, and to prompt debate on where it is going. The series emphasizes the need to understand public policy in the context of international developments and global change. New Horizons in Public Policy publishes the latest research on the study of the policymaking process and public management, and presents original and critical thinking on the policy issues and problems facing modern and post-modern societies.

Public Management in the Postmodern Era

Challenges and Prospects

Edited by

John Fenwick

Newcastle Business School, Northumbria University, UK

Janice McMillan

Edinburgh Napier University Business School, UK

NEW HORIZONS IN PUBLIC POLICY

Edward Elgar
Cheltenham, UK • Northampton, MA, USA

Mixed Sources
Product group from well-managed
forests and other controlled sources
www.fsc.org Cert no. SA-COC-1565
© 1996 Forest Stewardship Council

FSC

Dedicated to our families
Andrew, Anna, Bertie, Daniel, Denise, Matthew and Tori

Contents

Contributors

Henrik P. Bang is Associate Professor, Senior Lecturer and Coordinator of the Comparative Politics group in the Department of Political Science at the University of Copenhagen. His main fields of research are network governance and political participation, within which he has published extensively. Recent publications include articles in the journals *Urban Research and Practice*, *British Politics* and *Administrative Theory and Praxis*. He has also edited, with Anders Esmark, *New Publics With/Out Democracy* (2007), a critical analysis of the public sphere in an era of networks.

Mark Evans is Professor of Governance and Director of the Australia–New Zealand School of Government's Institute of Governance at the University of Canberra. His published research focuses on four key areas: public administration and public policy; policy analysis; evaluating the impact of processes of globalisation on domestic policy formation; and post-war reconstruction and development. The research theme binding these together is the interest in institution-building and processes of governance. His books include: *Constitution-making and the Labour Party* (2004), *Policy Transfer in Global Perspective* (2005), *New Directions in the Study of Policy Transfer* (2009) and *Understanding Competition States*, with Neil Lunt (2009). He is also editor of the international journal *Policy Studies*.

David Farnham is Professor Emeritus at the University of Portsmouth and Visiting Professor at the University of Greenwich. He is former Senior Visiting Research Fellow at the Catholic University Leuven, Visiting Professor at the University of East London and Visiting Fellow at Glamorgan Business School. Specialising in human resources management and public sector employment, he is a board member of several public bodies and co-chair of the Public Personnel Policy study group of the European Group of Public Administration. Publications include *Staff Participation and Public Management Reform: Some International Comparisons* (with A. Hondehem and S. Horton) (2005) and *Employment Relations in Europe: A Comparative and Critical Review,* in E. De Weert and J. Enders, *The Academic Profession: International Comparisons* (2009).

John Fenwick is Professor of Leadership and Public Management at Newcastle Business School, Northumbria University. He teaches in the areas of public management, local government and organisational studies and has long-established research interests in public participation and policy research. He has completed a study of political management in local government and the role of executive mayors, and his current research relates to theoretical developments in public management, leadership structures in local government and cooperative models in secondary education. He has published *Managing Local Government* (1995) and a range of papers in journals such as *Local Government Studies*, *Public Money and Management* and *Public Policy and Administration*.

Paul H.A. Frissen is Professor of Public Administration at Tilburg University and member of the Council for Societal Development, an advisory body for the cabinet and parliament. He is also Dean and Chairman of the Board of the Netherlands School of Public Administration, a training institution for higher officials in government and the public sector, and a think-tank in The Hague. He has published *De Versplinterde Staat* (*The Fragmented State*, 1991); *De Virtuele Staat* (*The Virtual State*, 1996) (translated as *Politics, Governance, Technology: A Postmodern Narrative on the Virtual State*, 1996); *De Lege Staat* (*The Empty State*, 1999); *De Staat. Een Drieluik* (*The State. A Tryptich*, 2002); *De Staat van Verschil. Een Kritiek van de Gelijkheid* (*The State of Difference. A Critique of Equality*, 2007), and *Gevaar verplicht. Over de noodzaak van aristocratische politiek* (*The Obligation of Danger. On the Necessity of Aristocratic Politics*, 2009).

Andrew Massey is Professor of Public Administration, Department of Politics at the University of Exeter. Prior to this he was Associate Dean at the University of Portsmouth and has taught at Queen Mary, University of London and Salford University. He is the Director of the Masters in Public Administration (MPA) degree at Exeter and researches on public sector reform and modernisation. He is the author of numerous books and articles on these subjects. He has also produced reports for and advised the British Cabinet Office and HM Treasury as well as the National Audit Office. He regularly contributes to the work of the Public Management and Policy Association (part of the Chartered Institute of Public Accountants) and has been the Chair of the UK's Joint University Council.

Janice McMillan is Lecturer in Public Management and Human Resource Development at Edinburgh Napier University. She has held previous posts at Northumbria University, Robert Gordon University and Nottingham

Trent University. Current teaching includes public management, human resource development and leadership, and she has published widely in these areas. With John Fenwick she has undertaken several research projects into learning, governance and public management and is co-author of *Decentralizing the Civil Service: From Unitary State to Differentiated Polity in the United Kingdom* (2003) (with Rod Rhodes, Paul Carmichael and Andrew Massey). She was Chair of the Political Studies Association Public Administration Specialist Group 1995–2005.

Wayne Parsons is Professor of Public Policy at Queen Mary, University of London. He is currently Visiting Professor in policy sciences at FLACSO, Mexico and the Catholic University of Lille. His research interests cover the fields of public management, economic policy and policy analysis. Amongst his books are *The Political Economy of British Regional Policy* (1986), *Keynes and the Quest for a Moral Science* (1997), *The Power of the Financial Press* (1990) and *Public Policy* (1995). He has served on the editorial boards of a number of journals, including *Policy Sciences*, *Journal of European Public Policy*, *Politics and Policy* and *Contemporary Wales*.

B. Guy Peters is Maurice Falk Professor of American Government at the University of Pittsburgh and Distinguished Professor of Comparative Governance at Zeppelin University, Friedrichshafen, Germany. A specialist in comparative public policy and administration, he has published extensively in journals including *Public Administration Review*, *Policy Sciences* and *Public Administration*, and is currently co-editor of the *European Political Science Review* and associate editor of the *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis*. Among his recent publications are *The Coordination of Public Sector Organizations: Shifting Patterns of Public Management* (2010) (with Geert Bouckaert and Koen Verhoest) and *The Politics of Bureaucracy: An Introduction to Comparative Public Administration* (6th edn, 2009).

Preface

This new collection of original essays is intended as a challenging exploration of public management and public policy in a postmodern era. Written by a group of leading international scholars, the book addresses key issues of theory and practice. Its central concern is with a public service and public policy environment that has now moved irreversibly beyond the historical moment of the New Public Management (NPM). In a post-NPM world, the old ways of working and making practical sense, and the superficial changes associated with the period of 'modernisation', have ceased to have any utility for public sector practitioners. Correspondingly, on a theoretical level, the old assumptions of modernism and foundationalism have ceased to have explanatory or heuristic value. We are, as researchers and as practical people, in a state of constant change. The maps we previously used to chart our course have become faded and indistinct, describing a country we no longer recognise.

The contributors to this book each, in their own way, seek to make sense of this changed environment. We are confident that these collected essays will prompt further research and further thought around the sometimes difficult ideas within. In particular, we hope that challenging theoretical work can be made relevant to the day-to-day work of public sector managers and practitioners. Just as empirical work without theory can only be, at best, descriptive, we believe that theoretical work without reference to practice will be judged irrelevant. In difficult postmodern times, the task of addressing both theory and practice is more important than ever.

A number of audiences – academic researchers, students and practitioners alike – will find different parts of this book relevant to their particular needs, and we hope, above all, that the book as a whole will stimulate further research in these demanding areas of enquiry.

Acknowledgements

PART 1

Conceptualising and theorising

1. Public management in the postmodern era: an introduction

John Fenwick and Janice McMillan

SCOPE AND AIMS

Exploring public policy and management from an avowedly postmodern perspective has its dangers. The state of affairs we identify on both the theoretical and practical levels could, for some, lead merely to philosophical introspection: the kind of postmodern approach which analyses only itself as the object of enquiry and decries any attempt to engage with a swirling and seemingly capricious reality out-there, akin to the paralysis of thought and action depicted in Edvard Munch's 'The Scream'. Yet such a response would take us nowhere on the level of theoretical understanding of the postmodern environment and, worse, it would leave the world of practice to fend for itself, with the implicit message that we, as scholars and researchers, have nothing of value to say to those charged with the future of public provision.

We reject this analysis. Hence, within this collection, the aim is to make sense of both theory and practice in postmodern times. Our approach can be summarised in a statement of broad propositions. First, at the theoretical level, a key theme is that the reassuring predictabilities of foundationalist paradigms have given way to a fluid and uncertain era in which there is no single available explanation of the changing nature of public management and policy. Theoretical understanding must therefore be based in a recognition of this state of flux as a normal condition. Reference to a 'new' public management is now woefully inadequate as any kind of theoretical tool and attempts at explanation must instead be based within a postmodern frame of reference. Secondly, the political dimension of this postmodern era is that the tenets of 'modernisation' as the basis of public sector reform across a range of societies have outlived their usefulness as a framework for policy programmes. Thirdly, at the applied level of public management practice, the implication of living in postmodern times is that individual actors, in the absence of any coherent overall explanation of change or any clear guide to action, increasingly employ their own

methods of sense-making based on the circumstances at hand, using the tools of understanding at their disposal.

The book as a whole applies a critical perspective to theory and practice in public policy and management, challenging received orthodoxies about public service reform and its interpretation. It presents a number of accounts of the contemporary public sector environment, arranged thematically rather than by sector or country. It suggests that the search for a unifying prescription for public service reform is fraught with theoretical and practical pitfalls and is likely to be futile. It argues instead that actors make sense of the public sector environment through numerous practical and/or anti-foundational responses. There is no simple or single answer in considering the future of public policy and management: the future derives from (and will be interpreted by others through) the lived experience of the actors involved and the meaning assigned to what they do. In this way the desire of many national governments to provide an overall roadmap for public service reform is misconceived. Such a roadmap tends to include a vision of public provision where public services 'need to become something *different* to meet the demands of modern society' (Fenwick and McMillan, 2005: 51, italics in original) but this is based on a foundational logic of gradual progress, with all its assumptions, and it fails to recognise the individual actor's sense-making ability. We return to this theme in the closing chapter.

The central focus of the book is thus upon public policy and public management in an era beyond modernisation. We will assume that the case has already been established for being 'beyond the New Public Management (NPM)'. We argue that old orthodoxies and debates have been superseded by a fluid setting in which there is no 'best way' to do things. In a post-modernised public policy environment, there is no compass and no clear indication of where we have been and of where we are going. Hence actors default to their habitual ways of working, from whenever and wherever these may be drawn. Thus we advocate an anti-foundational approach for both public policy-makers and managers.

We recognise that complexities and challenges arise in adopting this position. Anti-foundational approaches can be and are subverted by systems of governance that tend to propel actors back toward known foundational positions. Governance systems, by their nature, cannot match the rhetoric of third-way pragmatism and post-foundational thinking. Governance itself tends to impose a foundational logic on patterns of public policy and management. Either the systems employed by government need to match the logic of a fluid postmodern world, or they need at least to allow small-scale incremental foundational steps that can be managed. We are propounding not only the inevitability of anti-foundationalism in a postmodern world; we are advocating this as the only possible response in an environment

where all previous positions, not least those associated with neo-liberalism, have failed. Our perspective also necessarily focuses upon the beliefs and practices – political and managerial – of the actors involved in generating, implementing and managing public policy. In this setting, actors look to available sense-making techniques in order to do their jobs. In doing this, they are obliged to look beyond the available discourses of modernisation and of public service reform. The currency of these has already passed.

This book does not provide an audit or chronology of public service reforms. Instead it presents a critical analysis of practice and theory. Internationally, the practice of public service modernisation has represented a set of changes common within industrialised societies at a certain point in history, accompanied by a narrative of reform which made sense of those changes on the grounds both of necessity and of progress. Theoretically, these reforms could be understood within the twin perspectives of neo-liberal economics and the notion of a newly responsive public sector. Today, there is no prevailing narrative through which sense can be made of current changes in public management and policy. While numerous available narratives are on offer, there is not and cannot be a single dominant explanation of current 'trends'. Instead, there is a state of flux of both theory and practice, a postmodern condition rigorously explored within the current collection.

In addition to the distinctive theoretical perspective of the collection, it engages with practice in an original way. The beliefs and experience of policy actors and managers tend toward either foundational or anti-foundational ways of making sense. The key question for practice is: how can governance be changed to support actors in finding their own solutions to complex problems, in the context of mutually desired aims? Prescriptive methods imposed from the centre, even in the name of progressive social reform in Europe, Latin America or elsewhere, offer only another version of foundationalism and of how it 'must be done': a modernist conception of onward progress. We suggest that the question for practice is not 'how to do it', but of how to arrange governance in order to allow 'it' – public policy and public management – to be done, perhaps in ways that we currently do not or cannot envisage. The rhetoric of public service pragmatism asserts that this is happening already. Our position is that it is not, because of persistent intractable problems of governance that must first be tackled if effective practice is to match anti-foundational theory.

In the UK, this fluidity has coincided politically with the end of the New Labour epoch, a period where the discourse of modernisation has run its course, compounded in its closing stages by unprecedented economic uncertainty. As Rhodes et al. (2003) argue, the British state has been 'hollowed out' from above, below and sideways, meaning that no British

core executive has the capacity to act effectively. This, along with other influencing governance features, has resulted in a 'differentiated polity', outlined by Bache and Flinders (2004) as being characterised by, among other aspects, heterarchy; central government steering; multiple lines of accountability; fragmented civil service; multi-level bargaining, and shared sovereignty. In this conception of governance the centre still retains some pivotal control through, for example, greater control of resources compared with other actors in the system (Bache, 2003). Several chapters in this book develop these themes, and indeed we would go further: we would propose that the differentiated polity has itself reached a postmodern condition where the features indentified by Rhodes and others still exist but are pushed to the extremes of sense-making in public service provision. Sense-making goes on at the periphery of conventional discourse, at the edges of the official life of the public services.

The developments and debates explored in the collection are international in their scope, but we do not intend that this is confined to the United States and the United Kingdom. Comparable choices and uncertainties are confronted in societies that have passed through their own modernisation phases (such as New Zealand, discussed by Andrew Massey in Chapter 5), or have avoided confronting the choices in exactly the same way (such as Ireland or France), or in transitional societies (such as those in Eastern Europe or China) who are 'learning' from experience elsewhere. Thus the key concerns of the book are global and draw their examples widely, for instance in the international comparisons offered by David Farnham in Chapter 6. Taken as a whole, the collection assesses the impact on both theory and practice of the prevailing postmodern condition in public policy and management. Thus the era with which this book is concerned is defined theoretically, politically and managerially.

The collection is about postmodernity – the time and place we find ourselves in, the state we are in, a condition beyond modernity – and about postmodernism – the (multiple) ways of conceiving of postmodernity, beyond existing theoretical positions, especially foundational theories, and certainly beyond NPM. The book is theoretically informed but is not aimed toward elaboration of theory for its own sake. It is about how public policy and public management can be conceived of in postmodern times.

STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK AND KEY THEMES

The chapters are grouped into three parts, dealing with concepts and theories, applications and practice, and, finally, overall resolution and conclusions.

Conceptualising and Theorising

The first part of the book explores some key conceptual and theoretical challenges arising from the dominance of modernist ways of thinking. Following this introduction, Wayne Parsons provides a definitive statement of public policy and policy analysis as components of the modernist project, discussing ways in which an abiding concern with problems and policy has propelled academic enquiry toward a model based on rationality. The discussion by Parsons of the work of key thinkers including Lindblom, Wildavsky and Rittel provides a rich historical context for understanding the dominant paradigm of modernism, and points also to its essential deficiencies. Parsons detects a return to modernism in the managerialist responses of the late 1990s and the twenty-first century, a 'remix' of old solutions presented as new and fresh. He suggests that within postmodern approaches may be found new insights into the making and understanding of public policy, not least in the 'playfulness' of those perspectives which subvert the old modernist model, and a new criticality in challenging policy conventions in a world which has transcended the old wisdoms and critiques of Left and Right. Drawing from research in economics as well as in public policy, Parsons sets out a clear and challenging theoretical statement to open the book's substantive discussions, predicated on the impossibility of certainty and the manifest failures of modernist policy approaches.

A clear theoretical statement of intent follows in Paul Frissen's chapter. The conceptual basis of the contemporary public sector welfare state is explored in terms of its essentially modernist character. This, it is argued, is concerned ultimately with discipline and control. Frissen explores the insights offered by aspects of libertarian thinking in relation to negative freedom, developing a notion of non-purposive politics and democracy 'without a centre' within the postmodern world. In common with the perspective advanced by Wayne Parsons in the previous chapter, Frissen rejects the 'problem-solving' orientation of state intervention along with the view that society as a whole can be managed. An intriguing view is offered of the 'modesty' required by political and public administration, in place of the grand, and misplaced, claims of modernist strategy. In an eloquent exposition of what 'letting go' and 'leaving' mean for the essentially uncontrollable nature of the reality around us, Paul Frissen offers a view that would have been anathema to the grand theoreticians of public policy and the advocates of public managerialism alike. Yet his analysis also takes us back to a reconsideration of the insights of an earlier generation that may now have been forgotten, not least Lindblom's advocacy of incrementalism and 'muddling through'. What else – we are tempted to add – is there for us to do?

The section on conceptualising and theorising concludes with a lucid discussion by Mark Evans of policy transfer within the competition state. Here we find a critical and analytical review of what policy transfer has meant within a rational model of policy-making. Defining the UK as a 'competition state', Evans considers policy transfer as both cross-disciplinary and cross-national in its scope, focusing upon the globalising impact of policy actors' search for new ways to cope with the perceived reality around them. On one level Evans presents a comprehensive account of what policy transfer is and the ways in which it can fail or succeed. This is valuable in identifying, for instance, the 'coercive' policy transfer relationship between the West and some other societies. More important, in the context of the themes of the book as a whole, the chapter is about governance, globalisation and learning. It links the theoretical debates back to an empirical base, one of our concerns throughout. The chapter by Mark Evans poses some significant questions for us. In the UK, the principal tenets of public service 'modernisation' – that already dated political incarnation of NPM – drew (in)famously from experience in other countries, whether it was borrowing local elected mayors from continental Europe or the Child Support Agency rationale from the United States. The United States remains an exemplar to some transitional countries in Asia and Eastern Europe, while other societies in the South actively pursue an alternative paradigm. In which direction and with what consequences is the process of policy transfer now travelling? This chapter defines the current state-of-the-art in relation to policy transfer under conditions of rapid change.

Having established some challenging theoretical dimensions for the collection as a whole, the next part of the book shifts attention to 'applications and actors'.

Applications and Actors

Informed by theoretical debates, the intention in this section is to reflect directly on practice in a postmodern public service environment. Thus Chapters 5, 6 and 7 explore the lived world of public sector practitioners.

This part of the book begins with Andrew Massey's discussion of professions and professionalism. The implications of changes prompted by NPM are considered for the work of public service professionals. Massey finds that debates about the power of professionals have 'moved on' in the postmodern era, as we have increasingly had to take account of how professionals operate within globalised systems of governance. This embraces issues such as regulation of professional behaviour, ethics, the application of codes of conduct and professional power. Within a differentiated polity,

the central policy apparatus must conceive new methods – including negotiation and use of international partners – to get its own way and, again, this impacts significantly on the role and influence of professionals. Central to Andrew Massey's argument is that within new patterns of governance there need to be new approaches to the professions.

This is followed, again with the emphasis firmly upon practice, by David Farnham's analysis of contemporary public management. A common context is shared with the previous chapter: a public sector environment characterised by globalisation, the collapse of modernist theories of the Left, and a reliance on private and third sector providers which are in some cases under transnational ownership. Farnham looks in detail at working life on an international scale in this uncertain world of public service, including performance, managerialism and, in particular, human resource management. He alludes to aspects of change not usually given much attention by commentators, including higher levels of stress and violence in the lives of public servants, and, again, recognises the challenge to professionalism in a turbulent world. In postmodern conditions, there have been fundamental changes in what Farnham terms the 'public life', 'private life' and 'working life' of the public services, manifested in less stability and more diversity for public sector practitioners at a time of rapid change.

Finally in this section, Guy Peters offers a reconsideration of the public servant within the bureaucratic organisation, where – not for the first or last time in this collection of essays – the continuing influence of Weberian thought is evident. Peters argues that while NPM may not be new, or public, it has certainly been about management, and he unravels some of the elements of this. He notes that if bureaucracy has declined as a paradigm for the public sector, it has not been replaced with any coherent alternative. Academics and practitioners thus have to cope with uncertainty and a range of *ad hoc* solutions – one of the recurring themes of this book. Given that the role of public employees becomes ever less clear in these changing conditions, Guy Peters presents a constructive empirical typology of choices available to practitioners. These include the 'back to the future' option of 'bureaucrat', the adoption of the NPM role of 'manager', the stance of practical 'policy-maker', the role of 'negotiator' in a mixed economy of public and private providers and partnerships, and the intriguing role of 'democrat'.

All three chapters in this section focus upon what public employees are *doing* in the changing and sometimes troubled world they inhabit. This focus is absolutely essential in keeping critical commentary anchored to the public sector world being analysed by the theoreticians of public policy.

Resolution and Sense-Making

The concluding part of the book turns to 'resolution and sense-making', comprising chapters 8 and 9, which provide a critical overview in very different ways.

Henrik Bang's critical review in Chapter 8 considers everyday makers and expert citizens: sense-makers in the world of civil society. Bang places public policy firmly in the arena of governance and politics while also drawing attention to its limits. He argues forcefully that in a world where the old frameworks and solutions have failed, there are new ways of making sense based on the expertise and activism of the lay citizen. In a practical way this focuses upon lived experience. Theoretically, it revisits the question – also considered by Guy Peters – of whether public administration is art or science. In a discussion which takes in Aristotle, the Obama presidential campaign, globalisation and participation, Henrik Bang moves the focus of our attention back to the crucial theoretical issues with which we began: the decline of old ways of working, the choices facing both theoreticians and practitioners, and the emphasis upon 'everyday' sense-making by active individuals aware that they cannot fall back onto old foundationalist solutions. Above all, Bang offers a distinctly optimistic message.

In the final chapter, we pull together the key themes of the book and re-examine its initial concerns. The closing chapter reviews the deficiencies of the foundationalist paradigm and its shortcomings as both theory and basis for practice. Taking the position that modernist approaches have failed – a theme evident throughout the book – we then develop an alternative approach for postmodern times, focusing upon multiple narratives, a non-linear conception of policy-making, and a recognition that solutions are numerous and context-bound. There is no single policy solution to single policy problems. By definition, a postmodern approach cannot offer a final summary meta-narrative. Instead, 'letting go' is more relevant than ever, not as an admission of weakness, but as an assertion of strength in the ability of practical actors to find solutions. We emphasise the importance of actors' sense-making and active learning. As in the previous chapter, the message is an optimistic one for both policy and practice: a depiction of what is possible.

CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

In sum, this new collection of essays is not a description of developments in public management nor is it a chronology of events. It is a critical

discursive review, addressing both theory and practice, predicated upon dissatisfaction with the received wisdoms of public policy and public management. The following essays are diverse in their approach and are united by a concern with making sense of an uncertain public sector world where theory has been left behind by hyper-rapid change and practice has been cast adrift by inadequate theory. The book places itself firmly within an anti-foundational framework where the conventions of a 'new' public management and the critique once posed by 'modernisation' are now redundant. This leaves public policy and management in uncharted territory. The collection aims to map this terrain for the first time.

REFERENCES

Bache, I. (2003), 'Europeanization: a governance approach', paper presented to the EUSA 8th International Biennial Conference, Nashville, 27–29 March.

Bache, I. and M. Flinders (2004), 'Multi-level governance and the study of British politics', in I. Bache and M. Flinders (eds), *Multi-Level Governance*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fenwick, J. and J. McMillan (2005), 'Organisational learning and public sector management: an alternative view', *Public Policy and Administration*, 20(3), 42–55.

Rhodes, R.A.W., P. Carmichael, J. McMillan and A. Massey (2003), *Decentralizing the Civil Service: From Unitary State to Differentiated Polity in the United Kingdom*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

2. Modernism redux: po-mo problems and hi-mo public policy

Wayne Parsons

INTRODUCTION

The theory and practice of public policy and policy analysis quintessentially represent a modernist project. The growth of the modern liberal-democratic state has been a story of a discourse in which government has sought to present its decisions in terms of an appeal to rationality. Tyrants, dictators and those whose authority is rooted in a claim to derive their decisions by reference to a higher authority or a sacred text do not have to give reasons based on rational explanations or science, although they may well use such arguments, since it is enough that they – the supreme leader or the father of the nation – have said it. Modern democracy, however, is (in a Deweyian sense) a method of problem solving in which reasons and rationale matter. In a democracy government has to give good reasons: it has to put forward *policy*. And this policy has to constitute a kind of theory of the problem, and a plan of action. Of course, when we use the term 'policy' itself we are using a particular Anglo Saxon concept: in many languages there is no special word for policy. Policy is simply read as 'politics'. In this sense, when we use the term 'policy' itself we are using an expressly modern interpretation of the word. The use of politics to describe 'policy' (as in Spanish, 'políticas públicas') is in many ways much closer to the 'premodern' sense of the word as a form of deceit and Machiavellianism. Using the word policy in a modern sense is to shift the activity into a different mode of expressly rational discourse. Equally, the term 'public' is also a very modern form of language. It is predicated on the idea that we can indeed separate out private and personal problems from 'public' problems. Hence when we use the term 'public policy' we tend to assume that this refers to the design of solutions to problems by 'the government' or 'the state', as opposed to non-governmental or non-state actors.

From Dewey (1927) onwards, the policy approach has been concerned with problems. Public policy could be said to be the study of how human

beings construct or frame those conditions which are understood to con-
stitute 'public' problems and which thereby call for collective action. In so
doing, public policy is involved in the process of discovering or producing
the 'public' by solving those problems which are considered to be within
this sphere of human life. The study of public policy involves the analysis
of the policy making process itself, but it is also about the analysis used *in*
that process, or the analysis which is produced in the hope of influencing
the process. As students of public policy and policy analysis we are inter-
ested in understanding and explaining the process wherein human beings
in specific contexts go about trying to solve or ameliorate those problems
which they believe to be public. But we are also interested in how policy
relevant knowledge is used, abused and ignored in this process. Knowledge
of problem solving processes and knowledge for these processes are closely
inter-connected. They both involve questions of power: who gets what,
when and how, and what and whose knowledge counts when, and how?
However, although they are related, they may well diverge: and in prac-
tice often do. Those who are interested in the policy process are necess-
arily engaged in the development of theoretical questions and literature,
whilst those who are engaged in the production and use of policy relevant
literature usually have a very different agenda: hence the gap or chasm
between academic research and the actual policy making process which
often occurs. From the beginning there has been a difficult and troubled
relationship between the production of policy relevant knowledge and its
utilization by policy makers. The theory and practice of public policy and
policy analysis as it emerged from the 1950s and 1960s was a profoundly
modernist enterprise. It was expressed in the belief that we can acquire
knowledge of our problems which can be used to design solutions: that is,
to transform 'what is' into what is considered to be a better end state. The
modernist view of public policy which was to develop in the period after
the Second World War was that government could be made smarter and
become more effective in solving problems by the use of expertise, knowl-
edge and analytical methods. The policy sciences were conceived of as an
approach which could contribute to the enhancement of the capacity of
democracy as *qua* method of problem solving.

In the forefront of this conception of the modern state was, of course,
economics. As the premier mode of analytical discourse in policy making,
economists laid claim to know how 'the economy' worked, and fur-
thermore that this knowledge provided policy makers with a capacity
to manage and control the economy. Notwithstanding the warnings of
Keynes with regard to the dangers of mathematical modelling, economics
in theory and practice became important and dominant as a policy science
because of its claim to provide *scientific* knowledge to manage and control.

The high point for this belief in harnessing knowledge to power was the 'one small step for man' in 1969. It demonstrated what human beings could achieve if only they could use knowledge to solve the problems of mankind. If 'we' could put a man on the moon, we could solve other problems such as poverty or unemployment. This belief in policy analysis as a method of rational problem solving was, of course, profoundly misguided. But it was, and remains, seductive. As a belief in what Lindblom termed the 'intellectual guidance' model of public policy (Lindblom, 1977: 248) policy analysis taps right into the Faustian modernist urge: knowledge can be power.

The term 'postmodern' has attracted numerous definitions that in many ways have become wholly meaningless in terms of what we might describe as postmodern problems, or the postmodern condition in public policy. In the broadest sense it suggests that we live in a world full of uncertainty, lack of agreement on what constitutes a problem, a multiplicity of different perspectives, fuzziness (Parsons, 1998), a world in which no one theory, world view or ideology can capture 'reality' – whatever that is. It is a world without any 'grand narratives', in which we cannot have the kind of knowledge claimed by experts or 'scientists'. A world in which, in the words of the most *non*-postmodern politician one can imagine, Aneurin Bevan, we are like children playing show and tell: 'I will show you my truth, if you tell me yours'.[1] Public policy in a supposed postmodern world takes place in a world which lacks the certainties and uncompromising straight lines of modern policy design. In short, it is a world in which the greater proportion of the 'texts' which have defined theory and practice are of little use to guide either theory or practice.

A 'postmodern public policy' implies that we cannot have the kind of knowledge which will enable us to command and control; to predict and provide; to measure and to manage. When we think about a postmodern mode of public policy we confront the sheer limitations of human rationality in the face of an uncertain and complex world. It is the most disturbing of modernist nightmares: the awful and frightening realization that 'knowledge' of human problems does *not* give us the power to solve them. The modernist fantasy was that we could acquire knowledge of a kind which would enable human beings to design solutions to their public problems in the same way that NASA had designed the mission to land a man on the moon. Postmodernism in its various forms strikes at the heart of public policy – what Deborah Stone terms the 'rationality project' (Stone, 2001) – because it wholly rejects the idea that human problem solving is a rational analytical activity, or can be understood as such. It is a position which is not *critical* of the idea of public policy and policy analysis as it has evolved in theory and practice; it is wholly dismissive of the project *per se*. A postmodern public policy is an oxymoron.

EARLY CRITICS OF THE RATIONALITY PROJECT

Bliss it was to be alive and a policy analyst on planet earth as astronauts played golf on the moon. It was in this period that policy analysis really took off in government and in the universities – especially in America. In the Kennedy–Johnson era policy analysis came of age as rational techniques migrated from the defence sector to other policy areas. It was the age of Programme Planning and Budgeting Systems: an age in which 'Wizz Kids' were imported into government from think-tanks and universities to help solve the problems of the day. However, in this brave new world of such people as Robert McNamara, there were some notable examples of people who were not (in the immortal words of Lyndon B. Johnson) inside the great analytical tent urinating out, but on the outside peeing in!

For many students of public policy, Lasswell's vision of the policy sciences of democracy rapidly became an instrument to advance the interests of the power elite rather than the cause of democracy. As practised in the 'mother' of all think-tanks, RAND, policy analysis soon became a highly technocratic and positivistic approach to problem solving. The response of the dissenters in the 1960s and 1970s (a defining period in the history of policy studies) is still of relevance to the issues of postmodernity in public policy. Here we shall just review three men who were in the forefront of dissenting from the mainstream approaches.

They are familiar names: Lindblom, Wildavsky and Rittel. In different ways they anticipated the kinds of issues which confront the idea of a postmodern approach to the theory and practice of public policy at the height of the modernist dream of a 'scientific public policy' (Formani, 1990). Of course, there were many other critics of the mainstream view of public policy, but Lindblom, Wildavsky and Rittel went to the heart of the modernist myth which underpinned the theory, practice and aspirations of the period when problems were just out there waiting to be solved by smart young guys from RAND. Together they identified the worm in the bud of the modernist project in public policy better than anyone else at the time. What they realized was that public problems were not at all like the problem of putting a man on the moon. The problems which human beings confront in their political life were of an entirely different nature from the problems which confronted NASA. For NASA, the problem was well defined, as was the solution. It was a puzzle *with* a solution: it was a jigsaw which had millions of pieces, and it was very complicated, but it was amenable to a solution. Lindblom, Wildavsky and Rittel exposed the faulty reasoning at the core of the modernist dream.

In his famous essay on the 'Science of muddling through' (1959), Charles Lindblom attacked head-on the kind of work which was taking place at

RAND and elsewhere: policy analysis as a mode of problem solving. His preference, of course, was for problem solving to be incremental, the outcome of 'muddling through'. In the following years, he was to refine and develop his position on the role of (disjointed) incrementalism and 'partisan mutual adjustment' as a method more suited to the limited and bounded nature of human rationality. Problem solving was a myth, and the core myth of the analytical project. Problems are not 'solved'; perhaps they may be alleviated, but the idea that public problems can be understood as things that can be solved was wholly fallacious, although logically necessary for the mainstream. In his book with David Cohen, *Usable Knowledge* (1979), he critiqued the 'hyperrationalism' which underpinned the technocratic belief in the role of policy analysis to solve human problems. And in one of his later books (*Inquiry and Change,* 1990) he reflects on 'the troubled attempt to understand and shape society' which has characterized public policy in theory and practice. It has, he shows, been a 'tragic' story, in which attempts to solve problems by 'understanding them' have proved so unsuccessful. The route to better problem solving, he argues, is not through the application of scientific method to generate a consensus, nor through popular agreement. For Lindblom, human problems are best 'attacked' or 'grappled' not by guided change, but through the existence of a society in which there is a competition between ideas and a diversity of views on values, purposes and ends. Lindblom saw public policy as a conflict between two ways of thinking about problems: analysis and human interaction. The story of public policy in his lifetime was that it tended to be dominated by the belief in the capacity of analytical methods to define and decide how best to solve problems.

Aaron Wildavsky, who was greatly influenced by Lindblom, expressed his critique in a famous book (actually a collection of papers) which should be at the top of any reading list which addresses critical approaches to public policy: *Speaking Truth to Power* (1987). The sub-title is important: *The Art and Craft of Policy Analysis*. In it Wildavsky sets out to show that the mainstream approach manifested in government and academia was wholly misguided: policy analysis was not, nor could it be, a scientific project as it was fundamentally about art and craft. It was about *persuasion*, not proof. The mainstream belief in the capacity of government to solve problems, and the capacity of analysts to analyse these problems, was grounded in a mistaken understanding of the idea of policy 'problems'. The problems which human beings confronted in society were not *puzzles*. And to treat them as if they were like puzzles was downright dangerous. Public policy problems were not amenable to solutions; and, furthermore, the more policies we introduced, the more problems were generated by policies themselves. The mainstream of the day deluded

themselves in over-estimating the capacity of human beings to solve problems by 'intellectual cogitation'. Wildavsky emphasized that public problems were fundamentally about how human beings interacted, and that this social interaction was a key aspect of human problem solving. Because public problems were far more complex than putting a man on the moon, progress was not to be about making government smarter, and refining rational techniques, but understanding the role of error correction in problem solving activities. Wildavsky was against the growth of big government because the bigger government gets – in terms of more policies and bigger programmes – the more difficult becomes the task of learning from errors. Although disagreeing with Lindblom on some points (especially as to the role of markets and business), Wildavsky believed that we had to build on his insights. This was the truth that had to be spoken to the powerful: knowledge is not power, it is corrosive and if those with power believe that 'problem solving' is their monopoly then policy makers could do more harm than good. Good public policy is consequently not about knowledge or instrumental rationality, so much as the capacity and willingness to learn from error. Although his personal preference was for the use of markets as ways of learning through error, Wildavsky also argued that policy analysts should endeavour to put themselves out of a job: he was a great advocate of citizen participation in policy analysis, as well as of decentralized forms of politics as ways of facilitating more participation and better error correction. But, of course, this was not the mainstream message: progress was about harnessing knowledge to solve problems rather than using error as the 'engine' of policy making. The 'ghost' of rationality had to be exorcised from the 'house of public policy' (Wildavsky, 1987: 25). It was this ghost which embodied the modernist spirit of the public policy project, and it had to be dealt with if there were to be progress in theory and practice. In many ways, the emergence of a postmodern public policy is the continuing response to this dangerous spook that haunts the halls of the mighty. And, for all the postmodernist talk in the halls of the non-mighty (in academe), the ghost of rationality is still an ever-present shadow in the corridors of power.

The German designer Horst Rittel also attacked the spectre of rationality which haunted the house of public policy on the same issue: the concept of problem which was the centre of the modernist project (Rittel and Webber, 1973). Rittel argued that the design of public policies was a very different matter from that of designing for a moon landing. Indeed, the problem of poverty was an entirely different class of problem from the problem of how to enable a man to play golf on the moon. The great exponent of the rational model, Herbert Simon, had argued that it is well to distinguish between well structured problems, such as chess, and ill structured

problems like child poverty. However, Simon argued that through the application of rational methods of problem solving, human beings could, despite the bounded nature of their rationality, actually transform problems that were ill structured into more well structured problems. This was the role of analysis: to create more and more 'well structured problems' (Simon, 1973). Rittel, however, argued a very different case. Whereas Simon's approach to the structure of problems (and bounded rationality) serves to underpin the foundational structures of modernist policy analysis, Rittel's approach directly undermines these foundations. Unlike Simon, Rittel argued that ill structured problems – or what he termed 'wicked' problems – cannot be solved using the same methods used to solve well structured problems (or 'tame' problems). This idea that public policy problems were of another order and therefore could not be 'solved' by the application of rational methods was wholly subversive of the claims and aspirations of mainstream policy analysis. For Rittel, as a designer, it suggested a radically different approach to 'wicked' problems: if human beings were to design solutions to their public problems, then they had to design ways of facilitating dialogue and communication rather than Houston-like command and control centres.

HIGH-MODERNISM IN PRACTICE

For the most part, these critical seeds scattered by Lindblom, Wildavsky and Rittel (and others in the 1970s) fell on stony ground. Indeed, if anything public policy in theory and practice took an even higher road to realizing the dreams of modernism: the quest for a 'grand narrative'. Public policy – in theory and practice – became possessed by an urge to find one theory, one model to rule them all. In the 1980s the position of economics in the house of public policy became even more dominant, if not downright imperialistic. In its first incarnation, economics had manifested itself in two forms: welfare economics and macro-economics. The former provided the logic and methods for the core technique of policy analysis: cost–benefit analysis. This provided for the ultimate modernist fantasy world: what could be counted (and *everything* could be counted) could be controlled, and what could be measured could be managed. Macro-economics, on the other hand, provided the tools which empowered governments to model the economy and regulate and manage the economic cycle. In due course, when stagflation was loosed in the late 1970s, the Keynesian era which was associated with the growth of big government and the welfare state came to a close. It was to be replaced by another even more virulent variant of economic rationality: the rationality of the market. Meanwhile,

back in the halls of academe, neo-classical economics was also making progress with the spread of rational choice and, in particular, public choice approaches to analysis of the policy process and *for* the process. *Economica vincit omina*.

But there was another spook loose in the 1980s and 1990s. In fact, this particular spectre had never really left. Indeed, if anything, it had been the presiding household spectre since the 1960s: managerialism. The importation of rational techniques into government in the first place had come *via* the former president of the Ford Motor Corporation, McNamara. What we think of as 'policy analysis' was really about the importation of (quite literally) Fordist management techniques. In the 1980s and 1990s, so-called 'New Public Management' reforms set out to make government more business-like. Government was to be 'modernized'; run like a corporation. Thus whilst in the academy the period was to see the (inexorable) rise of 'postmodernism' (although not in economics), the actual practices of government were to become ever more committed to realizing a more 'modern' (efficient, effective and economical) and business-like government. Indeed, what triumphed in the 1990s, in the UK as elsewhere, was not Lindblom's 'hyperrationalism' so much as 'hyper-managerialism', that is, the belief that problem solving was essentially something which involved improving policy *management*, rather than *analysis*. The analytical task became a sub-set of the broader task of improving the management of policy making processes, policy delivery, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E).

Confronted by the problems of a postmodern world (uncertainty, complexity, fuzziness, etc.), the response of many governments and NGOs such as the Bretton Woods Institutions (BWIs) was actually to assert the grandest of grand narratives: the need for enhancing governance capacity. National governments and the BWIs set about designing institutions and policies which were profoundly modernist in their urge to reassert command, coordination and control on a world which was increasingly full of problems which could only be solved by improving the capacity of the state to steer and navigate through the turbulent seas of postmodern uncertainty and complexity. And the higher the waves, the higher the form of modernism pursued. This was the greatest irony: the more de-regulated the economy became, the more regulated became the state itself. This, of course, was exemplified under Thatcher and Blair/Brown in the UK. Finance and business life was let loose whilst the design and delivery of public policy became trussed and tied in accordance with the doctrines of more business-like government. Meanwhile, the policy making processes were subjected to 'modernization' and 'professionalization' in order to improve steering capacities. Yehezkel Dror – the modernist's modernist

– perfectly articulated the logic of this drive to improve the 'central brains' of government so as to 'weave the future': we were all going to (po-mo) hell in a handcart unless and until government improved its capacities to command, coordinate and control an increasingly confusing and chaotic world (Dror, 2001).

This had many implications for 'modernizing' policy making: not least that 'policy makers' had to be trained and become more 'professional'. The UK was not alone in the 1990s and early 2000s in trying to improve the policy skills, capacities and competencies of civil servants. In the face of all the uncertainty of postmodern life, governments were to place considerable emphasis on enhancing the capacity of 'policy makers' to be able to deploy rational tools and techniques. The higher the waves of uncertainty and complexity, the more policy making in practice embraced (as in desperately hung on to) 'modernization'. This was accomplished by returning to the kind of approaches which had not been seen much in evidence since Robert McNamara was running his peacekeeping operation in Vietnam. Professionalized policy making took a very positivistic direction. In order to steer and navigate and weave the future, policy makers needed the right tools to do the job: that meant back to the future. Despite the arguments of proponents of a more postmodern turn, policy analysis returned to where it had been left in the 1970s. In irrational, crazy times, we needed *more* rational analysis. If po-mo was the problem, high-mo was the solution. As policy was less and less ideologically based, it had, necessarily, to become more evidence based.

Nothing demonstrates this approach more than what happened to policy analysis in the developing context. In the face of the total and abject failure to establish the conditions in which the developing world could 'take off' into the blue sky of 'modernization', BWIs embraced a form of high-modernism not seen since Ludwig Mies van der Rohe designed the IBM building in Chicago and uttered the immortal lines: 'less is more!' For the BWIs, less was indeed more. Faced with the failure to (big) push the developing world onto the runway of economic growth, the World Bank and IMF pressed down the great cookie cutter known as the Washington Consensus: one size *would* fit all. In due course, when the Washington Consensus failed to deliver the goods, and the concept of 'development' broadened and became more focused on poverty reduction rather than economic growth, the paradigm did not so much shift as re-brand itself. What was needed was a new big push: the push to secure and extend the monopolistic position of the BWIs as the purveyor of policy analysis. Just as Samuelson had famously said that he did not care who ran the government, just as long as they had read his textbook, so the World Bank did not much care who ran the countries of the developing world as long as

they had read their textbook(s). The emphasis in the 1990s shifted towards 'in-country' policy analysis: but 'in-country' analysis as framed by the World Bank. They could choose any colour they liked: as long as it had the imprimatur of the BWIs. McFordism, we hardly missed ye.

If there was a turning point in this shift towards a kind of knowledge Fordism it was the decision by James Wolfensohn in 1996 to transform the World Bank into your friendly global, but local, 'Knowledge Bank'. If the Bank could not promote development 'downstream' it would do it upstream, by improving the policy capacity (à la World Bank) of recipient countries. In the next few years the BWIs – and the big donor countries – published a staggering number of handbooks, guidebooks, manuals, tool-boxes, and so on, to promote 'in-country policy capacity'. The BWIs and donor countries had long sought to improve the 'rationality' of project design, monitoring and evaluation. USAID had introduced Logframe – or the Logical Framework Approach – in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and it was rapidly adopted as the required methodology by donor governments and NGOs (World Bank, 2003a). The Logframe document could stand alongside any high-modernist building as a monument to the resilience of man's faith in Cartesian method and logic. It is not a method that admits to uncertainty and fuzziness: all must be measured, monitored and causalities demonstrated. All can participate, but all must speak Logframe. And, as Wittgenstein might have put it: whereof they cannot speak, they must remain silent.

Where the Logical Framework went at a micro or project level, the policy capacity project (at the macro level) was to follow. The aim would be to create a uniform global set of analytical frameworks which would ensure the delivery of development goals and foster the 'ownership' and 'participation' of national 'stakeholders'. It did not matter who ran the country as long as they did it by the book. Or rather books. A brief review of some of the key publications indicates the scale of the project to crowd out and corner the market in policy analysis and narrow rather than broaden the discussion (Wilks and Lefrançois, 2002). In trade policy the BWIs have implemented with some vigour a Trade Related Capacity Building project (Powell, 2002). Amongst the set texts for this is the 672 page handbook on *Development, Trade and the WTO* (Hoekman, English and Matto, 2002) – seen by some as a handbook for fixing a car that is a write-off or a cookie cutter for a cookie that has long since crumbled. Another example of this project to improve the policy capacity of developing countries is the Policy Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) that were introduced in response to criticisms of the Bank's top-down, 'cookie cutter' approach. The PRSP process was intended to promote 'participation of stakeholders' by giving them a very big bag – some would say rag-bag – of 'tools' for better policy

making. The 'Knowledge Bank', ever eager to disseminate its unrivalled and unchallenged expertise in development policy, produced a 'toolkit' to support the research and analysis necessary to produce the PRSP. This was published as the *Poverty and Social Impact Analysis* (PSIA) (World Bank, 2003b). The PSIA toolkit was later supplemented by TIPS: *Tools for Institutional, Political and Social Analysis* (World Bank, 2007). The OECD produced another to help support capacity building: PIA, *A Practical Guide to Ex-Ante Poverty Impact Assessment* (OECD, 2007). In addition to PSIA, PIA and TIPS there are numerous other guides, handbooks and tool boxes to improve M&E (in-) country capacities. Such literature, of course, all aims to support the last great 'big push' to conquer poverty: the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), a push which is itself a monument to the belief in the need to solve the most intractable and 'wicked' of all policy problems by creating a global plan (targets) to 'end poverty'. The MDGs are at the hub of a complex and bewildering network of institutions and initiatives designed to solve the puzzles of development through rational analysis, monitoring and evaluation. It is an example of a faith in a high-modernist approach to public policy which dwarfs and puts into context any talk of the possibilities of a 'postmodern' turn in public policy, global or otherwise.

If the position of economics in public policy in the developed world was one of dominance, as far as the developing world was concerned it was hegemonic. In general, economics (or perhaps economic modes of discourse) has retained its dominant position in both the analysis of the policy process and for and in that process. The gap between postmodern analyses of the human condition and the high-modernist analysis which underpinned the economic decision making process grew wider and wider. In financial economics the 'efficient market hypothesis' ruled in practice, if it did not go unchallenged in theory. At the level of macro-economic policy, government and central banks did not have to worry about whether all of this 'wealth' being created was actually real: their (dynamic stochastic general equilibrium) models, as we now know, deluded policy makers into thinking that this world was basically stable when in reality (as Keynes argued) it is inherently very *unstable*.

The world economy was, as we know, far from being stable, or tending towards equilibrium. We may have been living in a postmodern world, but decision making by government and central banks was being conducted in the context of modernism so high, and a narrative so grandly abstract, that it eventually lost all connection with the real world entirely. We were, it turned out, governed by models that assumed that human beings were all rational actors. That is just about as modernist as it gets! It was an economics so grounded in the rational (neo-classical) model that, in

policy terms it was, as Krugman observed, 'spectacularly useless at best, and possibly harmful at worst'.[2] Even the great 'objectivist' himself, Alan Greenspan, had to confess to the House Committee on Government Oversight and Reform in 2008 that he was 'shocked' and in a 'state of disbelief' at what had happened. The paradigm of 'risk management' which had underpinned the whole 'intellectual edifice' of world finance had collapsed (Greenspan, 2008). And thus it was, that with the coming of the 'credit crunch' the grandest narrative of all had been told and it, and the party, were over. Whether it is over for the kind of toxic economics (and economic textbooks) which had provided the legitimating discourse for the rise of the toxic debt which devastated the world economy is an ongoing story. But it is a story which is relevant to the possibilities of a reconfiguration of mainstream approaches to policy analysis as a modernist project.

Whatever one might argue about the exact composition of postmodern problems, one thing is apparent. When faced with the wickedness of a wicked old world, the response of policy makers has been to respond with the highest of high-modernist designs. We have seen this writ large in the developed world, with the meltdown of the financial and economic system which began in 2007–8. And in the case of the problems of the developing world, which are as wicked as it is possible to imagine, the BWIs and national governments have responded with modernism again on the grandest of scales: 'feed the world' by planning the world. Solve problems by setting targets and enhancing policy capacity. With the failure of the kind of approach championed by the likes of McNamara in the 1980s, the BWIs have designed a system whose very purpose is to 'guide' the future of the greater part of humanity, and which is perhaps an even worse 'guide' to how we think about the problems of 'development'. If the hall-mark of modernist public policy is the urge to exercise intellectual and technical guidance, so as to facilitate command and coordinative and control capabilities, then we have to look no further than PRSPs and PSIA to see modernism *redux*.

FROM REMIXING TO REENCHANTING: THE ROADS TO NEUVERZAUBERUNG?

The restoration of policy modernism in the late 1990s and early 2000s may be viewed as (what is called in the music industry) a 'remix' of the rationality project (circa 1960s/1970s): a return to an 'anti-politics' that is characterized by the belief in technocracy and managerialism as the default problem solving method, rather than democratic politics. It was

a disposition nicely captured by Trevor Smith in his definitive account of that period, *Anti-Politics* (Smith, 1972). Perhaps what was happening in Washington and Whitehall as elsewhere in the world in the 1990s was comparable to what was happening on the club-dance scene at the same time: old tracks and ideas were being remixed for a new 'anti-political' era. It is ironic (in a postmodern sense, no doubt) that the remix (*not* the original!) of D:Ream's 1993 'club' hit, 'Things can only get better', became the sound-track to New Labour's general election campaign of 1997. The case, perhaps, of a remixed party using a remix to re-launch.

The shift towards the discourse of policy capacity involved therefore using the (best) bits of earlier (technocratic and managerialist) discourse (1960s hits), and re-packing them as 'modernization' and building policy/ governance capacities. Dror's report to the Club of Rome, *The Capacity to Govern*, is redolent of a musty old technocratic ethos which was itself a remix of the kind of arguments he had put forward (in *Public Policymaking Reexamined*, 1968) before Neil Armstrong took that one small step: if government was going to solve problems, it had to get a lot smarter! Fast forward to the 1990s and the obsession with the challenge of 'governance' and 'hollowed out states' and the need for policy makers to improve their network steering capacities, and the solution for Dror was the same, except more so: plus ça change. The more complex problems became, the more government had to reassert its capacity to steer and navigate. In a similar vein, the World Bank, which had, from the begin- ning, a dominant role in the production of policy analysis, launched its remix: 'we are the Knowledge Bank' ('things can only get better') in 1996. No longer was the Bank just in the business of lending money and telling countries what to do: it mutated into a Bank that liked to share knowledge and build in-country analytical capacity. It was the Bank that was in the business of 'technical guidance'. The plan was for the Bank to (apparently) vacate the driving seat but still provide the maps. It was still doing the navigating. And, at a time when academic students of public policy were warning about the dangers of thinking of policy making as a set of rational stages (Sabatier, 1999), HM government was using the rational model as the basis of creating a more 'professional' approach to policy making by remixing the policy stages model with a good dose of ye olde strategic management (Parsons, 2001).

