

# PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION THROUGH A KUHNIAN LENS: THE MISTAKEN SCIENCE

## INTRODUCTION

Since the publication of Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* in 1962, a number of social science scholars have attempted to describe and explain the evolution of their respective fields of knowledge within the Kuhnian framework. Public administrationists are no exception. This is unfortunate, however, given that the aim and effect of Kuhn's work was to *pull down* the natural sciences from an absolute, sovereign seat; not to simultaneously *pull up* the social sciences from a provisional, qualified seat. In fact, Kuhn argued that, unlike the natural sciences, the essence of social science lies in its search for newer and deeper hermeneutic reinterpretations of social phenomena. These hermeneutic reinterpretations can be neither reached nor reasoned through the Kuhnian framework. Indeed, Kuhn's orientation is not to illuminate how scientists understand historical, administrative, political, economic, psychological, social or cultural phenomena but rather how they understand *natural* phenomena *in light of* these troublesome pressures. Instead of asking: "*What part do administrative, political, economic, psychological, social or cultural phenomena play in understanding natural phenomena through a socially constituted and socially constructed 'science'?*" as Kuhn suggests, social scholars (and public administrationists) inverted (or perverted) the Kuhnian lens, ignoring its ontological, epistemological, and strictly logical misplacement.

This essay explains that public administration cannot be evaluated properly within the Kuhnian framework because:

1. PA is not a science.
2. Because PA is not a science, it does not follow the route of 'normal science' in the Kuhnian sense.
3. Because PA does not follow the route of 'normal science,' it produces no 'paradigm(s)' in the Kuhnian sense.
4. Because PA has no 'paradigm(s),' its theoretical questions and answers do not rise to the level of 'puzzle-solving' in the Kuhnian sense.
5. Sans 'puzzle-solving,' 'anomalies' do not emerge in public administration.
6. Sans 'anomalies,' PA cannot experience 'crisis' in the Kuhnian sense.
7. Sans crises, PA cannot progress through 'scientific revolutions' in the Kuhnian sense.
8. Sans scientific revolutions (and incommensurability), PA cannot present a novel 'worldview' in the Kuhnian sense.

## The Kuhnian Framework

Thomas Kuhn's (1922-1996) seminal work, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, presents a new framework for understanding the practice and process of natural science, scientific discoveries, and the tradition-bound rules for what qualifies scientific knowledge. According to Kuhn, scientists would have us believe that scientific knowledge is a cumulative, aggregative, evolutionary process. A historiographic view of scientific discoveries, however, reveals that this is misleading.

Kuhn's interpretive discourse of the history of science distinguishes "normal science" and "scientific revolution." Normal science serves the scientific community by providing both the puzzles to solve (*i.e.*, it shapes what *can be* asked) and the tools by which the scientist may solve them (*i.e.*, it shapes *how* it can be answered). To be sure, normal science is not a T rue representation of reality as much as it is the scientific community's predictions about their assumptions of the world. The robustness of tradition-bound normal science is contingent upon scientists' defense of these assumptions.

Competition between factions of the scientific community is the process through which one theory will be accepted in place of another (Kuhn, 1970, 118). Paradigms are part and parcel to this competitive



process such that they are “sufficiently unprecedented so as to attract an enduring group of adherents away from competing modes of scientific activity (Kuhn, 1970, 110);” and, they are “sufficiently open-ended to leave all sorts of problems for the redefined group of practitioners to resolve (Kuhn, 1970, 110).”

Paradigms capture the push-and-pull between the tradition-bound rules of this practice called science and “normal science.” The very *development of science*, as such, is driven by adherence to a paradigm. Yet, transitions from one paradigm to the next can be achieved only via scientific revolutions (Kuhn, 1970, 92; 112). The stuff for revolution emerges as patterns in the noise (*i.e.* anomalies). That is, if there is to be any discovery at all in the course of normal science, it must come first in the form of the scientist’s detection of an anomaly (Kuhn, 1970, 116). Anomalies invoke scientific discoveries.

A theory constructed on anomalies, however, will not be accepted by the scientific community without a crisis (Kuhn, 1970, 97). Crises can only arise when there is a pervasive loss of confidence among the scientific community in the ability of the prevailing paradigm to adequately account for the mounting anomalies. If the rival paradigm is tradition-shattering enough such that it shifts professional commitments *en toto*, it is a scientific revolution—or, a “tradition shattering complement to the tradition bound activity of normal science (Kuhn, 1970, 116).”<sup>1</sup>

Kuhn notes, however, that upon a scientific revolution, the non-scientific community changes immediately; yet, the scientific community does not (Kuhn, 1970, 112). It is only when the scientific community changes that the “world view” can change.

Kuhn claimed that science guided by one paradigm is *incommensurable* with science developed under a different paradigm. There simply can be no common measure of the different scientific theories. This rules out certain kinds of comparison of the two theories that necessitates a rejection of the views that later science builds on the knowledge contained within earlier theories, and that later theories are closer approximations to the truth than earlier theories (Bird, 2004). The reinterpretation of earlier theories gives the mythical perception that the process is cumulative.” Likewise, Woolgar (1993, 18) argues that “it is this ‘temporal-centrism’ which excludes the messiness of scientific practice, de-emphasizes the uncertainty faced by scientists, omits the red herrings and false trails, and ultimately conveys the impression that the present state of knowledge is the inevitable and logical outcome of historical progression.” The scholar is thus forced to consider the Kuhnian (and Woolgarian) implication that the contemporary world view presented by science is a representation of assumptions about reality—not of reality proper.

Most importantly, perhaps, is Kuhn’s direct and persuasive epistemological challenge to this notion of “science” and the presumption that “science” exists as some sort of independent entity, some sort of independent Truth that is infallible, indubitable, and certain. However, this must be qualified with Kuhn’s implicit assumptions about the world. To Kuhn, the *natural* world is, in some inexplicable way, patterned and regular, and accessible to human understanding [in short, we *can* know it, but we don’t, and likely won’t. See, for example, Kuhn’s (1970, 171) claim that: “We may have to relinquish the notion, explicit or implicit, that changes of paradigm carry scientists and those who learn from them closer and closer to the *truth*.”]

