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Paradigms of public administration



[Photo source](#)

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I. Henry's Paradigms

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Henry structures his second chapter around the concept of 'paradigms' of public administration, both the practice (what gets done in government agencies), and the theory (what gets talked about in universities, thinktanks, and other policy shops, as a result of observation of what gets done in government agencies). By 'paradigm' is just meant an over-arching perspective that drives the field. Henry presents his paradigms historically, so his chapter two looks at how the dominant perspective in public administration in the United States has changed over time. Two key provisos:

1. By 'dominant paradigm' we mean as much 'flavor of the month'. *All* of the paradigmatic perspectives that Henry discusses waxing and waning though history have *always* been present. So his historical 'shifts' can be just the growth of a perspective, rather than that perspective being the *only* way we managed government agencies during that period.
2. There has been a lot of reinvention: old wine into new bottles.

As seen, Henry comes up with the following:

The beginning. I'll take a different approach to this and point out that
our nation's founding = the founding of our government.

Ipsa facto: rather than somehow un-American, government *defines* our country. Until we created our government, we were not Americans, but just a gaggle of colonials. Examples of this "USA = its government" formulation:

- *Declaration of Independence (1776)* -- "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--*That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men...*"

- *The Constitution* (1789) – “We the people, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare and provide the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this constitution of the United States of America.”
This is then repeated in Article I, Section 8. Yes, the US Constitution famously restricts the power of government, but not before both creating it, and giving it considerable scope.

It is also important to think in historical (and, for that matter, comparative) perspective about this. As we saw in Table 1 of lecture 1, when you compare the US to other, actually existing societies, we are both relatively *well* governed, and *lightly* governed. Historically, the bureaucracy to which Wilson (and Goodsell) refers was *a revolution*, given what came before it: ineffective, unaccountable government. Another approach to it, this from Portugal (my translation):

Relative to the organization form of public administration, and despite the justifiable criticisms of the model and the functioning of bureaucracy, it is necessary to point out that at least in the Portuguese case, one of the reasons for its limited public responsibility and for the limitations in its efficiency and efficacy lie precisely in *insufficient bureaucracy*. The bureaucratic model of organization, in the sense postulated by the classics of the theory of organization – Weber, Fayol, Taylor and more recently, Mintzberg and Friedberg --, justly underline that, to limit the dysfunctionalities of an administration that is unprofessional and arbitrary, administration should conduct itself through [POSDCORB friendly reforms]... One of the reasons for the evident dysfunctionalities results from the non-observance of the so-called *bureaucratic model* of organization. (Mozzicafreddo 2001, p. 14)

The context is that Portugal, after its [1974 revolution](#), was entering the modern era after missing most of 500 years of European history. Waking up, [Rip Van Winkle](#)-like and looking at a world with people complaining about bureaucracy, this country that missed the bureaucratic revolution could see that it needed *more* effective, and *more* accountable government. Or, as Henry puts it in the preface of our course text: in its original definition, bureaucracy in government was about good government, that is “uncorrupted, democratic, and competent” (p. 4).

The politics/administration dichotomy (1900-26). This is fundamental to the field of public administration, especially in terms of distinguishing it from political science. In short:

- Political science is about the election of political representatives (Congress, legislatures and councils) and government executives (President, Governor, Mayor), and the enactment of legislation by those legislators, while...
 - Public administration is about execution, and the career civil servants who implement policy. As we will see, public administrators are also often heavily involved in policy formulation.
- As well, due to the rampant corruption of the era, Wilson argued for a separation of administrators from citizens, to reduce the likelihood of private citizens capturing public policy.

Principles of public administration (1927-37). In the US, this has its roots at least in Woodrow Wilson’s advocacy of “a science of administration which shall seek to straighten the paths of

government, to make its business less unbusinesslike; to strengthen and purify its organization, and to crown its duties with dutifulness” (1887, p. 201).

- Part of this movement, too, was to emulate what was seen as the superior management methods used in some business firms. So the idea was to use [the scientific method](#) to develop better ways to run government agencies.

The challenge (1938-50). In short, a revolt developed over the dogmatic over-emphasis of ‘the dichotomy’ (i.e. the separation of politics and administration), and of the development of scientific principles of public administration. Put differently:

- Yes, administration and politics are different, but the two can’t be wholly separated. Just in pragmatic terms, you can’t administer without some appreciation of the politics in which management takes place, and the politician who can’t (or won’t) manage will accomplish little. Think of Mayor Brown... Also:
- Yes, ‘businesslike’ administrative science is good, but business and government differ in important respects, not least the ‘market failures’ discussed in our first lecture.