One could argue that the high-modernism remix of the Bank, in Dror and in HM government, was symptomatic of the remixing going on elsewhere from the mid-1990s onwards. As politics was becoming more 'non-ideological' and 'what matters is what works' became the mantra of the modernizing faith, the policy process and policy analysis could be portrayed as essentially technical and managerial in orientation. In the

absence of political or ideological grand narratives, the high-modernism of policy analysis became a kind of default setting: a 'we don't have an ideological agenda, we are just interested in what works, sharing knowledge and policy skills training' grand narrative. In this case, we might read the high-modernism manifested in the 1990s as the product of the 'end of ideology' and a world without grand narratives. The big idea was that there was no big idea: 'evidence' should drive policy, and techniques and tools and models would improve the problem solving capacity of both the developed and developing world. Indeed, the 1990s remix was in many ways far more technocratic than discussed in Trevor Smith's account of the 1960s and early 1970s. To govern was to design targets and specify outcomes and results and to manage, monitor and evaluate (even risk) so as to realize these targets. Thus it came to pass that a postmodern world was to give rise to high-modern modes of policy making and analysis. High-modernism in public policy was just another postmodern remix of a sort: an exercise in self-referencing and technocratic bricolage.

Perhaps the whole concept of 'postmodern', however, is not helpful when we come to think about alternatives to the kind of modernism we have experienced since the 1990s. It is possible to say that postmodernist describes the present human condition, but it does not take us far when we have to think in terms of what to do about health, housing, education, the economy, and so on. It may provide us with an account of the policy process, but it hardly seems relevant for thinking about how can we design policies. A postmodern policy – as a theory of a problem and, heaven forbid, a grand narrative – seems a contradiction in terms. Postmodernism can do a good job of deconstructing the world but appears to rule out constructing an alternative. The postmodern rejection of theory logically also rules out the idea of a 'policy' and 'analysis'. If there is no privileged reading of a text and voice, and uncertainty is all in all, what then? It is a grand narrative that prohibits any other grand narrative.

Do postmodern tools, therefore, have any place in the professional policy maker's toolbox? On the face of it, no: but that may be the professional policy maker's loss. What is lacking in the existing box of delights provided by the BWIs and others is a critical disposition: a way of looking at problems as constructed discourses, which serve to lock today's problems in yesterday's language. Deconstruction can challenge the assumptions and the mindset embedded in a policy language (Schram, 1993). As such it can be used, so it is argued, to help practitioners better understand the arguments they use and the alternatives to existing policy designs (Gillroy, 1997; Miller, 2002).

Postmodern approaches have much to offer modern policy designers: above all they bring to the fore the importance of playfulness in the design

process. Policy analysis as art and craft has been seen as the sole preserve of the species *homo sapiens*, but perhaps critical approaches also need to give *homo ludens* a try. Policy analysis in a wicked world has to deal (above all) with paradox, a world in which solutions do not exist, and in which meaning is not so obvious or so available or so desirable; a world in which we do not possess the luxury of a single perspective but have to deal with problems as existing within a multiplicity of ways of seeing. Playfulness requires an analysis of problems which recognizes the role of different forms and kinds of knowledge. Like the fool, *homo ludens* should be licensed to poke fun and prick the bubbles of the powerful as they float around the corridors of power. The postmodern deconstructive tools in the box are the pig's bladder and the motley: the tools of the fool. In this sense, policy analysis requires the same kind of playfulness that is a vital aspect of all human problem solving and design. Postmodern foolishness, above all, can serve to create space in which innovation (and a more critical modernity) can emerge. The postmodern fool plays the part that all the very best fools have played at the courts of the mighty: opening up space by challenging the supposed wisdom of the powerful, replacing clarity and dogma with ambiguity and doubt through verbal dexterity and 'wit'. This opening up of policy space to ambiguity is especially important in the light of Wildavsky's argument that, over time, the policy space becomes ever more dense and crowded: policies overlap and bump into one another and policies end up their own cause. Postmodernism can create space by questioning the fundamental (modernist) assumptions which support the architecture of policies and institutions: it does not presume to 'speak truth to power' but it interrogates and pricks that which is regarded as truth. The jester does this by being an outsider on the inside. The fool possesses the skill of being the outsider, the one whose cunning wit questions meaning and opens up the spaces between the words. As Hugh Miller shows, it can lampoon the contradictions and stupidities of supposedly neutral and objective forms of instrumental rationality that are embodied in bureaucracy and managerialism, and thereby expose solutions as little more than 'bumper sticker' slogans (Miller, 2002).

So, 'Vesti la giubba' since postmodern motley is appropriate attire for the high-modern court: a court that is always at risk of believing in the power of rationality and its capacity for intellectual cogitation and is consequently invariably prey to taking itself seriously, self-deception, closedmindedness and groupthink. Postmodern analysis is the joker in the pack, the wild card that does not belong: the post modern analyst is neither a Jack, Queen or King, or a member of any suit in the pack. As such, postmodern policy analysis requires a very different 'skill set' for professional policy makers than those which are generally deemed necessary.

The postmodern fool may serve to create a more playful context for policy making: and in doing so it does not 'postmodernise' public policy *per se*, but may well contribute to its *reenchantment*. A reenchanted public policy would be less 'post' modern than a more critical, knowing and playful form of modernism.[3]

It was Max Weber who argued that the fate of our modern times was characterized by 'rationalization and intellectualization and, above all, by the disenchantment of the world' (Weber, 1991a: 155). This '*entzauberung der Welt*' would, as a result of the spread of 'rational, empirical knowledge', transform the world into little more than a 'causal mechanism' (Weber, 1991b: 350–51). The modern world was, he gloomily forecast, doomed to be driven by the engine of disenchanted rationalization 'until the last ton of fossilised coal was burnt' (Weber, 1976: 181). Until then, 'not summer's bloom lies ahead of us, but rather a night of icy darkness and hardness' (Weber, 1991c: 128). The new high priests of this dark, hard age would be the scientists, economists, bureaucrats, and all those whose claim to power was grounded in their claims to knowledge and technical expertise. A brief read through some of the recent outputs of the BWIs graphically illustrates that, if we ever doubted it, we still live in the realms of *entzauberung*, where the only knowledge or wisdom that counts is that possessed by those who do the counting and write the 'guides' and compile the toolboxes: a world in which rational analytical knowledge and bureaucratic hierarchy always triumph over local and more tacit forms of practical wisdom and where the loud and strident 'grand narratives' of the powerful all too often crowd out and shout down the stories told around the camp fires that warm the hard icy darkness.

Well, the day when the last ton of fossil fuel is used up is not so far off: in which case, it is valid to ask what kinds of roads might lead to the warmer, sunlit and soft lands of *neu*verzauberung[4] or 'reenchantment'? The reenchantment of public policy begins when we recognize that the problems we face are of a wicked nature: they do not have 'solutions' which can be arrived at purely through the exercise of reason and analysis. We face problems for which causal relationships are so complex that we cannot know when one problem ends and another begins, or whether the problems themselves have been caused by previous or existing policies. We confront a world in which 'what works?' is a simplistic and nonsensical question. 'What works?', like probability, is a poor guide to action in a world in which 'problems' are not continuous over time and space. The fact that a policy had worked in one context does not mean that it will work in another. In the land of neuverzauberung causes and effects, and means and ends, are complex and confusing. We realize that we have to design solutions even though we can know so very little. It is a world in

which students and practitioners have to become more modest about their capacities to (as Lindblom put it) 'understand *and* shape society'. A reenchanted policy space is therefore a domain lacking the most powerful of modernist myths: there are, alas, no 'zauberkugel' – magic bullets – in the land of neuverzauberung. It is policy making that lays no claim to have magic bullets, silver or otherwise, which can be used in policy wars to hit targets.[5] Just as there are no magic bullets for cancer or obesity or any other bodily ailment, in a reenchanted policy space we have to come to terms with the fact that there are no magic bullets for our 'public' ailments. One size does not fit all. The 'policy' as universal solution is recognized for what it is: the ubiquitous snake oil of modern political discourse.

On reflection, the landscape of neuverzauberung in many ways offers a very postmodern prospect: it is confusing and complex, and full of competing ideas of what counts as progress in theory and practice. Policy studies itself has always been a field with no defined boundaries or borders. It consequently has a topography which has been formed by the transgression of intellectual boundaries. Indeed, the mission of the policy sciences movement was (in Lasswell's terms) to *integrate* knowledge. So, although the policy approach challenges disciplinary boundaries (like postmodernism) it does so in the belief that human knowledge could and should be integrated so as to solve human problems (so very non-postmodern). Hence, as Wildavsky (1987) observed, policy analysis has 'expropriated lands' from many disciplines, and for this reason any attempt to plot where the approach is (or is going) in a cartographic sense will 'not take us very far'. In fact, in many respects, the policy approach is rather like Schumpeter's definition of economics as being an 'agglomeration of ill-coordinated and overlapping fields of research', in which the frontiers of the field are 'incessantly shifting' (Schumpeter, 1954: 10). Policy analysis as an art and craft requires a variety of tools: most of which are 'borrowed'. Given this, we should expect a reenchanted public policy to be far more diverse, if not downright eclectic and positively kleptic.

If we understand public policy as an 'agglomeration of ill-coordinated and overlapping fields' which focuses on how human beings design problems and solutions to those conditions they consider to be public, then the toolbox must perforce contain a diverse range of approaches to be of any use to either students or practitioners. Progress in the past was very much about the search for a grand theory, the big idea. But the integration of knowledge relevant to analysis of the policy process, and for and in the process, cannot and should not be understood as an attempt at unification – or positivistic consilience (Wilson, 1998). In which case, progress in public policy may best be viewed as about increasing diversity and competition between different approaches, frameworks, tools and models.

Where neuverzauberung will actually be located on the scholarly map will, to a large extent, be a function of coordinates derived from the position of, and developments in, the policy sciences themselves, as well as other areas of human knowledge. These various ideas, metaphors, models, theories, and so on, flow into the theory and practice of public policy and stimulate thinking about human problem solving. The first stream of ideas that may shape the policy approach must be a re-reading and re-appreciation of the canon of literature from which the field has emerged. As we noted at the start of the chapter, the ideas of people such as Lindblom, Wildavsky and Rittel still have a relevance for the 'art and craft' of policy analysis and in many ways anticipate the issues that concern us today. So the landscape of a more critical theory and practice should contain the defining contributions to the way the field has developed. In thinking about the future, we should pay close attention to the foundational modernist texts of the field.

Although the influence of postmodernism and postmodern tools has been rather limited in terms of challenging mainstream theory and practices it has made an important contribution to the development of a more critical approach to public policy. In this sense, the flow of postmodernism has contributed to a re-orientation of policy studies, if not policy practices. However, the emergence of the variously named 'constructivist', 'post-positivist', 'postempirical', 'deliberative' and 'interpretive' approaches which have critiqued public policy in terms of the dominance of technocratic decision making and the role of expertise, and which make the case for more participative modes of policy making, pre-date the influence of postmodernism. Indeed, much critical policy analysis of this kind actually draws on Dewey and Lasswell rather than postmodern texts. If we consider one of the defining contributions to the development of a critical approach, Fischer and Forester's *The Argumentative Turn* (1993), postmodernism is a strand, but is somewhat marginal. What we can say is that, unlike many other research communities in the policy sciences, the kind of people represented in the volume were open to a variety of intellectual influences, including Habermas, Foucault and Derrida. But they are also rooted in re-reading Dewey and Lasswell. The 'critical' turn as a whole is very diverse and is not so easily captured by the term 'postmodern': but all have in common a desire to reenchant, in the sense that they are concerned to challenge the dominant or mainstream approaches to public policy. The exclusion of work associated with the 'argumentative turn' from Paul Sabatier's *Theories of the Policy Process*, on the grounds that he only included 'frameworks that followed scientific norms of clarity, hypothesis testing, acknowledgement of uncertainty, etc' (Sabatier, 1999: 11), is one measure of the extent to which such approaches are considered to be

outside the 'scientific' mainstream. However, it may be that the critical turn in policy analysis that has been championed by Frank Fischer and others has more relevance for both the practice of policy making and the possible shifts which may occur in economics, even if it may actually contest the empirical and experimental approach. Behavioural and experimental economics, for example, may tell us more about the conditions in which human beings can communicate, cooperate and participate: issues which are of vital interest to those who extol the importance of participative strategies in public policy and analysis. Thus another important influence on public policy in theory and practice is developments in economics.

REENCHANTING ECONOMICS

The story of economics in the period after the Second World War is the story of a subject becoming more and more isolated from what was happening in other disciplines. From what was, for the likes of Marshall and Keynes a moral science (whose 'Mecca' was biology), economics rapidly became little more than a form of social physics. Cutting itself adrift from history, politics, philosophy and psychology and other fields which are relevant to understanding economic problems, economics became, in the words of the French students who launched an attack on 'autisme-économie' in 2000, dangerously 'unrealistic' and preoccupied with an imaginary and abstract world (Fullbrook, 2003). Calling for a 'post-autistic' economics, the movement has, *inter alia*, called for: a broader conception of human nature; recognition of the importance of culture and history; a new theory of knowledge; a more empirical approach; a broader range of methodologies; and an interdisciplinary dialogue. Marshall had famously advised his students to 'do the mathematics' and then 'burn it'. Keynes also warned about the use of mathematical models as downright dangerous and little more than 'alchemy' (Parsons, 1997). And yet modern economics was to do precisely the opposite: it burnt the *words*, and became enamoured of the black arts of econometric modelling. Having been so long detached and removed from the ebbs and flows of the wider intellectual currents surrounding it, economics is, at last, becoming more receptive to ideas which were considered irrelevant to 'positive' economics.

Economics has been largely immune to postmodernism. Even the post-autistic movement does not argue for abandoning the mainstream approach, so much as 'opening up' economics to promote greater pluralism in the subject. Postmodern economics *per se* exists very much at the margin of the alternatives to mainstream economics. Steve Keen's (excellent) antidote to orthodox economics textbooks, *Debunking Economics*,

for example, contains no reference to postmodernism (Keen, 2004). Keynes himself has been portrayed as someone who anticipated a postmodern turn: after all, Keynes is all about uncertainty (Klaes, 2006). For McCloskey (2001: 122), postmodernism is simply an 'adult's way of being a scientist'! But then her idea of postmodern economics is 'something post Samuelsonism circa 1948': so that is quite a broad church. Even some Marxist economists are also busy reinventing themselves – and Keynes – as postmodernists (Ruccio and Amariglio, 2003). So, although we can discern some signs of interest, the postmodern turn in economics is still way down the road. It is unlikely, *ceteris paribus*, that economics will be overly influenced by postmodernism – however broadly defined. Economics will remain in all essentials a profoundly modernist enterprise. But it may well have its postmodern 'moments' (Ruccio and Amariglio, 2003).

Far more significant from the standpoint of policy analysis is the way in which economic modernism has become increasingly influenced by developments in other more empirically and experimentally orientated research. This 'new' economics draws on various sources such as behavioural economics, evolutionary economics, neuroeconomics and experimental economics.[6] The field of public economics – that is, the study of the economic issues from the point of view of public policy – has been dominated by the neo-classical model and in particular by public choice approaches. However, in recent years we have seen the emergence of '*behavioural public economics*', which 'incorporates ideas from behavioural economics, psychology and neuroscience in the analysis and design of public policies' stimulated by 'the accumulating evidence that the neoclassical model of consumer decision making provides an inadequate description of human behaviour in many economic situations' and which in turn gives rise to 'non-standard policy implications' (Bernheim and Rangel, 2008). If so many policies have been designed in accordance with the supposed motivations of *homo economicus*, the shift to a much thicker and more empirically grounded account of human behaviour has the potential to stimulate a radically different approach to the design of public policies (Dawnay and Shah, 2005). This new behavioural economics may in time shape a 'new policy analysis' which takes a broader and thicker view of human rationality and problem solving. The research agenda at the Workshop on Political Theory and Policy Analysis at Indiana University, for example, is an excellent example of what happens when such ideas are taken on board.[7] And the award of the Nobel Prize for Economics to Elinor Ostrom in 2009 is a sign that such a research agenda is now seen as having a growing relevance to the future of the theory and practice of policy analysis.

Complexity also has a key part to play in the development of a

reenchanted economics – and here we can discern a bridge over the troubled waters which separate the modernism of policy analysis and its postmodern critiques (Morçöl, 2002). And, as in the case of behavioural economics, complexity economics is attracting a considerable interest from within the heterodox economic community in academia.[8] The economic crisis which overwhelmed the global economy from 2007 onwards exposed the serious shortcomings of the mainstream models: it may well be that the coming century will indeed be one in which complexity economics becomes an attractive source of ideas for policy makers faced with puzzles that the old paradigms simply cannot solve. In which case, the impact of complexity and network economics will have significant repercussions for the possibilities of complexity based policy.

The failure of mainstream economics in the 2000s has brought to the fore the deficiencies of the 'normal science' and 'textbook' approach which dominated and distorted economics for over half a century. Some, like Richard Bronk, in his book *The Romantic Economist*, are optimistic that the old economic paradigm has to change – and *is* changing – to become a more 'organically' focused field of research and policy in the future. The 'standard economic model' is, he argues, grossly deficient and fails to capture so much about the factors which influence economic life. Bronk believes that the standard model ignores some fundamental aspects of what it means to be a human being living in an uncertain world: when human beings try to solve their problems, they use rational method but they also use imagination, creativity, intuition and ingenuity. There was a time when political economy was far more in touch with reality: modern economics has progressively become ever more abstracted and abstract. Bronk argues that if economics is to progress, then it first has to get back to being political economy and actually become more engaged with the realms of knowledge which are on its borders. It also has to abandon its simplistic and crude mechanistic idea of 'the economy'. It has to get *romantic*.

With regard to the importance of imagination in economics, a quality which Keynes thought was absolutely crucial to economics (as policy 'dentistry'), it is worth recording that, when HM Queen Elizabeth II asked economists for an explanation of why the economics profession had failed so miserably to spot the world economic crisis in November 2008, they dutifully replied (eventually) that it was a 'failure of collective imagination' (*The Observer*, 26 July 2009). This admission is at least a start: it goes some way to admit that the 'financial wizards' and all those 'many bright people' of the 'dismal science' had indeed become blind to the grave deficiencies of mainstream economics. A reenchanted economics may finally re-join the real world which it has for so long ignored and denied. The moment we let imagination back in, and the moment we recognize

that the rational neo-classical model is such a thin and wholly inadequate way to understand economic problems and policy, the imposing edifice of 'modern' economics becomes as shaky as a house of cards. So, as we travel on the road to neuverzauberung, economics may become (once again) a more romantic profession. If so, this will have significant repercussions for public policy in general and for the role of policy analysis in particular.

INCONCLUSIONS

Meanwhile, we may live in an allegedly postmodern world in which there is no such thing as objective truth and in which the role of the expert is fiercely contested, grand narratives are dismissed and in which we just bring and show each other our truth, rather than laying claim to anything called 'the truth' or 'the facts'. But we also live in a world which is influenced by scientific ideas, research and discourse. Critical policy analysis is oftentimes anti-science, but new scientific discoveries will continue to impact on the design of *res publica*. So the relationship between science and society constitutes a vitally important source of ideas which will change the way we see the world and our problems. A reenchanted public policy does not mean that it is a land ruled by romantics where science is banned: it may well be that scientific discourse assumes a *more* central role in our culture. The report of the Gulbenkian Commission, for example, argued that reenchantment involves a call to break down artificial interdisciplinary boundaries and the relationship between man and nature, rather than mystification (Wallerstein et al., 1996: 75).

A reenchanted public policy in this sense would be one in which human problems will be framed by a new relationship between policy relevant knowledge produced by the social sciences and the natural sciences. As we can see in economics, this already seems to be happening: having been for so long cut off from what empirical research is telling us about human behaviour, the 'romantic' (reenchanted) economist may well have more recourse to empirical and experimental research than the flaky mysticism of the all knowing, all powerful market. In addition, technology itself has given us the capacity to understand more fully our world, as well as an ability to model and simulate human interaction in ways that would have been inconceivable in 1969. 'Moore's law' is therefore also an important factor which has impacted, and will continue to impact, on public policy. For this is the most complete irony of modernity: the more technology gives us control over our individual lives, the more we are controlled by it; and the more technology gives us the power to acquire knowledge about our world, the more it shows us a world which is far too complex

for us to direct, steer, plan or control. For example, when reflecting on the economic crisis which was, in large part, caused by the faith which (the 'bright') people had placed in their crude models, the mathematician Benoit Mandelbrot recommended a massive increase in the amount of money allocated to building even bigger and better economic models. These models, he argued, would provide us with a far more complete understanding of how the real world works, but this great expenditure on more and better models would *not* give us more and better ways to predict and control the economy. Quite the opposite. The models which failed to forecast the economic crisis from 2007 were 'dangerously wrong' because they were dangerously simple (Mandelbrot and Hudson, 2008). A reenchanted economics and public policy is likely to have more of a role for mathematical models, but this will not necessarily endow policy makers with greater certainty, so much as increased appreciation of ignorance, uncertainty and 'animal spirits' (Akerlof and Shiller, 2009) in a world which can be wildly nonlinear and dangerously turbulent.

As we improve our capacity to model and map the complexity of human and other forms of life on this planet, we come to the realization that technology offers the possibility of a little more wisdom to cope and not the capacity to control and command. This realization alone would be just one small step, but a giant leap for the reenchantment of rationality. Knowing that we cannot know does not have to lead us into the cul-de-sac of postmodern foolishness, but, on the contrary, to a more critical, thicker and richer understanding of what human beings can achieve when they combine rational analysis with their capacities for imagination, intuition, ingenuity and, well, just plain muddling through, learning from errors and tinkering about. It may lead to an approach to public policy which values the importance of designing for resilience and reversibility, rather than simply efficiency, effectiveness and economy. Perhaps, just perhaps, 'Moore's law' will bring us to a new appreciation of what being 'modern' really means. If so, advances in computing may represent an important step towards the development of a public policy which will still have the audacity to hoist the tattered and torn flag of the enlightenment[9] but to do so without the intellectual arrogance of the past.

NOTES

1. From a speech made by Bevan, and subsequently used by a Welsh band, the Manic Street Preachers, as a title for their 1998 album *This is My Truth Tell Me Yours*.
2. Comments made at a lecture at LSE, 10 June 2009, cited in the *Economist*, 16 July 2009.

3. In using the idea of policy analysis as a 'motley' art and craft which is disrespectful of what passes for conventional wisdom, I am reminded of Doug Torgerson's editorial in the journal *Policy Sciences* (1986).
4. The translation of 'reenchantment' into German is a little problematic. I think '*neu-verzauberung*' (rather than simply verzauberung or 'enchantment') seems fitting in this context.
5. The term was originally introduced by Paul Ehrlich to describe the quest for a drug or treatment which could destroy specific bacteria without affecting the rest of the body. See Steve Fuller's (2005) article: 'Death to all magic bullets'.
6. Developing a 'thicker' account of rationality grounded in empirical and experimental research has been one of the major achievements of the workshop led by Lin and Vincent Ostrom. See her presidential address for the *American Political Science Review*, 1997 (Ostrom, 1998).
7. The relationship between public policy and the new (behavioural) economics may be explored by consulting Viale (2008); Lunn (2008); Lowenstein (2008); Wilkinson (2007); and Dawnay and Shah (2005).
8. A number of key texts should be consulted by students of public policy interested in the application of complexity to economic policy. These include Finch and Orillard (2005) and Colander (2000). At a more popular level, see Ormerod (1994, 1998) and Beinhocker (2007).
9. Charles Lindblom (1990: 14) confesses that 'the tattered flag of the enlightenment still stirs a deep response'.

REFERENCES

Akerlof, G.A. and R.J. Shiller (2009), *Animal Spirits: How Psychology Drives the Economy and Why It Matters for Global Capitalism*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Beinhocker, E.D. (2007), *The Origin of Wealth: Evolution, Complexity and the Radical Remaking of Economics*, London: Random House.

Bernheim, B.D. and A. Rangel (2008), 'Behavioural public economics', in Steven N. Durlauf and Lawrence E. Blume (eds), *The New Palgrave Dictionary of Economics*, 2nd edn, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan; *The New Palgrave Dictionary of Economics Online*. Palgrave Macmillan. 29 July 2009, <http://www.dictionaryofeconomics.com/article?id=pde2008_B000331>doi:10.1057/97 80230226203.0119.

Bronk, R. (2008), *The Romantic Economist: Imagination in Economics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Colander, D. (ed.) (2000), *The Complexity Vision and the Teaching of Economics*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Cullenberg, S., J. Amariglio and D. Ruccio (eds) (2001), *Postmodernism: Economics and Knowledge*, London: Routledge.

Dawnay, H. and H. Shah (2005), *Behavioral Economics: Seven Principles for Policy Makers*, London: New Economics Foundation.

Dewey, J. (1927), *The Public and its Problems* (1989 edn), Athens, OH: Ohio University Press.

Dror, Y. (1968), *Public Policymaking Reexamined*, San Francisco: Chandler Publishing.

Dror, Y. (2001), *The Capacity to Govern: A Report to the Club of Rome*, London: Frank Cass.

Finch, J. and M. Orillard (eds) (2005), *Complexity and the Economy: Implications for Economic Policy*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Fischer, F. and J. Forester (eds) (1993), *The Argumentative Turn in Policy Analysis and Planning*, London: UCL Press.

Formani, R. (1990), *The Myth of Scientific Public Policy*, New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.

Fullbrook, E. (2003), *The Crisis in Economics. The Post-Autistic Economics Movement: The First 600 Days*, London: Routledge.

Fuller, S. (1995), 'Death to all magic bullets', *New Scientist*, 6 May, 53–4.

Gerth, H.H. and C.W. Mills (eds) (1991), *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gillroy, J.M. (1997), 'Postmodernism, efficiency and comprehensive policy argument in public administration', *American Behavioral Scientist*, 41(1), 163–90.

Greenspan, A. (2008), 'Evidence before the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform' as reported in the *New York Times,* 23 October; 'Greenspan Concedes Error on Regulation', http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/24/business/economy/24panel.html?_r=1&hp.

Hoekman, B.M., P. English and M. Matto (2002), *Development, Trade and the WTO: A Handbook*, Washington, DC: World Bank.

Keen, S. (2004), *Debunking Economics: The Naked Emperor of the Social Sciences*, London: ZED Books.

Klaes, M. (2006), 'Keynes between modernism and postmodernism', in R.E. Backhouse and B.W. Bateman (eds), *The Cambridge Companion to Keynes*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lindblom, C.E. (1959), 'The science of muddling through', *Public Administration Review*, 19, 79–88.

Lindblom, C.E. (1977), *Politics and Markets*, New York: Basic Books.

Lindblom, C.E. (1990), *Inquiry and Change: The Troubled Attempt to Understand and Shape Society*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Lindblom, C.E. and D. Cohen (1979), *Usable Knowledge: Social Science and Social Problem Solving*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Lowenstein, G. (2008), *Exotic Preferences: Behavioral Economics and Human Motivation*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lunn, P. (2008), *Basic Instincts: Human Nature and the New Economics*, London: Marshall Cavendish.

Mandelbrot, B.B. and R.L. Hudson (2008), *The Mis-behavior of Markets: A Fractal View of Risk, Ruin and Reward*, London: Profile Business.

McCloskey, D.N. (2001), 'The geneology of postmodernism: an economist's guide', in S. Cullenberg, J. Amariglio and D. Ruccio (eds), *Postmodernism: Economics and Knowledge*, London: Routledge.

Miller, H.T. (2002), *Postmodern Public Policy*, New York: State University of New York Press.

Morçöl, G. (2002), *A New Mind for Policy Analysis: Towards a Post-Newtonian and Postpositivist Epistemology and Methodology*, Westport: Praeger.

OECD (2007), *A Practical Guide to Ex-Ante Poverty Impact Assessment*, Paris: OECD, http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/46/39/38978856.pdf.

Ormerod, P. (1994), *The Death of Economics*, New York: John Wiley.

Ormerod, P. (1998), *Butterfly Economics*, New York: Pantheon Books.

Ostrom, E. (1998), 'A behavioral approach to the rational choice theory of collective action', *American Political Science Review*, 92(1), March, 1–22.

Parsons, W. (1997), *Keynes and the Quest for a Moral Science: A Study of Economics and Alchemy*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Parsons, W. (1998), 'Fuzzy in theory and getting fuzzier in practice: postmodern reflections on responsibility in public administration and management', in A. Hondeghem (ed.), *Ethics and Accountability in a Context of Government and New Public Management*, Amsterdam: IOS Press.

Parsons, W. (2001), 'Modernizing policy making for the twenty first century: the professional model', *Public Policy and Administration*, 16(3), 93–110.

Parsons, W. (2005), 'Designing for innovation in the public sector', *Administration*, 53(3), 7–18.

Powell, J. (2002), *Cornering the Market: The World Bank and Trade Capacity Building*, London: Bretton Woods Project.

Rittel, H. and M. Webber (1973), 'Dilemmas in a general theory of planning', *Policy Sciences*, 4, 155–69.

Ruccio, D.F. and J. Amariglio (2003), *Postmodern Moments in Modern Economics*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Sabatier, P. (ed.) (1999), *Theories of the Policy Process*, Boulder: Westview Press.

Schram, S.F. (1993), 'Postmodern policy analysis: discourse and identity in welfare policy', *Policy Sciences*, 26(3), 249–68.

Schumpeter, A. (1954), *A History of Economic Analysis*, London: George Allen and Unwin.

Simon, H.A. (1973), 'The structure of ill structured problems', *Artificial Intelligence*, 4, 181–201.

Smith, T.A. (1972), *Anti-Politics: Consensus Reform and Protest in Britain*, London: Knight, for the Acton Society Trust.

Stone, D. (2001), *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*, New York: W.W. Norton and Company.

Torgerson, D. (1986), 'Editorial: priest and jester in the policy sciences: developing the focus of inquiry', *Policy Sciences*, 25(3), 200–227.

Viale, R. (ed.) (2008), *Las nuevas economías. De la economía evolucionista a la economía cognitiva: más allá de las fallas de la teoría neoclásica*, Mexico City: FLACSO.

Wallerstein, I. et al. (1996), *Open the Social Sciences: Report of the Gulbenkian Commission on the Restructuring of the Social Sciences*, Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Weber, M. (1976), *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, London: Allen and Unwin.

Weber, M. (1991a), 'Science as a vocation', in H.H. Gerth and C.W. Mills (eds), *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Weber, M. (1991b), 'Religious rejections of the world and their directions', in H.H. Gerth and C.W. Mills (eds), *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Weber, M. (1991c), 'Science and politics', in H.H. Gerth and C.W. Mills (eds), *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wildavsky, A. (1987), *Speaking Truth to Power: The Art and Craft of Policy Analysis*, New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.

Wilkinson, N. (2007), *An Introduction to Behavioral Economics*, London: Macmillan.

Wilks, A. and F. Lefrançois (2002), *Blinding with science or encouraging debate*, London: Bretton Woods Project.

Wilson, E.O. (1998), *Consilience: The Unity of Knowledge*, London: Little Brown and Company.
World Bank (2003a), *The Logframe Handbook: A Logical Framework Approach to Project Cycle Management*, Washington: World Bank.
World Bank (2003b), *Poverty and Social Impact Analysis*, Washington: World Bank, http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTPOVERTY/ EXTPSIA/0,,contentMDK:20466271~menuPK:1108016~pagePK:148956~piP K:216618~theSitePK:490130,00.html.
World Bank (2007), *Tools for Institutional, Political and Social Analysis of Policy Reform,* Washington: World Bank, http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXT TOPPSISOU/Resources/1424002-1185304794278/TIPs_Sourcebook_English. pdf.

3. Democracy without a centre: towards a politics of difference

Paul H.A. Frissen

INTRODUCTION

Modernist public administration theory views the state as a problem-solving machine and supports it in this role. This is based on a strong conviction that society can be created and managed. Due to societal difference, or 'multiplicity',[1] a different view, which is beyond goal-orientedness, will be taken in this chapter. As the world is contextual, perspectivistic and relativistic, public administration can be nothing other than ironic. We are ignorant in a tragic way. Disregulation, in the sense of letting go and leaving to others, then becomes very important. This assumes an aesthetical view of politics. Politics is design and representation. Multiplicity means that the state can, therefore, only be amoral. As the big monopolies of violence and taxation are entrusted to the state, it needs to focus on creating checks and balances of a horizontal nature, which should, above all, protect minorities. The state is a will-less institution that has no centre; its most important modus operandi is 'muddling through'.

BEYOND GOAL-ORIENTEDNESS

Public administration theory needs to stop thinking in terms of goals and means. Goal-orientedness is one of the most guiding and structuring ideas of the modern state and of the knowledge that has always served this state. Spicer calls this view of a 'purposive state' a teleocratic view of the relationships between politics, public administration and society. Public administration is an instrument in the hands of a goal-oriented state. Power is centralized and based on rational science (Spicer, 2001: 70–71). Spicer shows that this teleocratic view of the goal-oriented state deeply conflicts with the structure and practice of American political culture and institutions. The Western European welfare state, however, shows many similarities with this view. Thinking in terms of goals and

means is extremely widespread in this state. The opinion that the state is a problem-solving machine appears to be dominant amongst politicians and bureaucrats. The goal-oriented state can be seen 'as an organization or as an enterprise dedicated to the pursuit of some substantive end or set of ends such as the salvation of human souls, economic development, or economic and social justice' (Spicer, 2001: 31).

The idea of the society that can be created and managed is closely linked to the goal-oriented state. Problem-solving assumes that something can be created and managed. The modern state is the ultimate expression of the idea, which has dominated since the Enlightenment, that humans are the masters of their fate and therefore of themselves (Chevallier, 2004: 12).

The goal-oriented problem-solving machine that the modern state has become, and to which public administration makes an important contribution with research and advice, is a state of command and control. Such command and control refers to the policies that are enacted, to the knowledge and research that are necessary, to the organizations and people who are the subjects of policy and to the societal conditions that, on the one hand, influence policy and, on the other hand, are influenced by it. The command takes shape in different ways: discursive strategies of words and meanings, the use of disciplining technologies, the development of instruments that define and form nomalization, and the institutionalization of policy-panoptica that make any escape impossible.

When confronted with multiplicity (Deleuze, 1968), which is permanent and omnipresent, goal-orientedness must produce great numbers of rules and an intensive condensation of rules. If, after all, the subjects of policy excel in difference and inequality, the instrumentation must be very intricate. Given a specific goal, a rule must be constructed for each specific case and for each exception. Given a specific goal, this must be anticipated in advance, and afterwards every unintended undesirable result must be compensated for. As the ambitions of policies are often coloured by the ideal of equality, difference is even more of a burden. Not only does the goal have to apply equally to everyone, the goal as such is often equality.

The goal-orientedness of the modern welfare state manifests itself intrusively when it comes to prevention. The aim of prevention is always one or the other normality: health, safety, durability. The ultimate realization of this goal is the internalization of it by the subjects of policy, meaning that repression does not have to take place. Health as the goal of policy is realized when everyone lives healthily according to the ideal of health propagated by the state and its professional executors of this policy. Slama calls this dream totalitarian: 'l'angélisme exterminateur' (Slama, 1993: 233).

Functional rationality that has gone off the rails is the final result (Frissen, 1999). Functional rationality gets bogged down in its own intentions (Beck, Giddens and Lasch, 1994). Goal-orientedness and instrumentality can no longer guarantee the legitimacy of the welfare state precisely because they undermine its own legitimacy. As a result of having to allow for difference, they must try to get a grip on this panoptically.

THE NECESSITY OF IRONY

The world of difference is unknowable. That is to say, we know that the world is difference, but we do not know this in all its depth and size and multiplicity (Van Gunsteren and Ruyven, 1993). The unknown society demands an *ironic stance*. This is linked, amongst others, to the tragedy of unintended results. We must be ironic because history is: 'Weltironie' (Ankersmit, 1996). It is impossible to maintain a teleocratic relationship of goal-orientedness with society if society is unknown. The ambitions of policy analysts who want to come up with policy theories are hopeless: we can never completely know the causal relationships in complex areas of policy; we can know even less what the effects of our policy interventions in this unknown society are; in addition, we are profoundly divided about our goals.

We must be ironic because we are unknowing. Our knowledge is continuously inadequate because experimenting is impossible in social science. The social science universe talks back, to put it informally. Our unknowing is, in other words, tragic. The more we know, the better we are able to document this unknowing; the more we intervene on the basis of this knowledge, the more unintended effects and contrary knowledge we generate and mobilize. Every statement I make reaches, if all goes well, the object of my knowledge and therefore changes it. If I do not want to lie I must remain silent. The irony that is necessary in the world of politics and public administration is an irony of *modesty* and *temporality* (Rorty, 1992: 165–6).

Modesty applies to a number of aspects: the ambitions of those working in politics and public administration, the points of reference, the instrumentation and the intended aimed results. When it comes to ambitions, modest views of society and people should prevail. Different opinions about the good life should stay beyond the reach of politics and public administration. The good life is a matter for those who live it. Modesty is fitting for the state.

This also applies to the points of reference of political and public administration interventions. The intentions or opinions of the citizens are not

the object of these but rather their behaviour, or even better: the contexts or contingencies of this. There must always be room for difference, where the boundaries of this room are determined by the difference itself. The citizen may also not enforce the total and the uniform on others. In the choice of instruments, the modesty required is expressed by treading gently. Heavy instruments that restrict and sometimes destroy difference and inequality require extreme restraint. The negative freedom (Berlin, 1996) and the basic rights linked to this are a high price to pay. For the rest, the instrumentation should serve multiplicity. Difference and inequality should not be affected.

Finally there is the modesty of the results. These should always be formulated in such a way that pragmatism and incrementalism are evident. In addition, the results of the policy should not be worded in totalizing terms. Unintended results must be accepted for sure. Only that which is strictly unwanted merits exclusion.

Ambitious modesty is accompanied by temporality. Irony and temporality are inextricably bound together. This temporality relates to the policy itself, the parties who develop and carry it out, and the results of it. The most important notion that should be inherent in each policy is the possibility of error. If society is unknown, the possibility of error must be fundamentally accepted. The only reliable actors involved in developing and effecting policy are those that allow for uncertainty, chance and unprecedentedness, and therefore are pragmatic, employing only performativity. Parties who have a clear and unambiguous vision, who want to show strong leadership and who have no doubts, are as naive as they are dangerous in an ironic view.

Then there are the intended results of policy. These should be formulated in such a way that they are always temporary and therefore reversible. The results are only justifiable if they are formulated in such a way that difference does not disappear so that everyone is allowed to sing from a different hymn sheet. Results that are totalizing always carry the risk of non-temporality.

Postmodern politicians are, therefore, ironic in the sense of temporality and modesty. They are actors without a will in an institution without a will.

CONTEXTUALISM

The ironic view is a *perspectivistic* view. This applies in three ways: irony is a perspective on the world, irony is a perspectivistic view of the world and irony recognizes the world as perspectivist. Authors often use glasses

as a metaphor for perspective. Different glasses show different aspects of reality. The term 'paradigm' has, meanwhile, also earned a place in ordinary language that corresponds to the term 'perspective'. In addition, the following should be mentioned: frame of reference, frame, way of thinking, thinking model and heuristics. The term 'intertextuality', in which the world is seen as a network of texts, is theoretically related to theories of multiplicity. A relationship with the Wittgensteinian term 'language game' can also be observed here (Van Twist, 1995).

The perspectivistic nature of irony can also be described as relativism. Irony does not recognize any set values, over-reaching views or tertium that can legitimize the absolute validity of views. Rorty makes it clear that irony is benevolent because it does not seek any essences and does not strive for a metaphysical foundation (Rorty, 1992: 132, 223). Irony is light-footed in its aesthetics (Rorty, 1991: 193). Ijsseling prefers to call relativism 'contextualism', meaning that all realities, regardless of whether they are discursive or factual, have contexts in the reality of language (Ijsseling, 2006: 35). These contexts create meaning but also mean that each meaning is always lost because it is taken out of context.

In such a contextual world, there is steering. It is then immediately clear that steering can never be instant. First, steering has to connect to the contexts of meaning in the domain of steering. This connecting implies acknowledgement and recognition of the relevancies in the domain. Secondly, steering itself cannot be totalizing. Steering must contain as many perspectives as possible. Thirdly, steering will have to promote so many contexts that these make possible a great abundance of meanings. Steering must therefore be context-steering.

To put it in Deleuzian terms: if we understand the world as an unending multiplicity of folded realities, steering will have to add itself to the folds and become one of the folds (contexts) itself (Deleuze, 1988, 1992). This goes further than the responsive steering that is often championed (Nonet and Selznick, 1978) and is related more to what Teubner (1983) calls 'reflexive steering'.

Multiplicity thinking and the idea of 'folded realities' are a lot more radical when it comes to steering than the interpretations listed earlier. A hierarchical view is, after all, avoided if we talk about folds. There is no overarching meaning, no greater whole, no connection – steering just relates to aspects of reality. These aspects never correspond totally to reality but are the contexts – folds – that create connections without resolving difference in a greater system. What it is about, after all, is letting go of the folded realities, of the differences, in order, in this way, to facilitate the unfolding of them.

AESTHETICS

Irony and contextualism refer to an *aesthetic view* of politics, which I have already advocated (Frissen, 1999). The most important inspirations for this were societal developments, which I denoted as postmodernization. On the other hand, there is the work of Ankersmit (1996), which is a very intelligent defence of aesthetics as an alternative to political theory based on morals or on purely positivistic empiricism. Politics is first conflict and dissensus and secondly form and power.

Aesthetical political theory is a theory of the political and public forms and contents, of representation as form in order to give shape to its contents, and of the autonomous meaning of politics as power formation. There are different views but they agree upon the conviction that it is not up to politics to realize a moral view of the good life. These views belong in society and are by definition different and conflicting. The aesthetical interpretation of politics states that multiplicity must continue to exist without degenerating into civil war or the state losing its sovereignty. Political power serves the stability of the state and the conditions of existence of a vital society. In a democratic 'Rechtstaat', both stability and its conditions of existence are based upon and bounded by the rule of law.

My aesthetical view is that of difference. In multiplicity thinking the world is not just a world of difference ontologically, and there is, therefore, an eternal return of singularity. Historically, we are also currently going through an aestheticization of the real experience, the dominant characteristic of which is the 'multiplicity of perspectives' (Oosterling, 1996: 504). Societal difference means that there are only unequal cases and that everyone wants to make a social, cultural and economic difference. This is why many observers of the postmodern network society give identity a prominent position (Castells, 1997).

The design of our institutions – private and public – does not correspond with the transformations that, more and more, are the realization of multiplicity. Legal inequality is increasing because the subjects of law are less and less equal. Social-economic inequalities are increasing because labour markets, production relationships and patterns of consumption are changing dramatically. Classic class categorizations are becoming obsolete. Lifestyles and identities are continually changing in unpredictable combinations.

The folds of the institutions scrape against the content of the societal realities causing ruptures and incompatibilities to develop. The robustness of institutions has always been an important condition for their vitality and stability (Zijderveld, 2000). If, however, forms and contents in institutions become alien to and obsolete for each other they lose their legitimacy.

This makes liberating disregulation necessary. The usual reaction of institutional refinement leads to too much intricate regulatory condensation and therefore bureaucratization. We can continue expanding the number of categories in social security systems infinitely, but the dynamic of societal differences will continue to escape and to produce new categories. In addition, this intricateness is still based on equality. Disregulation makes the design of inequality and difference more feasible.

A combined activity of de-institutionalization and re-institutionalization must fold forms and contents better. As long as this does not occur naturally in public domains, political action is necessary. This political action is the formation of content. The content is difference and inequality, the form is multiplicity.

AMORALITY

An aesthetical political theory is an amoral political theory. Does this mean then that the state too must or can be amoral? In my view there are different reasons for keeping the state and morals separate from each other.

To begin with, there is a paradoxical reason. This lies in the monopolies that we entrust to the state for good reason: the monopolies of violence and taxation. Exercising force – taking away freedom, coercion and ultimately killing – is an immoral act. Taxation, which is called theft as soon as an institution or party other than the state carries it out, is too. We have entrusted both immoral repertoires of acts to the state as a monopoly in order to avoid a war of everyone against everyone. But in the hands of the state they remain severe and dangerous monopolies. Precisely this severity and danger make a connection with morals – a specific view of the good life – undesirable. From a private and a public perspective it is unacceptable that these monopolies can be used in order to enforce one view of the good life. The immorality of the actions which these monopolies refer to therefore requires an amoral grounding. The state does not take sides but keeps the disagreement between the sides bearable. State amorality is necessary in order to protect public and private morals in all their plurality and to temper them in their pretentions of totality.

A second reason why the state should be amoral is related to the multiplicity of forms and contents in society. In order to recognize this multiplicity to its full extent and to keep it bearable, it is necessary that politics is focused on multiplicity and not on consensus, on inequality and not on uniformity, and on diversity and not on uniformity. Then amorality is obvious. A politics of difference only makes a fundamental choice for

that multiplicity as such, for its own sake. A politics of difference can only make that choice if it does not choose *between* the differences but *for* the differences. A politics of difference is a politics that recognizes multiplicity by making a difference. That is an aesthetical and not a moral position.

A third reason for an amoral view of the state is that multiplicity provides protection and guarantees. Multiplicity provides protection against totality and is, therefore, in a true sense of the word, anti-totalitarian. In addition, multiplicity provides the guarantee that moral choice always stays private, even if it comes about in public contexts. Multiplicity prevents the state from usurping this choice. Amoral politics therefore protects the plurality of the citizens and their connections and provides the citizen with the guarantee that plurality is not just able to continue but that it can also continually change.

A politics of difference focuses from first to last not on realizing the primacy of politics relating to content but on realizing negative freedom. Negative freedom (Berlin, 1996) is fundamental in a politics of difference because it protects and allows for multiplicity and at the same time restrains politics and the state. This restraint is necessary because of the state monopolies. The value of negative freedom is that this takes the difference of and between people as a basis and therefore protects human beings from any encroachment on that difference. The term 'negative freedom' could therefore be called a term of equality because it considers all people equally different. In addition, negative freedom is most important in political theory because it does not want to connect the state with one or the other view of positive freedom. The state should be rooted in negative freedom so as to enable the most pluralistic possible articulation and realization of positive freedom in private and public domains. This is what Lefort (1992) means by 'the empty space of power'. This is why a politics of difference is also not utopic – it is not messianic. This also makes it, in Cioran's (2002) terms, benevolent.

DISREGULATION

'Letting go' and 'leaving' are the key terms of the steering that is intended here. Letting go and leaving mean that reality remains unknowable and uncontrollable. There are always unintended consequences. This is the 'Weltironie' that plays a role in the largeness of geopolitical relationships and equally in the smallness of micropolitical domains.

Letting go and leaving mean something other than deregulation. With the best intentions, extensive and radical deregulation operations have been undertaken in the last decades. These have frequently produced

paradoxical results. The intensity of rules has actually increased. That is understandable: where rules are scrapped, unintended and certainly undesirable consequences have to be fought with new rules. This is all linked to the goal-orientedness that is also incorporated in deregulation.

Deregulation in the form of liberalization, as we have seen in many markets, is supposed to lead to price reduction and new entries. Aside from the fact that markets require regulation but do not have objectives, price reduction is only the obvious result of liberalization in specific markets. *Disregulation* presumes an end of goal-oriented steering. Disregulation does not aim at specific societal conditions, specific distributions or specific interpretations of the good life. Disregulation wants to remove goal-oriented regulation in order to socialize or individualize goal-orientedness. Disregulation is related to almost all domains where state interventions with substantive objectives are carried out. Improving safety, furthering competition, fighting monopolies and supporting weak interests are, however, not substantive objectives; neither is supporting and encouraging difference. State interventions that are focused on this are legitimated in this view. On the one hand (the material, the content, the good life) there is no regulation and nothing more is regulated, whilst, on the other hand (conditions, terms and contexts), there is still a great need and space for regulation. In order to enable self-regulation and self-management, different sorts of regulation are necessary. Precisely in order to allow for more variety, there is the need for immaterial, non-substantive regulation and steering. Substantive regulation and steering always limit variety, after all. Disregulation therefore brings us to difference and inequality.

CHERISHING DIFFERENCE AND INEQUALITY

Cherishing is, of course, a strange category in public and political domains. But cherishing fits in a political theory that is aesthetical rather than moralistic or moralizing. In addition, a hedonistic term such as 'cherishing' is part of such an aesthetic perspective because – without moral connotations with regards to the good life – it can also express normative preferences. Furthermore, cherishing is not a totalizing term, particularly if it refers to difference and inequality. The obsession with equality is increasingly coming up against empirical and normative boundaries. But this obsession also requires a 'Bejahung', an initial affirmation. The cherishing of difference and inequality is exactly what is needed to actually transform the state. A totalizing opinion of the good life is not needed for this but a hedonistic confirmation of multiplicity. This lets a thousand flowers of the good life bloom.

What makes a politics of difference justified? To choose multiplicity is the only choice that does not exclude any choices, except the choice of totality and uniformity. To choose multiplicity is therefore most profoundly to choose political tolerance regarding public and private difference. Multiplicity is the only choice that makes it possible to tolerate 'the Other and the Different', not in the sense of indifference, but in the very sense of involvement that shows respect, in as much as difference is respected. With regard to multiplicity, the politics of difference is therefore tolerant in an active and committing sense.

The justice of difference and making a difference therefore lies in the implied tolerance of plurality. Difference and making a difference are justified because they produce vitality in the multifariousness at which they aim. If biodiversity is of vital importance, an analogy with social reality and the importance of variety could be made. Multifariousness is preferable here to singularity and monotony. Diversity is, in many areas, the pre-condition for vitality and survival. Monocultures are the danger.

The public formation of private differences can be nothing other than equivocal in order to do the differences right. 'One size fits all' is a bad adage in social reality. In addition, multifariousness strengthens the citizens in their public interests, precisely because they are the ones doing the active formation. We allow the citizens to be ungovernable through this multiple formation of difference. Where necessary, we *make* them ungovernable. This is how we achieve citizenship.

With this multifariousness I do not aim at isomorphism of form and content. These do not converge seamlessly, after all. The modernistic adage 'form follows function' is not mine and much less the dominant interpretation 'less is more'. There is also a certain 'brokenness' between contents and forms. This always concerns the forms that are in-between: folds. The institutional form fits with the institutional content but both form as well as content has a certain autonomy. This makes it immediately clear that the boundaries of multiplicity are political by nature. On the one hand, because it is the task of politics to protect multiplicity and therefore to create boundaries where the results of multiplicity hinder the possibility of making a difference; on the other hand, creating boundaries is political by nature because opinion differs about the boundaries. Whoever is weak, or whatever is weak and which results of multiplicity are intolerable are the subject of political dispute. There will never be a consensus about this.

But a compromise is always possible. That compromise can only refer to 'un-values': complementary to the notion of negative freedom. These are 'atopical' values that do not represent a vision of the good life but only define negative values that simply make life possible. Rorty calls it 'the avoidance of cruelty' (Rorty, 1992: 101).

PLURAL ARRANGEMENTS

This calls for plural arrangements, first, in the mutual relationship of the private, the public and the political, and, secondly, in the formation of checks and balances.

The first order of plurality is that of the relationship between the private, the public and the political. If politics has primacy, this is because of the fundamentally political character of the question for this order. For Schmitt, the crucial difference ('brokenness' to quote Ankersmit) between the world and the political lies here. 'The political world is a pluriversum' and not a 'political unity'. Only politics itself is unity. If the world was one and there could be no more civil war, there would be 'no more politics and no more state' (Schmitt, 2001: 86–7). As the state is in control of the monopoly of violence and constraint, the political order, according to Schmitt, is therefore a higher order. The fundamental idea of politics is based on the declaration of war and, finally, in the declaration of enemies. The enemy is outside the state and therefore outside society.