*The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* does not deny that natural phenomena can be known; rather, it shifts the focus from *what can be known* about *natural* phenomena to *how it can be known*: how do scientists go about solving basic problems about nature? *How* do they go about finding what can be known?<sup>2</sup> Kuhn suggests they do this through a route of *normal science*. And, even though Kuhn (1970, 117) collapses scientific fact and theory as categorically inseparable, he does not collapse his underlying assumptions about the *natural* world. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* is a positive description of natural science practice. The cheeky argument that public administration is ‘pre-paradigmatic’ (even

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<sup>1</sup> [Feyerabend even argued that “we are unlikely to produce reliable knowledge *unless* we deliberately flout the rules of science (Woolgar, 1993, 12).”]

<sup>2</sup> Latour & Woolgar (1986, 176) extend this notion and argue that “[scientific] facts are socially constructed” and “the process of construction involves the use of certain devices whereby all traces of production are made extremely difficult to detect.”



though Kuhn begrudgingly concedes the point) does not trump these central epistemological and ontological assumptions. To argue a place for public administration within the Kuhnian framework is logically unsound—and gravely misplaced.

### **Public Administration is not a ‘Science.’**

At first blush, it appears that Kuhn’s scholarship lays a convincing foundation for the argument that public administration possesses its own Kuhnian paradigm, paradigms, or—in the very least—is pre-paradigmatic (Houston, 1993; Ostrom, 1973). This seems particularly true when jumping headlong into the lively scholarly debates; and even more so when, like Ostrom (1973), placing a Kuhnian “stencil” atop the public administration literature (and forcing a *goodness of fit*.) However, the error is evident when considering the public administration literature *in light of* the Kuhnian argument. In the Kuhnian framework, the implicit assumption is that of *science*—an assumption that is not shared among public administration scholars. In fact, scholars have yet to reach consensus on a unifying definition for public administration theory or practice, a unifying theory defining its scope, depth or breadth or its academic or professional status. As such, public administration lacks the professional commitments to shared assumptions (about how the world works), that are, in turn, a requirement for ‘normal science.’

### **There is no unifying definition for public administration theory or practice.**

Before the argument of whether public administration qualifies as a Kuhnian paradigm can be entertained, it must be shown how public administration qualifies as a ‘science’ in the Kuhnian sense. However, this argument cannot be reached until there is professional agreement on just *what* public administration *is*. And, indeed, there is no such consensus. Granted, the lack of agreement is due in part to the wide variety of fields and disciplines from which public administration draws, *e.g.*, economics, sociology, psychology, political science, business administration, philosophy, history, mathematics, law and labor relations, to name a few. This broad knowledge base leads to much ambiguity. Take, for example, MacCurdy’s (1986, 72) definition that public administration is “an area of practice based upon a body of knowledge.”

In “The Meaning and Scope of Public Administration,” Marshall Dimock (1935, 1) suggested that, “Whenever people associate for common purposes, the problem of administration presents itself...When government is organized for the effectuation of community business, we have what has come to be called ‘public administration.’” On the other hand, Leonard White (1948, 3-4) suggested that, “Public administration consists of all those operations having for their purpose the fulfillment or enforcement of public policy...a system of public administration is the composite of all laws, regulations, practices, relationships, codes and customs that prevail at any time in any jurisdiction for the fulfillment or execution of public policy.” He thought that the study of public administration should embrace broad generalizations of political theory concerned with such matters as justice, liberty, obedience, and the role of the state in human affairs (Denhardt 2000, 43-44). Then again, Paul Appleby (1949, 8) argued, “The need is for the administrative mind that can hold fast to the public interest and bind conflicting special interests to it by skillful contrivance, based on knowledge but exceeding mere expertise.”

But in *The Study of Administration*, Woodrow Wilson (1887) argued that administrative questions were not political questions and “the field of administration is the field of business” (Denhardt 2000, 44). Further, he thought that “administration is the most obvious part of government; it is government in action; it is the executive, the operative, the most visible side of government, and is of course as old as government itself.” His essay is credited widely as the work that established the politics-administration dichotomy in the public administration literature.

Even so, in *Modern Public Administration*, Felix Nigro and Lloyd Nigro (1984, 11) offer a few more definitions of PA that have evolved over time, for example, public administration: 1) is cooperative group effort in a public setting; 2) covers all three branches—executive, legislative, and judicial—and their interrelationships; 3) has an important role in the formulation of public policy and is thus a part of the political process; 4) is different in significant ways from private administration; and 5) is closely associated with numerous private groups and individuals in providing services to the community.



Marini (2000, 5) suggests that “public administration is probably best defined as the practice and study of the professional formulation and influence of public policy and the implementation of such policy on regular and organized basis on behalf of the public interest of a society, its civic subparts, and its citizenry.”

Some argue that public administration is simply a language game (Wittgenstein, 1953) that suggests an identity (Rutgers, 1998) and a certain intellectual rigor (Adams & White, 1994) but actually reveals its “interdisciplinary nature” (Mainzer, 1994) and particular “fit” (or lack thereof) within other disciplines (Keller & Spicer, 1997; Mainzer, 1994; Whicker, et al, 1993).

**There is no unifying theory establishing the scope, depth or breadth of public administration theory or practice.**

Lorenz von Stein (1815-1890) was, perhaps, the last scholar to attempt to define the study of public administration as a coherent and unified discipline (Rutgers, 1994).

Frederick Mosher (1956) argued that:

[Public administration’s] “scope of interest seems unlimited; it has not developed a rigorous methodology; it has been pretty blasé about definitions; it has not agreed on any paradigms or theorems or theoretical systems; it has not settled on any stylized jargon or symbols; with a very few experimental exceptions, the field has not been modeled or mathematized into an “adminimetrics.”

Waldo (1968, 5, 9) argued that the nature and scope of public administration were so problematical that it ought to be pursued from a professional perspective. Stillman (1991, 9) argued that, even in the late twentieth century, the central characteristic – and problem – with public administration theory is its continued failure to define its scope and substance as a coherent theory.

**There is no professional agreement about the status of public administration as a field, discipline or profession.**

Because there is neither a unifying definition for public administration nor a unifying framework establishing its scope, there is no professional agreement about its status as an academic field (Marini, 2000, 3), a discipline (Shangraw, Crow & Overman, 1989, 153; Golembiewski, 1977), a profession (Waldo, 1968, 5), a ‘differentiated study’ (Raadschelders, 1999), an art, a craft, or an enterprise (Waldo, 1980). Understandably, a number of scholars argue that, whatever it is, it is suffering from an “identity crisis,” (Box, 1992; Marini, 1971; White, et. al., 1996), an “intellectual crisis,” (Ostom, 1973), a “paradigmatic quandary,” (Henry, 1987), or a “shifting” among “competing visions” and “theoretical images” (Stillman, 1999). Borrowing from Waldo, Rhodes et. al. (1995) playfully argued that, “Public Administration suffers from so many “crises of identity” that normal adolescence seems idyllic.” Brown (1989, 215) argues that we are “no closer to even a superficial resolution” of these crises; “at least no one is willing to make such a claim.”