Public administration as political science (1950-70). Again: politics matters, it can’t be separated completely from administration. Democracy matters, too!

Public administration as management (1950-70). Henry presents this as a second, competing paradigm during this period. To over-simplify:

- The MPA sought to emulate the MBA, or this can be thought of as a resurgence of the Woodrow Wilson desire to make the business of government ‘less unbusinesslike’, and renewed belief in developing ‘principles’ of administration.
- This also featured the ‘public management’ movement. Both halves were emphasized: the public (by the political scientists) and the management (by the MBA wannabes). In public administration scholarship, ‘public management’ and ‘public administration’ differ in no significant ways, the latter was largely an effort at rebranding.

The forces of separatism (1965-70). Henry presents this as the development of a separate identity among ‘public administrationists’, both academics and practitioners. In the US, systematic thinking about public administration had its origins in political science.

Public administration as public administration (1970-present). Basically associated with the previous approach: ‘public administrationists’ becoming more comfortable being ‘public administrationists’; rather than, say, political scientists, or business management specialists, or sociologists, who study public administration.

Governance (1990-present). Something of a multi-dimensional approach to thinking of human governance, so that

- the links between public agencies and the rest of society are better appreciated, and
- there is a more conscious recognition that the public good can be provided by nonprofit, and especially for-profit organizations. This greater utilization of markets is generally referred to today as the *New Public Management* (even though it’s been around since Woodrow Wilson, and uses private markets rather than public management).

II. An attempted rationalization of Henry’s paradigms

All confusing enough, I’m sure. Note, again, all the reinvention in Henry’s paradigms: administrative science has had at least three phases of paradigmatic hegemony. Below I’ll offer an attempt at an integrated taxonomy, showing especially how Henry’s various paradigms overlap. This is illustrated in the table below. GC is me, NH is Nick Henry:

Table 1
Paradigms of public administration, me (GC) v. Nicholas Henry (NH)

GC	Pre-modern	Bureaucracy	Normative	Networked		Civic responsibility
				Market-mediated	Dialogue-mediated	
NH	‘the beginning’	principles, administrative science, management	political emphases, <i>public</i> management	governance, new public management,	governance, new public service, politics	[ignored]

Pre-Modern Public Administration -- characterized by cronyism, patronage and lack of popular control. Unfortunately, what Americans criticize in public bureaucracy has typically been treated as a caricature and held up for abuse. This has especially been so from conservative politicians. Margaret Thatcher, on the eve of the Conservative Party’s 1979 general election victory, warned of “the slither and slide to the socialist state” (Thatcher 1979), while former US President Ronald Reagan argued in his 1981 inaugural address: “In this present crisis, government is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem”¹ (Reagan 1981). It is also worth noting that this broader anti-government perspective is not restricted to the political right. Long-time leftist political activist Ralph Nader echoed Reagan’s anti-government dirge in a 2004 interview shortly after announcing his candidacy for President of the United States:

"Washington is now a corporate-occupied territory. There's a "For Sale" sign on almost every door of agencies and departments where these corporations dominate and they put their appointments in high office." (Nader 2004)

Yet despite these criticisms, 'bureaucracy' was (and remains!) a reformist, even *radical* reformist movement. The common failure to recognize this may be because many American citizens, and even contemporary American scholars of government, have little experience of administration in the absence of modern bureaucracy. Rather than over large and ineffective, the US is one of the best governed societies in the history of our species. I’ll repeat that for emphasis:

Rather than over large and ineffective, the US is one of the best governed societies in the history of our species.

¹ For the record, especially regarding the claims of Thatcher and Reagan: Fraser/Cato economic freedom ratings show a relatively large British state in 1980 (the year after Thatcher’s assumption of office as Prime Minister), but little evidence of the dictatorial economic coercion implied in the statement above: the UK was the 12th least regulated economy in the world (out of 153 analysed), ranked fifth in freedom of international trade, ranked a respectable 19th in the integrity of its legal structure and security of property rights, and ranked 17th in terms of economic freedom overall. The impeccably conservative Cato/Fraser index similarly ranked the US as the third most free economy on the eve of the Reagan administration.

Bureaucracy (the 'how' of administration) -- Also referred to as *administrative science*, this has been around at least since Wilson's call for "a science of administration which shall seek to straighten the paths of government, to make its business less unbusinesslike" (1887, p. 201). Chevallier similarly points to earlier roots of administrative science (1986, p. 12-19), specifically with reference to the long historical battle against the undemocratic cronyism and patronage of 'pre-modern' administration.