A less 'raw' view of this order of plurality can be found in constitutional thinking. The constitutional state lays down the relationships between the private, public and political domains in their plurality. The constitution is an answer to the key question of politics: namely, how it relates to the citizens and their associations (Kinneging, 2005: 18–19, 304–31). This is also why the classic constitutional rights that protect negative freedom take such a prominent position in the constitution of many states and also why social constitutional rights are included in these constitutions as the welfare state develops.

In my opinion, the relationship between the private, the public and the political is not just a relationship between plural domains, but this relationship itself is also plural. This is, after all, intrinsic in the essentially political character of this relationship.

Some writers contend that politics has received another position in this relationship. Politics has moved into private and public domains (Bovens et al., 1995). In *After Politics* (1994), Huyse talks about 'a silent mutation'. In the theory of hybrid organizations, it is convincingly demonstrated that the public domain is pluralistic because of its hybridity (Brandsen, Van de Donk and Kenis, 2006; In't Veld, 1997). As the plurality of the relationship between private, public and political is denoted as historical, empirical and normative, there is little point in recording this relationship definitorically. Economists often seem to do this when they attempt to provide an economic foundation for the room for political interventions. The economy thus gains the position of a tertium in regard to politics (Teulings, Bovenberg and Van Dalen, 2005). I do not see the relationship

between political, public and private as hierarchical but recognize that what is unique about politics lies in the fact that it decides on this relationship, 'since the very establishment of the demarcation line between what counts as political and what does not is a political gesture par excellence' (Žižek, 2004: 67). 'What is politics?' is, in other words, the key question of politics. The answer to this key question is, in my view, mainly performative and not primarily moral. Any politics that wants to fix relationships in an ideology of the market, society or the state is ultimately totalitarian.

An important question is whether the domains have an intrinsically irreducible meaning or configuration of values. Is there an autopoietic self-referentiality that makes the societal domains impenetrable for external interventions? It seems to me that strict autonomy or full self-referentiality is excluded. The private is inconceivable without public dimensions; the public has private forms and the political aims for ordering and interventions. These are not all just aims but are also real relations: right up to destruction and oppression. Autonomy is also often a normative autonomy: the private *ought* to remain its own sphere and the public *ought* to be free from all too fundamental interventions. At the same time the presence of hybridity in the public domain already shows that the private organization of public tasks is perfectly possible and that it is a substantial characteristic of public domains in many countries. The nationalization of private arrangements in the fields of care, welfare and education points to an intense penetration of public and private domains by the state.

The relationship between the private, the public and the political is, in my judgement, one of 'brokenness', on the one hand, and 'foldedness', on the other. The 'brokenness' indicates a relationship of representation between the different domains. Politics does not converge with the private and public in this representation but it is the representation of these domains *with* the state. Political power-formation is a process of representation and the relationships gain shape in this. The 'foldedness' points to the pluralistic, changeable and always temporary nature of these relationships. The folds between the domains differentiate and connect. This is not a connection that totalizes but a connection that makes a difference. Citizenship can therefore be seen as the formation of 'brokenness'. In addition, the distance between citizen and politics (although in itself a strange expression) is therefore desirable rather than being a gap that should be filled.

PUBLIC PLURALITY AND POLITICS

Plurality is necessary more than ever. The plurality of subcultures is exceptionally great in postmodern society – in ethnicity, in lifestyles, in religions

and in social-economic positions. Identity and, primarily, differentiating identity is of great importance in a globalizing world (Castells, 1997). We want our pop music in dialect, we want individual religious beliefs and the comfort of rituals, we want to go to McDonald's and to a three-star restaurant. In consuming we create our identity. The significance of religion has once again become prominent in the public domain in European countries. Our institutions should fit this plurality of identities. There are at least two good arguments for this.

First, the plurality of institutions can prevent us from imposing a singular identity on society. This desire is present and hardly concealed in the debate about integration. Integration is supposed to be based on a communitarian understanding of identity, on a shared history and a shared culture of collective norms and values. In fact, this is about adapting to a specific set of norms and values, to a singular and, therefore, one-sided interpretation of history and to a uniform identity.

Secondly, plurality of institutions is necessary in order to avoid the exclusion that, if it is permanent, can lead to civil war. In multicultural society conflict is often manifest and always latent. The conflict is potentially explosive and can seriously destabilize society. Institutional plurality is necessary in order, on the one hand, to guarantee a certain sustainability and anchoring of subcultures and, on the other hand, to be able to follow plurality. Once again, the Deleuzian 'fold' is an effective term (Deleuze, 1992: 65–6).

In our public domains the articulation of differences is central. Not what we have in common but how we differ from each other determines the way in which we form the public domain. Determining the relationship between the political, the public and the private is, of course, in the first instance a political question: this is the main object of the political primacy. Following Witteveen (2000), I must immediately note that the primacy, just like the public interest, is a useful and necessary fiction. Whoever materializes the political primacy, and therefore makes it singular, damages the plurality of the public domain. What should be central is the renewed interpretation of politics as the formation, not of our cultural connectedness, but of our differences (Hajer, 2000: 31–2). It is not possible to do this in any other way because a political community that is based on agreement is no longer a political community.

CHECKS AND BALANCES

The design of the relationships between the private, the public and the political is a question of creating checks and balances and countervailing

powers. The separation of powers of the Trias Politica is central here. As Madison stated in the Federalist Papers of 1788, 'Ambition must be made to counteract ambition' (Hamilton, 2008: 289).

Checks and balances are not based on the naive utopia of a powerless society. They place power against power in the recognition that the power-hungry can keep each other in check. The aim is not in the least to weaken power and to temper the exercise of power. It is much more about connecting power and multiplicity. In addition, as far as the desire for the exercise of power is concerned, radical plurality can be used to counter oppression and dictatorship. Difference is not deployed *against* power, but the multiplicity of power is the basis.

This means that the design of checks and balances is equal to the formation of difference in the political and the public domain. Difference can be seen as a permanent form of subversity in the public and political. Checks and balances are a fragmentation of power. This means that powerlessness does not arise. On the contrary, multiplicity is a vital performative power. Subversity is, in other words, an important political value: it therefore does not deserve to be fought but should actually be supported. In addition, the subversity of multiplicity keeps the political domain pluralistic and therefore prevents the uniformization and totalization of public and private domains.

Checks and balances are therefore active and necessary at different levels. First, they are constitutionally anchored in the organization of the state and in the constitutional rights, primarily the classic ones. The division of powers means that power is set against power, preferably in the plural, in order to counter it. The classic constitutional rights protect the negative freedom of the citizens by declaring that their right to autonomy and subversity is fundamental. Secondly, checks and balances work between the political domain and the public and private domains. They restrain the state's power by pluralizing power. Not just the citizens, but primarily their private and public associations as well, receive autonomous rights and powers to resist, to arm and to defend themselves. Thirdly, checks and balances work in private and public domains where they protect and promote difference. Monopolies and concentrations of power that lead to totalizing tendencies are actively fought and discouraged. There is still a great urgency for this in a time of large-scale mergers and conglomeration-forming in private markets, between private organizations and in public domains. This is why a plea for state disregulation also does not automatically lead to a substantial decrease in regulations. Private domains can take over the regulation. Private freedom and public difference also still require extensive regulation. The desire for disregulation should not cherish any all too naive expectations.

Fighting monopolies and concentrations in private and public domains has taken off in Europe, primarily in the last two decades. A number of regulatory agencies and authorities, in a more or less independent position, try to promote level playing fields and to counteract monopolies and concentrations. Slaughter calls these regulators at an international level a new diplomacy that, together with international judges, is creating 'a new world order' (Slaughter, 2004: 36 ff.). These regulators are currently mainly active in private domains and in commercial markets, but with the advancement of the free market system in public domains they will undoubtedly also become active in these too: utilities, health care, education, housing, insurance.

HORIZONTALITY

In the plurality of arrangements that I advocate there is no room for goal-orientedness and the accompanying notions of linearity and hierarchy. The necessity of checks and balances can also be legitimated on the basis of their *horizontality*. This horizontal character of checks and balances has nothing to do with equality or a radical direct democracy. Checks and balances work horizontally because they temper the desire to rule between domains and within domains. Without sharing his preference for equality, there is a relationship here with Walzer's idea of autonomous spheres that, precisely because of their autonomy, are justified in their criterion for distributive justice, without denying the effect of power within each of these spheres (Walzer, 1983).

As a horizontal principle of organization, checks and balances must prevent the public, the private and the political from oppressing each other. Not everything is market, not everything is politics and not everything is voluntary care. Hybridity is possible within this, but subordination is not. There is no hierarchical relationship between the domains. The primacy of politics when defining these relationships is, after all, principally based on temporality and modesty – irony. The very legitimacy of this primacy is connected with a radical horizontal interpretation of the principle of checks and balances. The political primacy is, in other words, a form of self-binding and ultimate self-restriction. That is the 'noblesse' of the political office, and therefore the most important political office is that of the citizen.

The horizontal character of checks and balances is relevant between but also *in* the different domains. Checks and balances must be deployed against oppression, monopoly formation, concentration of power, exploitation of weak interests. In so far as domains are not able or

prepared to do this, a political task is applicable. This political task is principally anchored in a primacy that, for its part, is constitutionally restricted and to which provisos are attached. This means that the horizontal character of checks and balances is deepened further. The horizontality does not just refer to the ordering of relationships between the private, the public and the political, but there is also a horizontality of relationships within these domains. Here too, power is set against power, the citizens gain the power of disposal and decision, there is the right of opposition and resistance, and weak interests can protect themselves or be protected.

With regard to goal-orientedness in which the means are always a derivative and in which – in extremis – the reasonable justifiability of the goal justifies the means, a politicization of the means leads naturally to tempering and constraint. There is no goal that can justify all means. Many goals are problematic because of the severity of the necessary means. The means are always normatively bound in notions of citizenship and difference. These, after all, should not be threatened. In addition, because the means in a democracy, just as the goals, are pluralistic, there is horizontality. The means keep the goal-orientedness in check, temper and restrain it, and make temporality and modesty of ambitions fundamental.

With respect to the means, checks and balances also apply, of course. The means should not just promote the restraint, temporality and modesty of the goals and the goal-orientedness; they themselves should also be an expression of this. The means are not just a tempering of the goal, they should also be characterized themselves by tempering. That checks and balances also apply with respect to the means is clear at first sight as far as the most severe means of the state are concerned – the monopolies of violence and taxation. That is why the position of, for example, prison inmates is so delicate and should be equipped with all sorts of forms of protection. That is why the death penalty is intolerable with respect to a state's own citizens. That is why taxes must not be too excessive.

However, checks and balances also apply with respect to the relationship between goals and means in private and public domains. A decision about the end of life can therefore only be the legitimate result of a process that provides many strong checks and balances. Professionals' conduct towards clients must therefore provide guarantees.

Everywhere checks and balances hinder efficacy and the power of enforcement when these are employed for totalizing aims. Checks and balances work in a fragmenting way. They are based on the neo-republican idea of citizenship and on the insight that the republic only knows minorities. They serve to strengthen and balance the power of all minorities.

MINORITIES

There is an obvious connection between democracy and multiplicity. Democracy is the only political order that can honour difference. Democracy is a symbolic order because it is more than an electoral contest, the creation of a majority, concrete political decision-making and controlling the political leaders. The symbolic order of democracy is constitutional, not in the sense of a real constitution but in the sense of institutional design and care. Democracy is a mentality because it is more than a concrete political ideology. It is a mentality that is connected with respect for minorities, for the Other and the Different. Democracy as a symbolic order and as a mentality has no exclusive owners and no aims and content that can be further defined. Our societies have become 'acephal', as Enzensberger (1990: 215) calls it. This must have consequences for concrete political institutions.

Democracy is division of powers, checks and balances and countervailing powers. In addition, democracy is constitutional rule of law: the state is bounded by and to the law and the citizen has a great extent of negative freedom. In my view, the citizen is the most important official in the republic. In a democracy the main thing is, maybe, protecting minorities. In a strict sense there are, after all, only minorities.

Such a democratic order honours difference in different ways. In terms of elections, democracy guarantees each citizen an active and passive right to vote. This means that each specific opinion and each position can, in principle, be articulated or present itself. It is clear that, from the perspective of multiplicity, no limits can be set to this right: as complete as possible proportional representation suits it best; electoral thresholds, constituency voting systems and high quotas suit it much less. Limiting the easy formation of a majority is an advantage.

Constitutional statehood also serves multiplicity, at least if we understand this as binding the state to the law and giving this binding a foundation in negative freedom. The fact that the constitutional state in our world has become a welfare state that includes an extensive and material definition of positive freedom is therefore a threat to multiplicity.

The most important reason why democracy and multiplicity are inextricably bound is the position of minorities. Democracy cannot and may not be a dictatorship of the majority. Majority rule is the most literal translation of popular sovereignty and is ultimately based on the principle of equality. The rule of unanimity would, therefore, better apply to the principle of multiplicity. In any way, there must be a qualified majority for important matters. The deliberative side of democracy is at least as important as decision-making. Democracy does not have to lead to collective

decisions: in democracy the primary concern is not consensus but *compromise* (Ankersmit, 1996: 58, 252). Ankersmit claims that politics strives for a 'juste milieu'.

In democracy we can stay in disagreement. This means that each democratic decision derives its value from the extent of care by which and to which the position of minorities is done justice. Perhaps the most democratic decisions are those where no majority relating to content is possible: 'we agree to disagree'.

In honouring the minoritarian – there are only minorities – democracy is an unlimited expression of difference. On the other hand, a limitation is also present in the connection between democracy and multiplicity. Multiplicity and the respect for it form a boundary to the formation of a majority and the materialization of political preferences that could result from this.

The place of power must remain empty because of multiplicity (Lefort, 1992). But following Ankersmit, I do position the empty place *within* the political order (Ankersmit, 1996: 104 ff.). That is to say: the emptiness or the gap is between the representative and the represented. Lefort's symbolic order does not lie outside politics but *is* the political. Politics is, after all, the articulation of multiplicity, of inequality and difference. This articulation is focused rather on protecting difference than on removing it. Democracy is 'multipolarity' (Ankersmit, 1996: 145), 'multiplicité'. The gap is protected and guaranteed by politics. Democracy is 'arranged in folds' (Deleuze, 1988, 1992).

THE WILL-LESS INSTITUTION

The folded character of democracy stems from the fact that multiplicity is the most important characteristic of politics and that the incompatibility of political positions is the most important protection of societal difference (private and public). For this reason, democracy is a will-less institution. It exists as the constitution of self-organization in a society and as a guarantee for the conditions of this self-organization (Van Gunsteren, 2006). Self-organization is worth trusting because it produces and protects diversity. In addition, 'emergency' causes systems to demonstrate a complex ability of adaptivity that is threatened by 'direct control' (Van Gunsteren, 2006: 55–64).

Democracy, understood as the constitution of self-organization, is therefore not intentional or teleocratic (Spicer, 2001). It cannot be so because it is normatively anchored in an institutional design and in a mentality in which respect for minorities is central. Goal-orientedness that

makes democracy a problem-solving machine is fundamentally wrong. As soon as goals are set and chosen via majority formation, other goals must be excluded. Then minorities are obviously pushed aside.

Self-organization is an intrinsic quality of vital resilient realities. Self-organization as the most important condition and result of democracy is not compatible with the paternalism of the welfare state and the single view of emancipation implied in it. Of course, specific forms of paternalism and emancipation may be cherished in self-organization. Direct steering of this is not just ineffective but also potentially threatening for self-organization itself.

As I have already argued at length, private, public and political domains are relatively autonomous in respect to each other. For good reason I used the Deleuzian term 'the fold' for this. This expresses, after all, connection, distinction and conductivity and it is, in addition, dynamic. Each solidification and each sustainability is temporary. Because the domains are autonomous in this sense, democracy cannot be anything but will-less. I have described the political domain at its core as follows: the constitution of the relationships between the domains in all temporality and modesty. That is also what the term 'irony' implies. With regard to all and each individual willing, the political is ironic precisely because the will and the goal are autonomous aspects of the private and the public. The opinions about the good life also belong here.

Democracy's will-lessness is linked secondly with the difference that characterizes the different domains. Politics relates to our differences and must keep these differences bearable. The substantive realization of differences in terms of values occurs in private and public domains. Democracy as a constitution and mentality creates and protects the conditions for this. Which conditions these are and how their creation and protection take shape is, of course, the object of political conflict. Democracy is not in the least neutral proceduralism, as the reproach often goes.

Democracy relates to multiplicity, disputes and conflict. The key is to restrain these and to bring them under control to such an extent that we avoid cruelty (Rorty, 1992: 101), particularly cruelty that takes the horrific form of civil war. Controlling and restraining do not mean, however, that the difference is removed or the conflict settled. That would mean, on the one hand, the end of democracy and would presume, on the other hand, the presence of a strong will. The strength of democracy lies precisely in suppressing the desire to form a substantive majority. Only if democracy is indifferent with regard to the substantive results of self-organization does it then achieve what is most important: the protection of minorities and of difference.

'MUDDLING THROUGH'

Political narratives are not grand narratives – although they sometimes try to appear so – but they are primarily style statements. The style argued for here is that of multiplicity – a politics of difference – which is only possible if democracy as an institution suppresses its majoritarian preference and is extremely reserved. Legislation should therefore be fundamentally temporary and reversible. We come across this plea repeatedly in Scott (1998: amongst others, 345). We find a comparable argument in Quoc Loc Hong. Following Kelson, he argues that democracy should be based on legislative self-limitation: 'Basic rights are, in other words, essentially minority rights' (Quoc Loc Hong, 2005: 171). This is why the right to freedom of expression is also not primarily *our* right but mainly that of *others*, of our opponents, to offend, shock and to disturb (Quoc Loc Hong, 2005: 209–10).

If legislation must be reserved – the only possible limitation and legitimization of majority rule – then an instrumentalistic view of the law is excluded and incrementalism in the formation of policy is obvious. *Muddling through*, as Lindblom (1959) so beautifully termed it. A political order that is based on the rights of minorities, even if that is the right to become a majority, is an order of difference and temporality. Muddling through is, in addition, a primarily societal affair. Politics must protect and promote muddling through.

Lindblom lays the emphasis on an empirical and theoretical explanation of the impossibility of central and comprehensive policy interventions: causal patterns in social reality are so complicated that direct interventions cause too many unintended and therefore also many undesirable consequences. Our lack of knowledge is limitative and fundamental because social reality is reflexive. Central and comprehensive interventions, however, are also normatively undesirable. They assume, after all, one regulating point of view and an exclusion of rivalling points of view. They employ a singular problem definition and are based on a cognitive hierarchy that brings the means used in connection with the realization of the set goals.

Lindblom's incrementalism, which can be defended on empirical, theoretical and normative grounds, is pragmatic. It sets performativity – does it work? – as the primary test for an intervention and not truth. We can, after all, determine in retrospect whether interventions have had an effect but in the reflexive contexts of social reality this is always impossible prospectively. This is also the principal objection against the ideology of 'evidence based' working, so popular nowadays in many policy domains. Not only is this ideology inconsistent with innovations, it is primarily

theoretically primitive. We cannot be convinced in the least that what works 'hic et nunc' will also work there and later.

Incrementalism is modest and ironic in its temporality. We can make mistakes, we can overlook positions and we are lacking in our efficacy. The concept of a learning government in which bureaucracy has a much more substantive role, where parliament does not just control but also inspires, in which government has a substantive programme which it brings into realization with societal parties in horizontal networks, is often championed (e.g. WRR, 2006: 117–25). In this view politics must become an institution again that contributes 'to the wellbeing of citizens'. Politics must be cooperative and deliberative for this. It requires 'different repertoires' and an 'open agenda'. Politics must become 'problem-oriented' again (WRR, 2006: 103).

My most important objection to problem-oriented politics is that it employs a 'frame' that is not neutral and innocent. Problem-oriented politics is, after all, goal-oriented: problem-solving is an orientation that applies a goal-means model and ultimately aims to realize the 'legibility' (Scott, 1998: passim) of societal problems. The deep-seated belief that knowledge and the ability to judge at the level of the state will contribute to progress and well-being is still alive. The danger is precisely in this. In contrast to the goal-orientedness of politics, which will always suffer from the short-sightedness of the state – which is singular and centralist out of necessity when defining problems, suggesting solutions and executing interventions – the plurality of society must be set. Society must therefore be made 'legible'. The state's outlook is the short-sightedness of the Cyclops who wants to organize, plan and rule.

The principle of checks and balances, the necessity of legislative self-limitation and the recognition that there are only minorities and minority positions require the healing conservatism of a will-less institution. Precisely because a state institution can be so dangerous, the argument for a learning government is, in a certain sense, naive. It wants to declare the normativity of power-free deliberation applicable to an institution that must both articulate and temper societal power relations. This institution can only do this authoritatively if it is fundamentally reserved with respect to the content of societal phenomena.

WITHOUT A CENTRE

The formation of difference is an expression of what Kuypers calls the necessity of a *symbolic order* (Kuypers, 2003: 76–80). According to him, a symbolic order is of crucial importance for democracy. The symbolic

order refers to the protection of plurality, the constitution of the republic and the negative freedom of the citizen. The symbolic order refers to the normativity of the means in a democracy that is without aim and without a centre.

The notion of multiplicity implies that there is *no whole* in the sense of an overarching and sense-making order: the whole is less than the sum of the parts. The political order does not express the symbolic cohesion of a society but protects its fragmentation. It lets a thousand flowers bloom and in this meaning it is rather an infrastructure at the bottom than an overarching whole (Frissen, 1999: 205–6, 229–35, 257–8). The primacy of politics lies in the definition of the relationships between the political, the public and the private. This primacy is democratic only if it is modest and ironic. That is exactly the opposite of the totalitarian interpretation of politics (Lefort, 1992: 39). Plurality does not bear a blanket truth or meaning. Truth and sense are in the separate units, in the singularities and in the fragments. Of course, there can be connections but these are in the form of folds, and the movements that the fold makes are plural: 'plier, déplier, replier' (Deleuze, 1988: 189). There are, to agree with Deleuze and Guattari (1980), thousands of plateaus. But there is no relationship or subordination or preordination between the plateaus. It is therefore preferable to acknowledge the 'rizomatic' as a characteristic of societal relationships (Deleuze and Guattari, 1980: 15).

The state as embodiment and instrumentation of the political must maintain the conditions for the rizomatic character of societal reality. This means, of course, that cruelty must be avoided. This is why we entrust the monopolies of violence and taxation to the state, so that no other institution or group can carry these out against us. These monopolies protect our freedoms: the negative freedoms, of course. Positive freedom cannot be anything other than societal if the state does not want to give in to the totalitarian temptation.

This is also why I denote the state as an infrastructure at the bottom of society. Underground, as it were, in order to be a fertile ground for the thousand flowers that may bloom. This world is decentred. An overarching centre that confers meaning, guards cohesion and order, formulates goals or defines problems is then unnecessary and undesirable.

The place of power where the representation of the majority takes place must remain empty in order to protect minorities. Democracy is vital and legitimate as long as no one can take ownership of the power that is based in the people (Lefort, 1992: 57). The symbolic order maintained in this way by politics is a folded order that must not be viewed as a centre. As a symbolic order it is actually a deconstruction of the idea of a centre. It creates the conditions for maintaining, promoting and protecting the

dissimilarity, the incongruence, the disparity, the inequality, the heterogeneity: in short, multiplicity.

Democracy that is without a centre protects the plurality and the difference and thereby itself. Only whoever protects plurality by not choosing a fixed course and goal can resist the totalitarian temptation and can therefore justly fight it. It is the societal state of difference that must protect the political state of multiplicity. This is how I would describe the symbolic order that constitutes the relationships between the political, the public and the private.

Whoever wants to make a difference will have to put up with inequality, cherish it even. The richness of societal difference requires a state that looks for legitimacy in modesty and temporality, and in irony and reservedness. That is an ambitious repertoire and it is a style that requires courage. The addiction to the ethos of the welfare state is, after all, widespread. Whoever wants to protect plurality authoritatively must recognize multiplicity radically, even if this is unpleasant and grating. Only in this way can it be maintained that democracy is currently the most pleasant political order. Democracy – without a centre, without a goal – is the symbolic order of a state of difference (Frissen, 2007).

NOTE

1. In the Deleuzian interpretation of the term ('le différend'), which could also be translated as 'multiplicity'. In this chapter I will use difference for the empirical phenomenon of things not being the same and 'multiplicity' for the philosophical meaning.

REFERENCES

Ankersmit, F.R. (1996), *Aesthetic Politics: Political Philosophy Beyond Fact and Value*, Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Beck, U., A. Giddens and S. Lash (1994), *Reflexive Modernization: Politics, Tradition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Berlin, I. (1996), *Twee opvattingen van vrijheid*. (Two Conceptions of Liberty), Amsterdam and Meppel: Boom.

Bovens, M., W. Derksen, W. Witteveen, F. Becker and P. Kalma (1995), *De verplaatsing van de politiek*. *Een agenda voor democratische vernieuwing*. (The Replacement of Politics. An Agenda for Democratic Renewal), Amsterdam: Wiardi Beckman Stichting.

Brandsen, T., W. van de Donk and P. Kenis (eds) (2006), *Meervoudig bestuur*. *Publieke dienstverlening door hybride organisaties*. (Plural Governance. Public Service by Hybrid Organizations), Den Haag: Lemma.

Castells, M. (1997), *The Power of Identity*, London: Blackwell.

Chevallier, J. (2004), *L'État post-moderne*, Paris: L.G.D.J.

Cioran, E.M. (2002), *Geschiedenis en utopie*. (History and Utopia), Amsterdam/ Antwerpen: De Arbeiderspers.

Deleuze, G. (1968), *Différence et répétition*, Paris: PUF.

Deleuze, G. (1988), *Le Pli. Leibniz et le Baroque*, Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit.

Deleuze, G. (1992), *Het denken in plooien geschikt*. (Thinking Arranged in Folds), Kampen: Kok Agora.

Deleuze, G. and F. Guattari (1980), *Mille Plateaux. Capitalisme et Schizophrénie*, Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit.

Enzensberger, H.M. (1990), *Lof van de inconsequentie*. (Praise of Inconsistency), Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij.

Frissen, P.H.A. (1999), *Politics, Governance and Technology: A Postmodern Narrative on the Virtual State*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Frissen, P.H.A. (2007), *De Staat van Verschil. Een Kritiek van de Gelijkheid* (The State of Difference. A Critique of Equality), Amsterdam: Van Gennep.

Gunsteren, H. van (2006), *Vertrouwen in democratie. Over de principes van zelforganisatie*. (Trust in Democracy. On the Principles of Self-organization), Amsterdam: Van Gennep.

Gunsteren, H. van and E. van Ruyven (1993), 'De Ongekende Samenleving (DOS), een verkenning'. (The Unknown Society. A Survey), *Beleid & Maatschappij*, XX(3), 114–25.

Hajer, M. (2000), *Politiek als vormgeving*. (Politics as Design), Amsterdam: Vossiuspers AUP.

Hamilton, A. (2008), *The Federalist Papers*, Charleston: Forgotten Books.

Huyse, L. (1994), *De Politiek voorbij*. (After Politics), Leuven: Kritak.

Ijsseling, S. (2006), 'Eenheid en veelheid. Een uitdaging voor het denken van de 21ste eeuw'. (Unity and Plurality. A Challenge for 21st Century Thinking), *Filosofie*, 16(3), 33–6.

Kinneging, A. (2005), *Geografie van goed en kwaad. Filosofische essays*. (Geography of Good and Evil. Philosophical Essays), Utrecht: Spectrum.

Kuypers, P. (2003), *De staat der Nederlanden. Opstellen en brieven tegen de tijdgeest*. (The State of the Netherlands. Essays and Letters Against the Zeitgeist), Amsterdam: De Balie.

Lefort, C. (1992), *Het democratisch tekort. Over de noodzakelijke onbepaaldheid van de democratie*. (The Democratic Deficiency. On the Necessary Indetermination of Democracy), Amsterdam and Meppel: Boom.

Lindblom, Ch.E. (1959), 'The science of muddling through', *Public Administration Review*, 9, Spring, 79–88.

Nonet, Ph. and Ph. Selznick (1978), *Law and Society in Transition: Toward Responsive Law*, New York: Harper/Colophon.

Oosterling, H. (1996), *Door schijn bewogen. Naar een hyperkritiek van de xenofobe rede*. (Moved by Appearance. Towards a Critique of Xenophobic Reason), Kampen: Kok Agora.

Quoc Loc Hong (2005), *The Legal Inclusion of Extremist Speech*, Nijmegen: Wolf Legal Publishers.

Rorty, R. (1991), *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth*. Philosophical Papers I, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rorty, R. (1992), *Contingentie, ironie en solidariteit*. (Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity), Kampen: Kok Agora.

Schmitt, C. (2001), *Het begrip politiek*. (The Concept of Politics), Amsterdam: Boom/Parrèsia.

Scott, J.C. (1998), *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

Slama, A.-G. (1993), *L'angélisme exterminateur. Essai sur l'ordre moral contemporain*, Paris: Bernard Grasset.

Slaughter, A.-M. (2004), *A New World Order*, Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Spicer, M.W. (2001), *Public Administration and the State. A Postmodern Perspective*, Tuscaloosa and London: University of Alabama Press.

Teubner, G. (1983), 'Substantive and reflexive elements in modern law', *Law and Society Review*, 17(2), 239–86.

Teulings, C., L. Bovenberg and H. van Dalen (2005), *De cirkel van goede intenties. De economie van het publieke belang*. (The Circle of Good Intentions. The Economy of the Public Interest), Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Twist, M.J.W. van (1995), *Verbale vernieuwing. Aantekeningen over de kunst van bestuurskunde*. (Verbal Innovation. Notes on the Art of Public Administration), 's-Gravenhage: VUGA.

Veld, R.J. in't (1997), *Noorderlicht. Over scheiding en samenballing*. (Northern Light. On Division and Contraction), Den Haag: Vuga Uitgeverij.

Walzer, M. (1983), *Spheres of Justice: A Defense of Pluralism & Equality*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Witteveen, W. (2000), *De denkbeeldige staat. Voorstellingen van democratische vernieuwing*. (The Imaginary State. Imaginations of Democratic Renewal), Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

WRR (Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid) (2006), *Lerende overheid. Een pleidooi voor probleemgerichte politiek*. (Learning Government. A Plea for Problem-Oriented Politics), Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Zijderveld, A.C. (2000), *The Institutional Imperative. The Interface of Institutions and Networks*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Žižek, S. (2004), *Organs without Bodies: Deleuze and Consequences*, New York and London: Routledge.

4. Understanding policy transfer in the competition state

Mark Evans

> First, if any individual points have been well made by previous writers, let us try to follow them up; then from the collection of constitutions we must examine what sort of thing preserves and what sort of thing destroys cities and particular constitutions, and for what reasons some are well administered and others are not. Aristotle (384 to 322 BCE), *Nicomachean Ethics* (X, 1181b)

EVOLVING OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURES FOR POLICY TRANSFER

There is nothing new about the concept of policy transfer or its practice. As early as 315BCE Aristotle in his *Nicomachean Ethics* advised fellow citizens of the rationality of engaging in lesson-drawing from positive and negative administrative experiences elsewhere. Although policy transfer has been habitual practice since the dawn of civilization, it is common to see observations that the scope and intensity of policy transfer activity have increased as a consequence of changes to the field of action (see Common, 2001; Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; Evans and Cerny, 2004). It is claimed that this is largely the function of the world of public policy becoming increasingly small due to dramatic changes to global political and economic institutional structures and to nation states themselves. Moreover, because public organizations in Britain do not always possess the expertise to tackle the problems they confront they often look outside the organization to other governments or non-governmental organizations for the answers. Further, the public demands more from government than ever before and this expectation has been mediated through politicians to civil servants. As the initial New Labour administration in Britain (Cabinet Office, 1999: 16) put it: 'This government expects more of policy-makers. More new ideas, more willingness to question inherited ways of doing things, better use of evidence and research in policy-making and better focus on policies that will deliver long-term goals.'

Given this emphasis on the importance of 'evidence-based' policy-

making, policy transfer has increasingly become the rational choice for policy-makers in Britain (see Davies, Nutley and Smith, 2000; Pawson, 2002). The British Competition State, as I will term it in this chapter (see Evans and Cerny, 2004), is a living laboratory for the study and practice of policy transfer, and yet with the exception of the occasional case study it has not been surveyed as an area of study in British political science since the turn of the millennium (see Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; Stone, 1999). This chapter outlines the emergence, development and use of the concept of policy transfer in the study of British public administration. Its purpose is to evaluate the character of this interdisciplinary approach to cross-national policy development and to assess its strengths, weaknesses and potential theoretical and methodological development. It therefore considers: the domestic and international circumstances that are likely to bring about policy transfer; the key approaches to the study of policy transfer that have emerged over the past decade; and the scope and dimensions of the policy transfer process. The chapter is organized around a consideration of four central research questions: What is studied when policy transfer is studied? How is policy transfer studied? Why do public organizations engage in policy transfer? In what ways can the policy transfer approach be improved?

My main submission in this chapter is twofold. First, British Labour governments since 1997 have adopted a policy agenda which, in its most crucial aspects, reflects the continuing transformation of the British State into a competition state. Secondly, within a competition state policy actors and institutions increasingly promote new forms of complex globalization through processes of policy transfer in an attempt to adapt state action to cope more effectively with what they see as global 'realities'. The analytical purpose of this chapter is therefore to consider the significance of these two developments.

WHAT IS STUDIED WHEN POLICY TRANSFER IS STUDIED?

Policy transfer analysis is a theory of policy development that seeks to make sense of a process in which knowledge about institutions, policies or delivery systems at one sector or level of governance is used in the development of institutions, policies or delivery systems at another level of governance. Different forms of policy transfer such as band-wagoning (Ikenberry, 1990), convergence (Bennett, 1991), diffusion (Majone, 1991), emulation (Howlett, 2000), policy learning (May, 1992); social learning (Hall, 1993) and lesson-drawing (Rose, 2005) have been identified in a

wide ranging literature which has attracted significant academic attention from domestic, comparative and international political scientists.

The contemporary study of policy transfer originates from policy diffusion studies, a sub-set of the comparative politics literature. Research in this area focused on identifying trends in timing, geography and resource similarities in the diffusion of innovations between countries and, in the United States, between states in the federation (see Walker, 1969). However, these studies revealed next to nothing about the process of transfer apart from its identification of mechanisms of diffusion and focused exclusively on the study of policy transfer between developed countries. The latter preoccupation continues to characterize much of the contemporary literature on policy transfer, which has primarily focused on studying voluntary policy transfer between developed countries as a process in which policies implemented elsewhere are examined by rational political actors for their potential utilization within another political system (Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000). As Richard Rose (1991: 3) puts it:

> Every country has problems, and each thinks that its problems are unique . . . However, problems that are unique to one country . . . are abnormal . . . Confronted with a common problem, policy makers in cities, regional governments and nations can learn from the ways in which their counterparts elsewhere responded.

I begin by describing the scope of enquiry in policy transfer analysis with regard to levels of analysis, agents of policy transfer, forms of policy transfer, processes of policy-oriented learning, obstacles to policy-oriented learning and the outputs of policy transfer.

Levels of Analysis

Policy transfer analysis encompasses the traditional domain of policy analysis: the study of the broad macro-environs of the policy process such as the economic context, Europeanization (in the case of EU member states and associates) or processes of globalization (e.g. geopolitics, political integration, global communications and the internationalization of financial markets); meso-level or intergovernmental forms of policy analysis (e.g. policy network analysis); and micro-level stages of the policy process (e.g. formulation, implementation and evaluation) and methods of analysis (e.g. prospective policy evaluation and implementation theory). As Harold Lasswell (1970: 3) would put it, policy transfer analysis is about providing 'knowledge of and knowledge in policy making'.

Policy transfer analysts are therefore interested in: pre-decision-making

processes and the key actors which shape policy-making; programme management and enhancement; policy implementation and the causes of policy 'failure'; issues involved in researching and studying policy change, and enhancing the capacity of public administrators to formulate and implement policy decisions. Policy transfer analysis therefore focuses on three areas of study that are commonplace in normal policy analysis: description – how policy transfer is made; explanation – why policy transfer occurs; and prescription – how policy transfer should be made.

It needs to be noted here, however, that most political scientists, particularly in Britain, deliberately avoid the third area of study in the aspiration of maintaining social scientific impartiality. As we will see later, this may be identified as a significant deficiency in the approach and one which this chapter seeks to bridge.

Agents of Policy Transfer

The study of policy transfer analysis should be restricted to action-oriented intentional learning – that which takes place consciously and results in policy action. This definition locates policy transfer as a potential causal phenomenon – a factor leading to policy convergence. However, I distinguish policy transfer from policy convergence in that the latter may occur unintentionally – for example due to harmonizing macroeconomic forces or common processes. The element of intentionality in this definition of policy transfer makes an agent essential to both voluntary and coercive processes. Intentionality may be ascribed to the originating state/institution/actor, to the transferee state/institution/actor, to both, or to a third party state/institution/actor. For example, if the agent of a particular transfer is the state which first developed the policy, or a third party state (Country C) seeking to make Country B adopt an approach by Country A, it is likely that there are coercive processes at work. Alternatively, there may be a series of agents at work, either simultaneously or at different points in the process. Necessary – but insufficient – criteria for identifying policy transfer are therefore: (a) identify the agent(s) of transfer and the policy belief systems that they advocate; (b) distinguish the resources that they bring to the process of policy-oriented learning; (c) specify the role they play in the transfer; and (d) determine the nature of the transfer that the agent(s) is/are seeking to make. At least seven main categories of agents of transfer can be identified in the literature on policy transfer: politicians; bureaucrats; policy entrepreneurs (including think-tanks, knowledge institutions, academicians and other experts); pressure groups; global financial institutions; international organizations; and supra-national institutions (see Stone, 2000b).

Forms of Policy Transfer

Policy analysts deploy the policy transfer approach as a generic concept that encompasses quite different claims about why public organizations engage in policy learning. Typically policy transfer analysts refer to three different processes of transfer: voluntary transfer or lesson-drawing, negotiated transfer and direct coercive transfer. The first is a rational, action-oriented approach to dealing with public policy problems that emerge from one or more of the following: the identification of public or professional dissatisfaction with existing policy as a consequence of poor performance; a new policy agenda that is introduced due to a change in government, minister or the management of a public organization; a political strategy aimed at legitimating conclusions that have already been reached; or an attempt by a political manager to upgrade items of the policy agenda to promote political allies and neutralize political enemies.

The second and third processes of transfer involve varying degrees of coercion and are common in developing countries. Negotiated policy transfer refers to a process in which governments are compelled by, for example, influential donor countries, global financial institutions, supra-national institutions, international organizations or transnational corporations, to introduce policy change in order to secure grants, loans or other forms of inward investment. Although an exchange process does occur it remains a coercive activity because the recipient country is denied freedom of choice. The political economies of most developing countries throughout the 1980s and 1990s have been characterized by the implementation of structural adjustment programmes in return for investment from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or the World Bank (WB). This is a reflection of the pervasiveness of negotiated forms of policy transfer to developing countries. Another form of indirect policy transfer can be identified when governments introduce institutional or policy changes due to a fear of falling behind neighbouring countries. For example, Japan's economic miracle in East Asia proved inspirational to neighbouring countries such as Singapore, South Korea and Malaysia. John Ikenberry (1990: 102) terms this process 'band-wagoning'.

Direct coercive policy transfer occurs when a government is compelled by another government to introduce constitutional, social and political changes against its will and the will of its people. This form of policy transfer was widespread in periods of formal imperialism and its implications can still be seen today in contemporary Mexico, Kenya, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe and South Africa, to name but a few examples.

In Britain, however, policy transfer activity tends to focus on voluntary transfer or lesson-drawing. Negotiated processes of transfer can be

identified with regard to majority decision-making in the European Union (see Wincott, 1999; Padgett, 2003) but such forms of transfer tend to be the exception rather than the rule.

Processes of Policy-Oriented Learning

The literature identifies four different processes of policy-oriented learning emerging from the process of transfer (Evans, 2004a). The first and rarest form of policy-oriented learning is *copying* – where a governmental organization adopts a policy, programme or institution without modification. For example, Gordon Brown's working family tax credit system is a direct copy of the American earned income tax credit system (Evans, 2004b). Secondly, there is *emulation* – where a governmental organization accepts that a policy, programme or institution overseas provides the best standard for designing a policy, programme or institution at home. For example, US policy once again proved the standard against which English crime control policy was made under New Labour (Tonry, 2004). *Hybridization* is the third and most typical form of policy-oriented learning. This is where a governmental organization combines elements of programmes found in several settings to develop a policy that is culturally sensitive to the needs of the recipient. For example, New Labour's welfare programme 'New Deal for Young People' was a product of lessons drawn from initiatives in Australia ('Lone Parents and Partners', 'Working Nation' and 'single gateway/one stop shops' programmes), Sweden ('Working Nation'), the Netherlands ('single gateway/one stop shop' programmes), Canada (the 'Making Work Pay' scheme) and over 50 'Welfare to Work' schemes in the US. In addition, institutional memory (e.g. 'Job Seekers' Allowance' and 'Restart' schemes from 1988 and 1996) was influential (Evans, 2004b). And, fourthly, there is *inspiration* – where an idea from an unexpected source inspires fresh thinking about a policy problem and helps to facilitate policy change (Common, 2001).

Obstacles to Policy-Oriented Learning

The proof of policy transfer lies in its implementation. In other words it is not possible to identify the content of a transfer or, by implication, whether transfer has occurred without adopting an implementation perspective. So what factors can constrain policy transfer and policy-oriented learning? As Figure 4.1 illustrates, three broad sets of variables have been identified in the British case study literature: 'cognitive' obstacles in the pre-decision phase, 'environmental' obstacles in the implementation phase and, increasingly, domestic public opinion. These variables interact

Cognitive obstacles in the pre-decision phase
• Limited search activity
• Cultural assimilation through commensurable
problem recognition and definition
• The degree of complexity involved in the process of transfer

Environmental obstacles during the process of transfer

• *Ineffective cognitive and elite mobilization strategies by agents of transfer*
• *The absence of a cohesive policy transfer network*
• *Structural constraints* – socio-economic, political, institutional
• *Normal technical implementation constraints arising from limited policy design, resources and technical support*

Public opinion

• *Elite opinion* – political, bureaucratic, economic
• *Media opinion*
• *The attitudes and resources of constituency groups*

Process of transfer

Figure 4.1   Mapping potential obstacles to processes of policy transfer

in complex and often unexpected ways and inform the process of policy transfer. 'Cognitive' obstacles refer to the process by which public policy problems are recognized and defined in the pre-decision phase, the breadth and detail of the search conducted for ideas, the receptivity of existing policy actors and systems to policy alternatives, and the complexity of choosing an alternative. The most significant cognitive barriers for agents of policy transfer to overcome at this stage of policy development are normally issues arising from the prevailing organizational culture and the need for effective cultural assimilation of policy alternatives.

'Environmental' obstacles refer to the absence of effective cognitive and elite mobilization strategies deployed by agents of policy transfer, the need for the development of cohesive policy transfer networks to ensure

successful policy-oriented learning, the broader structural constraints (institutional, political, economic and social) that impact and shape the process of lesson-drawing, and the normal technical implementation constraints that inhibit or facilitate the process of lesson-drawing. The latter would include: coherent and consistent objectives; the incorporation of an adequate causal theory of policy development; the sensible allocation of financial resources; hierarchical integration within and among implementing organizations; clear decision rules underpinning the operation of implementing agencies; the recruitment of programme officers with adequate skills/training; sufficient technical support; and the use of effective monitoring and evaluation systems including formal access by outsiders.

Outputs from the Process of Transfer

Using Peter Hall's (1993) terminology, the outputs from processes of policy transfer can include: first order change in the precise settings of the policy instruments used to attain policy goals (marginal adjustments to the status quo); second order change to the policy instruments themselves, such as the development of new institutions and delivery systems; and third order change to the actual goals that guide policy in a particular field (negative ideology, ideas, attitudes and concepts). Of course, negative lessons can be drawn in each form of policy change.

HOW IS POLICY TRANSFER STUDIED?

The British literature on policy transfer analysis may be organized into two discernible schools: one which does not use the label 'policy transfer' directly but deals with different aspects of the process using different nomenclature; and one which uses the concept directly. This amorphous literature can be organized into five main approaches: process-centred approaches; practice-based approaches; ideational approaches; comparative approaches; and multi-level approaches. While there is inevitably some overlap between these approaches (for instance, all of them engage in some form of comparison) they are all distinctive with regard to their central focus of enquiry.

Process-Centred Approaches

Process-centred approaches, unremarkably, focus on the process of policy transfer directly in order to explain the voluntary or coercively negotiated importation of ideas, policies or institutions. They argue that policy

learning is largely based on the interpersonal interaction between agents of transfer, bureaucrats and politicians within interorganizational settings. In these settings there exists a pattern of common kinship expressed through culture, rules and values. Hence an emphasis is placed on analysing the structure of decision-making through which policy transfer takes place and relationships between agents of transfer and their dependencies. These include state and non-state actors who are actively engaged in policy learning such as bureaucrats and think-tanks. Process-centred analysis also tends to be a predominantly inter-state approach that emphasizes the role of state actors as active agents seeking solutions to policy problems rather than the passive agents depicted in pluralist or corporatist decision literatures. Rose (1993: 6), for example, deploys the concept of lesson-drawing as a method for learning from past and/or extra organizational experiences, emphasizing the role of the bureaucrat and the programme itself in the process of policy learning. Rose's research in the 1990s on lesson-drawing contributed to our social scientific understanding of both the role of the programme as an instrument of public policy and the conditions under which programmes can be effective in non-indigenous settings. For Rose, the important features of this process are the circumstances surrounding the learning of lessons from other sources, the extent to which they are adopted and, crucially, the impact they have on the new policy environment. His research ably demonstrates who has relationships with whom and it can describe how these relations impinge on the making of policy (e.g. why some actors are influential and others are not).

However, while the approach is important to our understanding of the nature of the process of transfer, it has shortcomings in explaining why policy transfer takes place in the first place due to the limited reflection on the role of exogenous forces in processes of lesson-drawing. Moreover, although he provides some clues on how lesson-drawing could be deployed to help policy actors to draw lessons from other jurisdictions, it was not until the launch of the UK Economic and Social Research Council's (ESRC's) 'Future Governance Initiative' in January 2000 that Rose turned his attention fully from explanation to prescription or from retrospective to prospective evaluation. We will turn our attention to this practice-oriented research in the next section.

Practice-Based Approaches

Three prescriptive avenues for policy transfer analysts have emerged associated with organizational learning, evidence-based policy-making and comparative public policy. The organizational learning approach is largely a product of management studies and its concern with public

sector learning from the private sector. Indeed, it has superseded Total Quality Management as the key strategy for improving public sector performance (Tushman and Nadler, 1996). It is based on the proposition that the quality of an organization rests on its ability to demonstrate that it can learn collectively through the application of new knowledge to the policy process or innovation in policy implementation. As Olsen and Peters (1996: 4) note, organizational learning involves the 'development of structures and procedures that improve the problem-solving capacity of an organization and make it better prepared for the future'. The literature distinguishes between the notions of organizational learning and the learning organization. The former is based on observing learning processes within organizations while the latter provides an action-oriented perspective for improving the performance of public organizations. This approach has only recently been introduced in the study of policy transfer through Richard Common's (2004) study of the British government's attempt to become a learning organization. It is particularly useful in helping policy analysts to identify potential obstacles to policy transfer and in providing insights to practitioners on how to develop the type of learning organization conducive to the facilitation of successful policy transfer (see Pedler, Burgoyne and Boydell 1991).

The second prescriptive avenue for policy transfer analysts was largely a response to new political dynamics. The British government's 1999 *Modernising Government* White Paper represented an acknowledgement of the need to modernize policy and management at the centre of government. It argued that government 'must produce policies that really deal with problems; that are forward-looking and shaped by evidence rather than a response to short-term pressures; that tackle causes not symptoms' (Cabinet Office, 1999: 15). The Blair government's aspiration was given institutional expression through the creation of the Centre for Management and Policy Studies (CMPs), which had a clear mandate both to establish more productive relations between government and academia, in order to generate high-quality evidence-based research to inform practice, and to consider the broader training needs of the civil service (Cabinet Office (CMPS), 2002). The Cabinet Office's (2001) *Better Policy-Making* mapped out an evidence-based approach to policy for achieving the former based on: reviewing existing research, commissioning new research, consulting relevant experts and/or using internal and external consultants, and considering a range of properly costed and appraised options. The Cabinet Office's (2005) 'Professional Skills for Government' programme dealt with the skills and training requirements of the civil service (see http://psg.civil service.gov.uk/). There has subsequently been an explosion of intellectual and discursive activity around the evidence-based practice approach, the

establishment of the ESRC UK Centre for Evidence-Based Policy-Making and Practice at Queen Mary, University of London, and even an academic journal (*Evidence and Policy*) but limited evidence as yet of improvements in government policy and operational delivery (Davies, Nutley and Smith, 2000; Burton, 2006).

The third prescriptive avenue has emerged from within the comparative public policy literature on lesson-drawing. Richard Rose's (2005) *Learning from Comparative Public Policy: A Practical Guide* confronts, though perhaps unwittingly, two of the central problems with much of the present academic literature on public administration in general and lesson-drawing or voluntary policy transfer in particular. First, there is the relative absence of enterprising prescription to help public organizations solve public policy problems and, secondly, a stark failure to engage with practice, reflected in the reluctance to make social scientific enquiry relevant to practice. This has made it all too easy for practitioners to dismiss social scientific enquiry as 'abstract' and 'impractical' at a time when academics should be helping to set the public policy agenda. The integral relationship between evidence-based practice, rational lesson-drawing and good policy-making has created a political space for comparative public policy specialists to provide a unique contribution to public policy discourses.

Learning from Comparative Public Policy combines social scientific reflection on the domain and utility of the concept of lesson-drawing with a prescriptive enterprise aimed at providing a practical guide to learning. As Rose (2005: xi) asserts, it is 'not a book about explanation, for theories that specialize in explanation, such as rational choice, do not tell you how to do what is rational. This book is addressed to readers who want to learn how to draw lessons.' He defines a lesson and its domain of utility as a: 'distinctive type of programme, because it draws on foreign experience to propose a programme that can deal with a problem confronting national policymakers in their home environment . . . It is a practical, nuts and bolts outline of the means as well as the ends of policy' (2005: 22). The chapters that follow in his account are organized around a detailed sequential discussion of ten steps that Rose recommends to practitioners in order to evaluate whether or not a non-indigenous programme should be applied domestically:

1. Learn the key concepts: what a programme is, and what a lesson is and is not.
2. Catch the attention of policy-makers.
3. Scan alternatives and decide where to look for lessons.
4. Learn by going abroad.

5. Abstract from what you observe a generalized model of how a foreign programme works.
6. Turn the model into a lesson fitting your own national context.
7. Decide whether the lesson should be adopted.
8. Decide whether the lesson can be applied.
9. Simplify the means and ends of a lesson to increase its chances of success.
10. Evaluate a lesson's outcome prospectively and, if it is adopted, as it evolves over time. (Rose, 2005: 9)

Each chapter draws on selective empirical, personal anecdotal evidence and assertions from secondary literature, culminating in the observation, 'As time goes by, the ultimate achievement is that the foreign origins of a programme are forgotten. It then becomes described as no more and no less than "the way we do things here"' (Rose, 2005: 139).

A critique of Rose's work would rest on the identification of three sins of omission. The first would be the lack of a discussion about the relationship between the concept of lesson-drawing and the broader literature on policy transfer. Given the salience of this literature in British political science in particular it is important for Rose to clarify his terms within this context to lend clarity to the debate for students and scholars alike. The second is that it is difficult to discern between the concept of lesson-drawing and normal forms of policy-making in general (Evans and Davies, 1999) and rational approaches to policy-making in particular (James and Lodge, 2003), and therefore it has no distinctive domain of enquiry. Thirdly, Rose can also be accused of not providing rigorous tools for evaluating whether a lesson has been drawn or not (Evans and Davies, 1999). Moreover, finding the evidence that a lesson has been drawn demands excellent access to key informants in informal decision-making processes. Such access is not often possible.