While some scholars argue that PA is a science (Wilson, 1887; Gulick & Urwick,<sup>3</sup> YEAR; Simon, 1947; Behn, 1995; Neumann, 1996); others say that it is not (Dahl, 1947; Waldo, 1948). Some argue it is a hermeneutic science (Balfour & Mesaros, 1994), others a science of design (Simon, 1969; Shangraw & Crow, 1989). Nonetheless, its early 20<sup>th</sup> century masquerade as a *natural science* was thrown quickly out of the fray in the midst of challenges to reconcile PA science with PA values (most notably in Robert Dahl’s argument portrayed in his 1947 article in the *Public Administration Review* and the seminal Simon-Waldo debate.)

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<sup>3</sup> Luther Gulick and Lyndall Urwick founded the *Administrative Science Quarterly* journal.



### Principles, Proverbs and Paradigms

In *The Science of Administration: Three Problems*, Robert Dahl (1947) argued that PA could not be a science because it cannot elucidate normative values. He argued that any *science* of public administration necessarily succumbs to a naturalistic fallacy. He argued that no science of public administration was possible unless: “(1) the place of normative values is made clear; (2) the nature of man in the area of public administration is better understood and his conduct is predictable; and (3) there is a body of comparative studies from which it may be possible to discover principles and generalities that transcend national boundaries and peculiar historical experiences” (Dahl, 1947, 11). Kuhn agreed that an enterprise could have different values but it would not be science (1977, 331; 1993, 338).

Nonetheless, concepts of *science* and *principles* were used interchangeably early on. For example, Willoughby argued in his *Principles of Public Administration* (1927, ix) that “in administration, there are certain fundamental principles that of general application analogous to those characterizing any science”; Luther Gulick’s POSDCORB), notions of principles were replaced with hypotheses and propositions in Leonard White’s *The Meaning of Principles in Public Administration* (1936). Urwick (1937) argued that “there are certain principles which govern the association of human beings *for any purpose*, just as there are certain engineering principles which govern the building of a bridge.” Shortly thereafter, Edwin O. Stene argued in *An Approach to a Science of Administration* (1940) that “principles” in the public administration literature were little more than speculation and opinion. In response, he sought to *determine causal relationships* as a basis for a science of administration (Denhardt 2000, 57). Dahl (1947) argued that “principles” are culture bound and context sensitive, which prohibited a science of administration. However, Herbert Simon provided an explicit formulation of a science for public administration in his seminal work, *Administrative Behavior* (1957). [*The novelty and promise of what could have become a design science for public administration*<sup>4</sup> (which would have mooted, finally, the wrongheaded, illusory and loose claims for public administration ‘paradigms’) were eclipsed by what this author can only surmise as a tremendous, recurring, conceptual blunder.]

In fact, Simon could not

“see how [public administration could] progress in political philosophy if we continue to think and write in the loose, literary, metaphorical style that [Waldo] and most other theorists adopt. The standard of unrigor that is tolerated in political theory would not receive a passing grade in the elementary course in logic, Aristotelian or symbolic. If political philosophers wish to preserve democracy from what they regard as the termite borings of positivism, I suggest that as the first step they acquire a sufficient technical skill in modern logical analysis to attack the positivists on their own ground. Most of the positivists and empiricists of my acquaintance will then be likely to receive them more as allies in the search for truth than as enemies” (Simon, Drucker & Waldo 1952, 496).

Because scholars have yet to reach consensus on a unifying definition for public administration theory or practice or a unifying theory defining its scope, depth or breadth or its academic or professional status, one can take leave of the Kuhnian framework upon its first premise. Kuhn (1970, 161) argues that questions about whether a field or discipline is a science “will cease to be a source of concern not when a definition is found, but when the groups that now doubt their own status achieve consensus about their past and present accomplishments.” Indeed, there is no consensus.

Public administration theory and practice do not rise to the level of *science*, an implicit Kuhnian assumption. Rather, loosely, public administration attempts to describe, explain or predict administrative, political, economic, social and cultural phenomena—not *natural* phenomena, as was clearly Kuhn’s intended orientation. Public administrationists’ face unique challenges to make sense of these phenomena without the ability to wholly separate themselves from the representation of the object under study and how the representation’s meaning has been constituted through the researcher’s experiences;

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<sup>4</sup> See Shangraw, Crow & Overman (1989), *infra*, “Why has public administration taken so long to embrace Simon and his design science explanation?”



without the ability to appeal to a universal, unifying theory of human or social phenomena; without the ability to generalize on the bases of observations; without the ability to advance *causal* explanations of what brought the behavior about; and without the ability to forecast what its consequences *must* be. The tasks for public administrationists are not those of ‘normal science.’ Rather, it is to provide the most intelligible interpretation possible.

### **Public Administration Does Not Follow the Route of ‘Normal Science.’**

Given that public administration is not a science in the Kuhnian sense, it cannot be evaluated in light of Kuhn’s notion of ‘normal science.’ But even if the assumption that PA is a science is relaxed, it still cannot follow the route of ‘normal science’ because: PA has no founding, exemplary *scientific* achievements that are *sufficiently unprecedented* so as to attract an enduring group of adherents away from competing modes of scientific activity and are *sufficiently open-ended* to leave all sorts of problems for the redefined group of practitioners (and their students) to resolve (Kuhn, 1970, 10). Waldo (1948) would likely meet these high-brow requirements with the argument that public administration scholarship pivots around a core set of *beliefs* and *values* that constrain theoretical development (e.g., *beliefs* that efficiency and democracy are compatible.) But, there have been no *scientific achievements* in the Kuhnian sense (1970, 10). Public administration is *social* and *intelligible* only in the context of *ways of living* or *modes of social life* (Winch, 1958).

In the Kuhnian framework, the scientist concerns himself with determining *significant facts* through *fact-gathering* experiments and observations, which are guided by paradigm (discussed later). The paradigm provides an explanation of the *nature* of things (1970, 25). The scientist’s focus is on making this explanation more precise, and a closer approximation to what is true.<sup>5</sup> In doing so, the scientist matches his facts with the predictions of the paradigmatic theory (1970, 26) by undertaking empirical work (1970, 27) to better articulate this theory so that it better corresponds to the natural object of the inquiry (1970, 33). Normal science, as such, is simultaneously theoretical and empirical (1970, 33). Where the Kuhnian scientist matches facts to theories, the public administrationist attempts to bridge theory and practice (or praxis). This has been a long-standing, intransigent, conceptual (and practical) challenge for public administration; but it is not a *paradigmatic* one.

### **Public Administration Has No Prevailing ‘Paradigm.’**

In the Kuhnian framework, there can be no normal science without commitment to a paradigm. Kuhn argued, however, that it is an open question about what parts of social science have paradigms (1970, 15). Yet, the public administration literature is fraught with claims to ‘paradigm.’ Golembiewski (1977, 43-67) argued for three: humanist/systemic paradigm; social psychological paradigm; and the traditional paradigm; Nicholas Henry (1975) argued for five: politics-administration dichotomy, the challenge, political science, administrative management, and public administration. Others think that particular theories rise to the level of prevailing paradigm. One such theory is the New Public Management (Pollitt, 1990; Hood, 1991; Barzelay, 1992<sup>6</sup>; Osborne & Gaebler, 1993; Mathiasen, 1999; Lynn, 1996, 2000, 2001). Gow and Dufour (2000) question whether it really matters if it is a paradigm. One contemporary claim is for the emergence of a “governance paradigm” (Heinrich & Lynn 2000; Lynn *et al.*, 2001; Hill & Lynn 2004; Ingraham & Lynn 2004; Lynn & Ingraham 2004).

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<sup>5</sup> Again, with the implicit assumption of universal truth. While Kuhn sidesteps both logical positive and logical empirical requirements—in so far as they explain science as object—he does not collapse his belief of a patterned, regular universe. His dismissal of both logical positive and logical empirical claims for verifying or falsifying scientific truths (science as object) provided grounding for social scholars to argue within the Kuhnian framework. This is, however, a mistake. Sidestepping logical positive and logical empirical claims does not simultaneously lift social sciences to ‘science.’

<sup>6</sup> Barzelay (1992, 178) defines paradigm as, “[T]he basic way of perceiving, thinking, valuing, and doing associated with a particular vision of reality. A dominant paradigm is seldom if ever stated explicitly; it exists as unquestioned, tacit understanding that is transmitted through culture and in succeeding generations through direct experience rather than being taught.



If the Kuhnian requirements for paradigm are relaxed, the incoherence of public administration within this framework is obvious. Kuhn argues, “the assimilation of either a new sort of phenomenon or a new scientific theory must demand the rejection of an older paradigm” (1970, 95) and “to desert the paradigm is to cease practicing the science it defines” (1970, 34). But what does it mean to abandon the *science* of the traditional or classic public administration paradigm? What *science* is it that we are deserting? How might we cease practicing a science of ‘governance’ or a ‘NPM’? Taken to its end, the argument shows the evolutionary nature of public administration. But this, too, violates the Kuhnian argument.

It is here that Kuhn’s philosophy of science reveals itself as a specious framework for understanding public administration. PA is not a product of normal science. There are no ‘exemplars’ around which the professional community gathers. Rather, theory coheres around research questions *about social life* that arise from the intrinsic values implicit in PA, a Kuhnian violation (1970, 37). In the absence of a unifying paradigm in the Kuhnian sense, there are no shared, implicit or explicit professional commitments about what *must be* studied or what the expected outcomes should (or must) be. Instead, public administration presents conceptual debates around value tensions that are constitutively social (e.g., Politics and Administration; Facts and Values; Democracy and Efficiency; Discretion and Accountability.) These tensions are scientifically untenable, unresolvable, and their solutions undiscoverable through the theoretical and empirical means of ‘normal science.’ In fact, the dichotomization of values ensures that there will be no solution. Even if the Kuhnian requirements are relaxed, no public administration theory provides *an assurance of solution* (Kuhn, 1970, 37).

### **Public Administration’s Questions and Answers Do Not Rise to the Level of ‘Puzzle-Solving.’**

Kuhn (1970, 37) argues that a paradigm provides the criterion for choosing problems that, while the paradigm is taken for granted, can be assumed to have solutions. The intrinsic value of a research question *is not a criterion* for selecting it. Rather, following Kuhn, the assurance that the question has an answer is the criterion (1970, 37). Kuhn adds that “The man who is striving to solve a problem defined by existing knowledge and technique is not just looking around. He knows what he wants to achieve, and he designs his instruments and directs his thoughts accordingly” (1970, 96). The paradigm provides the puzzle and solution; the scientist is merely an expert at putting puzzles together. At this juncture, public administrationists seem to jump headlong into the Kuhnian discourse, assuming wrongfully that public administration theories rise to the level of puzzles and puzzle-solving, if only because they present questions for research (or, some would argue, discourse).

This is far from Kuhn’s notion of ‘puzzle’ and ‘puzzle-solving.’ Metaphorically, a puzzle has a set number of pieces; these pieces have a predetermined form and fit. The rules bound the way the puzzle is put together (the ‘rules’ are so obvious as to be taken for granted, for example, the ‘rule’ that square pegs do not fit in round holes.) The point is: the puzzle pieces cannot *not* fit together, even though the scientist may not have ‘discovered’ how to put it together quite yet. Theoretically, to classify as a puzzle, the research question must have an assured solution, *rules* that bound these solutions, and must be *consistent with paradigmatic assumptions* (1970, 39). Even if the Kuhnian assumptions are relaxed to allow for a ‘paradigm,’ none of public administration’s questions and answers (embodied in public administration theories) rise to the level of puzzles or puzzle-solving. This is evident in a brief review of the dominant groups of PA theories.