From the perspective of practice two main shortcomings are evident. The first is that the study would have benefited from a reflection of how traditional organizations can become learning organizations. Rose (2005: 104–5) himself argues that the strategic directions of public organizations are path dependent and characterized by 'inheritance rather than choice' in the sense that 'past commitments limit current choices'. Hence a set of recommendations on how to break from the 'wicked context' problem would have been extremely useful (see Common, 2004). Secondly, a more detailed identification of potential obstacles to successful lesson-drawing would have provided important insights for practitioners into how to develop both the type of learning organization conducive to the facilitation of successful lesson-drawing and a model of prospective evaluation to guide effective lesson-drawing.

Ideational Approaches

There are two main accounts of policy development using ideational-based studies that are worthy of brief discussion here – the social learning approach and the epistemic community approach. These approaches are united in arguing that it is systems of ideas which influence how politicians and policy-makers learn, how to learn and they all address the problem of when and how politicians, other policy-makers and societies learn how to learn.

Social learning approaches do not make explicit reference to the concept of policy transfer but rather seek to provide a general theory of policy change. The relationship between the two literatures, however, is self-evident as policy transfer is an intentional activity involving the movement of ideas between systems of governance in the aspiration of forging policy change. Peter Hall's (1993) social learning approach disaggregates the policy-making process into three dimensions: the overarching goals that guide policy in a particular field (third order change); the techniques or policy instruments used to attain these goals (second order change); and the precise settings of these instruments (first order change). Hall argues that in order to make sense of how policy learning takes place we need a theory of the policy process that takes into account the role of ideas. For Hall, public policy deliberation takes place within a broader system of ideas that is understood and accepted by the policy-making community. This system of ideas specifies not only the goals of policy and the instruments used to attain them, but also the very nature of the issues that are important and need to be addressed. Keynesianism or monetarism may be viewed as two illustrations of systems of ideas, or what Hall also terms 'policy paradigms', emerging in periods of third order change.

Hall's work has proved particularly influential in the study of policy change but is yet to be applied directly to the study of policy transfer with the exception of the work of Ian Greener (2001) on macroeconomic policy. Its potential utilization in this field, however, is rich with possibilities. For example, consider the 2008–09 financial crisis. Will it lead to a period of third order change and a new policy paradigm characterized by the demise of neo-liberalism and the revival of old forms of state intervention in the economy? What role will policy transfer play in this process of change? The British Prime Minister Gordon Brown performed the part of an international agent of policy transfer and was lauded as the saviour of global capitalism by finance ministers around the world and even the Nobel Prize winning economist Paul Krugman. Brown's rescue plan was then adopted by other governments in need of a quick fix to get them out of the financial crisis. The plan involved the British government taking a

stake in three British banks (Royal Bank of Scotland, Lloyds and HBOS) and giving them £37bn finance to recapitalize to allow them to cope with current market volatility and the ongoing liquidity crisis. The package was received exceptionally well by the world's markets. In contrast, the US government's bailout package of $700bn, which was originally intended just to buy off bad debts from failed banks, was badly received by the markets earlier in October 2008 and failed to stem the tide. In consequence, the US government has adopted the Brown plan and recapitalized nine banks (amongst them Goldmans and Morgan Stanley) at the cost of $250bn. Gordon Brown's newly found role as the saviour of global capitalism is, of course, rich in irony. Brown did not anticipate the global credit crunch despite being in a uniquely privileged position in his capacity as Chairman of the International Monetary and Financial Committee (the IMF's most important advisory committee) since September 1999.

The study of epistemic communities as a method of understanding the movement of ideas in the international domain is a central preoccupation in the study of international relations (Adler and Bernstein, 2005; Haas, 1980). Diane Stone's influential research on think-tanks has been central in integrating the concerns of this literature with the study of policy transfer (see Evans and Davies, 1999, for an alternative account). Stone (1996a, 1996b, 1999, 2000a, 2000b) identifies think-tanks as key agents of policy transfer within what are termed 'epistemic communities'. Epistemic communities comprise natural and social scientists or individuals from any discipline or profession with authoritative claims to policy relevant knowledge that reside in national, transnational and international organizations. The function of these communities is to facilitate the emergence of policy learning that may lead to policy convergence. Her research provides an understanding of the mechanisms by which think-tanks have been successful in influencing the formulation of public policies, specifically the spread of privatization ideas. The epistemic community literature has also been used to explain how international policy has converged in areas such as GATT, food aid, financial regulation and environmental protection. Stone's work is particularly useful in helping policy analysts to determine how policy-makers acquire and deploy knowledge. Moreover, it provides compelling evidence of the internationalization of policy paradigms (see Hood, 1995).

Comparative Approaches

As we noted earlier, all studies of policy transfer should adopt a comparative methodology but few do. In most cases, thick qualitative description is provided to account for the indigenous policy environment and detail of

the non-indigenous policy environment is largely ignored. Comprehensive qualitative policy transfer analysis requires thick description but this does make for tiresome narrative and few editors are likely to countenance it. However, the use of quantitative methods in policy transfer analysis can make for more accessible reading. Guy Peters (1997), for example, examines the diffusion of administrative reform policy transfers through the member countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). He argues that policy learning in public management is a common activity for governments around the world, but that there are differences in the rates at which countries are able to learn and adapt. He attributes these differences to structural factors such as economic, ideological, cultural and institutional similarities. Those states that share common features are more likely to engage in policy transfer with one another. For example, the 'New Public Management paradigm' struck a chord with governments of the radical right such as the Thatcher (1979–90) and Reagan (1980–88) administrations in the UK and the US who blamed 'Big Government' for global economic downturn and were seeking to roll back the frontiers of the state to redress market failures. Subsequently, New Zealand, Canada and Australia followed suit. Indeed, in relation to market reforms, the UK became a net exporter of administrative innovations first of all to the Commonwealth and later to developmental states (Common, 2001).

Notably, the most popular administrative reforms within OECD countries have been participatory and quality related and – apart from in Anglo-American countries – there has been far less interest in market reform. The developmental states clearly buck this trend and follow the Anglo-American countries in this regard. Peters concludes that cultural variables play an extremely important role in the transfer of policy innovations among countries, particularly in relation to geographical proximity and political similarity. However, another set of policy ideas, those associated with political parties and ideologies, appear to have much less of a relationship with the spread of management reforms.

While Peters's work is scholarly and provocative, it does fall foul of the criticism that it is impossible to use this methodology to prove that policy transfer has taken place. Hence, his explanation of why the diffusion of administrative reform has occurred through the member countries of the OECD is at best impressionistic (see also Olsen and Peters, 1996). Moreover, such research provides few, if any, insights into the process of transfer. This appears a classic case of where quantitative analysis proves useful in highlighting potential critical variables for qualitative analysis. In other words cross-national aggregate comparisons of this sort are best contained within a mixed methods approach (see Wolman, 1992).

Multi-Level Approaches

Multi-level approaches to the study of policy transfer are characterized by a concern with understanding outcomes of policy transfer through combining macro and micro (Dolowitz and Marsh, 1996, 2000), or macro, meso and micro (Common, 2001; Evans and Davies, 1999; Evans 2004a) levels of enquiry. The most influential accounts using this approach have been developed by David Dolowitz and David Marsh (1996, 2000), Mark Evans and Jonathan Davies (1999) and Evans (2004a, b).

Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) have led efforts within British political science to develop a comprehensive theory of policy transfer. In essence, they have drawn together a general framework of heterogeneous concepts, including policy diffusion, policy convergence, policy learning and lesson-drawing, under the umbrella heading of policy transfer. Dolowitz and Marsh suggest that all these phenomena can be organized into one framework as 'dimensions of policy transfer'. Thus lesson-drawing is categorized under the sub-heading 'voluntary transfer' and structured change is categorized within 'voluntary', 'perceptual' and 'direct' or 'indirect' coercive policy transfer. Dolowitz and Marsh (1996: 357) provide an extremely useful framework which invites others to criticize and develop it: '[w]e have suggested a series of questions which can be used both to organize our current knowledge of the process and to guide future work'. The framework developed by Dolowitz and Marsh is clearly designed to incorporate a vast domain of policy-making activity by classifying all possible occurrences of transfer, voluntary and coercive, temporal and spatial.

Dolowitz and Marsh's approach is generally regarded as being more inclusive than previous studies for two main reasons. First, their definition of transfer is broad enough to encompass both voluntary and coercive processes and transferences within and between nations. Secondly, the concept of policy transfer is used as both a dependent and an independent variable. In other words, they seek to explain what causes and impacts on the process of transfer as well as how processes of policy transfer lead to particular policy outcomes. As Dolowitz's (1997) analysis of how the British government learned from American employment policy demonstrates, the framework is extremely useful for organizing research questions and classifying the process of transfer under scrutiny. Similarly, Dolowitz et al. (2000) provide a compelling account of policy transfer and British social policy development. However, Dolowitz and Marsh are also criticized for failing to provide either an explanation of policy change (James and Lodge, 2003) or an appropriate methodology for studying processes of policy learning (Page, 2000; Evans, 2004a). We will consider

the work of Evans and Davies as a way forward in this regard in the penul-
timate section of this chapter.

WHY DO PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS ENGAGE IN POLICY TRANSFER?

What are the knowledge claims of policy transfer analysis? The claim that
policy transfer activity is on the increase is normally attributed to one or
more of the following sources of policy change: global, international and/
or transnational forces; state-centred forces; the role of policy transfer
networks in mediating policy change; and micro-level processes of policy-
oriented learning. This claim is, of course, non falsifiable in the sense that
there exists no comprehensive base-line data against which to compare
contemporary transfer activity.

Global, International and Transnational Sources of Policy Transfer

Global, international and transnational sources of policy change provide
opportunity structures for policy transfer to occur. I recognize as 'inter-
national' those structures and processes which inform state-to-state rela-
tions such as the United Nations and as 'transnational' the increasing
importance of non-state actors, such as multi-national corporations
and knowledge institutions, in policy-making at all levels of governance
(Risse-Kappen, 1995; Stone, 1996a, 1996b, 2000a, 2000b). Knowledge
of policy initiatives in a wide variety of policy arenas at different levels of
governance in nation states throughout the world is more accessible than
ever before as a consequence of global communication technologies. The
advent of the Internet has provided a unique opportunity for policy entre-
preneurs, knowledge institutions and think-tanks to sell their expertise to
governmental organizations throughout the world. It has exposed a hith-
erto private realm of policy-oriented learning – transnational networks of
epistemic communities operating in a system of Global Governance.

The concept of Global Governance proceeds from the assumption that
certain public policy problems such as the regulation of world trade and
financial markets, global warming and ozone depletion, drug trafficking
and terrorism cannot be dealt with at the level of the nation state alone but
require a global response. Global Governance thus refers to the process
of political interaction aimed at solving problems that affect more than
one state or region when there is no authority structure that can enforce
compliance (see Rosenau, 2000: 172). Global Governance is therefore the
manifestation of the increasing scope and intensity of formal and informal

processes of global social and political interactions. Formal processes of Global Governance focus on the activities of predatory agents of policy transfer including multi-lateral organizations such as the World Trade Organization and the Bretton Woods Institutions (the IMF and the WB). The influence of these global economic institutions has been particularly pronounced in developing countries, transition states and states emerging from conflict, which all depend heavily on external aid, loans and investment. Moreover, established international organizations such as the OECD have become proactive in pushing neo-liberal policy agendas in the international domain, particularly in the areas of economic and administrative reform.

In contrast, informal processes of Global Governance would refer to networks of actors that seek to promote dominant policy discourses such as new public management or 'neo-liberalism' (Biersteker, 1992). The Internet has established a rich source for non-governmental policy-oriented learning for individuals and groups wishing to question the views of government. *Government is no longer the expert*. Of course, such a development poses threats as well as opportunities. The Internet does not provide a free market of ideas. Ideas are in imperfect competition with one another. Indeed, the think-tanks with the highest profile on the Internet tend to be deeply ideological, cloaking dangerous policies in creative evidence-based practice. Hence policy analysis needs to be more rigorous than ever in discerning appropriate policy transfers.

As well as acting as potential opportunity structures for policy transfer these institutional and ideational structures and the processes that emanate from them can also act as sites of struggle between competing conceptions of globalization. For example, unaccountable bureaucrats have designed the global economic architecture, such as the development of banking standards that govern economic globalization, and this has engendered significant resentment in the developing world. The securing of loans by developing countries from the IMF and elsewhere has become conditional on the introduction of Structural Adjustment Programmes that are predicated on a western interpretation of 'Good Governance' that also give rise to significant resentment (Grindle, 2004).

State-Centred Explanations of Policy Transfer

State-centred explanations of policy transfer tend to be rooted in transformational theories – that is, theories that see policy transfer as a key strategy for transforming the state. Evans and Cerny's (2004) competition state theory, for example, proceeds from the grounded empirical observation that over the past three decades the British State has transformed from an

industrial welfare state into a competition state. It is observed that successive governments, regardless of their traditional ideological complexion, have increasingly assumed the policies of an enterprise association. The core concern of government is therefore no longer seen purely in terms of traditional conceptions of social justice but in adjusting to, sustaining, promoting and expanding an open global economy in order to capture its perceived benefits (Evans and Cerny, 2004). The shift from an industrial welfare state to a competition state reflects political elite perceptions of global realities and informs state strategies for navigating and mediating processes of globalization. In modernization terms this has been articulated in: leadership rhetoric and discourse; the changing architecture of the state; the nature of political agency in which politicians and bureaucrats have become entrepreneurial agents of globalization promoting 'Great Britain Plc' in the global economy; the decline of ideological differences between political parties and the gravitation of party politics to the electoral centre ground; and the internationalization of the policy agenda through policy transfer. Hence the modernization of the public sector is a key component of the British Competition State project. As Gordon Brown himself has put it, the role of the Competition State project is to take 'the hard edges off capitalism without losing its essential wealth creating drive'. It fosters job market flexibility, but 'ensures that those displaced by it are continually retrained so that they remain employable, and it shies away from stiflingly big government, while rejecting the minimalist state favoured by some British Tories and the Republican right' (*The Times*, 8 January 1998).

Changes in government clearly provide a significant opportunity structure for policy transfer activity in what Hall (1993) refers to as periods of third order change that give rise to new policy paradigms. For example, the ascent of the Blair government to power in the UK in July 1997 led to a proliferation of policy transfer activity between Britain and the United States and signalled the rise of some new policy paradigms, although there was also a significant degree of continuity with Conservative government policy, particularly in economic matters. The close relationship which developed between the Blair and Clinton administrations was reflected in a long list of common policy initiatives that included: education (reduction of class sizes), crime (zero-tolerance, anti-truancy drives) and welfare (welfare to work and creation of work incentives) reform. In addition, the UK's former Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, became convinced of the need for Bank of England independence after discussions with Alan Greenspan, Chair of the independent US Federal Reserve Board (Central Bank), and Robert Rubin, Clinton's Treasury Secretary. Many of these items may be viewed as part of an international policy agenda

for the centre-left which was forged by Blair, Clinton and their advisors. It is within this international agenda for the centre-left that we are most likely to find examples of policy transfer between Britain and America, for example in public management (Common, 2001; James, 2001), urban (Wolman, 1992) or welfare (Dolowitz et al., 2000) policies.

Hence the upsurge of policy transfer activity between the two countries may be attributed partly to the sharing of similar policy problems and partly to ideological similarities between the New Democrats and New Labour. It was made possible, however, because elites in the two countries share a common ontology and language, together with the existence of longstanding historical legacies that are embedded economically, socially and culturally.

In Britain processes of 'hollowing-out' have also created new opportunity structures for policy transfer. The term 'hollowing-out' infers that the political powers of the central state are being eroded in particular ways. Rhodes (1994: 138–9) has argued that there are four key interrelated trends which illustrate the reach of this process in the UK: privatization and limiting the scope and forms of public intervention; the loss of functions by central government departments to alternative service delivery systems (such as Next Steps Agencies) and through market testing; the loss of functions from the British government to EU institutions; and the emergence of limits to the discretion of public servants through a public management that emphasizes managerial accountability and clearer political control created by a sharp distinction between politics and administration. A further dimension can be added to these four: the global trend towards regionalization and devolution. The rise of this new form of governance has facilitated cross-sectoral opportunities for policy transfer. Hence the private sector is increasingly used as a source of policy learning due to its expertise in particular areas (e.g. banks and credit card fraud detection, management, risk assessment or logistics).

Organizational-Centred Explanations for Policy Change

The most common explanation for the occurrence of policy transfer is that micro-level dissatisfaction with existing policy systems identified through performance measurement systems provides opportunity structures for policy transfer to occur. However, public organizations in both developed and developing countries often do not have the expertise to tackle all the problems they confront and increasingly look outside their organizations for the answers to their problems (Stone, 1999). This depicts policymakers as wholly reactive beings. There is evidence, however, that some governments have started to emphasize the importance of governmental

organizations being rational learning organizations engaged in an ongoing process of evidence-based learning (see Common, 2004). There are, of course, other organizational-centred explanations for policy change that are highlighted in the literature. Changes in organizational leadership often provide an opportunity structure for policy change to occur (Furlong, 2001). Moreover, policy transfer may be introduced for political reasons to legitimate conclusions already reached by the organization (Robertson, 1991). It may also be observed that processes of policy transfer can precipitate further processes of policy transfer. For example, it can be observed in the UK context in the case of New Labour's New Deal for unemployed 18- to 24-year-olds, that new service delivery approaches have been adopted including one-stop-shops on the United States Iowa model and the introduction of a single gateway to the benefit system (see Dolowitz et al., 2000).

Policy-Oriented Learning as a Mechanism of Policy Change

Policy transfer studies of processes of policy transfer have emphasized the role of policy transfer networks as key instruments of policy-oriented learning (Evans, 2004a; Huerta-Melchor, 2006; Ladi, 2005). These are collaborative decision structures comprising state and non-state actors that are set up with the deliberate intention of engineering policy change. It is argued that policy transfer networks matter because they shape the nature of policy outcomes emerging from the process of transfer. Moreover, the creation of a policy transfer network provides an opportunity structure for the creation of further policy transfer networks. In this sense policy transfer activity can have a momentum of its own through a process of functional spill-over.

Policy transfer networks can act as agents of globalization or counter-agents to globalization, for agents of policy transfer are often carriers of particular policy belief systems (e.g. new public management, privatization, etc.) and use their membership of formal and informal international policy networks to disseminate international policy agendas. Indeed the content of policy transfers is often informed by notions of 'best practice' disseminated by international organizations, knowledge institutions and think-tanks in the international domain, suggesting that ideological considerations play a key role in informing the content of policy transfers. These agents of transfer play a key role in facilitating policy-oriented learning through imparting technical advice, for the content of policy transfers normally reflects areas where indigenous state actors lack expertise. Agents of policy transfer that have the capacity to bridge the indigenous knowledge gap can become important players in policy transfer networks.

THE CASE FOR MULTI-LEVEL 'ACTION-BASED' POLICY TRANSFER ANALYSIS

Policy transfer analysis is not without its critics. There are four main areas in which the policy transfer approach is subject to critique. First, that policy transfer analysis cannot be distinguished from normal forms of policy-making in general (Evans and Davies, 1999; James and Lodge, 2003) and rational approaches to policy-making in particular (James and Lodge, 2003), and therefore it has no distinctive domain of enquiry. Secondly, and in my opinion most tenuously, policy transfer analysts fail to advance an explanatory theory of policy development (James and Lodge, 2003). Thirdly, that policy transfer analysts do not provide rigorous tools for evaluating whether policy transfer has occurred or not (Evans and Davies, 1999). And fourthly, that in the main policy transfer analysts fail to make their research relevant to the world of practice (Evans, 2006).

So what is the way forward for policy transfer analysis? A multi-level 'action-based' approach to policy transfer analysis would transcend some of the problems identified with the aforementioned approaches. In an article published in 1999 in the journal *Public Administration* I mapped out a multi-level, interdisciplinary approach for understanding policy transfer (Evans and Davies, 1999). The main submission underpinning this article was that policy transfer analysis provides a context for integrating some key concerns of domestic, comparative and international political science. It was also observed that the increasing complexity and uncertainty that underpins modern governance has increased the tendency for policy-makers at all levels of governance to engage in policy transfer activity. The article therefore focused on the tactics of research in policy transfer analysis and concluded that the process of policy transfer should be examined through a structure and agency approach with three dimensions: global, international and transnational levels; the macro level; and the interorganizational level. This three-dimensional model employs the notion of a policy transfer network as a middle-range level of analysis which links a particular form of collaborative governance (policy transfer), micro-decision-making in organizations, macro-systems, and global, transnational and international systems.

As Figure 4.2 illustrates, a series of empirically testable hypotheses can be deduced from the above characterization of the process of voluntary policy transfer. These may be organized into a set of independent and dependent variables in which structures should be viewed as independent variables and functions as dependent variables. Any variation in the dependent variable (function) may be the result of variation in either the structure (independent variable) or in the intervening variable (process or

---

1
Global, International and Transnational Structures

Economic, technological, ideological and institutional structures
constrain but do not determine the behaviour of state actors at
levels 2 and 3

2
The State Project

The state has some autonomy from structural forces
(economic, technological, ideological and institutional)
at the level of strategic selectivity

3
Meso Level: The Policy Transfer Network

A network of endogenous and exogenous agents in resource-
dependent relationships with some level of autonomy from
structural forces at the level of options analysis and
implementation in processes of policy transfer. Events at level 3 can
often be explained by reference to the interaction of levels 1 and 2

Source: Developed from Evans and Davies (1999).

Figure 4.2   Multi-level policy transfer analysis

mechanism). For example, exogenous or network environment changes
may lead to the creation of a policy transfer network leading to policy
change. These may be economic/market, ideological, knowledge/technical
or institutional effects. If economic factors constitute the catalyst for
change, the form of the response may be influenced by, for example, the
ideology of the Competition State. It may also be deduced that policy
changes, which emerge from a policy transfer network, can be the product
of endogenous factors such as the influence of the agent of transfer.
However, as the multi-level nature of this approach dictates, policy trans-
fer networks are but one component of an explanation of policy change.
    The development of the policy transfer network approach was primarily
a response to the absence of an adequate methodology within the existing
literature for investigating processes of policy transfer, the role of agent(s)
of policy transfer within processes of policy transfer, and policy-oriented

learning (Evans, 2004a). The application of a version of policy network analysis, which incorporates the strengths of the epistemic community approach, was thus considered an essential research tactic because it allows policy transfer analysts to analyse the role of agents in the process of policy transfer. The notion of a policy transfer network can also help us to evaluate the cognitive dimension of decision-making – that is, how decision-makers acquire knowledge. Thus through its emphasis on studying structural (organizational rules and imperatives) and interpersonal relationships (information and communication exchange) a method is provided for understanding forms of policy development within a multi-organizational setting.

Figure 4.3 illustrates how, *purely for analytical purposes*, the voluntary policy transfer process can be broken down into three broad stages involving various learning activities: pre-decision policy-oriented learning, decision processes and post-decision policy-oriented learning. The first stage involves the identification of a public policy problem, the search for ideas, the identification of agents of transfer and the establishment of a policy transfer network. The second stage involves processes of agenda-setting and decision-making and the final stage considers policy-oriented learning. The principle underpinning this scheme is the idea that policy is made and remade in the practice of implementation and is characterized by ongoing organizational learning in an evolutionary process. These putative activities within the process of voluntary policy transfer will be analysed in detail within the ensuing case study. *It must be noted that we are making no claims here about the rationality or otherwise of the policy transfer process*. The capacity for a policy to pass through these stages is contingent on environmental factors (e.g. prevailing economic conditions, changes in government) and the type of agent of transfer involved. Moreover, processes of policy transfer can break off at any point past 'search' and still result in a form of transfer (e.g. the drawing of a lesson or the transfer of rhetoric).

The scheme that we present is thus wholly illustrative and provides a frame for organizing empirical research. But in what sense is this approach action-based and relevant to practitioners? In order to ascertain the appropriateness of policy transfer research for public action the researcher should engage in the self-conscious integration of theory and practice. This works at two levels: practical application and communication for practice. The former involves identifying the elements of the research that are both relevant and irrelevant to practice and the elements that are missing from the research that would be relevant to practice. The latter focuses on developing a sense of audience. Getting research into practice is often a difficult process because policy-makers often describe research articles as

The pre-decision process of policy-oriented learning

Problem recognition	**The search for ideas and contact with potential agents of transfer**	**The emergence of an information feeder network**
economic crisis	*regime*	
globalization	*international*	
modernization	*transnational*	
policy failure	*national*	
electoral change	*regional*	
conflict	*local*	
legitimation	*cross-sectoral*	

Decision processes

Cognition and reception and the emergence of a policy transfer network	**Elite and cognitive mobilization and evaluation of options** (*agenda-setting*)	**Decision enters formal policy stream**

Post-decision processes of policy-oriented learning

Implementation	**Monitoring and evaluation**	**Ongoing processes of policy learning**
operational delivery		

Process of policy evolution

Figure 4.3   The emergence and development of a voluntary policy transfer network

being inaccessible (Burton, 2006). These principles can be included within a logical framework matrix in order to aid the application of the principles to practical examples (see Dale, 2003). As Table 4.1 illustrates, the logical matrix summarizes the constituent elements of the research and links them to each other, allowing for conclusions to be reached as to the utility of research for public action. Moreover, the logical framework also demonstrates the academic benefits of prescriptive analysis as it draws attention to putative problems in theorization, method, data analysis and synthesis. The matrix of the logical framework is organized around four columns: a

Table 4.1 *A logical framework for assessing the utility of policy transfer research for public action*

1. Narrative summary	2. Verifiable indicators of rigour	3. Means of verification	4. Critical reflexivity
Goal – the overall practical aim to which the research is expected to contribute	Identifying the measures that show the potential of the research for public action – theory, method, data analysis	Identifying the sources of information and methods used to show achievement of the goal	Reflecting on the utility of the research for public action
Theoretical approach	Is the theory or approach verifiable? Can it be tested against the world of observation?	Is the theoretical approach tenable? If they exist, are the core propositions of the theory tenable?	Is there inherent bias in the theory? Does the theory need to be reconceptualized? What amendments to the theory need to be made to make for sounder knowledge claims?
Methodology	Does the methodology allow for the verification of the theory? Are these tried and trusted methods?	Have appropriate documentary, qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods been used?	Is there inherent bias in the method? Has the evidence been obtained properly?
Data analysis and synthesis	Is the evidence credible? Has enough evidence been generated?	Have the data been verified through triangulation and the use of counterfactuals?	Is the evidence reliable and generalizable?
Self-conscious integration of theory and practice	What elements of the research are relevant to practice? What elements of the research are irrelevant to practice? What elements of the research could have been relevant to practice but are missing from the research agenda? Is the communication of the research accessible to practice?		

narrative summary of the potential of the research for public action; verifiable indicators; means of verification; and critical reflexivity.

IN CONCLUSION: AVOIDING THE LEARNING PARADOX

Policy transfer analysis can only be distinctive from the analysis of normal forms of policy-making if it focuses on the remarkable movement of ideas cross-culturally between systems of governance through policy transfer networks with the intermediation of agents of policy transfer. This should involve the study of different forms of voluntary and completed transfers, failed transfers and 'in process' transfers. Moreover, while policy transfer analysis remains weak as an explanatory theory of policy change if used in isolation from other theories of policy change, this chapter demonstrates that transfer analysts are busy developing a common idiom of theoretical and methodological discourse from which lessons can be drawn and hypotheses developed. Policy transfer analysis thus presents a valuable field of study for integrating common research concerns of scholars of domestic, comparative and international politics insofar as it provides a lens for observing both the changing nature of the nation state and the role of state actors and institutions in promoting new forms of complex globalization.

The question remains, however, as to how seriously British public organizations take international learning, as the evidence is at best confined to particular policy arenas which reflect the core concerns of the Competition State project. Consider, for instance, the modernization of the Department for International Development and the British Council or the morally dubious role of the Department of Health's international department and its role in exporting public–private partnerships in health care (Berman, 1995). Moreover, as we noted earlier following the *Modernising Government* White Paper (Cabinet Office, 1999), the establishment of the CMPS and the Strategy Unit in the Cabinet Office was a manifestation of the government's intent to improve public policy-making and management, and learning lessons from abroad formed a key component of this strategy.

The importance of international lesson-drawing, however, has never been effectively integrated into research, training and development activities civil service-wide, despite a growing concern that the capacity of the UK central government to engage in innovative policy development has been seriously eroded. We can offer a variety of reasons for why this has been the case. It could be a reflection of the absence of political

leadership or service-wide leadership on international matters, or merely a product of cost containment or the legacy of the colonial era when the British civil service led the world in public service innovation and thus few lessons from abroad were deemed worthy of the plane fare. It is therefore difficult to refute the argument that the British civil service believes itself to be a net exporter rather than importer of policy ideas. In those areas where Britain has imported ideas it has hardly been an unmitigated success (e.g. the Child Support Agency, New Deal for Communities, the action zone experiments, among others). This has mainly been due to the rather misguided notion that Britain can only draw progressive lessons from the United States despite significant differences in political culture, systems and public policy belief systems (Deacon, 2000). In stark contrast, the case study evidence derived from the study of international policy transfer suggests that setting limits on the scope of learning activity may severely prejudice organizational capacity to engineer successful policy change.

Hence British policy-makers have a habit of flouting the key conditions for successful cross-cultural learning: the need for comprehensive search activity; cultural assimilation; adequate political, human, technological and/or economic resources; simplicity over complexity; and the importance of regard for indigenous practices and existing policy systems. 'Rational' lesson-drawing which avoids the 'learning paradox' is to be encouraged, even in conditions of rapid change where numerous alternative approaches are available. In other words, British policy-makers are advised that lesson-drawing can be a rational and progressive learning activity but only if the programme that is transferred is compatible with the value system of the recipient organization, culturally assimilated through comprehensive evaluation and piloting, and builds on existing organizational strengths.

REFERENCES

Adler, E. and S. Bernstein, (2005), 'Knowledge in power: the epistemic construction of global governance', in M. Barnett and R. Duvall (eds), *Power in Global Governance*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 294–319.

Bennett, C. (1991), 'Review article: what is policy convergence and what causes it?', *British Journal of Political Science*, 21, 215–33.

Berman, P. (1995), 'Health sector reform in developing countries: making health development sustainable', *Health Policy*, 32 (April–June), 13–28.

Biersteker, T. (1992), 'The "triumph" of neoclassical economics in the developing world: policy convergence and the bases of governance in the international economic order', in J. Rosenau and E. Otto Czempiel (eds), *Governance Without*

Government: Order and Change in World Politics, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 102–32.

Burton, P. (2006), 'Modernising the policy process: making policy research more significant', *Policy Studies*, 27 (3), 173–85.

Cabinet Office (1999), *Modernising Government*, London: HMSO.

Cabinet Office (2001), *Better Policy-Making*, London: HMSO.

Cabinet Office (CMPS) (2002), *International Comparisons in Policy-Making Toolkit*, London: CMPS.

Common, R. (2001), *Public Management and Policy Transfer in Southeast Asia*, Aldershot: Ashgate.

Common, R. (2004), 'Organisational learning in a political environment: improving policy-making in UK government', *Policy Studies*, 25, 72–97.

Dale, R. (2003), 'The logical framework: an easy escape, a straitjacket, or a useful planning tool?', *Development in Practice*, 13 (1), 57–70.

Davies, H., S. Nutley and P. Smith (eds) (2000), *What Works? Evidence-Based Policy and Practice in Public Service Policy*, Bristol: Policy Press.

Deacon, A. (2000), 'Learning from the US? The influence of American ideas upon "New Labour" thinking on welfare reform', *Policy and Politics*, 28, 5–18.

Dolowitz, D. (1997), 'British employment policy in the 1980s: learning from the American experience', *Governance*, 10, 23–42.

Dolowitz, D. and D. Marsh (1996), 'Who learns what from whom: a review of the policy transfer literature', *Political Studies*, 44, 343–57.

Dolowitz, D. and D. Marsh (2000), 'Learning from abroad: the role of policy transfer in contemporary policy-making', *Governance*, 13, 5–24.

Dolowitz, D., R. Hulme, N. Ellis and F. O'Neal (2000), *Policy Transfer and British Social Policy*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Evans, M. (ed.) (2004a), *Policy Transfer in Global Perspective*, Aldershot: Ashgate.

Evans, M. (2004b), 'Policy transfer in a competition state: Britain's New Deal', in M. Evans (ed.), *Policy Transfer in Global Perspective*, Aldershot: Ashgate, pp. 64–78.

Evans, M. (2006), 'At the interface between theory and practice – policy transfer and lesson-drawing', *Public Administration*, 84 (2), 479–89.

Evans, M. and P.G. Cerny (2004), 'Globalisation and public policy under New Labour', *Policy Studies*, 25 (1), 84–107.

Evans, M. and J. Davies (1999), 'Understanding policy transfer: a multi-level, multi-disciplinary perspective', *Public Administration*, 77, 361–86.

Furlong, P. (2001), 'Constitutional change as policy transfer; policy transfer as constitutional change', ESRC Future Governance Programme, http://www.hull.ac.uk/futgov/Papers/APSAFurlongPau.pdf.

Greener, I. (2001), 'Social learning and macroeconomic policy in Britain', *Journal of Public Policy*, 21, 1–22.

Grindle, M. (2004), 'Good enough governance', *Governance*, 17 (4), 525–48.

Haas, E. (1980), 'Why collaborate? Issue-linkage and international regimes', *World Politics*, 32, 357–405.

Hall, P. (1993), 'Policy paradigms, social learning and the state: the case of economic policy-making in Britain', *Comparative Politics*, 25, 275–96.

Hood, C. (1995), 'Contemporary public management: a new global paradigm', *Public Policy and Administration*, 10, 104–17.

Howlett, M. (2000), 'Beyond legalism? Policy ideas, implementation styles and

emulation-based convergence in Canadian and U.S. environmental policy', *Journal of Public Policy*, 20 (3), 305–29.

Huerta-Melchor, O. (2006), *Understanding International Agents of Policy Transfer – the Case of the OECD and Mexican Administrative Reform*, PhD thesis, York: University of York.

Ikenberry, J.G. (1990), 'The international spread of privatisation policies: inducements, learning and policy bandwaggoning', in E. Suleiman and J. Waterbury (eds.), *The Political Economy of Public Sector Reform*, Boulder: Westview Press, pp. 88–110.

James, O. (2001), 'Business models and the transfer of business-like central government agencies', *Governance*, 14 (2), 233–52.

James, O. and M. Lodge (2003), 'The limitations of "policy transfer" and "lesson drawing" for public policy research', *Political Studies Review*, 1 (2), 179–93.

Ladi, S. (2005), *Globalisation, Policy Transfer and Policy Research Institutes*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Lasswell, H. (1970), 'The emerging conception of the policy sciences', *Policy Sciences*, 1, 3–14.

Majone, G. (1991), 'Cross-national sources of regulatory policy making in Europe and the United States', *Journal of Public Policy*, 11, 79–106.

Marmor, T. (1997), 'Global health policy reform: misleading mythology or learning opportunity?', in C. Altenstetter and J. Bjorkman (eds), *Health Policy Reform, National Variations and Globalization*, Basingstoke: Macmillan.

May, P. (1992), 'Policy learning and failure', *Journal of Public Policy*, 12, 331–54.

Olsen, J. and B.G. Peters (1996), 'Learning from experience?', in J. Olsen and B.G. Peters (eds), *Lessons From Experience: Experiential Learning in Administrative Reforms in Eight Democracies*, Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, pp. 1–35.

Padgett, S. (2003), 'Between synthesis and emulation: EU policy transfer in the power sector', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 10 (2), 227–45.

Page, E.C. (2000), 'Future governance and the literature on policy transfer and lesson drawing', paper prepared for the ESRC Future Governance Programme Workshop on Policy Transfer, 28 January.

Pawson, R. (2002), 'Evidence and policy and naming and shaming', *Policy Studies*, 23, 211–30.

Pedler, M., J. Burgoyne and T. Boydell (1991), *The Learning Company*, Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill.

Peters, B.G. (1997), 'Policy transfers between governments: the case of administrative reforms', *West European Politics*, 20, 71–88.

Rhodes, R.A.W. (1994), 'The hollowing-out of the state: the changing nature of the public service in Britain', *Political Quarterly*, 65, 138–51.

Rhodes, R.A.W. (1996), 'The new governance: governing without government', *Political Studies*, XLIV, 652–67.

Risse-Kappen, T. (ed.) (1995), *Bringing Transnationals Back In: Non State Actors, Domestic Structures and International Institutions*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Robertson, D. (1991), 'Political conflict and lesson drawing', *Journal of Public Policy*, 11, 55–78.

Rose, R. (1991), 'What is lesson drawing?', *Journal of Public Policy*, 11, 3–30.

Rose, R. (1993), *Lesson Drawing in Public Policy: A Guide to Learning Across Time and Space*, Chatham, NJ: Chatham House.

Rose, R. (2005), *Learning from Comparative Public Policy: A Practical Guide*, London and New York: Routledge.

Rosenau, J. (2000), 'Change, complexity and governance in a globalising space', in J. Pierre and G. Peters (eds), *Debating Governance – Authority, Steering and Democracy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 167–200.

Stone, D. (1996a), 'Non-governmental policy transfer: the strategies of independent policy institutes', paper presented to ESRC Research Seminar, Department of Politics and International Studies, University of Birmingham, 26–27 October.

Stone, D. (1996b), *Capturing the Political Imagination: Think Tanks and the Policy Process*, London: Frank Cass.

Stone, D. (1999), 'Learning lessons and transferring policy across time, space and disciplines', *Politics*, 19, 51–9.

Stone, D. (ed.) (2000a), *Banking on Knowledge: The Genesis of the Global Development Network*, London: Routledge.

Stone, D. (2000b), 'Non-governmental policy transfer: the strategies of independent policy institutes', *Governance*, 13, 45–62.

Tonry, M. (2004), *Punishment and Politics – Evidence and Emulation in the Making of English Crime Control Policy*, Cullompton, UK: Willan.

Tushman, M. and D. Nadler (1996), 'Organizing for innovation', in K. Starkey (ed.), *How Organizations Learn*, London: International Thomson Business Press, pp. 135–56.

Walker, J.L. (1969), 'The diffusion of innovations among American states', *American Political Science Review*, 63, 880–99.

Wincott, D. (1999), 'Globalization and European integration', in C. Hay and D. Marsh (eds.), *Demystifying Globalization*, London: Macmillan, pp. 168–90.

Wolman, H. (1992), 'Understanding cross national policy transfers: the case of Britain and the US', *Governance*, 5, 27–45.

PART 2

Applications and actors

5.   Professions and professionalism
Andrew Massey

INTRODUCTION

However much successive governments around the world have acted upon the precepts of New Public Management (NPM) over the last 30 years, imposing its prescriptions and replacing professionals as office holders in the public sector with 'generic managers', the professions remain important in the functioning of government and governance. It may be argued that there is no single *profession* of management, but that there are professionals who become managers and within the public sector there are generic managers who are employed for most of their career within one field of expertise, such as health, education or social work. Adherents to NPM have sought to control professional power within the public sector through the managerializing of offices traditionally held by senior professionals and by arrogating to those managers decisions over resource allocation and strategic policy making, decisions traditionally taken by professionals.

These developments in public sector management have been buttressed by an increasing stress on citizens as consumers of services; as clients rather than passive recipients. Furthermore, experience of this over many years has led to a realization that the

> public no longer want to simply put a naïve and touching faith in the proper behaviour and abilities of the professionals charged with (and paid for) delivering public and private services, they no longer simply wish to 'trust' them; they want assurances as to their competency. The 'tick-box mentality' and blame culture engendered by thirty years of Taylorist managerialism has contributed to the position of venerable professions as fallen idols, but a vacuum exists in the position they held in public esteem . . . Partly this is because of a failure to meet expectations and partly a restructuring of the relationship between professionals and the new generation of generic managers found throughout the public sector, managers (for example) who may be health service or social service managers, but have no medical or social work qualifications, or may be university faculty managers, but have no academic background. (Massey, 2009: 9)

It may be seen that this is part of a long process of change with regard to the role and reputation of professionals within the public service.

A generation ago Mosher observed the wide range of professional competencies within the US public service in his seminal *Democracy and the Public Service* (1968), adding later that throughout the period from the New Deal through to Carter's presidency the US public sector had increasingly become a technocratic system of politics with both private sector professional experts and federally employed professional experts setting the policy agenda and making decisions informed by their professional expertise (1978: 144–5). It was a similar pattern to that found in Western Europe and Australasia, the professional groups dominating much of the policy process in many areas of the growing welfare state, both as public employees and private sector lobbyists, as well as the phenomenon of professionals themselves increasingly being elected to public office (Mosher, 1978; Sherwood, 1997). It was the growth of this symbiotic relationship between politicians and publicly employed or funded bureaucrats that was criticized by Public Choice theorists and NPM advocates, and it led to the growth of managerialism as an attempt to control their 'producer dominance' and curb the power of the professionals (Olson, 1971; Pollitt, 1990).

Whilst the adherents of NPM attacked professional power from their perspective of critiquing producer dominance and an expanding welfare state squeezing the productive sectors of the economy, there were also those within the new social movements who were critical of the professions for their perceived elitism and socially restrictive backgrounds (Illich, 1977; Freidson, 1973). In the US and Europe the costs of a professional education were often prohibitive and the higher professions with lucrative salaries were overwhelmingly dominated by white middle-class males (Mosher, 1978: 148; Wilding, 1982). Alongside moves to reorient the public services to be more client focused there have been determined efforts to increase the demographic diversity of the professionals delivering those services (O'Donnell, 2008). The professions, like the public sector generally, have become much more diversified and reflective of the wider society over the last 20 years but the prestige of the professions and of the public sector more widely remains lower than in previous generations, especially in the US where the Reagan nostrum that government is 'the problem' remains powerful (Sherwood, 1997). In many ways, however, the issues to be addressed have moved on, not just in terms of addressing diversity within the professions, and their client focus rather than producer protectionism, but also the growth of government through governance and the belief that professional power within the global economy has drifted to an expanding 'third sector' where professional associations remain self-interested actors, indistinguishable from part of the 'privileged elite' (Candler, 2000: 43–58). The debate has moved on from the modern to the post-modern; it now has

to explore concepts such as global governance, global public goods and transnational policy networks (Pagaza and Argyriades, 2009).

The rest of this chapter will explore these issues in more detail. In particular the next section will discuss the nature of professions and professional power before linking this to the concept of governance and the professions. The chapter concludes with reference to the professional role in practice in setting out policy options and engaging in governance and public sector management.

PROFESSIONS AND PROFESSIONAL POWER

Professional power within the policy process varies over time and place and between professions, some being more autonomous and influential than others (Massey, 1988). It is useful to view the professions as though on a continuum, with 'pure professions' being an ideal type at one end of the continuum and 'quasi-professional ancillary occupations' at the other. It is the case that most occupations are located further towards the latter end, with only the older 'traditional' professions such as law, medicine and perhaps accountancy and architecture occupying a place nearer the pure, ideal type (Massey, 1988: 28–34). Whilst the ideal of pure professions, autonomous and free from managerial oversight, is a distant and unrealizable goal for many occupations, it remains a quest for most of them. The professional continuum must not be seen as being rigid; rather, it is a fluid, ever-shifting process that varies not only according to occupations, but also according to where they may be found within policy networks, the issue or service they are concerned with, other groups with whom they are allied and the other issues of salience within the differentiated polity which is where they are located, and their public sector context (Rhodes et al., 2003). Whilst not slipping into a Path Dependency perspective, it should be remembered that the context in which professionals operate is complex and must include the impact of time and history (i.e. things like professional culture developed over generations), the legal and ethical framework in which they operate, and even sunk costs in the form of fees paid for training and professional development (Pollitt, 2008).

Even the quasi-professional occupations seeking professional status from their ancillary position exercise a measure of power within public sector management. This power increases with the level of professional autonomy the occupation enjoys. Wilding, writing before the full force of NPM began to be felt, observed it as being exercised in four main ways:

1. Power in policy making; for example in health care, teaching, town planning and the law, the professional occupations involved have shaped the formulation and delivery of many policies and their successful delivery depends upon professional support through control over the requisite knowledge required for policy implementation; the actual delivery of a service (Wilding, 1982: 18–29).
2. Power to define needs and problems; this is fundamental to the exercise of professional power, for example the core of claims to professional status is the responsibility to give to a client what they need (as defined by the professional) rather than what they want (Wilding, 1982: 29). 'Professional definitions of needs and problems are a powerful influence on policy', but the narrowness of the professional vision and the focus on policy from a professionally parochial perspective proved problematic as the welfare state expanded (Wilding, 1982: 28–32). The Public Choice critique of producer dominance and the subsequent dynamics of NPM to increase managerialism, marketization and the shift to consumer choice in the delivery of public services have been the response.
3. Power in resource allocation; this can occur at the level of strategic planning decisions (where professional power is really more about influence than power) and at the 'street' level. For example, in health care doctors' decisions on treatment account for substantial amounts of funding and resource use; hence in the UK the introduction of organisations such as the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence to oversee this power. But in all professionally dominated areas the individual professionals exercise power over resources; lawyers in the use of court time and clients' money, architects, social workers, teachers, and so forth.
4. Power over people; power in policy making is also power over people in that it affects who gets what in services (Wilding, 1982: 42–4). But it is also direct power over peoples' lives in that the decisions made by professionals can have life and death consequences in health care and life changing impacts elsewhere. Professionals also tend to dominate managerial hierarchies, so in that sense they tend to be the ones who give the orders to substantial numbers of fellow employees.

As the incessant reforms of NPM, aligned with the forces of globalization (and within the European Union of Europeanization) continue to transform the institutions and procedures of public administration, it may be seen that the role and position of professional groups become more complex.

Previously they may have been employed as part of a public sector

organization charged with delivering a service, for example within a department or ministry, a nationalized industry or local authority. With the growth of governance and the differentiated polity the professionals are now just as likely to be employed by a private sector contractor, a non-governmental organization (NGO) or transnational corporation. Wherever they are employed, however, professionals engaged to deliver a public service must serve according to the ethical code of their professional body. For the most part there is no conflict between allegiance to an employer and adherence to an ethical code in that good employers 'are influenced by (and in turn influence) the professions to which their staff belong, as do the increasingly interventionist publicly-established regulatory bodies and their regimes' (Massey and Hutton, 2006: 21). But in some areas, especially in consultancy for large projects, this dual allegiance can 'lead to a perception of a conflict of interest, even where all concerned are acting to the best of their professional ability' and are committed through clear contractual and financial incentives to seek to further the aims of the public institution employing or contracting them to carry out a service (Massey and Hutton, 2006: 21–2). Traditionally within many public services, especially the central government departments of the UK, individual professional advice is subsumed as part of a hierarchical team, with professionals being 'on tap' to contribute their skills within a broader organizational context (Massey and Hutton, 2006). With the growth of a target culture and the decisive shift towards a managerialist solution to social problems (rather than an evidence-based professional solution) managers overrule professional advice and professional advice itself is trimmed to suit the short-term financially driven goals of employers.

Given that professionals are employed to deploy their expertise, any managerially inspired inhibition on the part of professionals to speak truth unto power – or the simple refusal to follow professional best practice – can have difficult consequences. For examples of what may happen when managers ignore the advice of technical professionals in order to meet organizational goals there are clear cut cases:

in the US the 1986 *Challenger* disaster; a case study that all managers in charge of technical professions should absorb (Weil, 2005). Other examples of the professional paradox may be of a more *ethical* nature, for example pressure by an organization's senior executives on professionals in the health, education or police services to meet targets, which may cause conflicts for professionals seeking to balance quality with quantity measures and in some cases may lead to the outright falsification of data, or a more flexible interpretation of the rules (Loveday, 2000). The managerialization of previously professionally-dominated organizations within a regime of inspection and performance measurement has certainly led to an almost constant process of 'game-playing' by

> those professionals in order to maximize benefits and minimize risks within that system. (Massey and Hutton, 2006: 22)

More recently in the UK, tragic child abuse cases and economically damaging short-term energy policy decisions have occurred, possibly as a result of financial pressures and target driven approaches to areas where professionals used to dominate the policy process (Massey, 2009).

It would be useful for academics and practitioners alike to reconsider the role of the professions for the delivery of public services. It may be that in order to assist the policy process and reduce the regulatory burden upon the public sector, there is a need to ensure the internalization of 'ethical' norms by those acting in a professional capacity. These may be overseen, even policed, by the various professional boards and colleges linked to the Nolan code, as designed by the first Chair of the UK's Committee for Standards in Public Life. This set out the Seven Principles of Public Life and echoes of these principles are found within the rules, regulations and codes of professional bodies. The problem for public sector professions is that when they are faced with the dilemma of carrying out the wishes of an employer to the detriment of their professional codes, they often lack the provision of a statutory commitment to those codes to support them in their advice to senior managers. For example, expulsion from the professional body is often irrelevant to the individual and their employer. If they are expelled from the 'profession' they 'may continue to work in an undiminished capacity as it is their employer who decides the issues here, not their professional body' (Massey and Hutton, 2006: 24). Clearly there are exceptions to this, the most obvious being in the 'higher' professions of law and medicine. But in any case suspensions and expulsions are rare, and in some professions such as engineering they hardly occur at all. In this objective economic sense

> many professionals working in, or for, the public sector and responsible for delivering goods and services to the public view the membership of a professional body in terms that are much diminished from those for doctors, lawyers and accountants. If they are unlicensed, and the applicable professional institutions do not have the power to insist on licensing practitioners, then the real professional code is the one imposed by the government through its regulators. (Hutton and Massey, 2006: 24)

The regulatory framework imposed by government on public and private sector organizations, most with the force of criminal statutes, is the way in which the exercise of professional power is controlled. The only way to enforce non-statutory codes of ethics therefore is through the civil law, but even this is fraught with difficulty. A less costly and less regulated approach

may be through the modernization of the professional ethic, backed by the statutory licensing of individual professionals; professional ethics and ethical behaviour need to become part of the 'professional DNA' in order to be effective. We have argued this point at length elsewhere (Hutton and Massey, 2006).

An alternative option to that of extensive regulation by governmental agencies, especially when faced by the reluctance of the courts to become involved, is to fully professionalize occupations, such as civil engineers, and ensure that members require a licence to practise. Furthermore, that this licence is contingent on working according to a clear and transparent code of ethics, based on the Nolan principles; and that this is also policed in a transparent and accountable way by the professional institutions. It should be noted here that often codes of 'conduct' and 'ethics' are used interchangeably by the institutions themselves and the literature, but that there are often differences between professions and within professions working in different sectors. The important point is that codes of conduct ought to be based on ethical concerns and may, therefore, include aspects of codes of ethics.

As an example of this, the Engineering Council UK (ECUK), which is moving towards greater institutional transparency and individual professional accountability, has guidelines for the structuring of institutional codes of conduct that include the firm observation that the Code of Professional Conduct of each Nominated Engineering Institution should place a personal obligation on its members to act with integrity, in the public interest, and to exercise all reasonable professional skill and care to:

- Prevent avoidable danger to health or safety.
- Prevent avoidable adverse impact on the environment.
- Maintain their competence. Undertake only professional tasks for which they are competent. Disclose relevant limitations of competence.
- Accept appropriate responsibility for work carried out under their supervision. Treat all persons fairly, without bias, and with respect. Encourage others to advance their learning and competence.
- Avoid, where possible, real or perceived conflict of interest. Advise affected parties when such conflicts arise. Observe the proper duties of confidentiality owed to appropriate parties.
- Reject bribery.
- Assess relevant risks and liability, and if appropriate hold professional indemnity insurance.
- Notify the Institution if convicted of a criminal offence or on becoming bankrupt or disqualified as a Company Director.

● Notify the Institution of any significant violation of the Institution's Code of Conduct by another member. (Massey and Hutton, 2006: 29)

Yet these aims are not mandatory in law. Public sector management that is based on the behaviour of professionals for its effectiveness, upon behaviour not backed by statute, is 'trust based'. It is a bottom-up approach: 'For key services, like health and education, the drive for improvement should come from the professionals working with management at the local level. This model has been damaged by growing public mistrust of professionals and high-profile organizational failures, for example the controversies over organ retention in hospitals and child abuse cases' (Black, 2006: 4, in Massey and Hutton, 2006: 30).

Statutory licensing of professionals would support professional bodies in their oversight of individual members, and it would also support and protect individual professionals in their dealings with their employers and their customers, providing a legitimate counter-balance to managerial and market pressures. It would also take the debate about what it means to be a professional beyond the old 'characterization of professionalism as an occupational project of market closure and market enhancement'; returning, perhaps, to a discussion about professionalism being a process of effective occupational control and accountability, with clear echoes of Durkheim's view of the professions as a kind of moral community, or Tawney's argument that professionalism is a force 'capable of subjecting rampant individualism to the needs of the community' (Aldridge and Evetts, 2003: 548; Evetts, 2003: 22–7, in Massey and Hutton, 2006: 30).

GOVERNANCE AND THE PROFESSIONS

'Governance' as a term has entered the political and academic discourse to refer to the process whereby any discussion of public policy and administration needs to address the inclusion of civil society and economic, professional and social interest groups in the consideration of what it means to govern. That inclusion, however, is neither comprehensive, nor on an equal basis, as some groups and networks are exclusive and hegemonic, with national (and sub-national) politicians as well as ordinary citizens engaged in a struggle to hold them to account (Anyang' Nyong'o, 2002). Just as there may be *good* governance conversely there must also exist *bad* governance; the latter lacking sufficient procedures to effectively enforce accountability through transparency and effective redress of wrongdoing. It may be argued that governance is 'rules, processes and behaviour that

affect the way in which powers are exercised . . . particularly as regards openness, participation, accountability . . . and . . . effectiveness' (Massey, 2005: 8). The contemporary concept of governance means it is used as a description of the complexities of modern political systems and that with few exceptions the reality is that hierarchical and bureaucratically centralized government is no longer the dominant form of political system. Yet the pluralistic structures of power and service delivery that now exist are (or more accurately remain) dominated by powerful coalitions of interests.

The differentiated polity thesis argues that a nation's core executive is less able to ensure the effective implementation of its policies, relying on diplomacy and negotiations to get its way. This perspective recognizes the expansion and strengthening of civic society institutions, NGOs and international corporations in the delivery of previously government-owned and run services (Massey, 2005: 6). The disparity of power and influence that exists between different institutions is an important element of this perspective, but those political and civil society institutions that seek to engage in (or promote) good governance may aspire to be:

1. transparent;
2. accountable for their actions;
3. accountable not just for their actions, but also in terms of their management, project implementation, financial management, and information disclosure;

  and to:

4. operate ethically;
5. operate beyond the boundaries of race, ethnicity, religion, culture and politics;
6. respect and support individual human rights. (Omelicheva, 2004: 8, in Massey, 2005: 9)

Without specific actions and procedures to implement these aspirations, they simply remain *aims*; it is professional groups and professionalized policy networks that can assist in operationalizing these aims and put them into practice.

Given the integral part professionals play within policy networks and, by extension, within the strategic, meso- and micro-level decision making that takes place, the way in which they conduct themselves with regard to their professional codes of ethics is instructive and important. As Plant has noted, trust, in a number of guises, is a key aspect of the process

(Plant, 2003: 560). The concepts of professionalism and a public service ethic 'have been intertwined for generations; they have also been linked to more obviously Victorian concepts of modernization (rather than post-modernization)' (Massey and Hutton, 2006: 4). The growth of a public service ethic from Victorian times was closely linked to the development of the modern idea of the professional and the ideology of professionalism. The 'members of professions saw themselves as gentlemen, not only in the sense of social status, but as being bound together by common professional ties, by common experiences, particularly at school and university, and by common norms' (Plant, 2003: 561, in Massey and Hutton, 2006: 4–5). Furthermore, the issue of professional expertise, the control of knowledge and the way it was exercised for the common good, became part of the wider and long-lasting debate about the role and purpose of the public sector and public administration. It may be argued that the growth of public administration based on knowledge, 'professionalism and expertise raised deep questions about trust' (Hutton and Massey, 2006: 5). For example, if:

> medically qualified people were making demands for more public involvement in health issues, then there was clearly a question as to how far public officials with this expertise could in fact be trusted. The point was in fact made with great insight by the Permanent Secretary to the Treasury in 1871 when R.W. Lingen said: 'I do not know who is to check the assertions of experts when the government has once undertaken a class of duties which none but such persons understand'. While this was particularly so in the field of public health, the point could be generalized over a range of fields in public administration. (Plant, 2003: 561, in Massey and Hutton, 2006: 5)

This is a problem that continues to beset those concerned with setting strategic policies for the public sector and seeking efficient, effective and accountable delivery of services. It applies equally in terms of engineering expertise, education, social services and other technical issues, as well as the modern generic manager. Plant argued that originally the approach was to trust such people: 'as professionals bound by an ethical code or ethos, and that they are gentlemen who are seeking to do the public good and not recommending schemes which will mean their own enrichment', (Plant, 2003: 561, in Massey and Hutton, 2006: 5).

Much of the analysis of these developments may be found in work on the concept of the 'hollowing out of the state' and the differentiated nature of the political structures and processes in economically advanced countries. Many of the government policies attempted in those countries tend to fail, either wholly or in part. This situation is not because of a lack of commitment on the part of public servants, but because with power

and authority (in the UK for example) ebbing away from London to Brussels, the devolved countries and powerful interest groups within the international economy, British national government has lost the ability to impose its will through the old hierarchical institutions. This is as true in other parts of Europe and indeed the wider world as it is in London or Washington. The modern world is immune to several of the techniques that an old-style national government may use to modernize itself. Much change is imposed from outside; 'it is the result of external triggers forcing governments and institutions to respond to change elsewhere by changing themselves' (Massey and Pyper, 2005: 172). We live in an age of super complexity and a bewildering diversity of interests and mechanisms of service provision. Ensuring accountable, transparent and ethical governance is increasingly difficult.

In previous generations this was partly done by fostering the notion (some may argue the 'myth', or rituals) of a public service ethic. This ethic may be characterized by including:

- Motivation: individuals do not enter the public service for self-interested reasons, but to serve a 'common good' which it is assumed exists and may be identified.
- Professionalism: linked to motivation, in that professionals often claim a vocation to serve the public, in doing this they are guided by professional values which emphasise disinterested service. Their specialized knowledge, over which they have control, is put to serve social needs.
- Trust: there can be no public service ethic without the central place for trust. Trust between citizens and the agreement that the public sector is there to deliver certain sorts of public goods funded from taxes. There is a general requirement here for efficiency, effectiveness and honesty. Trust also between government and citizens, in that citizens trust government to deliver these services in a fair, just, timely, honest and efficient manner. Trust between government and the public sector, in that ministers rely on officials to deliver services and advice impartially, honestly and efficiently. Trust between the people who work in the public sector, the notion that, whatever the organizational affiliation, there is a general sense of public service that overrides parochial concerns. Trust between the public sector and private sector partners, this will form the basis of effective contracts and efficient delivery. Trust between clients and public sector professionals, the most obvious example being patients trusting to the medical expertise, and integrity of NHS professionals.

- Impartiality: often seen as the first virtue of public administration and bureaucracy, central also to the rule of law.
- Judgement: public officials and professionals are expected to exercise their judgement and to do so impartially, fairly, justly and without seeking to enrich themselves at the expense of the common good. (Taken from Plant, 2003: 562–5, in Massey and Hutton, 2006: 12–14)

From their perspective, Public Choice theorists dismissed this 'myth', noting that professionals and officials were as much motivated by self-interest as by altruism. As noted in a preceding section of this chapter, their NPM antidote to this advanced consumer-based, service-oriented solutions to the perceived problems of service delivery, including advocating the need for disenfranchising professional groups and substituting managerial structures to control them. Trust was something to be earned, not blindly given to professional groups, however much they protested their aims were those of the public good (Massey and Hutton, 2006: 15).

Accordingly, throughout the 1990s successive governments established a range of inspectorates and audit bodies. Both practitioners and observers noted that in 'a public service culture that had become increasingly contract-driven, inspectorates were an appealing device', providing, however tenuously and without clear evidence, 'a reassurance that those in government were still in control of the standards that mattered most to citizens and consumers' (Terry, 2003: 1). It may be argued, however, that they are 'a blunt instrument for improvement, and they represent a permanent bureaucratic overhead', the costs of which have to be borne by taxpayers and those organizations over which the inspectorates have oversight (Terry, 2003: 1). As noted previously, a concomitant to the regulatory and managerialist state is the downgrading of professional power and autonomy; the inspection and auditing authorities have been key players in this, allowing managers to use the 'tick-box mentality' and performance indicator game playing to stifle professional innovation and entrepreneurialism (Massey and Pyper, 2005: 176; Hutton and Massey, 2006). Governments remain dependent on the knowledge and compliance of professional groups to deliver services, that is, to implement policies, but in some areas of public service the power of managers over professionals, the loss of autonomy, poor pay and the burdens of audit and inspection have conspired to de-motivate many public sector professionals and thereby frustrate the enthusiastic implementation of many policies (Terry, 2003: 2–3; Massey, 2002). Terry, amongst others, argues the way forward to secure 'real' change is to engage with the professional groups and explore how things actually work in the public sector, alongside initiatives

to promote training, career development and leadership in public management (Terry, 2003: 3, in Massey and Hutton, 2006).

It is worth reiterating the competing dynamics between the public and the private sectors, because as the two merge ever more closely as a result of global economic imperatives and the evolving structures of governance, the role of professionals who serve their employer's interests above those of the public can conflict with the 'public interest', however that may be defined. Clearly people in business act in order to maximize their utilities both as producers and consumers, being concerned with the needs of the firm and the customer, not with some general idea of the common good and the public interest; the dominant relationship in the market is that of contract, within which self-interested individuals bargain together to arrive at as mutually advantageous agreements as they can. Similarly, the world of business does not have to be linked to the principle of impartiality (Plant, 2003: 565). In order to retain and maintain public support for government, however, officials in their capacity as public sector managers must be seen to be governed not by the profit motive, but by the principles of accountability, redress for obvious grievances and the pursuit of the public interest or interests. Whilst being under the democratic control of elected politicians, public sector professionals are expected to serve broader interests than ministers. That is, they are expected to behave in the public or national interest, although remaining accountable for their actions to ministers and through them to the electorate. Public sector professionals are responsible for their individual actions and must account for them as individuals as such; therefore, there is a need to protect them from the short-term interests of party politicians. It is within this complexity that we find one of the most difficult paradoxes of professionals employed within the structures of modern governance: how to reconcile these different and differing accountabilities.

The political and administrative context in which professionals are responsible for the delivery of a public service has been undergoing constant reforms for over a generation; some governments are already reconsidering some aspects of NPM. New Zealand, for example, has reappraised once again the functions and structure of the public sector (Diplock, 2004). The focus of

> policy-makers has turned to recognition that the strength and capacity of the public sector needs to be maintained if the elected government's policies in terms of social and economic development are to be met. New Zealand's public sector has grown by about 10% since 2000, and it has recruited and trained specialist professional staff with a renewed emphasis on a public service ethos – an ethos with obvious similarities to those exhibited in professional codes of ethics. The focus now, as is also increasingly the case in the UK, is on ensuring

proper control and accountability across the public sector. In New Zealand rather than talking about 'joined-up government', the key phrase being used by officials is: 'a whole of government' approach to policy-making and service delivery. It is often used with 'managing for outcomes' as a major strand of the government's approach to public sector reform. (Massey and Hutton, 2006: 32 also using Diplock, 2004: 5–6)

Continual reviews like those of New Zealand's are part of the process of constant reform and should be seen within the broader context of the globalization and marketization of government services that has taken place alongside the development of new technologies (Crane and Matten, 2004; Fraser-Moleketi, 2005).

Because of the de-territorialization of much economic and governmental activity, governments are also trying to ensure that the ethical concerns they are insisting on domestically are also applied internationally when their citizens and companies compete for the provision of services globally; this has led to the growth of developments in global governance (Moon and Bonny, 2001; Fraser-Moleketi, 2005; Pagaza and Argyriades, 2009). An awareness of the risk of fraud and corruption and the measures to

deter, detect and punish those engaged in it or tempted to engage in it are now commonplace and ever stronger, with some countries, such as the US prepared to punish their own citizens for infringements committed abroad (NAO, 1995; Moody-Stuart, 1997; Neild, 2002; Harvard Business Review, 2003). It is within this complex, sophisticated context of governance within the global system of multi-level governance that professionals operate. (Massey and Hutton, 2006: 34)

Relevant case studies here include attempts at taking aspects of NPM and transferring them across the globe, especially in the form of policy transfers from Western countries to developing ones. An example is the use of privatization as a key facet of modernization as advocated by the Bretton Woods Institutions, used as a kind of economic medicine to cure the ills of the former Soviet Union (with often disastrous results for civil society) and many African countries (Massey, 2008). Other examples include large scale civil engineering projects (Massey and Hutton, 2006).

The enforcement of the public interest can be bolstered by placing professions and professional codes on a Nolan-influenced statutory basis. Whilst

there cannot be any return to the idea of a public service ethic where citizens and government are 'prepared to accept a degree of autonomy on the part of the service providers to determine how services will be provided on the assumption that the service ethic will ensure that such freedom from accountability

will work out to be in the public interest' (Plant, 2003, p. 576), a form of statutory licensing and robust auditing directly address this. There remain concerns about simply going down the contractual route. For example, 'there can be a considerable danger in going down the contractual road if we take ideas about rational self-interested motivation seriously . . . Contracts work best in a situation of trust, promise-keeping, truth-telling, respect and integrity'. (Plant, 2003: 576, in Massey and Hutton, 2006: 42)

The traditional notion of 'trust' needs to be placed into this context and supported with statutory weight in order that citizens may have confidence in it. But in order to have trust

> we need also to have confidence in robust systems of accountability, licensing, registration, competence testing and auditing. For example: in the context of 'trust' in large-scale public sector institutions outside of face-to-face relationships, it might be better if we thought more in terms of confidence rather than solely trust. Confidence is as much related to competence and performance as it is to trust. If this is so, then while a degree of trust is needed, we also have to focus on competence which includes sanctions and performance. If we focus on confidence, there is perhaps no fundamental ethical divide, at least in this respect (although there will be in others), between the public and other sectors. Therefore the skills of those in the public sector have to be enhanced so that a good service is delivered, and this will lead to a growth in confidence because it should enhance competence. At the same time, as we have seen, public sector goods are complex and the government needs to be much clearer about what its priorities are in different areas of the public sector. (Plant, 2003: 579, in Massey and Hutton, 2006: 42–3)

The development of governance replete with the concomitant evolution of complex policy networks, global governance and the substantial changes to civil society present a challenge to professional power and those professions that cut across sectors (private, public and third sector) to deliver services. Many of the flaws that both the political Left and Right critiqued a generation ago remain, in that by their very nature professions have a narrow view, can be elitist and exclusive, tend towards 'disabling' individuals through discovering and recommending solutions to their problems, and define policies in their own professional image. But that is the whole point of professions; they are a way of focusing gifted individuals to apply their long-acquired skills upon a narrow focus of issues, and they will naturally look for evidence and analyse it in ways that reflect their training. Society needs to ensure that professional development addresses the issues raised by Public Choice and Social Movement critics. Suffice to suggest here, employing even more managers and a managerialist culture will add to the problem, it will not provide its solution.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has explored the concept of professional power within the context of the evolving phenomenon of governance and its attendant (post-modern) notion of global governance. It has also explored the role of professional ethics and the possibility of the statutory licensing of all professions located within governance and involved in the delivery of services, as an alternative to increased managerial control and further NPM style reforms. It may be the case that G.B. Shaw's glib observation that 'all professions are a conspiracy against the laity' is a view that retains some leverage for both the political Left and Right, but it is difficult to envisage how teams of intelligent people can be trained and formed into skilled and experienced doctors, lawyers, accountants, economists, teachers, and so on without creating professions. Once that has occurred then society has created hierarchies, and with hierarchies come elites.

The evolution of these institutions replete with the professional ideology occurs globally, albeit often with culturally specific (but diminishing) differences. It is a product of the modern world; it is post-modern in the sense that it is global and has transcended the nation state. Accountants, for example, work to global strictures as a result of the Enron scandal certainly, but also because of the need to establish globally defined and accepted procedures for understanding the complexity of finances and the need to ensure common standards of accountability through accountancy. Professionals in a plethora of occupations relate globally to each other as readily, or perhaps more so, than they relate to fellow citizens of a nation state who are situated within non-professional occupations, certainly more so than they would relate to fellow citizens deemed to be members of an 'underclass', however that may be culturally defined. The quest for future public sector managers is to establish ways of harnessing and directing professional power without overburdening it with redundant levels of inspection, audit and management; we need to set free the professions whilst ensuring they work for us and account for the uses to which they put their power and taxpayers' money.

REFERENCES

Aldridge, M. and J. Evetts (2003), 'Rethinking the concept of professionalism: the case for journalism', *British Journal of Sociology*, 54, (4), 547–64.
Anyang' Nyong'o, P. (2002), 'Democracy and Political Leadership in Africa in the Context of NEPAD', Paper to the *Japan Institute for International Affairs Conference at the World Summit on Development,* Johannesburg, 31 August.

Candler, G. (2000), 'The professions and public policy: expanding the third sector', *International Political Science Review*, 21 (1), 43–58.

Crane, A, and D. Matten (2004), *Business Ethics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Diplock, J. (2004), 'Public sector reform in New Zealand and Australia', speech to the Institute of Public Administration Australia, Sydney, New South Wales, 30 August.

Evetts, J. (2003), 'The construction of professionalism in new and existing occupational contexts: promoting and facilitating occupational change', *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 23 (4/5), 22–33.

Fraser-Moleketi, G. (ed.) (2005), *The World We Could Win: Administering Global Governance*, Amsterdam: IOS Press.

Freidson, E. (1973), *The Professions and their Prospects*, New York: Sage.

Hutton, W.L. and A. Massey (2006), 'Professional ethics and public service: can professionals serve two masters?', *Public Money and Management*, 26 (1), 23–30.

Illich, I. (1977), *Disabling Professions*, London: Boyars.

Institution of Civil Engineers (1998), *Royal Charter, By-Laws, Regulations and Rules*, London: ICE.

Massey, A. (1988), *Technocrats and Nuclear Politics*, Aldershot: Avebury.

Massey, A. (1993), *Managing the Public Sector: A Comparative Analysis of the United Kingdom and the United States*, Aldershot: Edward Elgar.

Massey, A. (2002), 'The English speaking world: Commonwealth and North America', in Guido Bertucci and Michael Duggett (eds), *The Turning World: Globalisation and Governance at the Start of the 21st Century*, New York: UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs, International Institute of Administrative Sciences.

Massey, A. (2005), 'Multilevel governance', in G. Fraser-Moleketi (ed.), *The World We Could Win: Administering Global Governance*, Amsterdam, IOS Press, pp. 1–17.

Massey, A. (2008), 'Moja Kwa Moja', *Review*, No. 43, 12–14, London: PMPA.

Massey, A. (2009), 'Issues for the professions', *Review*, Vol. 44, March, 9–10, London: PMPA.

Massey, A. and W. Hutton (2006), *Modernizing Governance: Leadership, Red Flags, Trust and Professional Power*, London: PMPA.

Massey, A. and R. Pyper (2005), *Public Management and Modernization in Britain*, Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Moody-Stuart, G. (1997), *Grand Corruption*, Oxford: Worldview Publishing.

Moon, C. and C. Bonny (2001), *Business Ethics: Facing Up to the Issues*, London: Profile Books.

Mosher, F. (1968), *Democracy and the Public Service*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Mosher, F. (1978), 'Professions in public service', *Public Administration Review*, March/April, 144–50.

O'Donnell, G. (2008), *Promoting Equality, Valuing Diversity – A Strategy for the Civil Service*, London: Cabinet Office.

Olson, M. (1971), *The Logic of Collective Action*, New York: Schocken Books.

Pagaza, I. and D. Argyriades (eds) (2009), *Winning the Needed Change: Saving Our Planet Earth: A Global Public Service*, Amsterdam: IOS Press.

Parsons, D.W. (1995), *Public Policy: An Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Policy Analysis*, Aldershot: Edward Elgar.

Perry, J. (1996), 'Measuring public service motivation: an assessment of construct reliability and validity', *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 6 (1), 5–23.

Perry, J. and L. Wise (1990), 'The motivational basis of public service', *Public Administration Review*, 50, 367–73.

Plant, R. (2003), 'A public service ethic and political accountability', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 56, 560–79.

Pollitt, C. (1990), *Managerialism and the Public Services: The Anglo-American Experience*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Pollitt, C. (2008), *Time, Policy, Management: Governing with the Past*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Rhodes, R.A.W., P. Carmichael, J. McMillan and A. Massey (2003), *Decentralizing the Civil Service: From Unitary State to Differentiated Polity in the United Kingdom*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Sherwood, F. (1997), 'Responding to the decline in public service professionalism', *Public Administration Review*, 57 (3), 211–17.

Terry, F. (2003), 'Public management – time for a re-launch', *PMPA Review*, No. 23, November, 1–3.

Wilding, P. (1982), *Professional Power and Social Welfare*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

6. Working life in the public organisation

David Farnham

INTRODUCTION

Public services are broadly defined as the activities of central government, such as the civil service and other nationally provided services, and local government services, most of which are provided by the state universally to its citizens. In some cases, local services are supplied by non-governmental, not-for-profit, 'welfare' agencies funded partly by taxpayers and partly from other, voluntary sources. In providing public services, the liberal-democratic state is seen by some commentators as pursuing the 'common good' or the 'public good' on behalf of its citizens. The market provides the goods and services bought by paying 'customers' or 'consumers' from firms or individuals in an increasingly global economy. The state or administrative system of each country, in turn, provides those goods and services supplied 'freely' by public bodies to its citizens or at 'prices' subsidised by taxpayers. As states develop and mature, the scope of public services grows, increasing with the complexity of modern life. However, as the cost of public services rises, and shifts in political and economic ideas and inter-generational change take place, the boundaries and shape of public services are reconfigured and re-engineered through what is generically described as 'public management reform'. As this book and other works show, throughout the contemporary world the boundaries and shapes of public services have been radically transformed in the past three decades. Successive waves of 'modernisation', 'new public management' and 'public management reform' have fundamentally changed public services in a number of critical respects. Reform has affected who provides these services, how they are provided and the ways in which people work and perceive work within them.

The state, however, not only provides goods and services to its citizens but also governs through the principle of democratic accountability. There have always been tensions and ambiguities between the state's role as provider of goods and services to its citizens and its role as regulator of

their behaviours and obligations to the state, both individually and collectively. During wartime periods in the twentieth century, for example, 'the warfare state' emphasised the state's regulatory functions. During post-war periods, post-revolutionary or post-colonial periods, on the other hand, the 'welfare state' emerges out of the warfare state, or the 'new' state, emphasising its distributive and allocative functions to its citizens. This was illustrated, for example, in the history of the 'cradle to grave' welfare states of west Europe in the post-Second World War period. And, as has been observed throughout the present work, the era of postmodern or post-welfare states of the early twenty-first century has emerged out of a number of challenges to governments. These challenges include globalisation, neo-liberal economic policies, the collapse of Marxian socialism in east Europe, changing political values nationally and internationally, and inter-generational and geographical shifts of people and ideas. The goods and services that states, or agencies of states, now provide to their citizens and the bodies providing them (what I call the *public life* of public services), how they are provided (their *private life*), and how work is organised within them (their *working life*), have been fundamentally revised.

Three immediate observations can be made. First, in their public life, the boundaries and configurations of public service provision in postmodern states, compared with those in earlier welfare states, have changed, with some former public services being privatised and transferred to the private sector as public utilities, such as gas supply, electricity supply, water supply and transport, sometimes under transnational ownership. The scope of state provision, ownership and control, in other words, has contracted. At the same time, the regulatory functions of the state have increased and been strengthened, with citizens' behaviours and those of businesses and public bodies becoming more closely monitored and controlled by states and their officials, using the new technologies available to them for this purpose (West, 2004). Core public services are still provided by states, such as public administration, defence and the administration of justice, but others are provided by 'mixed economies' of welfare, partnerships between state authorities and private providers, 'contracting out' of services, mixes of public and private funding, and separating 'purchasers' from 'providers' within public services by using internal markets. The separation of public and private provision becomes increasingly blurred and, as is shown below, the universalism of political citizenship is substituted by a model of individualised, customised public services, as the rhetoric of public 'customers', 'clients' and 'consumers' becomes legitimised in the minds of both citizens and public servants, despite the paradoxes within this mode of thinking (Fountain, 2002).

Secondly, regarding the private life of public services, and the ways in

which they are financed, organised, structured and managed, this too has changed in response to successive waves of public management reform. These waves of reform vary by state, their political systems, constitutions, party politics, political and social history, and even the personalities involved. Such changes are, or have been, neither linear nor consistent: there is no single model or a common agenda of reform. But, in general, public management reform has been most intense in Anglo-Saxon common law states, such as Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States (US), and in other states such as Iceland, the Netherlands and Nordic countries most strongly influenced by the English speaking world and its economic ideas and policies. Such reforms have been generally, although not exclusively, initiated by reformist centre-right administrations, sometimes drawing upon often expensive external consultants to drive reform. In public law states, by contrast, such as France, Greece, Japan, the Slovak Republic and Spain, reform has been slower, less fundamental and frequently driven (or slowed down) by public managers themselves. In other cases, such as Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Poland and Portugal, reform has been in the middle ranges and more moderate than in the former two instances (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004; Barber, 2007).

Thirdly, the working life of public services – that is, how work is organised in them, who works in them, the conditions of public employment and how work is experienced in them – has changed too, compared with the era of the modern, welfare state. The age of relative stability, standardisation and certainty associated with working in centralised, welfare states has been superseded by greater instability, fragmentation and uncertainty in more decentralised, post-welfare states. This third feature of the postmodern, post-welfare state, working life within public services, such as their human resources (HR) practices and their impact on public servants as actors within them, provides the central theme of this chapter.

The chapter is a critical reflective essay, which undertakes a selective review of some recent English language literature in the field. For the sake of clarity and focus, it restricts its analysis and review of working life in public services in three ways. First, since public bodies provide a wide range of services, including armed services and police services, broadcasting, education, health care, telecommunications, transportation, social services, and public utilities such as gas, water and electricity, this chapter focuses largely, but not exclusively, on central government. Secondly, for comparative and analytical purposes, the chapter offers, where possible, an international perspective of changes in working life, rather than purely national ones. Thirdly, the chapter limits its review to developed countries that are members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), an international body of 30 member states

with high national incomes. OECD states not only accept representative democracy and free market economics as necessary conditions for free societies and economic development, but also have rich sources of data, research and analytical commentaries on public management reforms and their consequences.

In the analysis and review throughout this chapter, a useful distinction is made between public officials working in *position-based*, *career-based* and *department-based* public services, although there are some differences and 'exceptions' within each category. At one end of the spectrum there are position-based public officials who normally have contracts of service governed by public law (but where Denmark, Finland and the UK, for example, are exceptions), open recruitment, and partial or extensive delegation of reward with extensive individualisation of pay. At the other end of the spectrum, there are career-based public officials who have statutory civil service status, are recruited by competitive examination and have centralised pay systems with little individualisation of pay. Intermediate between these two groups is a newly recognised category, department-based public officials, who have either civil service status or are governed by a general legal code, mixed recruitment of pools and individuals (depending on the country), and partial delegation but little individualisation of pay (OECD, 2004a).

In terms of working life, it is claimed that position-based systems give more flexibility at work by allowing an individualised approach to HR issues and some decentralisation or delegation of HR practices. Career-based systems, in contrast, give less HR flexibility by using a more collectivised approach to HR and less delegation of HR practices. Department-based systems are low in HR individualisation but high in HR delegation.

These tendencies are summarised in Table 6.1. Twelve OECD countries have position-based systems which tend to be high on both individualisation and delegation, as shown in quadrant A. There are ten countries with predominantly career-based systems which tend to be low on both individualisation and delegation, as shown in quadrant B. Six countries with predominantly department-based systems tend to be low on individualisation and high on delegation, as shown in quadrant C. One country, Italy, appears to be a 'one-off' system, as shown in quadrant D, tending to be high on individualisation and low on delegation. As Italy seems to be an exceptional single case, discussion in this chapter will concentrate on the more typical position-based, career-based and department-based systems. Clearly, differences within national public services systems and their HR arrangements, and those between countries, are highly complex. They arise, in part at least, from the path-dependencies of each system (Thelen and Steinmo, 1995).

Table 6.1   HR practices in central government: degrees of HR
individualisation and HR delegation in 29 selected OECD
countries

	High/high (position-based systems)	*High/low* (a 'one-off' system)
Individualisation/ delegation	A Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, US	D Italy
Individualisation/ delegation	B Austria, France, Greece, Ireland, Hungary, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, Slovak Republic, Spain	C Czech Republic, Germany, Mexico, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal
	Low/low (career-based systems)	*Low/high* (department-based systems)

Source: OECD (2004a).

MANAGERIALISM AND THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

The driving forces behind changes in the working life of public services derive from changes to their private life. Amongst these, managerialism, with its focus on efficiency, economy and performance, is a major determinant. Indeed, a common, critical feature of the private life of reformed public services is the growth of managerialism within them. Managerialism in its various forms has always underpinned and informed managerial activity, management practices and managerial legitimacy in private businesses. Its introduction into public services is relatively new. In relation to public services, managerialism has at least two notable features. These are, first, an ideological, cultural dimension (or a system of beliefs); and, secondly, a practical, professional one linked with the application and use of private sector managerial practices in reformed public services.

Managerialism as Ideology

As an ideological and cultural phenomenon, managerialism is rooted in the belief of the centrality of knowledge in human affairs and in its ability to transform society and solve human problems. It is a modernist

enterprise. It is closely related to the principles of Scientific Management as espoused by Frederick Winslow Taylor (1911) and his acolytes (Merkle, 1990) in the early and late twentieth century. Pollitt (1993) identifies five elements of managerialist ideology or managerialist culture. These are, first, that social progress requires continuing increases in economic productivity. Secondly, productivity increases come from applying sophisticated technologies in society and organisations. Thirdly, the application of these technologies within organisations can only be achieved through a disciplined workforce. Fourthly, 'business success' depends on the professionalism of skilled managers. Fifthly, to perform their crucial role in organisations, managers must have the right to manage. At the core of managerialism 'burns the seldom-tested assumption that better management will prove an effective solvent for a wide range of economic and social ills' (Pollitt, 1993: 1).

As an ideological and cultural phenomenon, managerialism is also predicated upon universalistic approaches to solving organisational and resource problems. The underlying assumption is that professional managers are involved in the same processes and activities in whatever organisations they work. Only the contexts vary. Private sector managerial practices, therefore, provide a repertoire and template of management techniques, behaviours and attitudes which can be applied to the public services to make them more economically efficient, organisationally effective and politically successful – howsoever these features of public service performance are measured. Supporters of (and believers in) managerialism, therefore, claim that the injection of private sector managerial practices into public services will promote improved organisational performance, responsiveness to 'customer needs', more effective organisations and better value for money for taxpayers than do traditional public administration practices. This managerialist viewpoint was strongly articulated early in the period of public service reforms initiated by the Thatcher administrations in the UK in the 1980s. Michael Heseltine (1980), then Secretary of State for the Environment, believed strongly that efficient management was the key to national revival in the UK and that the 'management ethos' must run right throughout national life. In the case of the UK, this meant not only in private and public companies but also in the civil service, nationalised industries, local government and the National Health Service (NHS). Classical public administration, in contrast, was identified with slow decision making, risk avoidance and domination by professional workers, rather than by managers. Some 30 years later, managerialist ideas, principles and practices are now firmly entrenched and legitimated in public services, to varying degrees, around the developed world (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004).

Managerialism as Practice: The Application and Use of Private Sector Managerial Techniques in Public Services

The application and use of private sector managerial practices in public services imply that there is a distinctive set of management methods and techniques of management that can be adopted, used and reviewed by senior public managers (often promoted by external advisors and consultants) and which contribute to efficient and effective organisational performance. Recognised, professional managerial practices, in other words, supersede the primacy of applying rules, following instructions and using professional judgement, associated with classical public administration (Farnham et al., 1996). Five selective examples are outlined below.

First, there is the use of robust financial management and management accounting techniques. For managerialists, good financial control and known measures of financial performance are crucial to effective management, largely because they are seen to be measurable. These take the forms of decentralised and devolved budgeting and cost-centred management, as found in the private sector. Such practices are aimed at instilling greater cost control and financial accountability in public service organisations. In this way, public services become public 'businesses'. Financial management techniques, imported from the private sector, have, moreover, the attraction not only of measurability but also of making individual managers accountable for how financial resources provided by the state are spent. Effective financial management is also aimed at eliminating waste, shedding activities considered to be no longer necessary or ceasing those deemed to be better provided by the private sector (Pollitt, Birchall and Putnam, 1998; Lapsey, 1999).

Secondly, there is the adoption of rationalist, planned approaches to strategic management in public services. If government sets the overall strategic frameworks for individual public services within the limits of national public spending, then strategy formulation and strategy implementation for specific services are determined and delivered locally (Moore, 1997; Johnson and Scholes, 2001). With the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs), management information systems (MIS) are created, tested and revised, again often with the aid of outside consultants, to assist senior managers in strategic formulation and delivery (Botterman et al., 2008). The strategic function of each public service becomes critically important as public services are faced with uncertainty, turbulence, reform and increased competition, within, across or between services and with the private sector. This is graphically illustrated in a national advertisement, in summer 2009, for a 'Chief Operating Officer' within a large NHS Trust and teaching hospital in

London, which was engaged in a £1 billion hospital redevelopment plan. The post was aimed at overseeing operational delivery and providing 'a strong performance management focus across clinical, income, financial and quality requirements'. The person to be recruited was expected to 'lead the strategic development of initiatives that drive forward service quality in a complex business and service environment'. There was also an expectation that the post holder would 'have a major strategic role in the redesign of our entire care pathways keeping the Trust at the forefront of clinical service and delivery' (*The Sunday Times*, 2009).

A third feature of modern managerial practice in the private life of public services, again reflecting private sector practice, is the focus on performance management. Managing performance is a complex area of modern management practice and has a variety of meanings and methods but essentially it uses sets of processes that help public organisations plan, delegate and assess the operation of their services and activities at corporate, business unit, departmental and individual levels (Boland and Fowler, 2000). It is also argued that performance management can improve the professionalism of the public service provided, the innovative powers of public organisations and the quality of policy making. However, performance measurement can have perverse effects too, such as increased bureaucratisation and de-professionalisation of well qualified specialist staff (de Bruijn, 2002).

The underlying aims of performance management are to achieve high standards of work, quality output and satisfaction of customer needs. It consists of three main elements. The first sets performance standards and planned actions or outcomes to achieve these goals. The second addresses issues of day-to-day management, including monitoring, directing and coaching to ensure that these actions are translated into practice. The third appraises and assesses the results or outcomes of performance in the light of the targets set. However, although very similar performance indicator sets have been and are used in different countries, they are applied in very different ways, as has been observed, for example, in the cases of the Netherlands, Finland, Sweden and the UK (Pollitt, 2006). An important element of performance management is performance-related pay (PRP), which is now used in most public services, especially for senior managers (OECD, 2003a, 2008).

A fourth managerial practice imported from the private sector into public services is quality management. The demand for quality management techniques again emerges out of market competition for public services from given pools of 'customers' or 'clients' amongst, say, competing health care units, competing universities or competing schools. Quality management techniques and quality assurance processes germinated in the

private sector, drawing upon earlier experiences in Japan (Deming, 1986), where intense market competition had forced companies to look to the quality of their products or services, rather than to price or design, as a key to market success. Quality techniques and processes, which underwent an incremental metamorphosis from quality circles to total quality management to total quality control, have a variety of definitions: conformance to requirements (Crosby, 1984), fitness for purpose (Juran, 1988) and meeting the requirements of customers (Oakland and Porter, 1994). But howsoever it is defined, quality management reflects acceptance by public managers that users of public services are customers who want services meeting their expectations, as well as demanding high levels of customer satisfaction. It is also asserted that customers of public 'businesses' should be consulted about the services they want and whether they meet their needs (Morgan and Murgatroyd, 1994).

A fifth innovatory managerial practice used in public services is marketing management, including 'social marketing' that tries to change people's behaviours such as drinking and healthy eating. The contracting out of some public services, creation of internal markets of purchasers and providers, and the breaking up of public, monolithic bureaucracies into smaller, more flexible functional units, have promoted competition within, between and amongst public service providers. These have forced public service businesses and public service units to adopt strong marketing strategies and marketing techniques, drawn from the private sector, promoting business and market opportunities. Previously, these were confined to the private sector. Public managers now set clear marketing objectives, discover new ways of designing and delivering services and seek to satisfy customer needs. Extensive use is made of customer questionnaires, client surveys and opinion polls to enable public organisations to respond to the sometimes diverging and often changing needs of the different clients using their services. In competitive environments, effective marketing strategies and public relations activities are aimed at eliciting appropriate customer responses to public service provision (Titman, 1995).

SOME CONSEQUENCES OF PUBLIC SERVICE MANAGERIALISM

The main features of managerialism, outlined above, its ideological underpinning and current practices in public organisations, have consequences for the working life of public services. Three 'new' managerial orthodoxies in the public services are summarised below.

Public Managers as a Professional Group

Unsurprisingly, given the wide-scale introduction of private sector management practices into public services, a megatrend in public management is an exponential growth of public managers as actors within them. Various national statistics confirm that the largest, fastest expanding occupational group in public services over the past ten years is described as 'managers'. In the UK alone, for example, the senior civil service increased by some 35 per cent between 2000 and 2009, and by 15 per cent in the second most senior grade, Grade 3, in 2007–8 (Senior Salaries Review Body, 2009). An earlier study of reforms of the senior civil services of 12 OECD countries, covering Belgium, Canada, Finland, France, Italy, Korea, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Spain, the UK and the US, revealed that all of them were developing management capacities. Starting initially with performance management, this was supplemented subsequently by focusing on leadership, change management and human resources management (HRM). In nine of these countries, appointment to posts with important management responsibilities determined whether somebody was a senior executive rather than the usual determinants such as original grade, salary, length of service or qualifications. The exceptions were France, Korea and Mexico (OECD, 2003a).

These managerial cadres include senior, general managers, sometimes described as chief executive officers or their equivalent, and senior functional managers with specialist business skills, such as financial managers, directors of finance, directors of operations, and so on, some of whom are recruited from the private sector. Management boards, chaired by chief executives, are made up of senior, executive managers responsible collectively for the 'good management' and 'effective performance' within their organisations and individually for their area of specialist, executive responsibility such as marketing, HRM, operations and administration. At lower organisational levels, expanding strata of middle-level public managers link vertically upwards with senior managers, horizontally with their managerial peers, and vertically downwards with first-line operational managers. In this sense, the public manager at all levels has replaced the public administrator and professional staff, such as medical practitioners or 'class-room' teachers, as the key player and driving actor in the private life of public services.

Some observers interpret this trend as recognition of public management as a profession, with public managers emerging as a distinct social group, having more in common with their peers in the private sector than with the subordinate staff whom they manage (Farnham et al., 1996). A narrow administrative elite is replaced by a broader, deeper managerial one and, where the principle of collegiality existed, amongst some

professional groups for example, this is superseded by that of executive (often legal) line authority. The distinctive managerial roles of public managers, in turn, and their possible (and widening) career pathways, are reinforced by the training and development programmes they experience and by their professional contacts with the organisational leaders with whom they work and mix, both internally and externally. Further, an exponential growth in masters' degrees in public management, executive development programmes for public managers, senior staff training seminars and job secondments play important roles in reinforcing and developing these professional managerial values and managerial competencies across public service organisations internationally (Pollitt, 2003).

Another key reference group of some public managers, especially at senior levels, is their professional contacts with *external*, private sector management consultants, who are used to provide advice and managerial solutions to public organisations. This too is likely to reinforce managerialist beliefs, attitudes and behaviours within public organisations. However, some writers have claimed that, in the UK for example, private consultants have 'plundered the public sector' by 'running off' with some £70 billion of public money. One case is the NHS where there have been failures in delivering some contractual obligations such as in the area of MIS (Craig with Brooks, 2006).

Others argue, in contrast, that this elite of public managers is too heterogeneous to be effectively integrated. They also claim that issues of collegiality and distinctions between administrative elites and managerial ones are exaggerated. Only the most senior public managers, and others such as unit managers, for example, are generalists. The rest are trained in specific professional disciplines and fields, including accountancy, science, law, medicine, technology and other professions. They have therefore little in common with one another, either professionally or occupationally. Moreover, some public managers quit public service for the private sector whilst others quit the private sector for public service. This process of *pantouflage* means, in those cases, that there is no wholesale continuity of professional engagement by the new cadre of public managers populating the private and working lives of public organisations today. In France, for example, where *pantouflage* is a long standing tradition, this has raised ethical issues in terms of conflicts of interest, the political activities of civil servants and the requirement of an oath of office (Rohr, 1991).

The Search for Productivity and Performance

Under managerialism there is a continual search for higher productivity and economic efficiency in businesses and other organisations. In public

services, as in the private sector, this is now driven by the application of sophisticated ICTs not only in delivering services to customers and clients but also in managing people within them. This change in the private life of public services reflects the first and second elements of managerialist ideology outlined above. The pursuit of economistic solutions in managing public organisations explains why the private life of fragmented, more decentralised public services is now mainly performance-driven. Managers are the key primary actors and principals in this process, whilst professional and support staff are subordinate, secondary actors and agents of management. First-line managers directly supporting the new managerial class are often in ambivalent, ambiguous positions, with pressures from both 'above' (their managers) and 'below' (their staff). Rather than being responsible for administering established bureaucratic rules consistently and fairly, as did senior public officials in the past, today's senior public managers plan, organise, set targets, manage resources, deploy staff, monitor performance and seek to control subordinates' behaviour in the workplace.

Under these conditions, besides the technical functions of management, skilled, trained public managers, legitimised by the right to manage, are expected to lead disciplined public service workforces, manage them efficiently and effectively, and develop their workplace competencies. This is to ensure that both managers and workforces complete their job tasks, work together co-operatively and meet their performance targets, some of which are set by government. These last features of postmodern public management incorporate the third, fourth and fifth elements of managerialist ideology discussed above.

Another major implication of public service managerialism is that if managers are to undertake their managerial roles effectively, they need to take their workforces with them and to employ performance-driven, motivated workers, in line with what some of their leading-edge counterparts try to do in private businesses. One way of doing this is for senior managers to establish positive HRM incentives for their staff and middle managers, such as individualised performance-based pay, realistic promotion opportunities and facilities for job training. The disincentives for non-conformity include possible loss of pay, disciplinary action, dismissal for non-performance of tasks and non-renewal of non-permanent contracts. A second approach is designing sophisticated HRM 'tool-kits' to provide effective recruitment and selection of staff, attractive staff development policies and policies to engage staff, thus promoting the identification of public workforces with organisational objectives.

In summary, as actors within the postmodern public service organisation, public servants, amongst whom there was always a status hierarchy

in former public services, can now be increasingly distinguished by their different economic and organisational functions in a hierarchy of power. One set of actors is clearly delineated as *public managers* responsible individually and collectively for achieving measured, personal, unit and organisational performance; the other as *public workers* (with either civil servant or employee status, who may be either permanent or non-permanent) who are increasingly accountable to their managers for their individual performances to given standards.

Restructuring and Managing Organisational Change

Another major consequence of the search for improved performance by public managers is that the private life of individual public organisations is continually reviewed. And the process is iterative. It involves restructuring, re-engineering working processes and managing change within them. In the restructuring and re-engineering processes, a number of trends are discernible.

First, structures become less hierarchical, though not necessarily flatter, with power devolved to smaller, customer-based units, whose aims and purposes are defined with clarity and focus and then communicated to staff. Indeed, the OECD (2004b) has observed that decentralised management, with mechanisms for individual accountability, has been the core of public management reform. Secondly, as in the private sector, headquarters are reduced in size, so that whilst providing strategic direction they do not take operational decisions, which are decentralised. Thirdly, management boards have clear responsibility for creating internal 'vision', allocating resources, developing managerial talent and rigorously monitoring performance against targets and sometimes external competitors. Fourthly, management specialisation is discouraged, with individual managers acquiring portfolios of generalist managerial skills. Fifthly, again as in the private sector, distinctions between line and staff functions become blurred so that management teams consist of people with complementary, contrasting talents (Flynn, 2007). A number of writers see these developments as a shift to the active management of change in organisations. The underpinning aim is to create capacity within them, through people, to design, develop and deliver outcomes that satisfy customer needs (Kirkpatrick and Martinez-Lucio, 1995; Burnes, 2004).

Effective HRM strategies and practices and sound people management skills are part of the process of implementing organisational change processes, where the contribution of people to the management of change is seen as a necessary condition for its success. Organisational responses to changes in the private life of public services induce changes in the roles of

HR specialists and senior and middle line managers too. It is HR specialists and senior line managers who drive not only structural and cultural change but also HR strategy, giving new emphases to customer orientation, innovation and competition. It is operational managers, in turn, who provide steerage to these changes, with key people management tasks being devolved to them. These include recruitment and selection, performance management, staff appraisal, staff training and development, counselling and welfare. Some line managers also take critical decisions regarding pay, staff grievances, discipline and leave. For example, a number of UK and Dutch studies demonstrate the importance of middle and first-line managers, both in and outside the public services, in implementing HR strategy at operational level to support employee integration, job satisfaction and effective performance (Purcell and Hutchinson, 2007; Knies and Leisink, 2009; Steijn and Van der Voet, 2009). Clearly there are differences in emphasis between position-based, career-based and department-based systems, but this trend is discernible to varying degrees within the different systems.

There is now also considerable overlap and synergy between the managerial and HR vocabularies being used in both the public and private sectors. In leading-edge organisations, the role of HR departments is increasingly focused on developing organisational 'vision' and 'direction', monitoring the external environment, anticipating the need for cultural and organisational change, and supporting line managers with high-level knowledge and expertise. Working as partners, chief executives (or top managers) and HR specialists look to the new orthodoxies of received, 'good' HR practices in their attempts to shift organisations away from being departmentally focused, bureaucratic and reactive (Marchington and Wilkinson, 2008). In position-based systems especially, their goal is to create 'public businesses': with corporate objectives that are customer- and quality-oriented, in line with broader vision, mission and values, which are specific, responsive and proactive. Learning and development and diversity management play important roles in delivering these goals. To achieve competitive advantage, public organisations need to recruit and retain staff with particular knowledge and skills, develop latent skills in their workforces, and improve staff ability to participate in developing and improving services. Senior management also seeks to recognise personal effort and achievement, improve job satisfaction and career development, and enable their organisations to be more self-sufficient by developing the potential of their workforces. Promoting commitment to diversity management is part of this process. The situations are similar in non-position-based systems, which shift with a lighter touch (OECD, 2004b).

In the drive towards culture change, customer service, empowering line

managers and effective organisational development, the rhetoric of HR strategies is directed towards promoting recognised corporate identities and facilitating the appointment of staff of the highest calibre who are appropriate in terms of ability, attitudes, competencies and diversity. Such strategies are expected to promote and deliver the highest possible levels of staff performance, personal motivation, job satisfaction and worker commitment within public authorities, as well as caring for the health, safety and welfare of their entire staffs. Public service organisations in the postmodern era also commit to provide appropriate learning and development opportunities for staff to facilitate the highest standards of work in the interests of efficiency and customer service. Other HR strategies look to working positively towards, and influencing, the direction and implementation of organisational development processes in line with corporate objectives, thus providing employment opportunities in the wider community and improving HR planning.

All these themes are directed towards allocating internal resources related to agreed objectives, delegating responsibility to lower levels of management and promoting freedom for public managers to manage, so as to achieve their individual objectives in the most effective ways. The managerial language and rhetoric of private and public service organisations look increasingly indistinguishable. However, differences remain between the two sectors. These arise from the goal complexity and ambiguity of public services, their organisational structures, HR and purchasing processes, and work-related attitudes and values (Rainey and Bozeman, 2000). Differences of degree also remain between position-based, career-based and department-based systems.

HRM AND MODERNISED HR PRACTICES IN PUBLIC SERVICES: THEIR IMPACT ON WORKING LIFE

Under classical public administration, managing working life and public servants in position-based public services was associated with professional personnel management (PPM). In relatively stable public organisations, PPM was concerned with managing people at work, and their relationships within organisations, consistently, fairly and professionally. The aim was to bring public workers together and develop the men and women employed within them into effective organisations. PPM practices took account of individual well-being and working groups, so that people could make their best contribution to organisational success. This model paralleled what was happening in the private sector. It was largely a 'matching'

process between the needs of public organisations and those of the civil servants and the staff employed in them. In the PPM tradition, the personnel role was a specialist staff function and a line management responsibility. Within this model, public personnel specialists generally established the rules of work, either unilaterally or jointly with staff unions, in line with government policy. In the latter case, employment relations were standardised through sector-wide collective agreements negotiated with national trade unions. Public officials, in turn, administered working practices using a sector-wide model of rules, policed by local personnel departments. The style of management was predominantly paternalistic (Farnham and Horton, 1996).

Under classical public administration in career-based public services, the environment was orderly and predictable. Managing working life and managing public servants were typically regulated by legal rules determined by the state. In these public services, there was a tradition of public personnel administration (PPA), where the legal rules created by the state were applied and administered by local public officials. Following public service reform, both the PPM and PPA models of managing public servants become redundant and necessarily evolve into, and are superseded by, a more fragmented HRM.

The relatively 'new' HRM tradition of managing working life in reformed public services links with four general trends that have characterised employment status in central government since the 1980s. This is in addition to the shift of some central government functions to state-owned enterprises or other forms of government-owned organisational forms, with subsequent changes in working life rules applying to their staff. First, in some countries, such as Denmark, Sweden and Switzerland, the rules governing life-time employment have been abolished and civil servants and public officials are employed under general labour laws. Secondly, in other countries, such as Belgium, Finland and the UK, life-time employment in central government remains but some fixed-term contracts for positions have been used to increase the individual's responsibilities for delivering public services. Civil servants remain in public service but their stay in a position is no longer guaranteed. Thirdly, in other countries, civil servants are on short-term contracts with no guarantee of further employment in the service. Fourthly, some countries have increasingly used various flexible contractual arrangements for public employees in positions that could theoretically be filled by full-time staff (OECD, 2004a). These changes and revisions of employment status in public services reflect the drive for staff flexibility to promote more efficient and effective public organisations in OECD countries and elsewhere (Farnham and Horton, 2000).

Strategic HRM and the Individual HRM Cycle

The pace of HR reform differs between position-based, career-based and department-based systems but the general distinguishing feature of the new HRM tradition is twofold. First, HRM has both a high-level, *strategic* organisational role, driven by top management, and, secondly, a low-level, *devolved* operational role for line managers, where certain HR activities are delegated to them. There are many definitions of HR strategy but it is basically about 'integration'. To be effective, an HR strategy, it is argued, needs both to 'match' and to 'fit' an organisation. This means that HR strategy has to be integrated vertically upwards with an organisation's business strategy, so that they *match*. At the same time, it needs to be integrated horizontally across the HR function, so that all its constituent elements, normally taken to be the resourcing, employment relations, reward and training functions, *fit*. This ensures that they are internally consistent. The basic purpose of an HR strategy is to determine 'the strategic choices associated with the use of labour in firms [and public services] and [explain] why some firms manage them more effectively than others' (Boxall and Purcell, 2003: 49). An HR strategy, in other words, is aimed at gaining competitive advantage for an organisation in a dynamic market place, whereas PPM and PPA were aimed at managing stability and certainty.