Frederickson and Smith (1999) provide a typology for PA theories that cohere around various research questions. This typology groups these theories into: (1) theories of political control of bureaucracy (Wilson, 1887; Waldo, 1948; Simon 1947; Lowi, 1979; Kettl, 1993; Svava, 1994; Hecl, 1978; Selznick, 1949); (2) theories of bureaucratic politics (Allison, 1971; Gaus, 1931; Kingsley, 1944; Krislov, 1974; Long, 1952; Merton, 1957; Osborne & Gaebler, 1993; Seidman, 1970; Waldo, 1948; Wilson, 1989; Whyte, 1956); (3) theories of public institutions (Milward, 1986; March & Olsen, 1986, 1989; Tiebout, 1956; Wilson, 1989); (4) theories of public management (Taylor, 1911; Kettle, 1993, 1988; Milward, 1994; McGregor, 1960; Osborne & Gaebler, 1992); (5) postmodern theories (Berger & Luckman, 1967; Denhardt, 1993; Habermas, 1970; Hummel, 1994; Farmer, 1995; Fox & Miller, 1995; Stivers, 1990); (6) decision theory (Simon, 1947, 1969; Kiel, 1994; Kingdon, 1995; March & Olsen 1986, 1989); (7) rational



choice theories (Downs, 1967; Niskanen, 1971; Osborne & Gaebler, 1993; Ostrom, 1973; Tiebout, 1956; Tullock, 1965); and (8) theories of governance (Heinrich & Lynn, 2000; Kettl, 2000; Milward & Provan, 2000; Peters & Pierre 1998).

### **Theories of Political Control of Bureaucracy**

The core question for theories of political control of bureaucracy is: *Does bureaucracy comply with the law and the preferences of lawmakers?* In answering this question, this group of theories assumes a conceptual distinction between politics and administration. Another assumption of this group is that democracy is undermined when the bureaucracy is given too much power. As such, they reflect the historical distrust of power. These theories purport to explain how administration can be made accountable to formal institutions of democratic decisionmaking. Frederickson and Smith (1999) classify capture theories<sup>7</sup> and agency theory<sup>8</sup> under this group. The politics-administration premise is problematic but illuminates the symbiotic relationship between the two spheres. Frederickson and Smith (1999) suggest that the politics-administration premise served as the classical unifying paradigm; when it failed, other disciplines 'colonized' public administration as it sought to define itself. In the Kuhnian sense, the politics-administration dichotomy does not rise to the level of paradigm.

### **Theories of Bureaucratic Politics**

Theories of bureaucratic politics reject the politics-administration dichotomy. Among the core questions of theories of bureaucratic politics are: *To what extent do administrative processes, as opposed to democratic processes, determine public policy? Who controls or influences the exercise of bureaucratic power? What is the role of bureaucracy in representing and advancing the goals of particular clientele groups or organized interests? To what extent do elective institutions and elected officials seek to shape and control administration as a means to advance their own political interest? What is the source of bureaucratic power? How does the important political role of non-elected institutions based in hierarchy and authority square with the fundamental values of democracy?*

Frederickson and Smith (1999) identify Dwight Waldo (1948) as the architect of the bureaucratic politics movement vis-à-vis his claim that administration *is* politics. Waldo argued further that the central problematic of administrative theory is a version of James Madison's struggle, documented in *Federalist No. 10*: How do you preserve individual liberty without destroying the freedoms that make it possible? Likewise, Waldo asks: "How do we construct a theory that accommodates the hierarchical and authoritarian nature of the bureaucracy, the foundation of the modern administrative state and the seemingly contradictory egalitarian, inefficient ideals of democracy?" In a sense he asks, "What is *democratic administration*?" To date, public administrationists have not reached any consensus.<sup>9</sup> But,

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<sup>7</sup> Lipsky's (1980) street-level bureaucracy as a theory of client responsiveness.

<sup>8</sup> Agency theory is grounded in economics and describes a contractual relationship between elected and appointed government actors. Elected officials are the principals and seek to persuade bureaucracy (the agents) to follow through on their policy preferences. The theory assumes that agents are interested in compliance and the bureaucracy feels obliged to respond to the interest of elected officials. Taken from Tullock (1965), Downs (1967) and Niskanen's (1971) early economic analyses of bureaucracy, the assumption is that bureaucracies are either out of control or difficult to control. *And see:* Wood and Waterman's (1994) finding that bureaucracy is highly responsive to changes in political environment and direction; Gilmour and Halley's (1994) suggestion that "co-management" is a more accurate description of politics and administration.

<sup>9</sup> According to Frederickson and Smith (1999), embryonic theories of bureaucratic politics emerged for twenty years after *The Administrative State*. Primarily, these embryonic theories focused on the executive branch. Graham Allison's *Essence of Decision* (1971) was one such study. Two key organizational dimensions of these theories are behavior and institutional structure (with particular attention on the distribution of power.) Explanations of political behavior of bureaucracy and bureaucrats have deep roots in organization theory literature. Merton argued that classic bureaucracies shape the personalities of people who work for them. In the *Organization Man*, William Whyte, Jr. demonstrated the willingness of managers in corporations to adopt the goals of the organization as opposed to their own. Osborne and Gaebler's *Reinventing Government* (1993) make similar arguments about the pathology of bureaucratic behavior. A key contribution to organizational behavior scholarship is James Q. Wilson's *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It* (1989). Government reorganization is never far from the public agenda because the organization of the government's administrative arm has little to do with economy or efficiency; it is about power and politics. Harold Seidman's 1970 *Politics, Position and Power* argues that "the institutional location and environment of a policy or program and the organizational structure, process and procedures that govern it help determine the distribution of power and influence with the polity."



according to Frederickson and Smith (2003, 61), the theory of representative bureaucracy is perhaps the most explicit response.<sup>i</sup>

### **Theories of Public Institutions**

The core question of theories of public institutions is: How do structure and organization shape the behavior of public actors (particularly decision making), program, implementation and agency outcomes? What are the patterns of interaction between institutions and their broader social, economic and political contexts?

James Q. Wilson's (1989) *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It* and March and Olsen's (1989) *Rediscovering Institutions* brought back 'hierarchy' and added organizational culture to the study of public institutions. Frederickson and Smith (1999) note the absence of a central core in institutional theory; Wilson (1989) said a useful theory of PA was unattainable. The study of the diffusion of institutional innovation (change) is a core body of research in institutional theory.<sup>ii</sup>

### **Theories of Public Management**

Theories of public management link public administration's economic values with democratic values. The core questions for public management theories are: *What is efficient government and how can it be measured?*

Theories of public management assume a market-based government model. Political values are assumed to govern the evaluation of success where the rule of law dictates constraints on administrative discretion (Guy, 2000, 161). Typically, its subject areas center around leadership, outsourcing and governance (Frederickson & Smith, 1999).