There is no generally agreed model of strategic HRM. 'Best-fit', 'best-practice' and 'the RBV' (resource-based view of the firm) models, and variants of them, have been proposed, each of them justified by their advocates and challenged by their critics (Farnham, 2010). Whatever model a public service adopts, it is likely to have a number of features. These include: critical goals and means for managing people; a focus on performance; top management involvement; being partly planned and partly emergent, with different goals and means for different segments of the workforce; and being easiest to define at unit level (Boxall and Purcell, 2003; Marchington and Wilkinson, 2008). An important aspect of the HRM tradition, and implementing HR strategy, is its association with the managing of individuals and their personal performance and their development at work. This is known as the 'individual HRM cycle'. Public service line managers, like their counterparts in the private sector, play a crucial role in doing this, since, as indicated above, many of them have responsibility for devolved HR activities.

With the devolution of HR activities to line managers, the focus of the HRM cycle is on individual performance, how this is measured, how it is assessed, how it is rewarded and how it is likely to be improved. The cycle is an interactive one, where individual performance is linked, in turn, with

recruitment and selection, pay and rewards, performance review, staff appraisal, and training and development. The cycle commences, first, with recruiting and selecting the 'right' people into an organisation, using appropriate recruitment techniques and selection methods, and inducting them so that they understand and can identify with the organisation's vision, mission and culture. The second element in the cycle is selecting and designing a pay system likely to motivate individuals and to improve their performance, such as individual PRP. Thirdly, individual performance is reviewed regularly, feedback is given by the management appraiser to the individual worker, additional rewards given for good performance, future job targets agreed, and staff development needs identified, which, good practice suggests, is done in a separate staff appraisal interview. Fourthly, appropriate training and development are provided to individuals to improve their performance and enhance their promotion prospects. Fifthly, the cycle restarts with the next performance review and staff appraisal. The individual HRM cycle is now typically incorporated into public service performance management systems and public service HR practices internationally.

Delegated or Centralised HRM?

In addition to the tendency of individualising the managing of public servants, another tendency is to delegate the design and implementation of government HRM policies to lower levels of management. A main challenge for governments is to find ways of maintaining central coherence of overall HR strategy whilst delegating HRM responsibilities to departments, ministries and agencies. In some cases where advanced delegation has taken place, there has been a re-centralisation of HR practices. This is notably the case where importance is given to the notion of leadership and where reflections on the role of the central HR body have taken place (OECD, 2004a).

The scope and rate of delegation vary amongst countries but most OECD countries have moved towards some degree of decentralising HR responsibilities from central government bodies to ministries, line departments or agencies. In position-based systems, for example, there has been transferral of HRM responsibility from central HRM bodies to devolved bodies. In some career-based systems and department-based systems, there has been simplification of rules and procedures and devolution has focused on the operational aspects of HRM, with responsibility for determining less detailed policy remaining at the centre. In other cases, more flexible HRM policies have been developed, even where delegation has been limited. In these instances, some central HRM bodies, such as finance

ministries or management ministries, have developed these flexible policies and less cumbersome procedures, devolving them to ministries, departments and agencies whilst retaining pay determination centrally (Farnham and Horton, 2000; OECD, 2004a).

Nevertheless, central HRM bodies generally continue to play significant roles in managing public officials and changing central government systems. In many countries, emphasis is shifting from detailed controls to providing guidelines and defining basic standards. This approach implies more strategic roles for central government bodies. With many public services becoming more fragmented, the role of the centre becomes primarily concerned with making sure public expenditure and performance targets are met. Central bodies also identify and disseminate advice and 'good' HR practices to the periphery. According to OECD (2003a, 2004a, 2004b, 2008), involvement of central HRM bodies is limited to: first, the appointment, pay and classification of top central government positions; secondly, the management of top officials; thirdly, responsibility for equal opportunities, diversity, health and safety, and 'good employer' requirements; and, fourthly, codes of conduct, discipline, redundancy, and basic terms and conditions of employment.

The sorts of issues most commonly delegated to lower levels amongst OECD countries include, first, employment issues. These cover more flexible working time arrangements, increased mobility, deployment, simplified recruitment arrangements, open recruitment, flexible terms of employment and simplified termination of employment. Secondly, classification and grading of posts may be determined locally and made more flexible and less complex. Thirdly, decisions about flexible pay arrangements are taken at decentralised levels. Fourthly, staff numbers can be determined locally too. At the same time as local delegation is enabled, central HRM bodies take on more strategic roles and wider HR concerns.

Delegation of discretion over operating costs appears to be a good indicator of the extent of devolution. Devolved budgetary frameworks providing single running cost appropriations for salary costs and other administrative expenditures are the essential underpinning for relaxing central controls over staff numbers, classifications, grading and pay. These frameworks generally contain provision for carrying over funds, which then provide important flexibility in managing staffing levels. Position-based systems, as in Canada, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK, are where the most extensive delegation of HR practices has taken place. In these cases, bulk funding of operating costs has been used to initiate HR delegation and devolution.

Recruitment, Selection and Promotion

In some countries, public servants, at all levels, have traditionally been managed through specific rules and management processes different from general labour laws. Such rules applied to all public servants within their group or sector. In most countries, these rules, such as civil service rules, used to be detailed and left little room for senior staff to manage public workers individually. This has changed in many countries, where there has been a significant trend towards individualised HR practices in selection, the terms of appointment, performance management, pay and termination of employment. In general, HR practices have become more individualised and staff are increasingly treated differently, according to the changing needs of organisations and depending on their personal performance. This individualisation of HR practices is aimed at increasing the responsiveness of public services to customer and client needs but it can impact adversely upon the collective values and ethical behaviour of public servants themselves.

In position-based systems, the best candidates are selected for each position, since emphasis in recruitment is on competition for posts and professional experience, whether by external recruitment, internal promotion or mobility. These systems allow 'open access' to positions, which are advertised both internally and externally, and where lateral entry is relatively common. They tend to have weaker cross-government values at the point of entry but create stronger links across hierarchical levels and status. A further strength of this type of entry to public service is that fairness is ensured by open and competitive processes for each position. In terms of promotion, fairness is ensured by effective individual performance assessments.

In career-based systems, in contrast, staff are normally hired at the beginning of their careers and are expected to remain in public service throughout their working lives. Initial entry is based on academic qualifications and/or a national examination. Most posts are not open to non-civil servants, except for contract posts. The US is an interesting special case, because most positions are open to anybody but senior executive positions are only open to staff belonging to the Senior Executive Service group. Such appointments only normally take place after a long career in public service. This type of entry to public service ensures fairness by competitive examination and qualifications. Also whole service collective values are ensured by adopting similar pre-entry training for different categories of public servant.

Promotion in career-based systems is based on a grading system attached to an individual rather than a specific position. Since these

systems are characterised by limited possibilities of entering public service in mid-career, there is a strong emphasis on career development. Career-based systems tend to promote values at entry in specific sub-groups, such as '*corps*' in France, but there are relatively weaker cross-hierarchical and cross-*corps* values. The strength of the promotion system in this case is the limited possibilities of unfair management by separation of the grade, acquired with time, and the specific post.

Research also indicates that position-based systems tend to give enhanced roles to their central HRM bodies and have a more centralised system of management for senior management. Career-based systems tend to increase the number of posts open to competition and delegate HR practices to line ministries and lower hierarchical levels (OECD, 2003a).

Performance-Related Pay and Performance Review

Another megatrend in public employment is PRP and performance review. All OECD countries, with few exceptions, now have performance management and performance appraisal systems in place, whether position-based, career-based or department-based systems. There is therefore an emphasis on measuring, monitoring, assessing and rewarding improved performance across the public sector globally. Incentives for promoting good performance and measures taken in the cases of poor performance vary. But the evidence indicates that differentiated pay according to performance achievements, drawing upon the individual HRM cycle, is increasingly an important issue in working life throughout public services. Although the individualisation of pay at entry remains limited, governments have generally chosen PRP as a means of enhancing the individualisation of their HR practices (OECD, 2005a).

By the turn of the millennium, in most OECD countries a significant number of government employees were covered by PRP schemes of one kind or another, particularly amongst senior public managers, but increasingly for non-managerial employees too (i.e. public workers). There were multiple causes of this but PRP schemes originally occurred because of the economic and public budgetary problems facing OECD countries at particular times. However, PRP is also used because of the drive to improve individual motivation and accountability of public servants, as means of improving public performance. PRP also indicates to citizens that the performance of public workers is regularly assessed by public managers.

The first wave of PRP policies took place in the 1980s, with the governments of Canada, Denmark, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Spain, Sweden and the UK being the first to adopt such schemes. A second round in the early 1990s took place in Australia, Finland, Ireland and Italy.

More recently, countries such as Germany, Korea and Switzerland, as well as east European states such as the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and the Slovak Republic, have put PRP mechanisms in place. By the early twenty-first century France was experimenting with the implementation of PRP for top civil servants. It is mostly countries with the highest delegation of HR and budgets which have developed the strongest links between performance appraisals and pay as employee incentives. These are normally position-based systems. Indeed, with few exceptions, emphasis on monetary incentives for good performance is relatively stronger in position-based systems than in career-based ones.

In career-based systems and department-based systems, such as Austria, France and Poland, emphasis is on career development or promotion, rather than on monetary incentives. Also in career-based systems, staff management is more collectivised than individualised, implying that if monetary incentives are used then collective pay rewards are more appropriate than individual ones.

In most OECD countries, salary policy for central government officials therefore now consists of three components: base pay, remuneration linked to the nature or duties of a post, and PRP. A key issue is whether performance payments are given as a permanent addition to basic pay (merit increments) or one-off payments (bonuses), which have to be re-earned during each appraisal period. In recent years, use of bonuses has increased at the expense of merit payments because bonuses are managed with greater flexibility and do not add to fixed payroll costs (OECD, 2005b).

The process of performance appraisal is normally an annual cycle, where the line manager identifies key objectives for the year with his/her subordinates and at the end of the year reviews their individual performances. Performance ratings rely more on assessing pre-identified objectives, and on dialogue with line managers, than on strictly quantifiable indicators or standard criteria for a job. In other cases, more complex assessment systems are used, aimed at establishing a dialogue on objectives and results. In the case of senior public servants, most OECD countries have tried to formalise the link between assessment of executives' total remuneration and their promotion. Additionally, in most countries, one part of senior executive total remuneration is variable pay clearly linked to the achievement of personal objectives. But there are some variations related to the type of senior public service in which they work. Countries with position-based systems have implemented PRP fully. Most career-based systems appear to have implemented variable pay systems for senior managers but not all of them appear to be clearly linked with performance assessment (OECD, 2003a).

In general, public service staff unions continue to play important roles

in determining the pay, working conditions and the introduction of new public service systems, although they play relatively minor roles in staff performance, recruitment and determination of numbers of employees. OECD countries with strong participation of unions in pay include Austria, Belgium, Denmark, the Nordic states and the UK. OECD countries with weak union participation in pay include Hungary, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Switzerland.

Training and Development

Performance appraisal and appraisal for staff development purposes are related. Normally the two processes are separate, although this is not always the case. However, staff development, staff training and continuing professional development for public servants are crucial management tools for responding to the increasing need for knowledge acquisition and up-to-date practice in knowledge-based economies. In some highly individualised position-based systems, training is also increasingly used as a way to provide a common culture and an opportunity to discuss professional issues across a service.

Countries with position-based systems tend to provide more training to their staff, in particular Commonwealth and Nordic countries, than do countries with career-based or department-based systems. In most career-based systems, entry into public service requires passing competitive examinations and/or pre-entry training provided by government training institutes. Promotion to a higher grade depends upon public officials acquiring new qualifications, often sanctioned through new academic degrees or competitive examinations. This pre-entry required training probably provides an environment where staff build a common language and culture, in addition to gaining new qualifications. At the same time, it is unclear if it provides for the necessary adjustment of knowledge and qualifications in the new knowledge economy (OECD, 2003b).

Training policy is designed at the level of central HR bodies in many OECD countries, whilst implementation is left to departments or lower-level units. Some position-based countries use private companies and universities more than other countries and most countries use a specific training institute for public servants. However, it is not clear whether life-long learning is a reality in most OECD countries. A few countries, including Germany, Iceland, Japan, Mexico, Sweden and the US, have developed coherent life-long learning strategies. In the most advanced cases, life-long learning has been developed within either staff performance management systems, as in Australia, or as part of business plans and reflections on required competencies or skills, as in Sweden (OECD, 2004a).

CONCLUSION

This critical review of working life in postmodern public services – or more correctly working lives – has demonstrated that people's working experiences and working arrangements in public organisations have changed radically over the past 30 years, following successive waves of public management reform. These changes in working life have emerged from changes in both the public and private lives of public services over this period. From being acted out in relatively stable, standardised, working environments, working lives in postmodern public services around the world have, to varying degrees, become less stable, more diverse and subject to continuous change. The driving force behind working life in modern welfare states was for public services to be 'good' practice or 'model' employers. This meant, in essence, providing secure employment, fair terms and conditions of employment, career development opportunities for public servants, and safe and healthy working environments. In some countries, another objective was to promote soft forms of 'industrial democracy' in public services, such as collective bargaining, joint consultation or works councils. The aims of this were to empower public servants, engage them in the workplace and legitimise jointly agreed personnel management decisions.

Today the driving force behind working life in public services has shifted. It is now focused on the search for continuing improved performance and 'customer care'. If performance and customers matter, four things follow: public services become target-driven; more organisational power is delegated to line managers, including HR issues; public servants are increasingly managed individually, appraised regularly and rewarded according to their personal performance; and working life is flexible in terms of both job tasks and contractually. Working lives in public services in the age of post-modernity, in short, are distinctly different from what they were in the more certain and predictable age of modernity, with subtleties of difference and depth between position-based, career-based and department-based systems.

There are three major consequences for working lives arising from the transformation of public services into customer-driven, high-performing public businesses. First, organisational power becomes concentrated in the hands of public managers. In their continuing search for improved performance and meeting their personal targets, as well as eliciting public worker compliance with the 'public management project', top public managers, as noted earlier, typically develop dedicated HR strategies and delegated HR practices, operationalised by line managers. These strategies and practices are aimed not only at enhancing the individual HRM

cycle – in terms of recruitment and selection, pay, appraisal, performance and development – but also at gaining staff commitment to organisational goals and motivating them to perform well. This has resulted in a further innovation in the managing of people in public organisations in recent years: the introduction of direct 'employee involvement' (EI) practices. EI is any initiative taken by managers designed to motivate staff and increase their commitment to the organisations where they work. These HR practices concentrate again on individual public workers (or groups of them) and seek to promote committed workforces likely to contribute to the efficient operation of their organisations and their business agenda. Such practices are also designed to facilitate change, thereby satisfying the organisation's customers or clients. This was demonstrated in an international study covering nine west European countries, Switzerland, New Zealand and the US. This concluded that public managers believed that direct staff participation improved productivity and performance. But developing and utilising 'human capital', and enlisting its support for reforms, also made managing change more effective (Farnham, Hondeghem and Horton, 2005).

By introducing EI into organisations, public managers seek to gain the consent of staff to proposed courses of action based on personal commitment to their organisations and their goals, rather than basing it on executive, vertical control. Such participatory mechanisms enable individual public workers to influence, but not to radically change, top management decisions. The difference between EI and traditional, indirect, power-based staff participation based on representative systems, normally trade union organisation, is that EI is task-based and uses direct methods of participation. EI also assumes common interests between public managers and public workers, whilst seeking to concentrate and retain strategic influence exclusively amongst senior management by excluding the workforce from it. Power-based participation, on the other hand, incorporates staff representatives collectively on an equal basis with senior management, with the freedom, where there is a failure to agree, to oppose, resist or ignore unilateral, managerial decisions, ultimately by withdrawing support from managers by organised action.

The principal EI processes used are information provision, communication and consultation, although it is not always easy to distinguish between them. However, it is useful to separate 'downward communication' to individual workers and groups of workers from 'upward communication' by individuals and groups. Downward communication by public managers is used to inform and educate workers, so that they are more likely to endorse management initiatives and plans already determined by senior managers. Downward communication to individuals includes

staff handbooks, targeted reports to staff, notice-boards, bulletins, briefing notes, intra-organisational newsletters, house journals and intranets. Downward communication to groups includes departmental meetings, site meetings and team briefings by senior managers. Upward communication for individuals and groups aims to use workforce knowledge to maximise high production or service standards within public services. Upward communication for individuals includes attitude surveys, suggestion schemes, and appraisal and staff development schemes. Upward communication for groups includes team working, semi-autonomous work groups, quality circles, total quality management and total quality control processes. The extent to which these EI practices are used varies within national systems and across public services.

A second major consequence arising from the impact of public management reform on working life is that many public service professionals become de-professionalised. This has been well noted. It means that not only is the work of professional staff closely regulated and monitored by public managers but also that career development and promotion opportunities for many professional workers are channelled into managerial jobs rather than professional ones. Regulation and monitoring of professional work are incorporated into working processes and performance management systems, facilitated by ICTs and MIS. In terms of promotion, it has been observed in the UK, for example, that the Department of Health wants professional nurses to aspire to being managers or specialist practitioners. 'There is no reward, and no thanks, for being an ordinary nurse' (McCartney, 2009: 51). This has led a general medical practitioner to conclude that if the Patients' Association, a pressure group promoting patients' interests, wants to make a difference, 'it could start by declaring nurses an essential, honorable [*sic*.] professional vocation, and making government realise that it needs to be valued and rewarded' (McCartney, 2009: 51). Many other examples in other public services, such as teaching, medical practice itself and social work, could be identified and similar conclusions drawn within both the UK and other OECD countries. It has been argued, for instance, that current systems of performance measurement in UK public services are unlikely to have a significant influence on improving services. The most likely outcomes of these performance systems are further commodification of services and the de-professionalisation of public service workers (Adcroft and Willis, 2005).

The third major consequence of working in high-performing customer-driven public businesses is increasing levels of workplace stress and violence affecting public workers. Workplace stress and violence at work are not new phenomena and are common to the private, public and voluntary sectors. An international study commissioned by the International

Labour Organization reported that globalisation has led to downsizing and restructuring in organisations, resulting in increasing pressures on people at work. Demographic changes at work, such as higher female participation rates and increased diversity, also heighten the vulnerability of particular groups such as women and various minorities in workplaces. This report estimated that up to 30 per cent of the workforce in developed countries had experienced stress at work, arising from work intensification, bullying, harassment and discrimination amongst vulnerable groups and individuals. In terms of violence, health care workers, police officers and front-line staff were particularly vulnerable. In extreme cases, deaths occur. The report concluded that stress and various types of violence at work affect disturbing numbers of people at work (Hoel, Sparks and Cooper, 2001). Another study indicated that public administration and retailing reported the highest number of violent acts against staff (European Foundation, 2000). The unintended consequences of stress and violence in public services include lower productivity, higher labour turnover, short-term sickness, long-term absence and early retirement; all of which result in economic and social costs to public employers, public workers and governments.

To conclude, the terrain and substructures of working life in public services have dramatically changed over the past 30 years. Working life is different today compared with then. Stability has given way to fragmentation. The orderly progress of modernist public service has been replaced by an environment of continuous and unpredictable change. In general, but with some differences between position-based, career-based and department-based systems, the public manager has replaced the traditional public official in leading and driving 'public businesses'. There are relatively more managers, with management being more powerful, more professionalised, more target-driven and more devolved. The HR function is more strategic, more sophisticated and more focused on individuals rather than on groups. The public workforce is more diverse, more flexible, less secure, under greater duress 'to perform' and work is more individualised. Staff associations are generally weaker, even where they were traditionally strong. With more diverse public services, working lives within them reflect greater diversity too.

REFERENCES

Adcroft, A. and R. Willis (2005), 'The (un)intended outcome of public sector performance measurement', *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 18 (5), 386–400.

Barber, M. (2007), *Instruction to Deliver: Tony Blair, Public Services and the Challenges of Achieving Targets*, London: Politico's.

Boland, T. and A. Fowler (2000), 'A systems perspective of performance management in the public sector', *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 13 (5), 417–46.

Botterman, M., J. Millard, E. Horlings, C. van Oranjie, M. van Deelen and K. Pedersen (2008), *Value for Citizens: A Vision of Public Governance in 2020*, Rotterdam: European Commission.

Boxall, P. and J. Purcell (2003), *Strategy and Human Resource Management*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Burnes, B. (2004), *Managing Change*, 4th edn, Harlow: Prentice Hall.

Craig, D. with R. Brooks (2006), *Plundering the Public Sector*, London: Constable.

Crosby, P. (1984), *Quality without Tears: The Art of Hassle-Free Management*, New York: McGraw-Hill.

de Bruijn, H. (2002), *Managing Performance in the Public Sector*, London: Taylor and Francis.

Deming, W. (1986), *Out of Crisis: Quality, Productivity and Competitive Position*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

European Foundation for the Improvement of Working Conditions (EFIWC) (2000), *Second European Survey on Working Conditions*, Dublin: EFIWC.

Farnham, D. (2010), 'Developing human resource strategies', in D. Farnham, *HRM in Context: Strategy, Insights and Solutions*, London: CIPD, forthcoming.

Farnham, D. and S. Horton (1996), *Managing People in the Public Services*, Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Farnham, D. and S. Horton (2000), *Human Resources Flexibilities in the Public Services: International Perspectives*, London: Macmillan.

Farnham, D., A. Hondeghem and S. Horton (2005), *Staff Participation and Public Management Reform: Some International Comparisons*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Farnham, D., S. Horton, J. Barlow and A. Hondeghem (1996), *New Public Managers in Europe: Public Servants in Transition*, Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Ferlie, E., L.E. Lynn and C. Politt (eds) (2005), *The Oxford Handbook of Public Management*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Flynn, N. (2007), *Public Sector Management*, 5th edn, London: Sage.

Fountain, J. (2002), 'Paradoxes of public sector customer service', *Governance: An International Journal of Policy, Administration and Institutions*, 14 (1), 55–73.

Hoel, H., K. Sparks and G. Cooper (2001), *The Cost of Violence/Stress at Work and the Benefits of a Violence/Stress-Free Working Environment: Report Commissioned by the International Labour Office*, Manchester: University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology.

Johnson, J. and K. Scholes (2001), *Exploring Public Sector Strategy*, Harlow: Pearson.

Juran, J. (1988), *Juran's Quality Control Handbook*, 4th edn, New York: McGraw-Hill.

Kirkpatrick, I. and M. Martinez-Lucio (1995), *The Politics of Quality in the Public Sector: The Management of Change*, London: Routledge.

Knies, E. and P. Leisink (2009), 'People management activities of police and healthcare middle managers', paper presented at the European Group for Public Administration (EGPA) annual conference, Malta, September.

Lapsey, I. (1999), 'Accounting and the new public management: instruments of

substantive efficiency or rationalising modernity', *Financial Accounting and Management*, 15 (3/4), 201–7.

Marchington, M. and A. Wilkinson (2008), *Human Resource Management at Work*, London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

McCartney, M. (2009), 'Second opinion: don't knock nurses', *FT Weekend Magazine*, 26/27 September, 51.

Merkle, J. (1990), *Management and Ideology: The Legacy of International Scientific Management*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Moore, M. (1997), *Creating Public Value: Strategic Management in Government*, 2nd edn, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Morgan, C. and S. Murgatroyd (1994), *Total Quality Management in the Public Sector: An International Perspective*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Oakland, J. and L. Porter (1994), *Cases in Total Quality Management*, Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.

OECD (2003a), *Managing Senior Management: Senior Civil Service Reform in OECD Member States*, Paris: OECD, Public Governance and Territorial Development Directorate, GOV/PUMA (2003)17.

OECD (2003b), *The Learning Government: Introduction and Draft Results of the Survey of Knowledge Management Practices in Ministries/Departments/Agencies of Central Government*, Paris: OECD, Public Governance and Territorial Development Directorate, GOV/PUMA (2003)1.

OECD (2004a), *Trends in Human Resources Management Policies in OECD Countries: An Analysis of the Results of the OECD Survey on Strategic Human Resources Management*, Paris: OECD, Public Governance and Territorial Development Directorate, GOV/PGC/HRM (2004)3.

OECD (2004b), 'Modernising public sector employment', *Policy Brief,* May, Paris: OECD.

OECD (2005a), *Performance Related Pay for Government Employees*, Paris: OECD.

OECD (2005b), 'Paying for performance: policies for government employees', *Policy Brief,* May, Paris: OECD.

OECD (2008), *The State of Public Service*, Paris: OECD.

Pollitt, C. (1993), *Managerialism and the Public Services: Cuts or Cultural Change in the 1990s?*, 2nd edn, Oxford: Blackwell.

Pollitt, C. (2003), *The Essential Public Manager*, Maidenhead and Philadelphia: Open University Press/McGraw-Hill.

Pollitt, C. (2006), 'Performance management in practice: a comparative study of executive agencies', *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 16 (1), 25–44.

Pollitt, C. and G. Bouckaert (2004), *Public Management Reform: A Comparative Analysis*, 2nd edn, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Pollitt, C., J. Birchall and K. Putnam (1998), *Decentralising Public Service Management*, Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Pollitt, C., S. van Theil and S. Homberg (2007), *New Public Management in Europe: Adaptation and Alternatives*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Purcell, J. and S. Hutchinson (2007), 'Front-line managers as agents in the HRM-performance causal chain: theory, analysis and evidence', *Human Resource Management Journal*, 17 (1), 3–20.

Rainey, H. and B. Bozeman (2000), 'Comparing public and private organizations:

empirical research and the power of the *a priori*', *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 10 (2), 447–70.

Rohr, J. (1991), 'Ethical issues in French public administration: a comparative study', *Public Administration*, 51 (4), 283–7.

Senior Salaries Review Body (2009), *Report No 68: Thirty-first Report on Senior Salaries 2009*, London: Cm 7566, The Stationery Office.

Steijn, B. and J. van der Voet (2009), 'Supervisors in the Dutch public sector and their impact on employees', paper presented at EGPA annual conference, September.

The Sunday Times (2009), Job advertisement for chief operating officer, St Thomas' and Barts NHS hospital trust, 5 July.

Taylor, F.W. (1911), *The Principles of Scientific Management*, New York: Harper and Brothers.

Thelen, K. and S. Steinmo (1995), 'Historical institutionalism in comparative politics', in S. Steinmo, K. Thelen and F. Longstreth (eds), *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Analysis*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Titman, L. (1995), *Marketing in the New Public Sector*, London: Pitman in association with the Civil Service College.

West, D. (2004), 'E-government and the transformation of delivery and citizen attitudes', *Public Administration Review*, 64 (1), 15–27.

7. Still the century of bureaucracy? The roles of public servants

B. Guy Peters

The civil service, and public employment more generally, is often seen as stable, predictable, and frankly rather boring. The public bureaucrat has been, and continues to be, an object of scorn as well as an easy target for humorists, and the task of implementing public policy continues to be seen as largely the same as it has been for decades, or even centuries. Despite that apparent predictability, the job of the civil servant, as well as much of the environment within which he or she functions, has been transforming rapidly and the public sector is nothing like it was several decades ago. Intellectually, the consideration of public administration also has remained rather stable. Despite numerous changes in the public sector, Max Weber's conceptions of bureaucracy still constitute the starting point for most discussions (Derlien, 1999).

The above having been said, the changes within the public sector have not been consistent or uniform, and indeed some approaches to change have often been internally contradictory. Just as many aspects of the public sector have been largely immutable, then paradoxically change has been ubiquitous in government. Change and continuity have existed side by side for most of the history of governing. Therefore, we need to understand better what has happened with the world of the civil servant and with the job that these individuals now perform.

One premise of this book is that the 'post-modernizing' of the public sector has been associated with decline in the certainties that we associated with the modern, bureaucratic system. If bureaucracy has declined as a paradigm for the public sector, however, it has not been replaced with any single model that can provide descriptive and prescriptive certainty (see Peters, 2001; Frederickson, 2007). Neither scholars attempting to capture the reality of contemporary public administration, nor politicians and managers attempting to make the system work on a day to day basis, have any simple model of what the contemporary reality is. Many analysts are consequently forced to examine some aspects of governing and ignore others or to develop *ad hoc* conceptions and prescriptions.

This loss of certainty about managing in the public sector is very unsatisfying for many academics and perhaps for more practitioners, but as well as reflecting contemporary agnosticism – or the presence perhaps of numerous heresies when seen from the old orthodoxy – it does capture the struggle to find better ways of governing. To some extent, however, even the definition of 'better' is contested about governing, and the multiple goals that have always been present in public administration have become all the more evident (Rothstein and Teorell, 2008). Thus, the contemporary period continues to juggle values of efficiency, democracy, equity probity and accountability (to name but a limited but important set) and to understand that choosing any one to maximize will tend to produce problems on at least some of the others.

In this chapter I will attempt to lay out at least five contending roles of the current public administrator and discuss how they describe the contemporary reality of public administration, as well as the extent to which they also exist simultaneously. Any individual administrator may therefore be required to make some choices for him- or herself, and may have to select different values at different times. Likewise, politicians may be forced to choose one or more value to emphasize as they attempt to govern. Having these multiple conceptions does not have to produce chaos, and indeed one of the important activities in contemporary governance may be clarifying the approaches being taken more explicitly and with that clarifying the values that any particular system of governance is attempting to maximize. The history of governance often involved masking those preferences but now they can be addressed more directly and the political choices involved also clarified.

THE ROLES OF PUBLIC SERVANTS

As already noted the role played by public employees in contemporary governance is not as clear as it once was. While the clarity and simplicity of 'old-fashioned' government can clearly be over-stated, there was some sense of how the system would be managed and the role of the civil servant in that system (Walsh and Stewart, 1992). That perceived (and real) role for the civil service differed to some extent across countries (Peters, 2009) but at the core there was some common role for public servants and also substantial predictability. That predictability was especially evident for the lower levels of public organizations and their tasks of routine implementation seemed quite stable and often numbingly predictable.

As already noted, in Europe much of that traditional model of the public bureaucracy was based on the work of Max Weber. The Weberian model

is now commonly reviled in theory and practice, but we must remember that much of the legalism and formality within the model was designed to ensure equality of services, and political neutrality among public servants. Further, the emphasis on files and rules also ensured predictability for both employees and for clients, something far different from the extreme versions of discretion that characterized pre-bureaucratic administrative systems.

The Weberian model continues to serve as the intellectual foundation for thinking about governing, and is also the model against which most attempts to reform are directed. Indeed, the Neo-Weberian model of the State has become important as a means of understanding what is happening with government after the reforms of the New Public Management (NPM) have run their course (Bouckaert and Pollitt, 2004; Randma-Liiv, 2009). The basic logic of the Neo-Weberian State is to retain many of the efficiency values associated with NPM while recapturing some of the emphasis on probity and accountability that were more central to traditional models of the public sector.

In the United States, on the other hand, the Wilsonian model and the separation of roles between the political and the bureaucratic were influential. Wilson's model was less concerned with the internal management of public organizations than with the role of bureaucracy in a democratic political system. Wilson did, however, also reflect the scientific management values of his era. Although he accepted the legitimate dominance of political actors over public policy, he also stressed the superiority of administration as a science, while politics was merely an art. Thus, even then public administrators were in the somewhat ambiguous position of having to follow orders even though they may have considered themselves more capable than their nominal superiors in the organizations.

The most remarkable change in the role of the public service and for governing in general is that there is much less predictability and there are often competing demands placed upon people at all stages of governing – from ministers through to the lowest-level clerk. This reduced predictability represents the spread of a number of cultural and intellectual challenges to the role of the public sector, as well as changes in the real policy challenges being confronted by the public sector. These changes mean that the individual public servant may be in the position to define his or her own role, as well as having such a definition thrust upon them.

Choice is never easy, but is confounded in this instance because there are several roles that are available to the civil servant, and these all to some extent need to be played at different times by the same individuals.[1] Thus, one of the defining features of the public servant in an era of post-modernity is that he or she must constantly be moving among these

different roles. Certainly their position within an organizational structure or their specific policy area may affect the extent of change, but almost all public servants will wear several hats in the course of a week or a day, or even an hour. The need to make these choices appropriately also increases the chance of error and of some loss of job satisfaction for the individual.[2]

It is also important to remember that most of the roles mentioned below are not new.[3] These roles have been to some extent expected of the public servant for some time. What is different, however, is that in the 'modern' bureaucratic age the majority of the possible roles were subordinate to the dominant role of being a proper bureaucrat. The public servant could always resort to the law and to enforcing formal standards within the organization, and doing so was rarely incorrect. In what we are describing as a post-modern administration that role may still be available but it is less reliable as a means of producing good results for the individual, the organization or government as a whole. In some cases the bureaucratic response may be effective, and in many others the public will no longer accept the legalism. Even many members of the public sector itself will not want to rely on formal, legalistic responses to problems but may seek more innovative solutions.

Back to the Future: The Bureaucrat

One choice available to contemporary bureaucrats that is discussed less often than others is to return to bureaucratic styles of governing. While many observers in and out of government would consider this a retrograde step, there has been an important resurgence in thinking about the role of more formalized styles of managing within government. Reforms during the past several decades have produced a number of improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector and the market-based logic of this approach has been widely accepted. Although successful in some ways, this approach to managing the public sector has a number of important dysfunctions for governing (see Christensen and Lægreid, 2001). Further, this approach challenged a number of understandings about what good administration in the public sector should be, especially the importance of emphasizing the public in public administration.[4]

The logic of returning to at least some aspects of bureaucracy in the public sector is that the probity and predictability of bureaucracy are no less important in the contemporary public sector than they have been in the past (Du Gay, 2005; Olsen, 2006). The public often denigrates bureaucracy but at the same time demands to be treated fairly and equally by the public sector. Most of the reforms that have diminished the formality of

bureaucracy also have tended to produce greater variability in the services provided to citizens. Choice is good, provided that there is some certainty for adequate and equitable services.

The creation, or re-creation, of bureaucratic forms of governing is especially important for transitional regimes, whether in third world countries or in the still consolidating democracies of Central and Eastern Europe (Verheijen, 2010). As these political systems attempt to institutionalize new styles of governing after decades of authoritarian rule of various types, there is a need to create formal, legal styles of governing prior to considering any other styles of reform. NPM and other contemporary formats for governing tend to assume the presence of an accepted ethos that will guide the behaviour of public servants. Without that ethos, the emphasis on managerial freedom within contemporary public management would significantly reduce accountability and control.

The Neo-Weberian model is therefore a particularly apt model for transitional governments. But it is also important for administrative systems that have been undergoing the rapid changes already mentioned. In many ways this model of administration reflects some of the ambiguity that we are discussing with reference to individual public administrators. The Neo-Weberian State is in essence a hybrid between the managerial and hollowed out State that had been created during the reform era, and therefore may have the capacity to provide some improvements in efficiency along with improved probity. Likewise, the individual public servant will have to manifest that set of skills.

Manager

A second role for the contemporary public administrator is that he or she can be a manager. As noted above concerning NPM, the most important change in the public sector has been to emphasize the need for decisive and autonomous public management. NPM may not really be new, it is often not public, but it is management. In this view of the public sector the principal means of enhancing the quality of services to the consumer (rather than citizen) is to improve the efficiency of service delivery. As well as actually providing better services the managerial approach will also reduce the total costs of government and thereby further enhance the legitimacy of government.

Most of the discussion of NPM has been directed at the roles of senior public managers, but some of the ideas associated with this movement have also affected the lower levels of the public sector. For example, the idea of empowerment (Kernaghan, 2008) has been central to some versions of NPM, and in this view it appears that the lower-level officials

in government are also provided with greater power over the policies that they are delivering. In part, the enhanced role for the lower-echelon employee makes his or her job more interesting and more motivating. Further, the ability of these individuals to make more decisions should improve the quality of the services provided.

Although these ideas of empowering public employees have been to some extent successful, they also generate important management problems. In particular, if all the actors involved in the policy process believe that they are empowered, then no one really is (Peters and Pierre, 2000). The managerial role, perhaps more than even the bureaucratic role, involves the ability to provide direction to other actors. Therefore, if the role is not clearly defined then the role becomes extremely difficult to implement effectively and without conflict. The conflict from other empowered actors must also be considered in the light of what must be continued assertions of the power to rule from political actors.

The role of manager is one that is likely to be most comfortable for public servants, especially for higher-level public servants. These officials have often expressed frustration when their roles are limited either politically or through formal rules, for example about personnel management. Acceptance of the role of manager, however, may make accepting other roles, such as that of democrat (see below), more difficult.

Policy-Maker

Public servants have always had some role in making policy, but that role does appear to be changing. The traditional policy role for public servants was to serve as advisors for political leaders. Although this role clearly appeared subordinate to the position of the political leader, it was often crucial in the policy process. Politicians are rarely selected for their knowledge of policy issues so they may well be dependent upon their civil servants for making good policy. This policy focus from public servants is especially apparent when organizations in the public sector have a clear commitment to a particular policy perspective.

Although the emphasis on policy roles played by public servants is usually at the upper levels of the system, the lower echelons also play these roles. For example, Page and Jenkins (2005) have pointed out that middle-level bureaucrats have a very significant role in shaping policy, and that they can do so to a great extent independently of the influence of their nominal political masters. Further, the lowest level of the public bureaucracy can also have a very direct impact on policy, if through no other means than they must make numerous decisions about individual clients and the summation of those decisions helps to define the 'real' nature

of public policies. The logic of the bureaucratic role, and of Weberian bureaucracy, is largely to deny the exercise of discretion, although it is abundantly clear that street-level bureaucrats do have substantial discretion and do exercise it.

The policy-making role was generally considered to be the major alternative to the 'classic' bureaucratic role of implementer and manager of a staff. In that conception the policy tasks were primarily giving advice to the political masters. That version of the policy-making public servant remained (at least in principle) subservient to the political powers. As reforms of public administration have proceeded, however, the policy roles appear to have expanded to include more direct involvement with making policy. In particular, part of the logic of NPM has been to empower managers to have more of a say in policy and thereby to reduce the policy role of the inexpert and often fractious political leaders.

The development of a more powerful policy role for public servants to some extent alters fundamentally the bargains made between public servants and their nominal political masters (Hood and Lodge, 2006). The anonymous, yet influential, public servant has been replaced by public servants with greater powers but without the job protections and security they once would have enjoyed. In many ways they have become the unelected policy-makers that critics of the bureaucracy have frequently accused them of being. This power in turn has produced more attempts on the part of political leaders to control those officials and to influence the selection process of senior public officials.

Negotiator

The fourth possible role for the contemporary public servant follows rather naturally on the role of being a policy-maker. That policy role has been a central feature of the activities of the senior public service for some time, and represented the major option for the classical public servants described by Aberbach, Putnam and Rockman (1981). This role of negotiator may also have been available for some time, but has become one of the main activities of public servants more recently. This role reflects the tendency of the public sector to provide fewer public services itself and to rely more on the private sector – meaning both the market and social actors – to provide those services.

Contemporary public policy delivery relies heavily on market actors, linked to the public sector through contracts and partnerships. Even before NPM gained iconic status in some countries, any number of efforts were being made to out-source various rather routine functions in the public sector. The interest in using the market has only grown

and now extends to much more than (relatively) simple functions such as cleaning and rubbish collection. Partnerships and contracts now involve almost the full range of public sector activities, and often include very complex issues such as financing public works (Lonsdale, 2005) or providing social services. These services are difficult enough to manage when in government but are all the more difficult when there must be a contract that specifies both the nature of the product and the means of producing it.

The general ideological movement in the direction of contracts and partnerships has been driven by political leaders, but most of the actual work of negotiating and managing these relationships must be done by members of the public service. Not only are they more likely to have the expertise to do this well, but they are also the more enduring members of the public sector. Politicians may come and go but the public servants tend to remain. This is especially important for this negotiating role because most of the contracting in the public sector is in essence relational contracting (Peters, 2002). Given that it is difficult to specify all the details for social services or many other public programmes, it is important to build strong relationships between the providers of services and the public servants who supervise the contracts.

The negotiations of public servants are not confined to managing contracts with market actors, but also extend to working with members of social networks who are actively involved in policy and administration. These relationships with actors in the private sector must be built on trust, even more than the relationships involving formal contracts. A contract will have more specific constraints on the behaviour of the parties involved than does the membership of a social network, so that the informality of the networks imposes greater demands on public servants for an ability to negotiate. The role of the public servant in these relationships is more continuous and more innovative than with contracts, so that they permit a more active involvement in shaping policy and also shaping forms of democratic involvement.

Again, it is crucial to note that members of the public service will be more important in defining these relationships with social actors than will be politicians. In the first place, the networks often interact directly with relatively low levels of the public sector and therefore are more likely to encounter public servants than they are the political leaders – even at the local level. In addition, if these relationships for making and implementing services are to be successful they must endure, and public servants are on average involved in the process much longer than are politicians. Finally, the role definitions of public servants are less likely to be threatened by the involvement of other political actors in the process than are those

of politicians so that they can provide greater stability and a collective memory for governments.

The negotiator role for the public servant may be a means of encompassing several of the other roles, especially manager and democrat. As the public servant negotiates with private sector actors, he or she has the opportunity to stress public values and democratic control in contrast to the market values that have become prevalent in many policy areas. Further, he or she is also capable of achieving management goals through negotiation with market and social actors.

Democrat

Finally, although this role might usually be thought of as the antithesis of being a public servant, the contemporary public servant is often called upon to play a significant democratic role in his or her government. This emerging role for the public servant reflects in part the declining efficacy of more traditional forms of democracy. In most established democracies fewer people are voting and many fewer people are now members of established political parties (Dalton and Wattenberg, 2000; Mair and van Biezen, 2001). A great deal of political participation is now being channelled into 'flash' political parties, as well as into other, less conventional forms of involvement with the public sector.

At the same time that many of the principal instruments of political democracy have apparently become weaker over the past several decades, there has been a shift toward using the permanent public bureaucracy (here used in the generic sense) as a locus for public participation. The use of networks of social actors mentioned above has been one manifestation of that shift toward participation in the public bureaucracy, given that these actors now influence the choices of policy and the manner of implementation. In addition, the public appears to be more concerned with the provision of particular, often local, public services rather than with broad issues of public policy.

This change in the nature of public participation to some extent reflects a continuing shift toward the output legitimation of public action, rather than producing that legitimation through inputs into the political system (Peters, 2010; see also Keane, 2009). The traditional model of democratic legitimation has been that the possibility for the public to vote reflected their choice of policy, and further that the retrospective judgments of the public on the programmes of sitting governments would further be used to provide some legitimacy for public action.[5] As political democracy has become less central to processes of governing then this source of legitimation has also become less viable.

The alternative to conventional forms of legitimation is for the public sector to legitimate itself through its policies and its performance. This shift, and the associated role for the public service, is manifested in a number of ways. In general, governments have begun to emphasize their role as service providers rather than as political institutions that emphasize processes and deliberation. For example, one of the central components of NPM has been that government should 'serve the customer' rather than be concerned with the political process *per se*. This approach to governing therefore has explicitly transformed the public from citizens to consumers of public services, and although this may enhance services it tends to denigrate the political role of citizens.

In a model of the State dependent upon output legitimation the public service, and perhaps especially the lower levels of the public service, become even more crucial than in more conventional models of governing. The public service is in contact with the public and is responsible for the actual delivery of the public services. It is not only the quality of the services being provided that is important in these contacts, it is also the manner in which the public service treats its clients that influences the way in which the public regards their government. For the average citizen, the policeman on the beat, or the social worker, or the postal clerk is the State and how they are treated does matter. The good news is that most studies find that citizens are treated well, but the bad news is that they often do not transfer that to a more positive opinion of the bureaucracy, or the public sector more generally.

The democrat role may not come naturally to many public servants, even those not steeped in traditional bureaucratic ethics. The assumption in most political systems is that politics and bureaucracy, and perhaps especially democratic politics, are to some extent opposite approaches to governing. Bureaucracies are often portrayed as placing barriers to the exercise of democracy, but given the problems of contemporary representative institutions the bureaucracy may be an effective alternative. The underlying problem for playing this role is that citizens in many societies may not yet recognize the possibilities of influencing policy through the bureaucracy, and may not 'send' the role.[6]

CRITERIA FOR CHOICE

While it is important to understand the several roles that may be available to public administrators in the contemporary public sector, that is only the beginning for gaining an understanding of the manner in which those public servants will behave while carrying out their duties. The more

difficult question is how they choose to play one role or another, and when they make those choices. Although some individuals may opt for one of the roles for all or most of their working life, one important aspect of the 'post-modern' public servant is that they may be changing their roles from time to time and attempting to adjust their behaviour to the multiple expectations about their performance.[7]

Some choices for the individual appear rather easy to make. When the public servant must manage a network structure, or a contract, in order to deliver a service it is rather obvious that he or she must become a negotiator. Likewise, when called upon to advise a minister on policy he or she must put on a policy-making hat to do the job well. A skilful public servant, as indeed would a skilful employee in a private firm, will usually be able to find the right combination of skills and approaches to the job to be able to perform the tasks appropriately and to make their programmes perform as expected.

Not all choices are so clear for the contemporary public servant, and even those that appear simple may not be. For example, while the public servant may think that the negotiator role is most suitable when building and managing networks, the public servant must remember that he or she also represents the public sector in these negotiations. Therefore, in the end he or she may have to revert to playing a more legalistic, bureaucratic role in order to protect the public interest. As managerial, market values have permeated the public sector, maintaining the distinction between the public interest and the interest of the participants may be more difficult, but it is important to remember that distinction. This point only emphasizes the extent to which the traditional bureaucratic model of governing remains viable, and at times necessary.

These difficulties reflect the extent to which conventional models of the public sector have been eroded and no clear alternative has been institutionalized to replace them. Although we have noted that in a number of ways restoring the Weberian bureaucracy model may not have many benefits for society, this notion remains a convenient solution for the public employee, even if it is not always suited to the particular circumstances. Reliance on the rules of the organization and established practices is, as it always was, an important protection for public employees and may be more important once the circumstances of governing have become more ambiguous. What may yet be missing, however, is the service orientation that has become more central to governing in the reformed public sector.

The external linkage functions that have become important for contemporary public servants provide them with a source of power within the organization. Therefore, rather than adopting more defensive stances by relying on the rules of bureaucracy, public servants can take more positive

stances using their roles as negotiators with private sector actors. This gain in relative organizational power reflects the extent to which contemporary public organizations depend upon their partnerships with external actors to provide services, and as the liaison with those external actors the relative position of the public servant is enhanced. Therefore, the ambitious public servant has an incentive to adopt that role to the extent possible.

To some extent playing the role of democrat provides public servants with some of the same internal political advantages as are available to them outside the organization. This role involves the public servant looking outside his or her own organization to serve broader political constituencies, and to promote what may be alternative values and policies within the organization. Public servants have always been in positions that spanned the boundaries between the public and the private sectors, but emphasizing that role and its potential for democracy does serve as a means of complementing existing democratic institutions. This is especially true when, as noted, some of the traditional political institutions are now less effective in mobilizing public support. It also functions as a means of promoting policies and values that are derived from the connections with society.

THE USES OF AMBIGUITY

Describing the position and the role of contemporary public servants as ambiguous might be thought to describe a significant problem for these actors. To some extent that may be true, given that learning to be an effective public servant is now a less clearly defined task than in the past, and the individual will have to make more individual choices when carrying out their tasks in the public sector. This more ambiguous world may not be the most preferred by more conventional 'bureaucrats' who prefer an orderly and rule-defined existence that does not involve potentially difficult interactions with clients. Again, in the transitional governments that bureaucratic role may be especially important.

Despite the inherent problems in ambiguity, there are also a number of advantages (see Christensen and Røvik, 1999) for the contemporary public servant. The most important of those advantages is that the latitude for action for the individual is enhanced. One of the common complaints for public employees is that the formal definitions of their tasks do not allow for innovation and for individual initiative. While the reforms of the last 20 years have to some extent reduced that stereotype of the position of the public servant, they have by no means done so entirely and public servants can only welcome more room for defining and redefining their own positions within the processes of governing.

In addition, the more entrepreneurial among the public service can utilize the ambiguity of roles to increase their powers relative to their nominal political masters. The conventional definition of the role of the public servant has been rather constraining and has defined that role in non-political terms. The ambiguity of contemporary role definitions allows the individual public servant to do more to define their own roles and to mobilize political support from outside the organization. This does not mean that public servants necessarily are the power-seeking, utility-maximizing actors they are sometimes assumed to be (see Niskanen, 1971) but it does mean that they are not the political ciphers that others might have them be. Public servants do have ideas and they do have clients, and a more ambiguous definition of their place in the public sector will enable them to exert more of an independent influence.

Finally, ambiguous roles enable the public servant to mix and match responses to the needs of particular policy situations, and to provide more nuanced responses to those competing demands than would be possible with more strictly defined roles. The more conventional, uniform conceptions of managing the public sector require rather predictable responses from public employees, but the post-modern style of governing provides more options for governing. The key point is indeed that governance is no longer a simple, hierarchical activity but rather involves more complex interactions between the public and private sectors (see Kooiman, 2003; Peters and Pierre, 2006), and among a number of organizations within the public sector itself. That complexity, in turn, requires individuals who have themselves greater flexibility. With that flexibility must go a significant commitment to the integrity of the policy process in order to manage the inherent complexity of governing.

CONCLUSION

The task of being a public administrator has never been an easy one. Even when the role was more clearly defined, the necessity of coping with the complexity surrounding most public programmes presented a number of challenges to those public servants. The shift toward a less clearly defined understanding of the role of the public administrator in contemporary society has to some extent been making the life of the public administrator more difficult. There is a much wider range of possible demands on the public servant, and it is now impossible to rely on the familiar role of bureaucrat as implementer of the law. The individual public servant to some extent has always been responsible for making choices about their choices, but those choices now are even more basic.

On the other hand, however, the working life of the public servant may be both more interesting, and more effective, after the public sector has been transformed and in many important ways also has been deinstitutionalized. Having the opportunity, or even the expectation, of playing multiple roles within the governing process allows public servants not only creativity but also more capacity for solving problems. These opportunities also may enhance the job satisfaction of public employees, given that they can define their own role, shape their own careers and also have a more active role in shaping policy than traditional models would allow them. They have lost numerous protections they may have enjoyed in the past, but have been able to replace those with a greater degree of freedom.

This changing role for the public servant must also be understood in the context of broader changes within the public sector. In particular, the decentring reforms of the past several decades have created the need to restore some control over policy arising in the centre of government. With that shift toward more power in the centre of government has come the power to empower senior public servants to play a more significant role in the process of linking the decentred processes to central political control. The linkage function will employ a range of the role options mentioned above, but perhaps most notably the role of negotiator. The negotiations in this context require the public servants to tread a very thin line between politics and administration, and may also require them to be policy entrepreneurs in their own right.

The public servant has often been the object of scorn, but the role is being reinvigorated (albeit in a somewhat different guise) by contemporary political and administrative change. Public servants may still not be the most popular figures for the average member of the public but they do have crucial roles to play in making the contemporary State function. And it is indeed in part because they have those multiple roles that they are becoming more important to the policy process. The ability to provide a range of solutions for policy and administrative problems enables these 'bureaucrats' to be central actors in governing. We must be cognizant that the governing process itself also changes as a result of these changing roles for the bureaucrat, and even the notions of democracy will have to be considered in a different light.

NOTES

1. The roles identified by Aberbach, Putnam and Rockman (1981) in their seminal study tended to be more fixed for an individual at any one time, although that question did not appear to be addressed specifically.