The taproot of management theory is in Frederick W. Taylor's (1911) *Principles of Scientific Management*. These theories are resurrecting the old claims for principles in the contemporary context that bureaucracy is the devil. These assumptions underlie Osborne and Gaebler's (1992) non-theoretical, non-scientific attempts for reinventing government. Preferred doctrines suggest ways to "banish bureaucracy or to reinvent government. (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992). The public management 'doctrines' ground the theory of New Public Management, of doing the business of government. Behn (1998, 131) argued that the traditional method for organizing the executive branch of government is too cumbersome, too bureaucratic, too inefficient, too unresponsive, too unproductive. It does not give us the results we want from government. And today, citizens expect government to produce results. They are no longer tolerant of inefficiency or ineffectiveness. Thus, according to Behn (1998, 131), there is a need for a new way of doing business, "a new paradigm for the management of government."

Theories of Public Management acknowledge the political, economic, and constitutional contexts of doing government business. Guy (2000, 168) adds that, "everything that government does must first pass through a sieve that blends connections between levels and branches of government, partisan politics with substantive mission, economic efficiency with constitutional freedoms, and a tacit agreement between business and government and nonprofit enterprises about the boundaries which surround them. Public management is complex and requires a sophisticated appreciation for the interconnections that exist between all segments of society."

Theories of public management address the practice of outsourcing public sector services. This activity has been referred to as government by proxy (Kettle, 1993); third-party government, hollow government or the hollow state (Milward, 1994, 1999); shadow government, and contracting regime (Kettle, 1988). Frederickson and Smith (1999) argue that the modern concepts of public management work in practice, but not in theory. Adherents to the New Public Management argue that it bridges the theory to practice gap.



### **Postmodern Theory**

Postmodernists suggest that science is a cultural production like any other sign system and therefore has no “privileged voice” (Lyotard, 1979; Wittgenstein, 1973). A faction of these theorists argue, moreover, that no truth exists apart from the ideological interests of humans (Rorty, 1979; Lemert, 1990; Gottdiener, 1990, 1993; Seidman, 1994); discontinuity of knowledge is the norm (e.g., Foucault’s “governmentality”); and permanent pluralism of cultures is the only *real truth* that humans continually face. Gottdiener (1990, 1993) and Seidman (1994) question social theory that posits a *foundationalism*—or the view that knowledge accumulates such that one level of knowledge can serve as the base on which ever more knowledge is built. To them, foundationalism is just another effort to impose a grand narrative as a privileged voice. Gottdiener (1990) sees foundationalism as *logocentrism* where the classics of social theory are seen as the base for all subsequent theory and used by theorists as a political ploy to maintain privileged positions. Given this, Seidman (1994) says that the hope of emancipation through sociological theory must be replaced by “the more modest aspiration of a relentless defense of immediate, local pleasures and struggles for justice.”

In the main, these arguments capture the notion that *science* privileges ‘facts’—yet, to postmodernists, facts are merely social constructions made and maintained by discourse. To the mainstream, these ‘facts’ are either right—or they are wrong. However, postmodernists deny any objective reality about which facts are judged ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ (deZwart, 2002, 483). Rather, as McSwite (1997, 248) argues, the reality we experience as ‘real’ is actually a kind of virtual reality. In place of privileged science, the postmodernists advance phenomenology and insist that subjective-intersubjective relations gird the social constructions of reality. Instead of scientific methodology, postmodern scholars explore and interpret values, assumptions and ideas concerning the very nature of being or human existence (ontology) (Stillman, 2005, 25).

Postmodern theory reflects PA’s theoretical fragmentation. Its fundamental premise is that no ‘paradigm’—in the Kuhnian sense or otherwise—is capable of producing universal truths about any social phenomena. The central assumption is that there are no *absolute* truths; any given question has multiple possible answers. Its approach is subjective and focuses on language, context, and the social construction of reality. Postmodernists argue that the contemporary intellectual framework for public administration is too constraining and ethnocentric. These theorists advance the phenomenological argument that reliable scientific inquiry cannot be based on external observation by outside researchers but can be understood only from the standpoint of the actor themselves (Hummel, 1994; Harmon, 1981). Frederickson and Smith (1999) classify critical and feminist theories under this group.<sup>10</sup>

### **Decision Theory**

Herbert Simon provided the foundation for decision theory in *Administrative Behavior* (1947). Decision-making describes the process that links an organizational means to ends; it is the core administrative activity and an appropriate explanatory target. He introduced the notions that rational decision making is limited or “bounded” and described humans as satisficers. Waldo thought Simon’s decision theory could only fail because it separated facts and values—a task which Waldo believed impossible. The classic argument between Waldo and Simon still frames the enduring challenges of the tension between democratic values and bureaucratic behavior (Waldo, Wamsley, Wolf, Goodsell); and the possibility of a scientific study of public administration (Simon qualifies it as an ‘artificial,’ ‘man-made’ or ‘design’ science) (Simon, 1947, 1969). Frederickson and Smith (1999) classify March and Olsen’s (1984, 1989) garbage can theory, ‘loose coupling,’ and the metaphor of chaos under decision theory.<sup>11</sup> Simon said (shortly

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<sup>10</sup> Phenomenology is divided into two theoretical camps: interpretive or action theory (Harmon) and critical theory (Denhardt, Hummel). Action theory is considered to be an alternative to decision theory. Critical theory seeks to “emancipate” through “authentic discourse.” Much of postmodern language has to do with the abuse of governmental power, (including bureaucratic power). Key concepts are colonialism, corporate colonialism, social injustice, gender inequality, and the distribution of wealth between the developed and developing world. A feminist perspective of PA is provided in Camila Stivers’ *Bureau Men, Settlement Women: constructing PA in the Progressive Era*. Frederickson and Smith classify action-learning models under postmodern theories.

<sup>11</sup> Garbage can theory by Cohen, March and Olsen is: “an organization is a collection of choices looking for problems, issues and feelings looking for decision situations in which they might be aired, solutions looking for issues to which they might be the answer and decision makers looking for work” (Weich, 1972). The best-known application of garbage can theory is the public sector is John



before his death in 2000 that: “decisions regarding power and fairness are made best in nonmarket democratic institutions, and in such institutions the logic of rational self-interest is a poor guide for either power or fairness decision-making.

### **Rational Choice Theory**

Rational choice theories couple public administration’s economic and democratic values. In line with the core questions of public management theories, rational choice theories are used to answer such questions as: What is efficient government and how can it be measured? How can democratic governance be measured? How can citizen preferences be linked to government activities? How are public goods produced and consumed? How can we measure the public interest (‘the collective preference’)?