2. On the one hand having a more diverse job may increase satisfaction, but on the other hand the need to make complex choices may produce some frustration and indecision.
3. The most probable exception to that statement is the role as 'Democrat'. That said, the egalitarian components within even Weber's model can be conceptualized as to some extent democratic.
4. This is now commonly discussed in terms of 'public value' and the reassertion of the public interest (Moore, 1995).
5. For a classic statement of the difficulties of using elections for steering governance see Rose (1974).
6. In role theory the society, or the individuals with whom an individual interacts, transmits a role that the individual must perceive correctly. Of course, if the individual misperceives the role then his or her behaviour will be inappropriate.
7. One aspect of role theory is that there are a set of expectations about the behaviour of an incumbent of a position. Further, any individual may have to play a number of different roles and therefore must be sufficiently flexible, and sufficiently astute, to adapt to the different expectations.

REFERENCES

Aberbach, J.D., R.D. Putnam and B.A. Rockman (1981), *Bureaucrats and Politicians in Western Democracies*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bouckaert, G. and C. Pollitt (2004), *Public Management Reform in Comparative Perspective*, 2nd edn, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Christensen, T. and P. Lægreid (2001), *New Public Management: Transformation of Ideas and Practice*, Aldershot: Ashgate.

Christensen, T. and K.A. Røvik (1999), 'The ambiguity of appropriateness', in M. Egeberg and P. Lægreid (eds), *Organizing Political Institutions*, Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, pp. 159–80.

Dalton, R.J. and B. Wattenberg (2000), *Parties without Partisans*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Derlien, H.-U. (1999), 'On the selective interpretation of Max Weber's concept of bureaucracy in organization theory and administrative science', in P. Ahonen and K. Palonen (eds), *Dis-embalming Max Weber*, Jyvasyla: SoPhi Press, pp. 56–70.

Du Gay, P. (2005), *In Praise of Bureaucracy*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Frederickson, H.G. (2007), 'Whatever happened to public administration?: governance, governance everywhere', in E. Ferlie, L.E. Lynn and C. Pollitt (eds), *Oxford Handbook of Public Management*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 282–304.

Hood, C. and M. Lodge (2006), *The Politics of Public Service Bargains*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Keane, J. (2009), *The Life and Death of Democracy*, New York: W.W. Norton.

Kernaghan, K. (2008), 'The emerging public service culture: values, ethics and reforms', *Canadian Public Administration*, 37, 614–30.

Kooiman, J. (2003), *Governing as Governance*, London: Sage.

Lonsdale, C. (2005), 'Post-contractual lock-in and the UK Private Finance Initiative', *Public Administration*, 83, 67–88.

Mair, P. and I. van Biezen (2001), 'Party membership in twenty European democ-racies, 1980–2000', *Party Politics* 7, 5–21.

Moore, M.H. (1995), *Creating Public Value: Strategic Management in Government*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Niskanen, W. (1971), *Bureaucracy and Representative Government*, Chicago: Aldine/Atherton.

Olsen, J.P (2006), 'Maybe it is time to rediscover bureaucracy', *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 16, 1–24.

Page, E.C. and B. Jenkins (2005), *Policy Bureaucracy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Peters, B.G. (2001), *The Future of Governing*, 2nd edn, Lawrence: University Press of Kansas.

Peters, B.G. (2002), 'Contracts and resource allocation: markets and law as the basis of policy instruments', in A. Heritier (ed.), *Common Goods: Reinventing European and International Governance*, Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, pp. 263–78.

Peters, B.G. (2009), *The Politics of Bureaucracy*, 6th edn, London: Routledge.

Peters, B.G. (2010), 'Bureaucracy and democracy', in J.-M. Eymeri-Douzans and J. Pierre (eds), *Administrative Reform and Democratic Governance*, London: Routledge.

Peters, B.G. and J. Pierre (1998), 'Governance without government: rethinking public administration', *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 8, 223–43.

Peters, B.G. and J. Pierre (2000), 'Citizens versus the New Public Management: the problem of mutual empowerment', *Administration and Society*, 32, 9–28.

Peters, B.G. and J. Pierre (eds) (2006), *Handbook of Public Policy*, London: Sage.

Randma-Liiv, T. (2009), 'The Neo-Weberian state', *Halduskultuur*, 10, 15–22.

Rose, R. (1974), *The Problem of Party Government*, London: Macmillan.

Rothstein, B. and J. Teorell (2008), 'What is quality of governance?: a theory of impartial institutions', *Governance*, 21, 165–90.

Verheijen, T. (2010), 'The new member states of the European Union: constructed and historical traditions and reform trajectories', in M.A. Painter and B.G. Peter (eds), *Tradition and Public Administration*, Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Walsh, K. and J. Stewart (1992), 'Change in the management of the public service', *Public Administration*, 70, 499–518.

PART 3

Resolution and sense-making

8.   Everyday makers and expert citizens: active participants in the search for a new governance*

Henrik P. Bang

INTRODUCTION

Since Robert D. Putnam published his article about how Americans were increasingly 'bowling alone' (1995), one has continuously asked whatever has happened to civic engagement in the US and the rest of the Western world? As Russell J. Dalton recently noted (2008: 76) there is 'an apparent consensus among contemporary political scientists that the foundations of citizenship and democracy in America are crumbling'; 'Citizens participate in public affairs less frequently, with less knowledge and enthusiasm, in fewer venues, and less equally than is healthy for a vibrant democratic polity' (Macedo et al., 2005: 1). However, after having witnessed how millions of volunteers helped Barack Obama to win the American Presidency through a very spectacular and novelty-creating political campaign, it is time to ask: how could mainstream political science possibly overlook the shifts in political orientation and participation that made so many of those whom Putnam described as having 'forsaken their parents' habitual readiness to engage in the simplest act of citizenship' (1995: 69) invade 'the political' as new volunteers and voters? Why is it that those in the mainstream did not detect this significant political potential for participation and change? Those studying participation outside the formal institutions of government have for at least a decade been claiming that such a potential for revitalizing people's engagement in 'big' politics exists (Bang, 2003a; Corner and Pels, 2003; Hajer and Wagenaar, 2003; Heffen, Kickert and Thomassen, 2000; Marsh, O'Toole and Jones, 2007; Newman, 2005). Then why is it that the new participants whom Obama succeeded in mobilizing in the mainstream framework appear as but a bunch of 'small', 'insignificant', 'ineffective' and often even 'uncivic' forms of engagement (Dalton and Wattenberg, 2000; Putnam, 2002a; Pharr and Putnam, 2000; Stoker, 2006)?

Barack Obama also mocked the many stories of democratic decay in his victory speech in Chicago (http://elections.foxnews.com/2008/11/05/raw-data-barack-obamas-victory-speech/):

> [The campaign] grew strength from the young people, who rejected the myth of their generation's apathy; who left their homes and their families for jobs that offered little pay and less sleep. It drew strength from the not-so-young people who braved the bitter cold and scorching heat to knock on doors of perfect strangers, and from the millions of Americans who volunteered and organized and proved that more than two centuries later a government of the people, by the people, and for the people has not perished from the Earth. This is your victory.

Thus Obama demonstrated that slumping social 'networks, norms and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit' (Putnam 1995: 67) need not lead to diving engagement in 'big' politics. For example, 66 per cent of the generation aged between 18 and 29 voted for Obama, an increase of 12 per cent compared with the previous election (http://pewresearch.org/pubs/1023/exit-poll-analysis-2008). How could this political mobilization happen in a situation of growing political distrust and declining social capital? Because, I shall hold, even more important to good governance than social and economic capital is the *political* capital required to exercise political power in ways that can do well for people. The kind of community that Obama seeks to establish in and through his rhetoric of change is *political not social*. It is oriented towards building political networks, reciprocal power and a shared belief in the possibility of communicating and interacting for *making a difference* (Badiou, 2006; Bang, 2005; Carens, 2000; Chaney, Hall and Pithouse, 2001; Crozier, 2007; Foucault, 2007; Hay, 2007; Wenger, 1998).

> And where we are met with cynicism and doubts and those who tell us that we can't, we will respond with that timeless creed that sums up the spirit of a people:

'Yes We Can'

(http://elections.foxnews.com/2008/11/05/raw-data-barack-obamas-victory-speech/.)

The Obama campaign's famous action slogan echoes the 'Si se puede' of Ceasar Chavez and his United Farm workers in their fight for better wages and working conditions (http://ufw.org/_board.php?mode=view&b_code=hotissue&b_no=3241). Actually, it says it all. It illuminates that there is another crucial mode of political communication and interaction

than the *politics-policy mode*, as I call it, in which the accumulation of social capital is tied to political decision-making for the sake of keeping it effective and responsible (Putnam, 1993). This is the *policy-politics* mode of good governance, which depends for its success on actors' practical abilities to 'make a difference' inside 'the political' to the articulation and delivery of salient policy values (Hajer and Wagenaar, 2003). As David Easton pointed out about political community many years ago: 'Where the members [of a political system] identify strongly with one another, they can tolerate intense and passionate dispute among themselves without jeopardizing the integrity of the community' (Easton, 1965: 326). Hence, political community will always exist in tension with social community. Members of a political community cannot thrive in a morally unified and normatively integrated social community, exactly because they derive their political integrity from their reciprocal acceptance and recognition of each other's differences. In the policy-politics mode, political commonality does not primarily come from responsible, legitimate, informed and reflective political decision-making. Rather it springs from communicating and interacting in 'what has to be done'; that is, in the articulation and delivery of salient policy values. Unfortunately, mostly as a result of the dismissal of political action as 'technical' administration, one has come to forget that political authority primarily derives its acceptability from lay people sharing in a political division of labour. The kind of creative political capacity required for participating in the exercise of political authority and ethically informed political action is spirited away by the mainstream as but a matter of legitimate domination. However, members of a truly democratic political community cannot and will not submit themselves to a hierarchically organized authority requiring their blind or rational obedience. They would insist that the exercise of political authority in the policy-politics mode is not primarily about commanding and disciplining people outside. Rather it has to do with communicating and interacting with people inside 'the political' for the sake of empowering them and improving their political life chances for making a difference, whether they are acting alone or together.

Therefore the primary reason why the mainstream did not foresee what was coming stems from its identification of 'the political' with 'input politics', with how people's wants are given a social voice and politicized as demands that are converted into collective decisions (cf. Little, 2008). This leads one to believe that policy, as the programming and implementing action, is simply the domain of non-political administration. The result is that one comes to neglect how a political community first of all requires transformative capacity – that is *power* – to bring about normative and social integration (Bang and Dyrberg, 2003). Political community is an

action community in which one shares in a political division of labour for being able to *do* things together.

The credo of 'Yes We Can' reintroduces the exercise of political community as lying at the heart of 'the political'. Due to the separation of input politics from administration in mainstream political analysis, political community has long since been relegated to the domain of the social, implying that 'the political' has become synonymous with effective and responsible government. However, it was the policy-politics rhetoric of concerted action for solving common challenges and problems more than the conventional politics-policy rhetoric of representative democracy that gave the Obama campaign its compelling, mobilizing force. I would suspect that the majority of those participating in the campaign did not think highly of political parties, Congress and government. Indeed, it may actually have been their distrust of conventional politics-policy that convinced them of the authenticity of Obama's communal rhetoric of hope and the prospects for changing things together.

The notion of political community is what makes it impossible to understand Obama's victory solely as portraying the age old battle between neoliberalism and statism (Hay, 2007). The campaign did not manifest the defeat of the former or the return of the strong, regulatory control ambition of the latter. It appealed to the existence of a 'third way' between economically effective and socially responsible government in which the political community is situated. Its key message was that sharing in a political division of labour is the condition of developing a sense of mutual identification with each other and with one's capacities for making a real difference (Bang and Esmark, 2007a; cf. Crozier, 2007; Fischer, 2003; Hajer and Wagenaar, 2003; Dean, 1999, 2007; Rose, 1999). At least this is what I shall argue for in this chapter.

My purpose is primarily to show the limits of studying participation solely in the politics-policy mode. Empirical references serve only as illustrations of my theoretical points. I shall first expand on what it means to study 'the political' in its two different modes as politics-policy and policy-politics. Then I shall show how politics-policy became the dominant political mode of participation studies in the mainstream via Almond and Verba's conception of *the civic culture* (1963) as composed of three subcultures: the participatory culture, the parochial culture and the subject culture. The concept of civic culture, I shall show, is still the dominant framework within which political participation and non-participation are approached in the mainstream. This does not only hold for Putnam's model (1993, 2002b). It even applies to new approaches, moving beyond the analysis of social capital and responsible and effective government to cause-oriented critical citizens (Norris, 1999, 2003, 2007)

and forms of micro-personal political activity (Pattie, Seyd and Whiteley, 2004).

My first step beyond the mainstream goes through a new model of *politics as lived experience* (Marsh, O'Toole and Jones, 2007). This seeks to show how 'governance initiatives can open up political spaces for young people to organize around and articulate the issues that concern them' (ibid.: 221). Although this model is assuming the existence of political commonality as a potentially significant and relevant political force, it remains anchored on the input side as 'a means of giving people a political voice' (ibid.). Obama's 'Yes We Can', I shall conclude, turns us towards the output side, as a rhetoric which in particular is appealing to what I call 'everyday makers and expert citizens' (Bang and Sørensen, 2001; Bang, 2005; cf. Li and Marsh, 2008). Such political participants have a project identity more than a legitimating or oppositional one. They engage, not primarily for the sake of giving voice to repressed interests and identities, but for helping to empower people and develop their action capacities for solving common concerns. This they do by combining ethics and new Information and Communication Technologies as concrete prescriptions for those who 'can', 'will' and 'understand' how to 'make a difference' (cf. http://blog.wired.com/27bstroke6/2008/10/obamas-secret-w.html).

It will be exciting to witness whether American politics with Obama as President will be able to convince its new participants about the urgent need to forge an alliance in practice between democracy in its 'old' politics-policy mode and their 'new' policy-politics mode of good governance. Democracy and good governance are, of course, inseparable in practice. However necessary good governance is to fulfilling the hope for a better future among political authorities and in the political community, it only becomes democratic to the degree and extent that it manages to balance the relations of autonomy and dependence between them by: 'reclaiming the meaning of citizenship, restoring our sense of common purpose, and realizing that few obstacles can withstand the power of millions of voices calling for change' (Presidential Announcement, 10 February 2007, http://obamaspeeches.com/099-Announcement-For-President-Springfield-Illinois-Obama-Speech.htm).

ON THE TWO MODES OF 'THE POLITICAL'

Let us start by asking: if participation is considered an inevitable part of societal life, how can we best help in facilitating it? (cf. Hendriks, Dryzek and Hunold, 2007). One finds two clusters of different answers to this question in the literature:

1. By emancipating people from domination and providing them with free and equal possibilities to be heard in democratic decision-making (Dryzek, 2000; Habermas, 1997).
2. By empowering people and enabling them to make a difference to the exercise of good governance (Bang, 2004; Barnes, Newman and Sullivan, 2007).

Often the study of (1) and (2) are treated as liberal democracy plus something more such as network management and public–private partnerships. Good governance is mostly regarded as 'coming after', or as existing 'in the shadow' of democratic government, as if good governance must express approval of liberal democracy with its free market economy, autonomous civil society and hierarchical state. However, I would rather consider democracy and good governance as indicative of the difference between studying 'the political' in two interconnected and yet intrinsically different modes:

1. The politics-policy mode, which revolves around the question of how demands are converted into collective decisions.
2. The policy-politics mode, which concerns the question of how such decisions are acted upon and delivered to people.

'Politics-policy' expresses the dominant way in which participation is studied in the mainstream. One focuses on how interest and identity conflicts are voiced and politicized as demands that press themselves upon the political agenda to become collective decisions. Policy in this politics-policy mode is but the 'neutral' and 'loyal' instrument and medium of democratic politics. As Putnam states (1993: 63): 'A good democratic government does not only consider the demands of its citizenry (that is, is responsive), but also acts efficaciously upon these demands (that is, is effective).'

Participation in the mainstream model is specified as linked to representative government for the sake of fostering more informed and reflective decision-making, which in turn can lead to the exercise of more responsive and effective government. This means beginning by asking how participation can be made conducive to the pursuit of collective goals, and thereby 'more trusting, more joining, more voting, and so on' (Putnam, 2002b: 414). Then one proceeds by asking how government can be bonded to show more concern for 'inequalities, especially growing inequalities, in the social capital domain' (ibid.). The choice here stands between individualism and collectivism, preference aggregation and normative integration, market competition and state regulation. For example, when globalization

runs amok and creates global warming as well as financial and economic meltdowns, it is in Putnam's model because the socially responsive, regulatory state has declined into an effective market-driven state, turning virtuous citizens into individual consumers. Thus, the only way out of such crises is to 'refill' the reservoirs of social capital and mutual trust in the formal institutions of democratic government. As Benjamin Barber put it in the *Guardian* newspaper (UK) (http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentis-free/2008/oct/20/economics-globaleconomy-creditcrunch): 'The dirty little secret is . . . that market capitalism works only when it can feed parasitically off active democratic social capital.'

However, there is another mode in which the study of 'the political' is conducted other than as the tool and medium of economic and social capital. This is the mode of 'policy-politics'. Aristotle instituted this when stating (1976:14): 'Life is action not production.' Aristotle did not only deny that policy is simply politics' instrument of production. He also separated the general logic of decision-making inscribed in the democratic constitution from the singular logics of particular policy actions (ibid.: 66): 'What is written down must be in general terms, but actions are concerned with particulars.' Today, many political scholars outside the mainstream turn to Aristotle to show the crucial importance of phronesis for the exercise of good governance in latemodern societies. Flyvbjerg is one of them, insisting that 'The person who possesses practical wisdom (phronimos) has knowledge of how to manage in each particular circumstance that cannot be equated with or reduced to knowledge of general truth about managing' (2006: 70). Many regard the revival of phronesis as the prolongation of the age old discussion of whether the study of governmental politics is a science or an art or whether public administration links to the development of general knowledge or practical wisdom (Schram and Caterino, 2006; Raadschelders, 2008). I would rather consider the return of *phronesis* an attempt to reinvent the kind of political imagination which is tied to the hope that things could be done otherwise in and through a political community. As Obama puts it: 'In the end, that is God's greatest gift to us, the bedrock of this nation; the belief in things not seen; the belief that there are better days ahead' (http://obamaspeeches.com/002-Keynote-Address-at-the-2004-Democratic-National-Convention-Obama-Speech.htm).

'The hope and belief in good governance is the means and goal by which Obama in his rhetoric attempts to make political communication whole again as a loosely coupled system of both decision and action. In this system political authorities necessarily link with laypeople in the political community for the structuring of the political regime (cf. Easton, 1965). Thus, Obama comes close to the new generations of reflexive individuals who in and through their participation on the output side of political

processes have coupled policy and politics in a political way, demonstrating that 'administration' is far more than a 'techne' for the exercise of legitimate domination (Ascheson and Williamson, 2007; Davies, 2007; Fischer, 2003; Greenwood, 2007).

We should stop separating politics from administration and reducing political science to policy ethics. Instead we should reconnect the rational decision and the prudent action as manifesting the two modes of 'the political' as politics-policy and policy-politics (Bang and Esmark, 2007a, 2009). If Barack Obama can do it in his political communication so can we as students into the science and art of governing. We must begin acknowledging that whereas the code for politics-policy is legitimate versus non-legitimate political *decisions*, the code for policy-politics is acceptable versus non-acceptable political *actions*. Political authority can be accepted for many reasons other than its legal and moral legitimacy, such as by the ethical belief that it will be able to do well rather than badly for people (Easton, 1955, 1958). Yet, its legitimacy is what counts if it is to be regarded as democratic, which is precisely why actions that aim at doing good will often stand in tension to the structures of democratic decision-making.

I elaborate on the distinction between legitimating and accepting authority elsewhere (cf. Bang, 2003b; Bang and Esmark, 2009). Here I only introduce it to indicate how democratic government and good governance may be approached as loosely connected through the two different modes of 'the political'. The fact that the one does not necessarily lead to the other adds to the significance and importance of finding ways to combine and mediate them in rational and prudent manners in theory as well as in practice. For example, students of deliberative democracy seem justified when arguing that: 'Legitimacy in the theory of deliberative democracy exists to the extent that those subject to a collective decision have the right, opportunity and capacity to contribute to deliberation about the decision in question' (Hendriks, Dryzek and Hunold, 2007: 362). However, even if such a fully deliberative democratic practice should come into being, this would not in and of itself provide 'the political' with the discursive management capacities required for coping in an acceptable and good way with the high consequence risks that confront people in their everyday lives in a political community. As Hajer and Wagenaar from deliberative policy analysis put it (2003:11): 'If the traditional forms of government are unable to deliver – either because of a lack of legitimacy or simply because there is a mismatch between the scope of the problem and the existing territorial jurisdiction – then networks of actors must create the capacity to interact and communicate.' There is an obvious link between this statement and Obama's rhetoric of change: it is exactly such a lack and mismatches that they both promise to be able to fill out

in practice. Obama's campaign appealed to people who feel estranged by, or external to, the 'old' allocative politics-policy mode, and also consider it untrustworthy and unable to deliver (Little, 2008). It managed to politicize the whole domain of administration, convincing participants that the prospects for solving our common challenges and problems depend on our reconnecting in new policy-politics communities for the exercise of good governance (Bang, 2003a; Bevir and Trentmann, 2007; Hajer and Wagenaar, 2003; Heffen, Kickert and Thomassen, 2000).

THE CIVIC CULTURE REVISITED

If we are to understand the turn to community policy-politics, we must first go back and consider how the insulation of politics from administration was brought about in mainstream political science and with what consequences for the study of the relation between political participation and rule. Almond and Verba's study into the civic culture is here a convenient starting point, since they were among the first to state that:

> incumbents and decisions may . . . be classified broadly by whether they are involved either in the political or 'input' process or in the administrative or 'output' process. By 'political' or 'input' process we refer to the flow of demands from the society into the polity and the conversion of these demands into authoritative decisions. (1963: 14)

By distinguishing between whether individual orientations towards the polity were directed towards politics or administration, political inputs or non-political outputs, they developed a notion of civic culture by asking (1) what knowledge individuals have of their nation and the polity in general terms (history, size, location, etc.); (2) what knowledge they have of how their 'inputs' relate to their polity's basic structures, roles and policies; (3) what knowledge they have of the structures and actors involved in the production of 'outputs' and policy enforcement; and (4) what knowledge they have of their rights, power, obligations and possibilities of access to influence (ibid.: 16). These questions, distinguishing the orientations of individuals towards (1) the polity as a general object, (2) input objects, (3) output objects and (4) themselves as active participants, enabled Almond and Verba to develop a notion of the civic culture of democracy as composed of three types of culture, namely the parochial, subject and participant culture (ibid.), as illustrated in Table 8.1.

- In the *parochial culture* people's knowledge about specialized political objects approximates zero. We are dealing with

Table 8.1   Orientations in the civic culture

Orientation culture	Polity as general object	Input objects	Output objects	Oneself as active participant
Parochial	0	0	0	0
Subject	1	0	1	0
Participant	1	1	1	1

'unsophisticated' 'close-minded' and 'insular' individuals engaging in the culture in their pre-modern tribal or local consciousness in which there is no knowledge of occupying specialized political roles, and no separation between one's political role and one's other roles.

- In the *subject culture* people do have a sense of the polity as a general object and of specialized roles associated with those who exercise commands over oneself and others when enforcing their policies. This is the 'we must obey' or 'government knows best' orientation characteristic of people having nearly no sense of themselves as active, influential participants and possessing virtually no knowledge of how their engagement in the culture relates to the conversion of demands into collective decisions.
- In the *participant culture* participants are collectively and explicitly oriented towards their polity as a whole; they can distinguish between incumbents and structures in relation to inputs and outputs; and they are fully aware of their important and significant roles and possibilities as those who give voice to common concerns and who seek to influence the demand conversion process as virtuous citizens. We are dealing with 'truly modern' individuals who know how to act collectively for acquiring access to and recognition in the democratic decision-making process.

I shall not delve further into the notion of civic culture here, but only remark that it has managed to set the tone and direction for nearly all mainstream studies of democracy in the politics-policy mode, culminating in Fukuyama's famous 'end of history' thesis, claiming the victory of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government (1992). By coding the civic culture as a choice between 'either existing liberal democracies or totalitarianism' (Pateman, 1989: 97), Almond and Verba contributed to consecrate a view of equal freedom as involving a 'flight' from political power in its own right as illegitimate, coercive, omnipotent domination. Thus, at least four basic oppositions appear:

1. *Public reason vs. political power*. Implicit to the idea of the civic culture as a bulwark against the abuse of political power, one finds the presumption that the only way in which 'the people' can become free is to run away from the threat of political power and establish their own private and public sphere outside of government. Foucault traces this insulation of the civic culture from democratic government in modern industrialized society to a 'contract of rational despotism with free reason [or emancipation]' (2007: 203). By this he means that modernity never beheaded the sovereign king of feudal society but instead tried to make his hierarchical rule and will to be obeyed an instrument and medium of public reason in the civic culture. Therefore, (a) when the participatory culture is specified as standing outside of government, actively trying to give voice to people's grievances by politicizing their wants as demands; (b) when the parochial culture is seen as a governmentally protected domain for the spontaneous and free accumulation of social capital; (c) when the subject culture is regarded as a potential irrational nuisance to be kept in benign and obedient apathy by a centralized bureaucracy treating its subjects as clients, Almond and Verba are simply echoing Kant's original claim that: 'the public and free use of autonomous reason will be the best guarantee of obedience, on condition, however, that the political principle that must be obeyed itself be in conformity with universal reason' (Foucault, ibid.). In his efforts at showing how to emancipate people on the input side of political processes and convert them into virtuous and rational citizens, Kant, and the whole of the modern tradition after him, simply overlooked the fact that political freedom and equality can never come from the exercise of hierarchy as one-way relations of command and obedience. It can only spring from empowering people on the output side to become reflexive *political* individuals who can, will and know how to turn hierarchical authority into a communicative and interactive authority for balancing existing political asymmetries of autonomy and dependence in and through the exercise of political commonality (Bang, 2004).

2. *'Big P' politics' vs. 'small p' politics*. The notion of parochial culture points to 'small' forms of participation in the locality in which political concerns are woven together with many other concerns; customary, religious, social, and so on. This has led many to make a strong distinction between the 'big P' politics of government to which virtuous citizens direct their energies and the 'small p' politics of laypeople in small communities and voluntary associations in civil society (Beck, 1996; cf. Stoker, 2006: 4–5). One major consequence is that the many new forms of engagement in policy articulation and delivery on the

output side are typically discarded as 'small p' politics, simply because they do not buy into the argument that big 'Politics is [only] about collective decisions, balancing conflict and cooperation, in order to promote human purposes' (Stoker, 2006: 203–4).

3. *Active citizens vs. passive masses.* Virtuous citizens are people who engage in 'big P' politics with a legitimating or an oppositional identity for the sake of making 'the system' more responsible and effective. Local social activists are people who engage in 'small p' politics, building social capital and social trust in their neighbourhoods and communities. The rest are those who are passive and mostly fall under the heading of obedient and apathetic masses populating the subject culture. They prefer to stay clear of all politics and leave it to government to do what has to be done. Some think government knows best and acquiesce in what it does, sometimes even with pride. Others hate all politicians, consider them liars and thieves and remain on the couch even at election days. This polarization of active vs. passive citizens who may oppose or legitimate 'the system' makes one blind to the fact that most individuals today prefer to be neither fully active nor completely passive but to engage in a more 'hit and run' or 'on and off' like fashion (Bang, 2005; Marsh, O'Toole and Jones, 2007). Unlike the participants in 'big P' politics and 'small p' politics, citizen consumers (Clarke et al., 2007) and everyday makers (Bang and Sørensen, 2001), as they are often called, do not have a legitimating or oppositional identity but a project one. The reason why they appear as 'apathetic' towards collective decision-making and the building of social capital is exactly that they mostly prefer to stay clear of the old forms of participation and instead let their tactical deliberations decide when to 'hit' and when to 'run' and when to do so by working against the system, collaborate with it or simply avoid it. Everyday makers and citizen consumers typically engage in order to influence policy articulation and delivery on their own terms, when they feel like it or have time for it, and for the sake of realizing their various life political projects.

4. *Pluralism vs. elitism.* Inherent to the conceptions of 'big P' politics and the civic culture is the idea that a pluralized culture with multiple groups with overlapping cleavages and with a 'mix' of active and passive citizens with a local and central orientation are the better way to secure that the political system does not get overburdened with politicized demands and yet can be held accountable to the different interests and identities of people in civil society. Implicit in this pluralist reasoning is an image of policy makers and implementers as potentially evil forces, who, if rendered autonomous from the input

chain of democratic steering, will fall prey to the 'dark face' of power as monism and illegitimate coercion. As Cerny describes it (2006: 86): 'A pluralist version of modernity therefore provides stability by replacing class conflict with stabilizing, cross-cutting conflicts; gives real or virtual representation to the greatest possible number; provides an institutional bulwark against monism; and rewards those actors who choose enlightened self-interest over predatory or monopolistic politics.' The pluralist–elitist dichotomy follows logically from the measuring of 'the open society and its enemies' by the degree and extent to which different people with different interests and different identities enjoy free access to and recognition in the political decision-making processes. Hence, to the degree and extent that voters, voluntary associations, parties, interest organizations, governments and administrators suddenly shift their attention towards problems of good governance on the output side this is *ipso facto* dismissed as a derogation of representative democracy and the civic culture, making concessions to elitism or monism (Putnam and Goss, 2002; Habermas, 1987, 1989). What then disappears from sight are the multiple new connections between conventional and new political actors on the output side, coping with high consequence risks across the old boundaries between civil society and the state, private and public, national and international, and so on. Old and new political actors here engage and join forces in new networks and partnerships which pay more regard to empowering and involving people for the sake of solving common policy concerns in an acceptable and good manner than to freeing individuals and masses from monism and illegitimate domination (Fischer, 2003; Hajer and Wagenaar, 2003). To dismiss participation in the policy-politics mode as democratic decay is to miss the chance for critically assessing the relation between democracy and good governance without reducing the one to the other.

No matter how much a hierarchical and commanding political authority is legitimated and in pact with universal reason in civil society, it is still hierarchical and commanding (Bang, 2003b, c). However, there is no *a priori* reason why laypeople's acceptance and recognition of political authority must always manifest a frozen, asymmetrical relationship of command and obedience corresponding to it. Political authority, as a communicative political power relationship, can assume multiple forms in time and space, and is in principle open to change on a continuum which runs all the way from government by one to government by all (Easton, 1955, 1958). As Obama's discourse illuminates, political authority can actually be requesting more than commanding and rely on voluntary acceptance

more than an enforced agreement. As he put it after his victory: 'Thank you. Change can happen' (http://www.barackobama.com/index.php). As this indicates, what form of authority is taken to be legitimate is subject to the communicative discussions and negotiations between members of the political community and between members of the political community and the political authorities. Therefore, if problems of good governance and democracy are to be coupled with one another, we must begin to recognize that political capital and community are distinct from social capital and community in being the direct political conditions for securing that what is good for people will also be good for democracy and vice versa. Like Obama in his practical discourse, we must in our theoretical discourse try to break the contract of autonomous reason and hierarchy to specify how a new political authority relationship can be forged, manifesting not hierarchy but our reciprocal acceptance and recognition of the difference each and any of us can make, especially when cooperating politically together.

Would the virtuous citizens, provincial people and obedient subjects in the civic culture have felt attracted by Obama's reversing of the relation between social community and political commonality? I severely doubt it:

1. those in the participatory culture are set up to fight political power with moral and instrumental reason more than a logic of immediate political action;
2. those in the parochial culture are occupied with creating social networks and accumulating reciprocal social trust in themselves and their social localities, not with creating cooperative political communities and expanding their capacities to 'make a difference' in and through their communicative and interactive political actions;
3. those in the subject culture are obedient subjects, who either hate politics or feel that 'government knows best'; they are not reflexive and cooperative individuals who stand prepared to accept and recognize themselves as bound by political authority, precisely as long as that authority does not threaten or command them to do so.

THE MAINSTREAM VIEW OF PARTICIPATION AND BEYOND

It is widely acknowledged that the old forms of participation in state and civil society are in decay. Party membership has fallen considerably and so has turnout at election time (Hay, 2007). Labour unions and other big interest organizations experience increasing troubles with getting new members and activating the existing ones (Stoker, 2006). Engagement in

social movements is not as high as it used to be (Putnam, 2002a). Citizens no longer primarily get their political identity from their identification with political parties (Dalton and Wattenberg, 2000). Even such intrinsic citizen practices as attending political meetings and writing to politicians are shrinking (Hay, 2007). There are at least two major responses in mainstream political science to this downward trend in old forms of engagement. There are those who adopt Putnam's early pessimism from 'Bowling alone' (1995; cf. Wattenberg, 2007) and see the decline as an indication of how social capital is plunging, undermining active participation in public affairs and thereby the stability and effectiveness of representative institutions (cf. Putnam, 2002a). A vicious circle is created in which increasing political apathy is leading to more social distrust and disaffection, which in turn is escalating political apathy, and so on. If we do not manage to stop it, we will be 'cursed with vertically structured politics, a social life of fragmentation and isolation, and a culture of distrust' (Putnam, 1993: 15).

However, Putnam's stories of decay, which echo those of Almond and Verba, who also emphasize the intimate connection between the accumulation of social capital in a mixed civic culture and responsive and effective formal political institutions, are not unchallenged in the mainstream. Another group of researchers, with Pippa Norris (1999) and Pattie, Seyd and Whiteley (2004) in the forefront, argue that Putnam's pessimistic view of citizenship results from his presumption that civic engagement is only for the sake of helping 'the lonely crowd' to voice and organize their concerns in the formal and institutionalized arenas of modern democratic government. When fewer and fewer people engage in this kind of civic engagement, they have discovered, it is because more and more of them are participating in a range of new modes of protesting, consulting, deliberating and co-governing beyond conventional organizations and formal institutions. New cause-oriented critical citizens (Norris, 1999, 2003, 2007) and forms of micro-personal political activity (Pattie, Seyd and Whiteley, 2004) are on the march, revealing how most stories of decline and apathy are merely a product of 'the older focus on citizenship activities designed to influence elections, government, and public policy-making process within the nation-state' (Norris, 2007: 641). Participation research, as Norris demonstrates, must move beyond the formal institutions to appreciate how the new protest movements and forms of micro-politics have

> more fluid boundaries, looser networked coalitions, and decentralized organizational structures. The primary goals of new social movements often focus upon achieving social change through direct action strategies and community building, as well as by altering lifestyles and social identities, as much as through shaping formal policy-making processes and laws in government. (Norris, 2007: 638)

The old participation studies, Norris here indicates, are dated because they do not grasp how new modes of life politics and identity politics that earlier were rebuffed as peripheral are now moving into the mainstream. Norris also comes close to formulating a policy-politics approach with her distinction 'between citizen-oriented actions, relating mainly to elections and parties, and cause-oriented repertoires, which focus attention upon specific issues and policy concerns' (ibid.: 639). Yet she soon withdraws into the mainstream position, tracing the cause-oriented repertoires back to the input side, as evidence of new identity conflicts giving voice to new postmaterialist values beyond materialist interests. As she notes (ibid.: 641):

> For Inglehart, the process of cultural change lies at the heart of this development, where the core issues motivating activists have shifted from materialist concerns, focused on bread-and-butter concerns of jobs, wages, and pensions, to greater concern about postmaterialist values, including issues such as globalization, environmentalism, multiculturalism, and gender equality.

Like Maslow with his 'hierarchy of needs' Inglehart assumes (E.G. Inglehart, 1997) that postmaterialist values 'come after' materialist ones. I think this is an empirical more than theoretical argument. More consequential is it that Inglehart provides us with no means for distinguishing 'old' postmaterialist values such as love of nation and a protestant ethics from 'new' postmaterialist values, such as a sense of multiculturalism and gender equality. The former values seem more relevant for building social capital and a 'strong' representative democracy than the latter. These seem to have more to do with political capital and the building of a political community for empowering the disempowered and getting everybody to accept and recognize each other's differences. Thus, in regarding the change as cultural more than political, Inglehart and Norris with him end up in collapsing the difference between politics-policy values and policy-politics into one and the same discussion of a change from interest conflict to identity conflict on the input side. Stoker relates this reduction of new cause-oriented policy-politics to participation in the old politics-policy mode (2006: 202). 'The old rules of politics have not changed; politics remains about people expressing conflicting ideas and interests and then finding a way to reconcile those ideas and interests in order to rub along with one another.' By definition, therefore, all new forms of participation on the output side are in the final analysis subordinated to more traditional representative political processes. They are considered an extension of demand-side politics to comprise identity problems and thereby how certain groups are oppressed as a consequence of the lack of recognition of their social and cultural differences (cf. Marsh, O'Toole and

Jones, 2007: 21). They are assimilated to the study of political participation in the politics-policy mode, in which all engagement directed towards articulating and delivering policy appears as the 'prolonged arm' of collective decision-making. Marcuse would have called it 'repressive tolerance' (http://www.marcuse.org/herbert/pubs/60spubs/65repressivetolerance.htm). If the new participatory forms are not relegated to the domain of 'small p' politics, they are reduced to a matter of guaranteeing effectiveness and responsiveness in the chain of democratic steering. In any case the new modes of participation are assessed solely by the degree and extent to which they contribute to, or hinder, that different interests and identities can make themselves heard and be organized as demands that can be negotiated into binding decisions.

POLITICS AS LIVED EXPERIENCE

There is 'pre-Obama' participatory research which, if it had hit the mainstream, might have shaken the dominant belief that the 'lifestyle politics' (Beck, Giddens and Lash, 1994), 'identity politics' (Giddens, 1996) and 'sub-politics' (Beck, 1996) of cause-oriented critical citizens are but reflections of 'small-p' politics and postmaterialist values. The studies of Marsh, O'Toole and Jones (2007) are a case in point. They break away from the mainstream to study identity politics, not by isolating and privileging particular aspects of identity (sexuality, gender, race, etc.), but rather by considering all such particular identities as revealing a politics of lived experience about how people themselves draw the line between what is political and non-political. As they show, many young people may have avoided the 'old' formal politics because they felt it had nothing to offer them. Thus, to write them off as 'politically apathetic is too simplistic and sweeping a statement' (2007: 22). In fact, these 'apathetic' youngsters may turn out to be the most active in more informal and *ad hoc*-based governance networks and practices, such as the new kinds of blogging, making comments on blogs, and viewing, posting and forwarding news stories and videos as forms of participation (Cornfield, 2004; Häyhtiö and Rinne, 2008; Kline and Burstein, 2005; Loader, 2007). These all fall outside mainstream discussions of politics, though the Obama campaign clearly demonstrated how they could become of key importance and significance to forge a viable relationship between representative government and the 'Yes We Can' of good governance (cf. http://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2008/11/obamas_network_transforms_demo.html).

Marsh, O'Toole and Jones challenge the mainstream, identifying four flaws in its participatory models (2007: 18–19):

1. Although the mainstream is moving beyond the narrow conception of participation as revealing a relation between social capital, interest politics and the formal institutions of democratic government, 'there is little engagement with how young people themselves conceive of the political and there remains a tendency in their work to impose a view of "the political" on their respondents'.
2. There is a serious lack when it comes to understanding non-participation in democratic government. 'Put simply, it is frequently assumed that if individuals do not engage in the activities that researchers take to represent political participation, they are politically apathetic.'
3. '[A]ge, class, ethnicity and gender are viewed merely as independent variables rather than as "lived experience" and, hence, the relationship between these and political engagement is poorly understood.'
4. '[M]ost researchers pay insufficient attention to the broader context of patterns of governance and citizenship, the ways they are changing and the consequences of these for political participation.'

These four flaws are prompted by a political practice in which government decides what is to be regarded as legitimate and illegitimate. For example, when Tony Blair called the demonstrations against the WTO and G8 meetings in the UK and elsewhere 'mindless thuggery' (quoted in Marsh, O'Toole and Jones, 2007: 23), he was attempting to depoliticize their engagement (cf. Hay, 2007). His underlying presumption was that only political activity sanctioned by formal political authorities is legitimate. By viewing and specifying the protesters as non-political and illegitimate hoodlums, Blair could legitimate their policing by the state. However, in regarding the protesters' informal, unconventional and unorthodox form of political participation as irrational and undemocratic, Blair and the police actually demonstrated that they did not, or would not, understand what was going on. There was an explicit reason why the protestors chose a confrontational tactic rather than a 'civic' one, namely that they had earlier experienced how 'non-violent protests are just completely ignored . . . despite a massive turnout' (Urban quoted in Marsh, O'Toole and Jones, 2007: 23). So what Tony Blair and the police experienced as being the irrational behaviour of hoodlums seeking trouble was actually a calculated event flowing from the belief that 'a certain amount of trouble is the only way to get the media to cover a protest like this' (ibid.):

> This point made is not to justify violence, but to suggest that what is political is in the eye of the beholder and what is regarded as legitimately political is policed by the state. To analyse politics and political participation, we need to rethink the claim that individuals who do not participate in politics in conventional, orthodox ways are politically apathetic. (Marsh, O'Toole and Jones, 2007: 23)

From this follows the obvious conclusion that 'we should distinguish between political participation and political non-participation. This leaves open the question of why individuals do not participate in formal politics' (ibid.). Marsh, O'Toole and Jones describe their position as a critical realism, conceiving of the politics of lived experience as a structured and structuring process. This means first of all focusing on participants' understanding of age, class, gender and ethnicity to see how it shapes their perception of what is political and non-political. But this should be done within 'the structural as well as the discursive constraints on how individuals construct and indeed live their identity, or what Butler (1999) calls their "performativity"' (2007: 29).

Indeed, the politics of lived experience brings us way beyond the mainstream. Yet, despite it pointing us in the direction of political community, it seems that Marsh, O'Toole and Jones in their critical realism still give priority to the emancipatory goal of freeing people from exclusion over the empowering goal of enabling them to make an autonomous difference to the articulation and delivery of policy. Their approach is 'input driven' more than 'output directed' in the sense that 'in the last instance' what counts is that policy contributes to inclusion; that is, to securing that all interests and identities enjoy free and equal access to, and recognition in, the political decision-making processes. In this way their politics of lived experience also imperceptibly turns into a struggle between having a resistance identity and a legitimating one.

However, was it an ingrained resistance identity and sense of exclusion which made the protestors in Britain choose the tactics they did in their struggle against globalization? Apparently not! When reading what they said, it is not so much hostility or a feeling of exclusion which decided their choice of tactics. Rather, it seemed to be their wish for creating public attention for their common concerns that made them decide and act as they did. But self-evidently their efforts at politicizing their wants with what appeared to be illegitimate means did not involve a legitimating identity either. The protestors did not seem to believe in the legitimacy of 'the system' but neither did they appear as feeling entirely estranged from it. They simply wanted to get media coverage for their struggle for better and more humane globalizing policies. The protesters' immediate actions were not primarily targeted to giving voice to repressed interests and identities in civil society. Rather, they revealed their political readiness and ability to work together for solving common concerns to concretely influence the regime's articulation and delivery of policies from inside 'the political' itself. In this way the protesters can be said to have a project identity more than a legitimating or oppositional one (Castells, 1997). Their project identity was put to use not as general norms or reasons but in and through

their practical experience of how to make a difference in and through joint political action. Hence, we come back to Barack Obama's most famous slogan about 'Yes We Can', signalling as it does that democracy relies for its approximation more on the *transformative capacity of political action* than on one or the other common norm.

When Obama's rhetoric did its job, I think, it is because it presented itself to people as a commonality inspiring political authority, which does not expect a 'blind' or rationally motivated form of obedience. Rather, it combined (1) goals, (2) tactics and (3) ethos, urging people to engage in its exercise as capable and knowledgeable political persons who are important and significant to solving common concerns in and through their participation in a reflexive political community. As Obama said in his victory speech (http://elections.foxnews.com/2008/11/05/raw-data-barack-obamas-victory-speech/):

> I know you didn't do this just to win an election. And I know you didn't do it for me. You did it because you understand the enormity of the task that lies ahead. For even as we celebrate tonight, we know the challenges that tomorrow will bring are the greatest of our lifetime – two wars, a planet in peril, the worst financial crisis in a century.

Obama was pleading to laypeople to participate in his campaign for developing political commonality as well as a sense of efficacy. He wanted to show them that their sense of sharing a political destiny does not come from unified normative agreement and social solidarity but from the kind of cooperation and mutual identification that arise from the creation of political capital in a reflexive political community. Hence, political solidarity must be regarded as distinct from social solidarity by the fact that it presupposes the reciprocal and mutual acceptance and recognition of difference. Such solidarity comes from laypeople in a reflexive political community:

- who refuse to be treated as obedient subjects;
- who are not at all parochial, but have a very precise sense of the difference between orienting oneself to 'inputs' or to 'outputs'; and
- who think that political participation is way too enjoyable, significant and important to be handed over to virtuous citizens, who do not think of 'the political' as an ongoing project but as a chore and an omnipotent threat to their freedom which must continuously be resisted and made legitimate.

Had Obama tried to command obedience, had he appealed to the parochial in people or had he required that his volunteers should be only grave

and morally dedicated citizens, I doubt that he would have been able to get so many volunteers engaged in canvassing, block by block, to help get voters to the polls and spread the rhetoric of 'Yes We Can' to every municipality, neighbourhood, city and village in the US. The participants who engaged in his campaign are probably better described as everyday makers (EMs) and expert citizens (ECs) (Bang and Sørensen, 2001; Bang, 2003c; Bang and Dyrberg, 2003; Bang, 2005; Lie and Marsh, 2008; Marsh, O'Toole and Jones, 2007).

EVERYDAY MAKERS AND EXPERT CITIZENS: NEW PARTICIPANTS IN SEARCH OF A NEW 'BIG' POLITICS

Marsh, O'Toole and Jones (2007) conceive of ECs and EMs as the very embodiment of their politics of lived experience. They clearly show that those in the mainstream, by dismissing ECs and EMs as 'free riders', 'mindless thugs', 'small p' participants, and so on, conceal their contributions to creating a more inclusive politics. ECs and EMs often belong to groups which are oppressed as a consequence of a lack of not merely recognition but of a belief in their political capacities for exercising their differences as members of a communicative and interactive political community (cf. Schneider and Ingram, 1997), for instance immigrants, gays and lesbians. When the mainstream approaches do not 'see' this, it is simply because their models do not allow them to do so. ECs and EMs often choose *not* to participate in 'big P' politics but to act on their own or join forces with public administrators, network managers and others who show readiness to involve them in policy-politics on their own terms and conditions.

ECs and EMs may be regarded as the living proof of how the resistance identities of social grassroots and social movements in industrialist society are changing into project identities aiming at politically transforming an increasingly globalized network society (cf. Castells, 1997, 2006). Their participation is governed by a project identity which makes them put concerns for immediate and prudent action above worries over rational decision-making. Whether they engage in protests, collaborate in public–private or state–civil society partnerships, make alliances with the media, do voluntary work in their neighbourhoods or whatever, they always have a concrete project in mind that they aim at realizing. They can be out fighting against 'the system' in one particular context, and then shift to teaming up with it in another; they can ignore an institution's attempts to involve them, but they can also help the institution in solving its problems on the condition that it simultaneously empowers them to pursue their own

life-political projects. The important thing is that to ECs and EMs partici-
pation and support are not solely a matter of being either *for* or *against*
'the system'. They adopt an oppositional or legitimating identity only if it
is functional to developing their project identity and thus to meeting their
specific life plans or policies.

ECs are most often new professionals, particularly in voluntary organi-
zations, who feel they can articulate and do policy as well, and even better,
than politicians and other professionals from the public and private
domain. They deal with all types of elites and sub-elites who somehow are
significant and relevant to securing the success of their various projects.
ECs have:

- a wide conception of the political as a discursive construct; a full-
  time, overlapping, project identity reflecting their overall lifestyle;
- the necessary expertise for exercising influence in elite networks;
- negotiation and dialogue before antagonism and opposition;
- a view of themselves as an autonomous part of the system, rather
  than as identical with it or external and oppositional to it.

To ECs, politics exists in 'the shadow' of policy as a fusion between repre-
sentation and participation. They are not afraid of using their knowledge,
skills and strategic judgment to influence others. They build networks
of negotiation and cooperation with politicians, administrators, interest
groups, media and private companies across conventional boundaries,
and in the process they develop their project identity and network con-
sciousness. As compared with more traditional activists, ECs are not in
the game to fight or cherish 'the system'. They may do so, if it suits their
projects, but mostly they want to be taken seriously as prudent and serious
partners in the exercise of good governance. Consequently, ECs are also a
resource for political capital. In particular, they have a fund of everyday
experience about how to deal with policy problems of exclusion based on
'race', gender, poverty and so on.

EMs are in many ways a response to ECs, whom they confront in nearly
all the institutions, network and projects through which they traverse in
their everyday life. EMs do not feel defined by the state either and they are
neither apathetic nor opposed to it. They don't want to waste time getting
involved in the 'old style' civil society politics; they prefer to be involved
as reflexive individuals participating with other reflexive individuals for
getting a particular and very concrete project going, right where they are.
They typically think globally but act locally. They are usually interested in
'big' politics, but they do not derive their primary identity from it. They are
somewhat sceptical of ECs, whom they think are too system-conforming

and too concerned with 'winning' the games that the professionals play. EMs make a distinction between participating to feel engaged and develop oneself and participating to acquire influence and success; they draw a clear line between participating in policy-politics as laypeople and as professionals. They aim to encourage more spontaneous and lowly organized forms of involvement than ECs, who typically will seek to professionalize all 'spontaneity', such as collaborating with media in the timing and spacing of a certain protest project. Unlike ECs, EMs don't want to mould the identity of others in the direction of certain goals. They rather want to pursue a credo of everyday experience, stating:

- do it yourself;
- do it where you are;
- do it for fun, but also because you find it necessary;
- do it *ad hoc* or part-time;
- do it concretely, instead of ideologically;
- do it self-confidentially and show trust in yourself;
- do it with the system, if need be.

Like ECs, EMs do not believe that representative democracy can be rescued, either by governing as a unity from above or by accumulating more and more social capital from below. They present a practical alternative to Putnam's notion of 'strong government' and 'thick community'. EMs identify themselves with neither. Their commonality does not build on a common good but on acceptance and recognition of difference, which is precisely why they do not stand satisfied in being obedient supports or 'virtuous' citizens of the state. EMs, like ECs, are concerned with creating political capital by enhancing political capacities for self-governance and co-governance in and through various communicative and interactive projects and networks.

ECs and EMs could appreciate that their contribution to Obama's project should not consist in helping him to 'tame' political domination by rational means. They would also have refused to subordinate themselves to any political form of rational domination anyway, however legitimate it may proclaim itself to be. But they would willingly accept a political authority requesting them to participate in its exercise on equal terms and for the sake of doing well for humans. This was exactly what the Obama campaign did. It made use of a political rhetoric aimed at 'luring' reflexive individuals into participating not simply for the sake of democracy but also for the practical reason of doing well. This showed them how 'the political' in its policy-politics mode could be targeted to developing themselves and their life plans – but for a greater cause and in and through their

political communication and interaction with others in a reflexive political community. In this sense, the Obama campaign in my view indicated how the rhetoric of democracy and good governance may be combined, in theory as well as in practice, by reforging the crucial link between political authorities and laypeople in the political community. This would reveal how political and democratic effectiveness and responsiveness are primarily generated from inside 'the political' itself in and through the exercise of good governance.

THE TURN TO POLICY-POLITICS

A key problem in the mainstream approaches to participation, we have seen, is that no one raises doubt that political participation links 'in the last instance' to keeping government responsive and effective in relation to the fulfilment of people's wants as economic individuals and social collectivities. Most research is conducted according to Putnam's formula (1993: 9): 'Societal demands; Political interaction; Government; Policy choice; Implementation'. This formula, as we have seen, dates back to Almond and Verba and their separation of 'political politics' from 'non-political administration'. Like Kant they employ this distinction to show how to make a contract of autonomous reason and political despotism, separating legitimate domination from illegitimate domination. The result is that orientations towards 'outputs' become indicative of a subject culture in which people either think that 'government knows best' or behave as 'mindless thugs' in need of policing. Progressive and virtuous citizenship, in contrast, is identified with those in the participatory public of civil society who strive for keeping government effective and responsive. Finally, there are the locally and socially oriented participants in the parochial culture who do not discriminate between 'inputs' and 'outputs' but rather strive for integrating the obedient subjects, the mindless thugs and the virtuous citizens into networks of social interaction and trust that can help in preventing demand overload and thereby an 'overpoliticization' of 'the system'. As Almond and Verba state (1963: 50):

> Attitudes favourable to participation within the political system play a major role in the civic culture, but so do such non-political attitudes and trust in other people and social participation in general. The maintenance of these more traditional attitudes and their fusion with the particular orientations lead to a balanced political culture in which political activity, involvement, and rationality exist but are balanced by passivity, traditionality, and commitment to parochial values.

This tendency to derive the study of political participations from a modern logic of consensus vs. conflict, decision vs. non-decision, legitimacy vs. illegitimacy, rationality vs. irrationality, modernity vs. traditionality, instrumental choice vs. normative commitment, active citizens vs. passive subjects, and so on, has held the political discipline in its 'iron fist' ever since. As Barack Obama's discourse indicates, it is time for change. As he told people in California during the campaign:

> It's time to turn the page. There is an awakening taking place in America today. From New Hampshire to California, from Texas to Iowa, we are seeing crowds we've never seen before; we're seeing people showing up to the very first political event of their lives. They're coming because they know we are at a crossroads right now. Because we are facing a set of challenges we haven't seen in a generation – and if we don't meet those challenges, we could end up leaving our children a world that's a little poorer and a little meaner than we found it.

Everyday makers and expert citizens all over the globe could become important resources in this crusade for a better world to live in. They would willingly and energetically help political authorities in the 'packaging' of salient policy values and in getting them programmed and delivered on time and in ways that can do well for people all over the globe. At least they would do so as long as those authorities would not try to dominate their political existence but on the contrary would empower them and show respect of their capacities for political thinking and acting as autonomous members of a reflexive political community.

NOTE

REFERENCES

Acheson, Nicholas V. and Arthur P. Williamson (2007), 'Civil society in multi-level public policy: the case of Ireland's two jurisdictions', *Policy and Politics*, 35 (1), 25–44.
Almond, Gabriel and Sidney Verba (1963), *The Civic Culture*, London: Sage.
Almond, Gabriel and Sidney Verba (eds) (1989), *The Civic Culture Revisited*, London: Sage.
Aristotle (1976), *The Nicomachean Ethics*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Badiou, Alain (2006), *Metapolitics*, London: Verso.

Bang, Henrik Paul (ed.) (2003a), *Governance as Social and Political Communication*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Bang, Henrik Paul (2003b), 'Introduction: governance as political communication', in Bang (ed.), pp. 7–27.

Bang, Henrik Paul (2003c) 'A new ruler meeting a new citizen', in Bang (ed.), pp. 241–67.

Bang, Henrik Paul (2004), 'Culture governance: governing reflexive modernity', *Public Administration*, 82 (1), 159–90.

Bang, Henrik Paul (2005), 'Among everyday makers and expert citizens', in Newman (ed.), pp. 159–79.

Bang, H.P. and T.B. Dyrberg (2003), 'Governing at close range: demo-elites and lay people', in Bang (ed.), pp. 222–40.

Bang, Henrik Paul and Anders Esmark (2007a), 'Introduction' in Bang and Esmark (eds), pp. 9–57.

Bang, Henrik Paul and Anders Esmark (eds) (2007b), *New Publics With/Out Democracy*, Copenhagen: Samfundlitteratur/Nordicom.

Bang, Henrik Paul and Anders Esmark (2009), 'Good governance in network society – reconfiguring the political from politics to policy', *Administrative Theory*, 31 (1), March 7–37.

Bang, Henrik Paul and Eva Sørensen (2001), 'The everyday maker: building political rather than social capital', in Dekker and Uslaner (eds), pp. 148–62.

Barnes, Marian, Janet Newman and Helen Sullivan (2007), *Power, Participation and Political Renewal*, Bristol: Policy Press.

Bauman, Z. (2000), *Liquid Modernity*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Beck, Ulrich (1992), *Risk Society*, London: Sage.

Beck, Ulrich (1996), *The Reinvention of Politics*, Cambridge: Polity.

Beck, Ulrich, Anthony Giddens and Scott Lash (1994), *Reflexive Modernization*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bevir, Mark and Frank Trentmann (eds) (2007), *Governance, Consumers and Citizens*, Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Boix, Carles and Susan Stokes (eds) (2007), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cardoso, Gustavo (2006), 'Societies in transition to the network society', in Castells and Cardoso (eds), pp. 23–70.

Carens, Joseph H. (2000), *Culture, Citizenship and Community*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Castells, Manuel (1997), *The Power of Identity*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Castells, Manuel (2006) 'The network society: from knowledge to policy', in Castells and Cardoso (eds), (eds) pp. 3–23.

Castells, Manuel and Gustavo Cardoso (eds) (2006), *The Network Society*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Cerny, Philip G. (2006), 'Plurality, pluralism and power: elements of pluralist analysis in an age of globalization', in Eisfeld (ed.), pp. 81–111.

Chaney, Paul, Tom Hall and Andrew Pithouse (eds) (2001), *New Governance – New Democracy*, Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

Clarke, Jon, Janet Newman, Nick Smith, Elizabeth Vidler and Louise Westmarland (2007), *Creating Citizen-Consumers*, London: Sage.

Corner, John and Dick Pels (eds) (2003), *Media and the Restyling of Politics*, London: Sage.

Cornfield, Michael (2004), *Politics Moves Online*, New York: The Century Foundation Press.

Cottle, Simon (2006), *Mediatized Conflict*, Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Crozier, Michael (2007), 'Recursive governance', *Political Communication*, 24, 1–18.

Dalton, Russell J. (2008), 'Citizenship norms and the expansion of political participation', *Political Studies*, 56, 76–98.

Dalton, Russell J. and Martin P. Wattenberg (eds) (2000), *Parties without Partisans*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Davies, Celia (2007), 'Grounding governance in dialogue?', *Public Administration*, 85 (1), 47–66.

Dean, Mitchell (1999), *Governmentality*, London: Sage.

Dean, Mitchell (2007), *Governing Societies*, Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Dekker, Paul and Eric M. Uslaner (eds) (2001), *Social Capital and Participation in Everyday Life*, London: Routledge.

Dryzek, John S. (2000), *Deliberative Democracy and Beyond*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Easton, David (1955), *A Theoretical Approach to Authority*, Technical Report, no. 17, Office of Naval Studies, Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Easton, David (1958), 'The perception of authority and political change', in Friedrich (ed.), pp. 170–96.

Easton, David (1965), *A Systems Analysis of Political Life*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Eisfeld, Rainer (ed.) (2006), *Pluralism: Developments in the Theory and Practice of Democracy*, Opladen: Barbara Budrich Publishers.

Fischer, Frank (2003), *Reframing Public Policy: Discursive Politics and Deliberative Practices*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Flyvbjerg, Bent (2006), 'A perestroikan straw man answers back', in Schram and Caterino (eds), pp. 56–85.

Foucault, Michel (2007), *The Politics of Truth*, Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Friedrich, C.J. (ed.) (1958), *Authority*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Fukuyama, M. (1992), *The End of History and the Last Man*, New York: Avon Books.

Giddens, Anthony (1996), *Modernity and Self Identity*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Greenwood, Justin (2007), 'Review article: organized civil society and democratic legitimacy in the European Union', *British Journal of Political Science*, 37, 333–57.

Gualmini, Elisabetta (2008), 'Restructuring Weberian bureaucracy', *Public Administration*, 86 (1), 75–94.

Habermas, Jürgen (1987), *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Habermas, Jürgen (1989), *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Habermas, Jürgen (1997), *Between Facts and Norms*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Hajer, Maarten A. and Justus Uitermark (2008), 'Performing authority: discursive politics after the assassination of Theo van Gogh', *Public Administration*, 86 (1), 5–19.

Hajer, Maarten A. and Hendrik Wagenaar (eds) (2003), *Deliberative Policy Analysis*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hay, Colin (2007), *Why We Hate Politics*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Häyhtiö, Tapio and Jarmo Rinne (eds) (2008), *Net Working/Networking: Citizen Initiated Internet Politics*, Tampere: Tampere University Press.

Heffen, Oscar van, Walter J.M. Kickert and Jacques, J.A. Thomassen (eds) (2000), *Governance in Modern Societies*, Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Hendriks, Carolyn M., John S. Dryzek and Christian Hunold (2007), 'Turning up the heat', *Political Studies*, 55, 326–83.

Hirst, Paul (1994), *Associative Democracy*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Hutton, Will and Anthony Giddens (eds) (2001), *On the Edge*, London: Vintage.

Inglehart, R. (1997), *Modernization and Postmodernization*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Kline, David and Dan Burstein (2005), *Blog!: How the Newest Media Revolution is Changing Politics, Business, and Culture*, New York: CDS Books.

Lash, Scott, Bronislaw Szerszynski and Brian Wynne (eds) (1996), *Risk, Environment and Modernity*, London: Sage.

Li, Yaojun and Dave Marsh (2008), 'New forms of political participation: searching for expert citizens and everyday makers', *British Journal of Political Science*, 38, 247–72.

Little, Adrian (2008), *Democratic Piety*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Loader, Brian D. (ed.) (2007), *Young Citizens in the Digital Age*, New York: Routledge.

Macedo, S. et al. (2005), *Democracy at Risk: How Political Choices Undermine Citizen Participation, and What We Can Do About It*, Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.

Marsh, David, Therese O'Toole and Su Jones (2007), *Young People and Politics in the UK*, Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Newman, Janet (ed.) (2005), *Remaking Governance*, Bristol: Policy Press.

Norris, Pippa (1999), *Critical Citizens*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Norris, Pippa (2003), *Young People and Political Activism: From the Politics of Loyalties to the Politics of Choice,* Report for the Council of Europe Symposium, Strasbourg, 27–28 November.

Norris, Pippa (2007) 'Political activism: new challenges, new opportunities', in Boix and Stokes (eds), pp. 628–52.

Papadopoulos, Yannis (2007), 'Problems of democratic accountability in network and multilevel governance', *European Law Journal*, 13 (4), 469–86.

Parsons, Talcott (1951), *The Social System*, New York: The Free Press.

Pateman, Carole (1989), 'The civic culture: a philosophic critique', in Almond and Verba (eds), pp. 57–102.

Pattie, Charles, Patrick Seyd and Paul Whiteley (2004), *Citizenship in Britain*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pharr, Susan J. and Robert D. Putnam (eds) (2000), *Disaffected Democracies*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Putnam, Robert D. (1993), *Making Democracy Work*, Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press.

Putnam, Robert D. (1995), 'Bowling alone: America's declining social capital', *Journal of Democracy*, 6 (1), 65–78.

Putnam, Robert D. (ed.) (2002a), *Democracies in Flux*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Putnam, Robert D. (2002b), 'Conclusion', in Putnam (ed.), pp. 393–416.

Putnam, Robert D. and Kristin A. Goss (2002), 'Introduction', in Putnam (ed.), pp. 3–21.

Raadschelders, Jon C.N. (2008), 'Understanding government: four intellectual traditions in the study of public administration', *Public Administration*, 86 (4), 925–49.

Rawls, John (1993). *Political Liberalism*, New York: Columbia University Press.

Rhodes, R.A.W. (1997), *Understanding Governance – Policy Networks, Governance, Reflexivity and Accountability*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Rose, Niklas (1999), *Powers of Freedom*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Scharpf, Fritz (1999), *Governing in Europe*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Schneider, Anne Larason and Helen Ingram (1997), *Policy Design for Democracy*, Kansas: University Press of Kansas.

Schram, Sanford F. and Brian Caterino (eds) (2006), *Making Political Science Matter*, New York: New York University Press.

Stoker, Gerry (2006), *Why Politics Matters*, Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Urry, John (2003), *Global Complexity*, Cambridge: Polity.

Wattenberg, Martin P. (2007), *Is Voting for Young People?*, Harlow: Pearson Longman.

Webster, Frank (2002), *Theories of the Information Society*, 2nd edn, London: Routledge.

Wenger, Etienne (1998), *Communities of Practice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

9. Public policy and management in postmodern times

John Fenwick and Janice McMillan

In this final chapter we consider the nature of public management and public policy in a postmodern era and revisit the themes outlined in the introduction. To begin the discussion, we review the key tenets of modernist and foundationalist approaches and their principal shortcomings.

THE FAILURES OF FOUNDATIONALIST THEORY

Foundationalism has been central to theory and practice in public policy and management, both in its explanations of the world around us and in the actions of those who occupy positions of influence in public policy and management. Yet we need only consider the many publicly documented policy disasters in western democracies (see for example Gray and 't Hart (1998)) to see the negative impacts of foundationalist understandings of the world and their assumed causal relationships.

We will follow here the definition of foundationalism offered by Bevir and Rhodes (1999: 216), as a positivist perspective that 'adopts some variant of the natural science model; tries to discover "pure facts", and strives after successive approximations to given truth'. In order to consider the failings of foundationalism, we will start by considering the genesis of foundationalist theory within narrative and knowledge creation perspectives.

If we accept the view of Jacobs (2009) that humans have a proclivity for narrative as a way of making sense of the world around them, and that narrative predated logic in this regard, it is not surprising that public management and policy have suffered from the discourse of foundationalism. However, the status of knowledge within such foundationalist perspectives has largely remained implicit – and unchallenged – and it is this assumed knowledge that has provided problems for making policy and managing public services. Central to our argument is a recognition of the status of different types of knowledge and, in particular, the fundamental

differences between tacit and explicit forms. According to Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) knowledge creation depends on a complex web of interactions between tacit and explicit knowledge, mediated through individual and organisational knowledge. In their analysis, tacit knowledge is uncodified, subjective, difficult to record, dependent upon the individual, context specific, not widely understood, difficult to pass on, difficult to emulate and only accessible through experience. In contrast, explicit knowledge is codified, objective, documented, independent of the individual, context free, widely understood, easy to communicate, codified and can be learned through study and emulated.

Although the conventional positivist conception of logic has been implicitly accepted within the world of policy-making and management, it forms the basis of our problem with the current state of understandings around the public reform agenda. In Nonaka and Takeuchi's (ibid.) analysis we can see clear links between narrative and tacit knowledge and between logic and explicit knowledge, although we accept that there is interaction between tacit and explicit knowledge and that there are no impermeable barriers between them: just as, indeed, narrative and logic are inexorably linked. This may be seen through Nonaka and Takeuchi's (ibid.) thesis that knowledge creation is an outcome of four interrelated human processes, namely socialisation, externalisation, combination and internalisation. Here 'socialisation' is interpreted as a sharing experience around individual experiences and tacit knowledge. 'Externalisation' is the articulation of that tacit knowledge to a wider group of receptors through statement of explicit concepts in models, metaphors, analogies and such. We argue that reification may not only be an outcome of knowledge management systems but may appear through earlier stages of the knowledge creation process. The greatest opportunity for reification within knowledge creation may come within the 'combination' process as it is here that knowledge may be systemised within organisations and societies through technology and social interaction. Issues of power are never far from our analysis and within 'combination' differential power positions will determine what is considered legitimate knowledge. 'Internalisation', or the embodying of explicit knowledge into tacit knowledge, may further compound reification through learning by doing.

In foundationalist perspectives the interaction identified above as central to knowledge creation is, we would argue, minimal. It results in knowledge that is either unchallenged or is positivistic in nature. It creates given truths. This perspective has underpinned historic understandings of public policy and management and it still thrives.

Bevir and Rhodes (1999) provided an early, though still influential, critique of foundationalism in public policy and management, proposing an

anti-foundational approach to government and public reform in the UK. Their main contentions are consistent with our starting position that the postmodern condition requires a narrative response. We further contend that we require a story-based rather than logic-based narrative; a narrative that has not yet been (*and will not be*) wholly completed.

Within Bevir and Rhodes's (1999) thesis of anti-foundationalism is an important point that we echo in our argument for moving beyond the orthodoxies. We criticise the limiting nature of logic but do not suggest that logic itself is discarded. Instead, we seek to move beyond a narrative rooted in and wholly dependent on positivist logic in making sense of public management in postmodern times. Bevir and Rhodes argue that the 'clear difference between this [anti-foundational] approach and conventional approaches to studying government is all interpretations are provisional. We cannot appeal to a logic of vindication or refutation' (ibid.: 224).

If we consider examples of the failings of foundationalist theory and practice in governance we can see the limiting influence on the creation of alternative understandings and ultimately government reform agendas. Bevir and Rhodes (1999) highlight the lasting influence of conceptions of the Westminster model of change in British government. They identify a series of variations on the model from different perspectives, all with the same central characteristics – 'a focus on rules and institutions, the use of legal-historical methods, a Whig historiography, and a personalised view of power' (ibid.: 217). With these characteristics forming the 'logic' of the Westminster model, no alternative narrative was available. As Bevir and Rhodes argue, 'traditional sceptics, positivist social scientists, radicals and managerialists alike have highlighted factual and theoretical problems in the Westminster model, but despite the force of the criticisms it survives. For example, most textbooks offer a critical variation, not a coherent alternative narrative' (ibid.: 223). Recent public service reform in the UK has therefore been based on misconceived notions of cause and effect. Further, as we argue throughout, the New Public Management (NPM) lies firmly within this foundationalist tradition and is not a challenge to it.

As an illustration of our perspective, we have elsewhere sought to demonstrate how the foundationalist tradition has influenced the perennial problem of sub-national governance through an examination of the issues around English governance in the devolved UK (Fenwick and McMillan, 2008). We have argued that 'the solution to English governance cannot reside in a top-down government imposed solution, but, if it is addressed at all, will be built up from the local level through those perspectives seen as important by local actors' (ibid.: 3) and, further, that this approach 'can be subverted by the systems of governance themselves propelling

actors back toward known foundational positions. Current governance systems cannot match the rhetoric of third-way pragmatism and associated systems. Governance itself imposes a foundational logic on patterns of public policy and management' (ibid.: 2). Bevir and Rhodes's (1999) response to foundationalism in the study of British government was through notions of traditions, narratives, decentring and dilemmas. We propose that, to move beyond the orthodoxies, we must not only consider narrative but must specifically build from the story-based narratives of the actors concerned.

MOVING BEYOND THE ORTHODOXIES: TOWARD A POSTMODERN PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

'If postmodernity catalyses a reappraisal of modernity, it must be said that some conclude that modernity looks inviting compared with what they see as the postmodern step beyond all boundaries. If all the postmodern can offer is randomness and chaos, play and pastiche, consumerism and unconcern, such critics might conclude that modernity held some attractions' (Lyon, 1999: 100).

Given the inadequacies of foundationalism and modernism as both theoretical base and guide to policy practice, the question arises of how the nature of public policy and public management can now be characterised. The conventional answer has been by reference to NPM and for a time this captured the idea of change in both political and managerial terms, signifying new thinking and new theorising wherein a crude adherence to competition and private sector models was superseded by something more complex, more subtle and, significantly, *new*. This chimed with the spirit of modernisation and, ostensibly, a grown-up pragmatism: we are all rather *above* the old debates now aren't we? At the time, NPM seemed to represent critique, not least of the unhealthy 'symbiotic relationship between politicians and publicly . . . funded bureaucrats' referred to by Andrew Massey in Chapter 5 of this collection. Yet the moment of NPM now seems fleeting. It was of its time, like Britpop, Blair, Clinton or Gorbachev. Things are far less settled now, and, for those who seek certainty, far more troubling.

On both the theoretical and empirical levels, there is now no single coherent narrative about public policy and public management. Capturing this theme of constant, unrelenting and rapid change in public management is central to our analysis. Guy Peters in Chapter 7 draws attention to the decline of certainties that used to be associated with the bureaucratic public organisation. The impact of this change is felt on all actors involved:

politicians, citizens, scholars, managers and employees. The term 'New Public Management' – coined at a certain moment, particularly in relation to Anglo-Saxon public service reforms – came to have an international currency in describing the move away from both monopoly provision and a crude worship of market forces toward a notionally empowered public and an emphasis upon performance. Yet the analytical power of NPM – which we see as foundational theory superficially presented as new or modern – ebbed away almost as soon as it had been created.

The policy and management environment 'post' NPM has not been surveyed comprehensively, but some existing research points up areas of interest. For instance, Christensen, Lie and Lægreid (2007) have explored the perennial question of 'where next?' for public service reform, identifying three possibilities for the future: the 'linear and continuing' pursuit of market-based reforms; a return to the 'old' public administration; or a 'synthesis' of new solutions within 'hybrid' organisational forms. Each is considered in relation to a number of European and Australasian countries. This is empirically grounded and has some value in assisting our understanding of specific countries, and we shall return to the theme of linearity below. Yet we would argue that a depiction of choices in this way tends inevitably to default to foundationalism. The future cannot usefully be conceived of as a choice between, or diluted mixture of, discrete models and processes. The future will be a sprawl of numerous possibilities, as it is now, each vying for dominance in gaining the attention of policy makers and managers, drawing lessons from experience in a globalised world and making sense to particular actors in the circumstances that prevail, sometimes in surprising ways: right-wing governments, as in the last days of the Bush administration in the United States in 2008, implausibly discovered the previously forbidden pleasures of nationalising key financial institutions. There is no script anymore, for any of us: *this* is the uncomfortable lesson of postmodern public management. We do what we do: as practice, this makes sense at least some of the time, but no theoretical model can be extracted from this. As Paul Frissen suggests in Chapter 3 of this collection, the continuing attempts of policy analysts to generate overall theoretical accounts remain 'hopeless', a futile pursuit.

The question then arises of why we – that is, researchers and practical actors – take refuge in reification and the search for realist explanations of what is going on around us. The attempt to identify order and predictability tends to arise, perhaps inevitably, in seeking to make sense of our professional lives, and policy makers of course like to give the impression that they have influence over events, or at least over positive outcomes. However, the notions of fluidity and lack of causality do not fit with this, nor with the rationalist assumptions of professional training for the

public services upon which many of us as educators have a vested interest, nor with an emphasis on mastery or control that may be important for some actors' roles, self-image, performance targets and hence livelihood. Politically, this is a crucial aspect of the 'economic downturn' – or global economic crisis – that manifested itself from 2007 onwards. An accurate political response would be that we don't really know what will happen next and we don't really know if this particular policy response will work or not – let's see. It is, however, very unlikely for political reasons to be articulated in this way. This applies to academics and to managers too: we all pretend to know. Yet we are – as Paul Frissen notes in his chapter – unknowing.

What does it mean, then, to say that we now inhabit an era beyond modernisation and modernism? It means that decisions about public policy and about the practice of public management have not followed a linear path and cannot do so. Policy makers – and managers – are not proceeding to deal incrementally with a list of issues that are gradually, cumulatively, being resolved. The world isn't like that. Public policy and management are not like that.

Unlike some commentators, we do intend 'postmodern' to refer, partly, to time and era: we are indeed 'beyond' the foundationalism that characterised the NPM and pre-NPM periods. This conception of 'post' is intended to have a meaning in temporal terms as well as suggesting a critical relationship to existing theoretical positions and practical interventions in public policy and management. We also use 'postmodern' to denote a move beyond the idea that the available foundational tools discussed above – the received theories and models – have any overall utility. These may have been useful at earlier stages of economic and political life and, in social policy terms, they may well have 'worked' during conditions of modernity, for instance in the creation of the state-provided welfare systems of the twentieth-century social democracies. This is not so now. This is amply illustrated by government responses to and economists' analysis of the economic crisis. We are in a condition of having moved beyond the remit, as well as the era, of the theories and the solutions we previously understood to constitute the available set of choices.

It would be misconceived, however, to assume that this means that 'anything goes', that we occupy a policy and management environment where any solution is as good or bad as any other; any reality as valid as any other; any language possessing any meaning that we or anyone else cares to ascribe to it. Although this is an interpretation of postmodernism that is sometimes offered, or more usually – in fine postmodern style – parodied, it is not our perspective. Our position is that in the environment of fluidity that characterises contemporary public policy and management

there are no available foundationalist responses, either in practice or in principle. These do not exist in any meaningful sense and the search for them is futile. Instead, practitioners look for their own solutions, and use their own sense-making techniques on the basis of the information they have available, while scholars draw from elements of different theories as these come to be found useful. Thus, for instance, we are content to admit elements of Weberian thought into the understanding of actors' responses, notwithstanding Weber's received status as the (critical) exponent of modernist thought. The postmodern task is to have the intellectual and practical confidence to recognise that this is the hyper-uncertain world in which we think and act, and to propose in particular circumstances the solutions and responses that have a value. It is not that anything goes. It is that the canvas for 'what goes' is infinite.

This is not a pessimistic perspective. It is an empowering perspective on what is possible for those involved. Consistent with this, Henrik Bang's exploration in Chapter 8 of the discovery of an active political community in the Obama campaign for the 2008 Presidential election points to the emergence of a notion of politics based within lived experience which would have been inconceivable in earlier times and within earlier perspectives. It takes us beyond the previous models of how people could be expected to behave at election time. This signifies a different conception of participation based on active sense-making at the individual and group level, strongly articulated through politics and thus potentially into policy.

We take the view that nothing is settled in public policy and management, and that theories or guides to practice that propose otherwise are erroneous, based in illusory layers of misconception. In this sense, our notion of postmodern public management is defined by what it is not rather than by what it is. Indeed, 'what it is' must be seen as necessarily conditional and fluid rather than some temporary aberration from a stable normality and rationality. That is how things are.

This challenges the idea that there is an undisclosed answer (for instance, to the making of public policy or to the 'delivery' of public services) to be unearthed if one could only perfect the technical means of finding it. There is not: there are multiple answers (depending on context, actors' varying ontology, sense-making techniques and other processes discussed by the authors within this volume) within shifting realities. This is akin to the changing realities conceived of within contemporary quantum physics which turn the received textbook notion of scientific method on its head, investigating a world where particles can literally be in more than one place at a time, where the act of observation constitutes what is measured, and where the object of study cannot be directly observed. The received

textbook notion of science has been subverted by its own method. Even natural science itself inhabits a postmodern world.

Within this world, there are some perhaps unexpected participants, including, as we and other authors in this book have suggested, Max Weber. Gregory (2007) has also explored the continuing relevance of Weberian thought, seeking to link analysis to the persistence of public sector bureaucracy and also to a Weberian concern with rationalisation and legal-rational organisation. Gregory's interesting endeavour was to reconnect Weberian thought to the understanding of public sector and governmental reform, arguing that NPM was itself a stage in Weber's process of rationalisation; that is, part of the continuing search for 'greater calculability and precision in the management of human affairs' (2007: 222). Gregory sees NPM as a separation of means and ends, and of facts and values, reflected for instance in the practical separation of 'funders' and 'providers' or 'owners' and 'purchasers' central to the public sector. He considers that the link between NPM and the political context of its formulation resembles Weber's 'problematic relationship' between instrumental and substantive rationality. If we accept that NPM was a more effective way of putting rationalisation into practice (rather than representing a critique of it) we need to consider what contribution Weberian thought may be able to offer in a post-NPM environment. Guy Peters, in Chapter 7 of this collection, has drawn specific attention to the relevance of a neo-Weberian approach in understanding the post-NPM environment, and if we are to accept that Weber may still be significant in comprehending both NPM and subsequent developments then a focus on the role of individual actors becomes crucial in an era beyond modernity. We discuss this further below in considering the implications of our approach for issues of practice.

Miller and Fox's explicitly postmodern analysis (2007) has also contributed to these debates by dealing with criticisms of 'orthodoxy' (which they take to include, for instance, scientific management, Taylorism and Weberianism) and its 'high modernism'. They consider democracy and representative politics in the light of Derrida's approach, in particular the critique of the denotative; that is, the idea that reality is represented symbolically and that we can somehow attach something tangible that stands in place of an underlying reality: a cornerstone of foundationalism. Miller and Fox refer to 'paradigm anxiety' (ibid.: 29) and the various alternatives to modernist orthodoxy that have been proposed, including 'neoliberalism, constitutionalism, and citizen activation' (ibid.). Significantly, they locate NPM within the neoliberal 'iteration' (ibid.) in the company of public choice theory and the 'reinventing government' approach (ibid.: 30). The references here to representation and active citizenship are consistent with

the exploration of the social and political bases of the Obama campaign offered by Henrik Bang in Chapter 8. This activism is an important strand of the post-foundational perspective.

Miller and Fox also use the powerful example of the 1973 military coup in Chile in pointing to the inherent dangers of a 'rational managerialism' (ibid.: 39) which asserts that it can control everything neutrally and rationally. It has consequences. It could be added that the seeds of totalitarianism within the rational managerialist approach can and are exhibited at micro and macro levels with the familiar rationale that 'we know best'. This, again, is the language of foundationalism.

Within the postmodern condition of hyperreality, the sign has become disconnected from what it signifies. Signs and symbols through which communication takes place become self-referencing, as in the slogans and vocabulary of New Labour in the UK at the turn of the century. This is the discourse of public service modernisation, illustrated neatly by Wayne Parsons, in Chapter 2, when he refers to the musical theme to New Labour's first victory, 'Things Can Only Get Better' by D:Ream. He reminds us that it was a remix, not the original: how fitting for the postmodern era and for a party committed to the symbolism of old as new. There is a rapid struggle here to capture meaning successfully. Politics and decisions about public policy become spectacle and virtual image, outwith the reality of lived experience. This directly links to a society based on consumption rather than production, in which debates about spin (and who is spinning about whom) become the surrogate of policy: indeed, they become its reality.

Modernity itself, according to Miller and Fox, has had 'totalitarian tendencies' (ibid.: 64). Not only does this have an important meaning in the sense discussed above of overt political totalitarianism, it also has particular force in the fundamental sense of framing a totalitarian view of public policies and their enactment, by which we mean a view that permits of no other alternatives and within which any possible challenges are absorbed and neutralised. This is the approach to public service 'modernisation' in the UK during the New Labour period 1997–2010, a modernisation which co-opted and diluted different strands of debate within a neo-liberal performance-led approach. Significantly, this approach to public service modernisation defined not only the way in which policy was made, it defined public service practice: this is how things will now be done. There is no alternative. This is the sense in which NPM has been both a modernist and a totalitarian enterprise. Within UK public policy, this is illustrated well by the language of partnership in the 'delivery' of local public services. It is a discourse that absorbs and co-opts differences of view, denudes them of meaning and renders political differences (e.g. about resources

or choices of provision) as mere managerial obstacles to be overcome (Fenwick and McMillan, 2009). This is summed up particularly well in the language of official documents such as this one: 'The challenge for all of us in the public sector is to deliver a seamless offer to the customer, joining up our promise and delivery wherever possible, with partnerships which are designed for customer convenience' (DCLG, 2009: i).

Such language takes us back to the importance of narrative. The key narratives of politicians, public policy scholars and ground-level actors are means of constituting the reality of public policy and management. Of course, as David Farnham notes in Chapter 6, there are hierarchies of power in the public organisation and we would certainly argue that a narrative analysis must take account of this. In the case of the managerially or politically powerful within an organisation or within the wider polity, this involves setting up the narrative of a reality we are invited (or coerced, for instance through performance management techniques, targets or simple hierarchical authority) into accepting – because they have power. And the victory of the powerful may seem complete, as we need to accept this narrative in order to make sense of what's around us. We accept the narratives of the powerful if we have no narrative of our own. In this case, to paraphrase George Orwell, everything is all right: we have learned to love Big Brother. The ironic applicability of this to the reality TV programme of the same name extends the metaphor, providing as it does the opportunity for vicarious participation in the narratives of others.

Within the foundationalist perspective, including that of 'modernised' public services, there is the notion of progress. It is a narrative of mastery. Lyon (1999) has noted that in speaking of postmodernity we are also necessarily talking about modernity, and that within modernity we refer to progress. From the Victorian era through to late twentieth-century world events there was the perception of an onward gradual march. Indeed, standing further back, Lyon sees the era of modernity as spanning the entire period 1789 to 1989, from the French Revolution to the fall of state communism: 'the postmodern refers above all to the exhaustion – but not necessarily to the demise – of modernity' (ibid.: 9). Lyon draws from Lyotard, noting that we cannot rely upon any overall meta-narrative to make sense:

> A postmodern artist or writer is in the position of a philosopher: the text he writes, the work he produces are not in principle governed by preestablished rules, and they cannot be judged according to a determining judgment, by applying familiar categories to the text or to the work. Those rules and categories are what the work of art itself is looking for. The artist and the writer, then, are working without rules in order to formulate the rules of what *will have to be done*. (Lyotard, 1979: 81; emphasis in original)

For Lyon, 'the processes of modernization gave us the social condition of modernity' (1999: 69), so 'postmodernization', with its changes in industry, dominance of service workers, flexibility and new technologies, brings postmodernity and its 'different ways of relating socially' (ibid.: 70). The emphasis on consumption – and the creation of the 'consumer' as the key available identity – are bound up closely with the postmodern era: we are what we consume, in public life and social policy as much as in retail or leisure activity.

Within this collection, Wayne Parsons has argued that public policy and policy analysis are 'quintessentially' part of the 'modernist project', necessarily predicated upon rationality, and he has provided a comprehensive narrative of what this discourse has had to offer. Within this modernist enterprise lies an implicit notion of gradual change for the better, a cumulative mastery of the world around us and a progressive elimination of problems. The modernist idea of the onward march of progress has of course appealed to the political Right and Left in equal measure, though for different ideological reasons. We are going forward. Political leaders can say little else perhaps, but the more important point is that this modernist notion of progress underlies public policy and the practice of public management from the era of established foundationalist doctrines through to, and including, the more recent times of NPM.

THE RECONFIGURATION OF PRACTICE IN A POSTMODERN WORLD

Given the standpoint advanced here, the question arises of how practice is to be reconfigured in this uncertain environment. In the hollowed-out state, discussed within these pages by both Mark Evans and Andrew Massey, government can no longer impose its will (although of course it tries, and is expected to do so). Letting go – freeing actors to develop their own answers, 'letting it happen', is one response, alongside an emphasis on actors' individual sense-making activities as the basis of practice – and this is a continuing theme of this book. However, these responses may (and in bureaucratic organisations probably will) default, through 'recursive practices' or through the expectations and requirements of managers (or, in a different context, politicians) into foundational responses. Thus the old ways will reassert themselves.

Chapman (2004), in the preface to the second edition of his important work on 'system failure', proposes a critique of the mechanistic model of policy-making and the common metaphors that go with it. These metaphors include well-used terms such as the 'machinery of government'. He

presents a powerful critique of the idea that policy and public services can be 'delivered' (another metaphor, at least for most services) to passive recipients. Instead, the outcomes of, say, health and education need to be seen as 'co-produced' by citizens (ibid.: 11). We have elsewhere argued, consistent with this, that relatively powerless consumers can be co-opted into the practical management of public services in the interests of producers (Gilliatt, Fenwick and Alford, 2000). Chapman also criticises the idea that policy improvement can simply be 'evidence based', as such evidence is bound to be context-bound and cannot be seen as part of a linear pattern of causation (2004: 11). Further, he is critical of the machine-inspired metaphor which presumes the existence of 'control and predictability – the essential characteristics that policy makers and managers *want* to find in real-life situations' (ibid.: 12–13; emphasis in original).

In short, Chapman is criticising the rational model of policy-making, a critique that could indeed be applied to the whole area of functionalist organisational analysis. But that is not all he is doing – there are already several well-rehearsed discussions of alternative models of public policy on offer, ably summarised by, for instance, Parsons (1995). Chapman's alternative to the inadequacy of the rational model is to emphasise the importance of learning as the means of dealing with complexity and unpredictability. This is not necessarily a process of learning new information, it is more a case of 'systemic' learning and reflection – challenging the idea that we think we already know best (Chapman, 2004: 13). Therefore a systems approach is offered, placing complexity and unpredictability at its centre rather than regarding them as unexpected and unwanted extras at the periphery. Of course the term 'systems' is itself capable of a number of interpretations, and it is easy to misconceive a system as something akin to the very machine that Chapman rejects. This would be a mistake: what is intended is that a systematic conception is needed of the complex adaptive systems, containing the differing perspectives of different actors, which make up any organisation and its policy and management. It is the opposite of thinking that the 'command and control' approach can work: 'feedback, non-linearity and complexity all undermine the conventional, "rational" basis of policy-making. These same characteristics support the notion that a more holistic approach is more likely to succeed' (ibid.: 28–9). Reductionism and the received methodology of positivist science were successful at a time when systems were simple (ibid.: 65). The old solutions, one might say, used to work. Now, failure is more common in policy and elsewhere. 'The core reason for this failure, so the systems practitioners argue, is that the assumptions of separability, linearity, simple causation and predictability are no longer valid' (ibid.: 65). This goal-oriented conception of what the state is seeking to do resides, as Paul

Frissen points out in Chapter 3, within a modernist model of intervention where the state is seen as a 'problem-solving machine'.

The applicability of this to the current agenda of public sector reform internationally is clear. Whether 'developing' countries borrow the neo-liberal reforms of the richer nations (with the significant encouragement of international financial institutions and the conditions they apply to investment), or whether they choose an alternative path such as that of Left-aligned administrations in the global South, the chosen road is that of modernism. In this context, it is puzzling that both politicians and practitioners are still surprised that what they do has so many unintended consequences, when the reasons why events should not turn out as intended are so numerous. This has been discussed by several authors in this book. Mark Evans in Chapter 4 considered the failure of UK government programmes (such as the Child Support Agency) when inspired by a limited notion of policy transfer drawn from a narrow range of countries, typically the United States, in a process which failed to recognise the international lessons to be drawn from the complex experience of globalisation. Paul Frissen, inspired by Lindblom, referred to the complexity of causal relationships and the inevitability of unintended consequences. Andrew Massey in his chapter referred to successive waves of NPM reforms and the impact of globalisation upon the influence of previously powerful professional groups. However, the assumption seems to persist within foundationalist thinking that if only we could remove these irritations and setbacks, and adjust incrementally what we are doing as managers or policy makers, then all would be well. The consequences would be what we intend. People in the organisation would do what we want. Yet this model – the basic assumption of rationality whether in 'New' Public Management or in old public administration – does not apply and cannot apply in the postmodern era. Complexity, hyper-rapid change and uncertainty rule this out.

There are some parallels here with Geyer's chaos theory. Geyer (2003) has described how the linear paradigm in the post-Enlightenment history of the natural sciences was based on assumptions about rationality and progress that suggested control of the natural world is limitless. This began to be questioned during the twentieth century as probability superseded certainty within scientific method, yet there is still a tendency in the everyday world and the social sciences to default to a linear rationalist model. Geyer explores complexity theory – 'a simple title for a broad range of non-linear, complex and chaotic systems theories' (ibid.: 238) – as an alternative to the rationalist model. He also considers the extent to which Giddens's conception of a Third Way represents a partial recognition of complexity.

Geyer notes that the failures of the rationalist, reductionist approach in the social and political sciences led to a questioning of linear models, whether from Freud, Weber, Habermas or the growing postmodernist movement (ibid.: 242). In short, it was not only that the linear model was technically failing to do what it claimed (i.e. predict, control and explain); it was also that the bases of this way of looking at the world were being questioned. Complexity theory has developed in this context, and Geyer conceives of it as a possible 'bridge' between modernism and postmodernism (ibid.: 242). Indeed, Geyer points out that complexity theory can be interpreted variously as part of the modernist project – as in the comments of Byrne (1998: 35), who sees complexity as 'foundationalist' but not 'reductionist and positivist' – or as, at core, anti-foundationalist, as in the perspective of Cilliers (1998). Our view of complexity theory as outlined by Geyer, and the critical systems approaches outlined by Chapman, is that they are consistent with the broad postmodern critique within public policy and public management, while not synonymous with it.

Geyer suggests that the Third Way as developed by Giddens (1994, 1998) does indeed recognise the failure of 'tight human mastery' and also recognises the importance of 'manufactured' risk and uncertainty (2003: 247). The Third Way perspective noted that previous rationalist responses during times of modernity worked well and could even have been considered radical: the development of the National Health Service in the UK stands as a good example. However, different policy responses are required in new times and this is where complexity theory starts to become significant. There were, as Geyer points out, critics of the Third Way from a linear rationalist perspective of both Left and Right (ibid.: 249). Of more relevance to our discussion, however, are critics of the Third Way from a complexity theory perspective, such as Geyer himself. These critics find within the Third Way an authoritarian element: a claim that, despite the uncertainty of the world, and despite the end of established foundationalist grand theory, there is nonetheless a clear next step for those with the ability to discern it: 'the Third Way implies that it understands the next phase of human development and thus can and should control that development' (ibid.: 251). Of course, this is not a problem for those with a modernist interpretation of the Third Way – it is simply showing a way forward in changing times. However, for complexity theorists, the issue is that there is not a Third Way, but there are 'any number of "third ways"' (ibid.: 255).

How then can we characterise the nature of public management and policy on a practical level: what are the consequences of our analysis for those immersed in the world we are seeking to understand?

By definition, postmodernism cannot be a meta-narrative with neatly

prescribed boundaries and an established methodology: it is defined, indeed, by not having these characteristics. For us, postmodernism is absolutely not the abandonment of reason, nor the denial of the Enlightenment. We are not charting a course into nihilism. Rather, we are saying that the received wisdoms of modernist thought are not up to the task of explaining, or even exploring, the realities of the world around us. Reason is still at the core: what else could be there? But the task of reason is to make sense, in different ways at different times, unburdened by the dead weight of foundationalist theories which, literally, explain nothing (in theory and in practice) and which, indeed, hold back the application of reason and the enquiring spirit. We can critique rationality – particularly as used in models of public policy – without forsaking reason.

Public policy and management in the postmodern era is not about the collapse of thought, but about thinking anew. It is fragmentary, and it denotes a fragmented world of theory and practice, but that is not the conclusion of the discussion. Analysis then moves on to what actors in the world of public policy and management do, and how they do it, whether the 'it' is simply making sense or acting practically in the provision and management of public services.

The danger remains – as alluded to by Wayne Parsons in his discussion in Chapter 2 – that postmodernism can lead to a dead-end, providing an account of what is happening but without anything to offer in coping with the difficult world (including the economy, education and other key public services) around us: deconstruction without construction. Yet here, as Parsons argues, postmodernism can yet offer something, and something significant, for policy makers, in the form of what he refers to as a 'critical disposition', a 'playfulness', a recognition of the limitless range of available knowledge, different ways of seeing and multiple perspectives. In these senses, we would suggest there is a strong argument that postmodern perspectives are not only relevant to practice, but are essential in understanding practice in a fragmented and hyper-real world where nothing we used to take for granted (politically or managerially) works any more.

The theoretical approaches discussed in this chapter and throughout this collection of essays are highly relevant to practice in an uncertain world. We propose that the key elements in applying postmodernist perspectives to the world of practice – in terms which are intelligible and of value to actors with a practical stake in public services in contrast to those with a merely passive interest in concepts – are:

- Active learning, by which we mean that we go beyond platitudes about the 'learning organisation' to develop ways in which

organisations can truly learn from the knowledge and creativity of their members. This includes cross-cultural and international learning. Mark Evans in Chapter 4 has referred to the British 'competition state' as a 'laboratory' in which voluntary transfer and less on-drawing occur, the 'social learning' and 'epistemic community' approaches both emphasising *ideas* as the basis on which policy makers make sense and learn from one another.

- Sense-making, basing practical policy solutions on the ways in which actors have themselves developed effective responses and found new solutions, whether in the organisation or, as discussed by Henrik Bang, in wider civil and political society.
- An emphasis on practical actors' perspectives and the different roles adopted by public service employees in an environment where traditional bureaucratic structures have given way to new ways of working, a theme explored in this volume by Guy Peters and David Farnham.
- A narrative approach based on tacit knowledge, understandings and actors' own stories.
- A recognition that there are different solutions for different times and places, that 'muddling through' (Lindblom, 1959) – discussed by Paul Frissen in Chapter 3 – is not a bad thing. It may indeed be the only thing. The criteria for success vary from time to time and place to place and are unlikely to be captured in any useful sense by the machinery of performance measurement and league tables: in this sense, our perspective on practice is not just post-NPM but anti-NPM.
- The positive prospect that in a non-modernist public service environment there is the opportunity for renewed emphasis upon values as the basis for the activity of the organisation and of those within it, and that this is a means to rediscover the basis of a genuine public service ethic. This is implicit in Andrew Massey's discussion in Chapter 5 of professional practice and codes of conduct.
- An approach based on agency, on the activism of practical actors, rather than on determinist models of both theory and practice. This activism is based consciously in uncertainty: David Farnham in Chapter 6 refers to standardisation and stability of work experience in the public service organisation being replaced by 'instability, fragmentation and uncertainty in more decentralised post-welfare states'. Within such uncertainty we identify the prospect of creative sense-making and practical action rather than the existence of a problem to be eliminated. Guy Peters, in his chapter, has referred to the new roles that are available to the public servant in these

changed times, roles that for Peters can be 'reinvigorated' by current
political and administrative changes.

In the light of the challenges facing public policy, public services and
their management in a contracting global economy, we are not advocat-
ing a postmodernism of 'stop making sense' in the manner alluded to by
Talking Heads in the 1980s. We are proposing the opposite: make sense,
but not within the – literally – deluded precepts of foundationalism. Make
sense from the individual actor upwards. A concern with sense-making
also reminds us that public policy and management are firmly rooted in
still-evolving political debates. In Henrik Bang's forceful depiction of par-
ticipation and policy in the penultimate chapter of this collection, there is
an emphasis on the central importance of 'lived experience' in the political
process alongside an unashamed commitment to the possibility of political
change at a time of uncertainty. This perspective on participation within
the policy process helps us to resist the depoliticisation of debate.

Perhaps the target-setting managerialism and individual consumerism
of NPM represented the last stand of modernism. It is the antithesis of the
actor-driven post-foundational approach proposed here. Global economic
crisis has exposed the vacuity of modernist thinking: 'pulling the levers' or
'tending the machine' are metaphors which were never quite convincing
and are now absurd. This does not mean that we abandon the possibility
of practical action in favour of the contemplative postmodern narcissism
referred to critically in our introduction. It means that we base practical
action in the lives and values of individual actors, making sense in different
ways, defining solutions in the light of lived experience, actively learning,
and finally leaving behind the received wisdoms and dominant models of
modernism in both its Left and Right incarnations.

Specifically, the practice of providing public services will almost cer-
tainly fall to an increasing extent, in most conceivable political circum-
stances, upon the third sector, including voluntary and charitable trusts
and community organisations. This is partly due to the global decline of
modernist grand theory which had previously elevated either the state
or the market to prime position, and partly due to empirical constraints:
even wealthy states can decreasingly afford the cost of direct provision of
financial support, for instance, to an aging population, while markets have
demonstrated themselves to be financially and morally incapable of doing
so. This sharp dilemma accounts in part for the vehemence of political
argument around Obama's attempt to reform US health provision: it is
seen, at least by the most vocal lobbyists, as a major paradigm choice.

One possible future for practice can be found – for instance – in
Frame and Brown's discussion of 'post-normal' technologies in relation

to sustainability (Frame and Brown, 2008). They examine the ways in which sustainable solutions have been held back by managerial and 'anti-dialogic' approaches. Their alternative – very much linking to practice as well as to theoretical criticality – recognises the 'diverse perspectives' of stakeholders, the centrality of 'complexity and uncertainty', and the unpredictability and incompleteness of interventions: 'Post-normal science takes concepts of stakeholder input beyond simply broadening democratic participation to new processes, open dialogue and ongoing engagement' (ibid.: 226).

This conception of theory and practice recognises change, uncertainty, multiple perspectives and the highly imperfect nature of attempts to exert control over the world. In these senses, it is close to the perspectives advanced by the authors in this collection. It remains crucially important to emphasise that this is not a passive view of the world. It is highly active: the problems are pressing. 'It is evident . . . that post-normal science requires widening a discourse from a core set of experts to sets of others with different skills and competences and, accordingly, other forms of expertise. Doing sustainability requires an assembly of different technologies and stakeholders cooperating to manage complexities and trial and error processes' (ibid.: 228).

Third sector provision can mean different things in practice but at best it means flexibility and a readiness to adapt particular solutions to specific circumstances, and an emphasis upon guiding values – for instance, those of co-operation or mutuality – rather than foundationalist ideologies.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The chapters in this collection have all been based on a view of rapid change, uncertainty and unpredictability in the post-NPM environment. From this starting point, the salient question becomes: how do we make sense of this environment for both theory and for practice? The latter in turn divides into issues of management (including the role of practitioners and actors) and issues of policy-making. Modernist and foundationalist approaches do not provide the means to make sense in any of these theoretical and practical terms, and thus we turn to postmodern perspectives, not as a philosophical leisure pursuit or as a passive commentary, but as an active way of putting individuals' own sense-making, learning, diversity and values at the centre of analysis. The NPM phase has come and gone. The old ideologies that preceded NPM – the Right and Left versions of steady progress toward some notion of the good society – have largely passed into the history of modernism. Thus we are left with the task of

constructing theoretical and practical sense from what we have. This is a challenging but empowering prospect.

REFERENCES

Bevir, M. and R.A.W. Rhodes (1999), 'Studying British government: reconstructing the research agenda', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 1(2), June, 215–39.

Byrne, D. (1998), *Complexity Theory and the Social Sciences*, London: Routledge.

Chapman, J. (2004), *System Failure: Why Governments Must Learn to Think Differently*, 2nd edn, London: Demos.

Christensen, T. and P. Lægreid (eds) (2007), *Transcending New Public Management: The Transformation of Public Sector Reforms*, Aldershot: Ashgate.

Christensen, T., A. Lie and P. Lægreid (2007), 'Still fragmented government or reassertion of the centre?', in Christensen and Lægreid (eds), pp. 17–41.

Cilliers, P. (1998), *Complexity and Postmodernism: Understanding Complex Systems*, London: Routledge.

Department for Communities and Local Government (2009), *Getting it Right and Righting the Wrongs*, June, London: Stationery Office.

Fenwick, J. and J. McMillan (2008), 'Understanding governance in an era of fragmentation and uncertainty', paper to the ASPA–EGPA 4th Transatlantic Dialogue, Milan, June.

Fenwick, J. and J. McMillan (2009), 'The discourse of local partnership in the United Kingdom', paper to the Public Administration Committee conference, Glamorgan, September.

Frame, B. and J. Brown (2008), 'Developing post-normal technologies for sustainability', *Ecological Economics*, 65, 225–41.

Geyer, R. (2003), 'Beyond the third way: the science of complexity and the politics of choice' *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 5(2), 237–57.

Giddens, A. (1994), *Beyond Left and Right: The Future of Radical Politics*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Giddens, A. (1998), *The Third Way: The Renewal of Social Democracy*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Gilliatt, S., J. Fenwick and D. Alford (2000), 'Public services and the consumer: empowerment or control?', *Social Policy and Administration*, 34(3), September, 333–49.

Gray, P. and P. 't Hart (eds) (1998), *Public Policy Disasters in Western Europe*, London: Routledge.

Gregory, R. (2007), *New Public Management and the Ghost of Max Weber: Exorcized or Still Haunting?*, in Christensen and Lægreid (eds), pp. 221–43.

Jacobs, C. (2009), *Management Rewired*, New York: Penguin Group.

Lindblom, C.E. (1959), 'The science of muddling through', *Public Administration Review*, 9, Spring, 79–88.

Lyon, D. (1999), *Postmodernity*, 2nd edn, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Lyotard, J.F. (1979), 'Answering the question: what is postmodernism?', in *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, pp. 71–82.

Miller, H.T. and C.J. Fox (2007), *Postmodern Public Administration*, revised edn, London and Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.

Nonaka, I. and H. Takeuchi (1995), *The Knowledge Creating Company: How Japanese Companies Create the Dynamics of Innovation*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

Parsons, D.W. (1995), *Public Policy: An Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Policy Analysis*, Aldershot: Edward Elgar.

Index