James Buchanan and Gordon Tullock’s 1962 book, *The Calculus of Consent: Logical Foundations of Constitutional Democracy*, is regarded widely as the founding work for rational choice theory. These theories are based on the neoclassical economic theory and presume economic, rational assumptions of self-interested, rational, utility maximizers who seek to maximize individual interests in the market.<sup>12</sup> This theory holds individual choice as the basis for organizational or “collective actions,” individual preferences as expressions of individual choices; rules to facilitate and assure order and stability in the process; satisficing rather than maximizing strategies by individuals in the pursuit of their self-interests; and, eventually, the incremental nature of changes in collective or individual decisions that are made in organizations and society. Being critical of hierarchy and large bureaucratic organizations, the public choice or market theory of organization calls for small organizations with overlapping jurisdictions (Frederickson 2003, 185-206).

### **Theories of Governance**

Theories of governance blend rational choice theory and theories of public management. The core question of theories of governance is: How can public sector regimes, agencies and programs and activities be organized and managed to achieve public purposes?

Theories of governance imply a different definition for PA, which incorporates a variety of nontraditional policy processes and actors. Frederickson and Smith (1999) argue that ‘governance’ is used to describe the changes in public administration and is not a coherent theory on its own. It adopts management and resource allocation techniques; emphasizes reliance on private sector organizations to deliver public services; and promotes downsizing and decentralizing government. Frederickson and Smith (1999) argue that, currently, governance is more of an acknowledgement of the ‘empirical reality’ of changing times than it is a body of coherent theory.<sup>13</sup> Kettl suggests the impetus for the development of theories of

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Kingdon’s – Agenda, Alternatives and Public Policies (1995). He describes three parallel but independent streams: political stream, the policy stream and the problem stream. “Loose-coupling” appears when responding to complex, confusing and inconsistent and ambiguous environments, complex organizations by decentralizing, delegating and outsourcing. Chaos metaphor in decision theory is similar to garbage can processes. What appears to be disorder, chaos and unsystematic decision-making can hide deep patterns of order (Keil 1994).

<sup>12</sup> Tullock, Downs and Niskanen introduced PA to the self-maximizing bureaucrat rather than the neutrally competent civil servant of traditional PA. Charles Tiebout explained how a competitive market for public services could be created.

<sup>13</sup> Some authors equate governance with New Public Management or “new managerialism.” Donald Kettl (2000, 1-2) outlines NPM’s reform movement around six core issues: (1) Productivity “doing more with less”; (2) Marketization – where government leverages market mechanisms to overcome pathologies of traditional bureaucracy; (3) service orientation to better connect government with citizens and to improve customer satisfaction with public services; (4) decentralization with the goal to put government closer to citizens and make it more responsive to their preferences; (5) policy - the reform movement seeks to improve government’s capacities to create, to implement and to administer public policy; and (6) accountability - the reform movement is an effort to make government deliver on what it promises. On the other hand, Guy Peters and John Pierre (1998,2000) denied that NPM is Governance. They define four basic elements of governance as: (1) dominance of networks. Governance is dominated by a collection of actors having influence over what and how public goods and services are to be produced; (2) The state’s declining capacity for direct control. The power of the state is now tied to its ability to negotiate and bargain with actors in policy networks. The member of networks are increasingly accepted as equal partners in the policy process; (3) The blending of public and private resource. Public and private actors use each other to obtain resource they cannot access independently; and (4) The use of multiple instruments. The willingness to develop nontraditional methods of making and implementing public policy, e.g. using tax incentives to influence behavior rather than command and control regulations to mandate behavior.



governance arise out of the economic stagnation of the 70's and early 80's; government over-regulation; erosion of trust in government; and the end of the cold war.

Given these theories, it should be readily evident that, no matter how regular or uniform the object under the study of each theory may be, public administration is not a study in *science*. The issues are not empirical. They are conceptual. Public administration theories reflect this scheme of concepts. There can be no assurance of solution. Rather, they illuminate the perplexing *social* problems public administrationists attempt to solve. In the Kuhnian framework, they are not scientifically resolvable. Unfortunately, however, public administrationists appear to ignore this fact and, instead, qualify the unsolvable questions as anomalies.

### **'Anomalies' Do Not Emerge in Public Administration.**

In normal science, the prevailing paradigm guides and explains observations, experiments, and their results. These results lead to the development of a shared vocabulary and conceptual refinements. These refinements lead to immense restriction of the scientist's vision, rigid science, and resistance to paradigm change. Matching observation and theory further refines the methods and research, leading to greater and greater understanding of the paradigm. It is, in a sense, a *precise* science. The more precise the understanding of the paradigm (and thus what the results must be), the more readily the scientist can see the unexpected.

In the Kuhnian framework, it is only against a background of paradigm that an anomaly can appear (1970, 65). Here, the Kuhnian assumption of the existence of some real world out there is evident. Simply, nature does not fit a paradigm; rather, paradigm is constructed to reflect what is believed about nature. This ontological grounding shows the striking misplacement of public administration within this framework.

The unexpected is the anomaly. Only when researchers know *with precision* what to expect from an experiment can they recognize that something has gone wrong. With greater precision comes greater sensitivity to detect events that do not follow anticipated results. The greater the sensitivity, the more likely the anomaly will be detected. Only then can the body of knowledge change. The inability to understand the anomaly leads to crisis.

The implicit mistake of public administrationists is to translate their identity crisis into a Kuhnian crisis. For example, Vincent Ostrom (1973, 14) argued that public administration exists in the midst of a paradigmatic crisis. To him, this was due to the proliferation of theories, experimentation and disagreement among scholars. But disagreements over multiple social theories do not rise to the level of Kuhnian crisis.

### **Public Administration Cannot Experience 'Crisis.'**

In Kuhnian crisis, a new theory emerges upon the persistent failure of the puzzles of normal science to be solved as the paradigm dictates that it should. These failures become evident through observed *discrepancies* between theory and fact, which serves as the "core of the crisis" (1970, 69). The crisis is the *essential tension* implicit in scientific research (1970, 79).

In crisis, new paradigms arise with destructive changes *in beliefs about nature* (1970, 98). Clearly, public administration is misplaced here. Even if this is relaxed, the transition from a paradigm in crisis to a new one is not a cumulative process in the Kuhnian framework. A quick look to the questions and assumptions underlying public administration's theories over a century show that this does not hold true. While it does seem that the field has not moved beyond the Waldo-Simon debate, one would hope that public administration has not abandoned its history lessons. Clearly, there has been no "reconstruction of the field from new fundamentals" nor a new "universe of discourse" in the Kuhnian sense (1970, 85). Indeed,



there has been no fundamental reorientation such that all that has been explained before is now explained in a completely different way. Still, relaxing all of these assumptions, there can be no *scientific revolution* in public administration.

### **PA Cannot Progress Through ‘Scientific Revolutions.’**

Kuhn defines a scientific revolution as a “non-cumulative developmental episode in which an older paradigm is replaced in whole or in part by an incompatible new one” (1970, 92). Paradigmatic differences cannot be reconciled. Consequently, the assimilation of either a new sort of phenomenon or a new scientific theory must demand the rejection of an older paradigm (1970, 95). In a scientific revolution (or paradigmatic shift), the schema of public administration concepts (democracy, bureaucracy, efficiency, responsibility, accountability) and our attempts to resolve the dilemmas surrounding these, would become incommensurable. The new paradigm emerging through crisis on the winds of scientific revolution is incommensurable with all that has gone before (1970, 103). Here, the misplacement of public administration is clear.

### **Public Administration Cannot Present a Novel World View.**

In the Kuhnian framework, the world changes when paradigms change. After scientific revolution, scientists are responding to an entirely different world. The difference resembles a *gestalt shift*, a *perceptual transformation*—“what were ducks in the scientist's world before the revolution are rabbits afterward” (1970, 122). Indeed, *world change* may have been the implicit hope of public administration all along. Here, the public administrationist's hubris is embarrassingly clear.

Let us, then, let the dead bury their dead.

### **Concluding Remarks**

This essay has argued that public administration cannot be evaluated in light of the Kuhnian framework. Even when the assumptions are relaxed, public administration cannot rise to the level of Kuhn's normal science, paradigm, puzzles, puzzle-solving, anomalies, crisis, or scientific revolution. The standing admonition is that social scholars need *step inside* the Kuhnian framework when borrowing its terminology; when it is not in strict adherence to Kuhn's logic, (and indeed, as shown here, it cannot be), it is necessary to qualify the use of the term (“non-Kuhnian”, or Big Paradigm and little paradigm). Waldo understood the necessity of Big P's and little p's, but it is Simon who understood the absurdity of these claims. [On this point, he is, perhaps, the only theorist who forced the field's feet to the fire. Unfortunately, to no avail.] That said, even in the absence of a unifying paradigm, methodology, or agreed upon identity, following Polanyi (1964), public administration has developed norms and roles that help sustain it. The Kuhnian framework, however, is not appropriate to help us understand what these norms and roles are.



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## ENDNOTES

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<sup>i</sup> As Krislov and Rosenbloom argued, "[I]t is not the power of public bureaucracies per se, but their unrepresentative power, that constitutes the greatest threat to democratic government. If this power cannot be constrained by legislators and political executives, it can nevertheless be made to operate democratically by making it representative of the public."

Donald Kingsley's *Representative Bureaucracy* (1944) was an early attempt to explain how the aggregated and representative nature of individuals in a bureaucracy would help explain bureaucratic behavior. Guy Peters (2001, 89-90) reports that since Kingsley coined the term "representative bureaucracy," there has been concern over the extent to which the bureaucracy reflects the population it serves. The argument has become twofold:

- (1) Narrow recruitment from any social stratum will tend to bias programs and policies; and the normative argument that
- (2) The ability of the public bureaucracy to hire personnel should be used as a positive means to alter the social and economic structure of the society. [Peters (2001, 90) notes that, in the United States, this has taken the form of "affirmative action" programs.]

Underlying the arguments, of course, is the normative assumption that a bureaucracy *should* demographically represent the citizens it serves. It is thought that, under these conditions, the behavior of the bureaucracy will be representative. Samuel Krislov (1974) agreed with Kingsley's notion that bureaucracies must be representative of the groups they serve if they are to be democratic. Importantly, the central questions from the 'framework' of representative bureaucracy are:

- (1) Do public agencies broadly represent the interest and values of the American people? (Passive Representation); and
- (2) Are these interests and values reflected in the policy actions of bureaucracy? (Active Representation)

Krislov says that any serious claim that bureaucracy is a representative institutions requires evidence that passive representation translates into active representation. But, as Selden (1997) notes in *The Promise of Representative Bureaucracy: Diversity and Responsiveness in a Government Agency*, there is remarkable little research on this issue. She finds that minorities and women are proportionally represented in bureaucracy as a whole, but they are underrepresented in the upper levels. Too, Guy



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Peters (2001, 90-91) sets forth a few caveats in the way of representative bureaucracy. The first is that research on representative bureaucracy has consistently found an over-representation of middle-class (broadly interpreted) backgrounds among civil servants. The second caveat is that the empirical research attempting to link background with behavior provides quite disappointing results.

Peters (2001, 90) reports a unique phenomenon that arises as a caveat as well. Although members of minority ethnic groups may not be able to change their status quite so readily, those who are in posts (especially senior posts) in the public bureaucracy will tend to support the values of the dominant community at a higher rate than other members of the minority group. Peters (2001, 90) explains that this phenomenon produces something of a paradox. Regardless of the degree of representativeness in the recruitment of civil servants, there will tend to be relatively great homogeneity of social and political values. Thus, the dilemma of democratic administrative practice stands unresolved.

<sup>ii</sup> Institution theory addresses system fragmentation, which is informed by the Tiebout debate. The Tiebout Thesis holds that multiple small jurisdictions in a metropolitan area aid market like individual choice, competition and public service efficiency. The institutionalists view it as a debate over fragmentation or consolidation. But, David Lowery argues that racial and income segregation will be greater in a fragmented setting; fragmentation results in a spatial mismatch with poor and minorities isolated in jurisdictions with limited fiscal capacity and high demand for expenditure while wealth whites escape to enclaves; consolidated systems will have policies to minimize sorting by race and income and will maximize redistribution and generalized economic growth. Among the best known elements of institutional theory is the logic of the garbage can (March and Olsen) This theory turns rational logic of decision theory on its head. Order is not sequential because the relationship between means and ends is often temporal. Public problems in the garbage can seek solutions at the same time public institutions may be attracted to particular problems. The related concept to garbage can is rent seeking.