Henry describes this science of administration as having received a substantial boost in the 1920s and 1930s, with Willoughby's *Principles of Administration*, followed a decade later by Gulick and Urwick's POSDCORB (Henry 2007, p. 28-30). The influence of the more recent 'public management' movement (Henry 2007, p. 34-5) on the discipline of public administration has seen an understanding

of the science and technique of public administration strengthened. Even much of the 'new' public management movement, with its emphasis on improved management techniques (Hood 1991, p. 4-5; Bresser Pereira 1998, p. 18-20, 52-58), is consistent with the traditions of this venerable, and still prominent (Candler 2008) administrative science paradigm.

By way of some context on governance in the US, see Table 2, at right. As you can see, the US does relatively well, scoring fairly high in terms of the honesty and effectiveness of its

	Corruption perceptions	Civil freedom	Government effectiveness	Legal system
<u>G7+</u>				
US	7.1	1	7.86	7.50
Australia	8.7	1	8.93	8.31
Canada	8.9	1	9.29	8.28
France	6.8	1	7.14	7.31
Germany	7.9	1	7.86	8.17
Italy	3.9	1.5	6.79	5.67
Japan	7.8	1.5	8.21	7.49
Sweden	9.2	1	9.64	8.48
UK	7.6	1	7.86	8.11
<u>BRICs</u>				
Brazil	3.7	2	7.50	5.25
China	3.5	6.5	5.00	6.38
India	3.3	2.5	8.57	5.93
Russia	2.1	5.5	3.21	5.73
<u>Laggards</u>				
Pakistan	2.3	4.5	5.71	4.04
Nigeria	2.4	4.0	3.21	4.20
Vietnam	2.7	6.0	4.29	6.01
Venezuela	2.0	5.0	3.93	2.91

² Sources: [Transparency International](#)'s 2010 *Corruption Perceptions Index*. Higher scores indicate less perception of corruption. [Freedom House](#)'s 2011 *Freedom in the World Report*. Freedom House rates countries in terms of civil and political freedom, on a 1 (free) to 7 (unfree) scale. The number presented here is the average of these two scores. The Government Effectiveness indicator comes from The Economist Intelligence Unit's *Democracy Index 2000*. Finally, the [Fraser Institute](#) and [Cato Institute](#)'s 2010 *Economic Freedom of the World Report* includes a Legal System and Property Rights variable. The data are for 2008.

government, even when compared to the other [G-7](#) (rich) countries.

Normative approaches (the 'why' of administration) -- If the Bureaucratic paradigm focuses on *how* to govern, a second major stream of thought in public administration theory within modern societies is that which addresses the questions of *why* one governs. As academic public administration developed, at least from Dwight Waldo's *The Administrative State* American public administration shifted some of its focus from the means of science and technique to the ends of this process, or what Waldo referred to as the pursuit of "the heavenly city" (1948, p. 66). More recently interest in 'publicness' (Henry 2007, p. 35-7; Ventriss 1989) and the new public administration movement (Henry 2007, p. 38-9; Frederickson 1980) saw further discussion of the purposes of governance. As indicated above, I also like to point out that the purposes of administration in the United States are legally set by a Constitution that enjoins us to work to 'promote the *general welfare*' (see both the [Preamble](#), and [Article I, Section 8](#)), as well as broader Judeo-Christian values which charge us to 'do unto others as you'd have them do unto you' (see, for instance, [Matthew 25:40](#)).

Finally, the 'normative' approach to public administration also includes a large ethical component: honest, open government, and all that.

Network approaches: multi-sectoral civic engagement --

A third meta-paradigm of public administration includes perspectives that focus on relationships with other social actors. There are at least two streams to this:

- *Market-mediated* – This stream focuses on privatization, marketization, contracting out, etc. As Henry (2007) notes, these network

approaches subsume a good portion of the New Public Management, especially that portion that sees government 'steer' rather than 'row' (Osborne and Gaebler 1992, p. 35; Chevallier 2003, p. 211-2). Indeed, Denhardt and Denhardt identify public choice, a NPM precursor movement, as a networked perspective (2006, p. 177-8). Table 3 provides indicators of the relative influence of government versus markets in the world's major economies.

- *Dialogue-mediated* – This stream focuses on interaction between government agencies and civic groups, and is more consistent with the 'new public service' of Denhardt and Denhardt (2000). The approach is largely a reassertion of a number of previous approaches, including

	Household final consumption	Government final consumption	Gross capital formation
G7+			
US	70	16	20
Australia	55	18	29
Canada	56	19	23
France	57	23	22
Germany	57	18	18
Italy	59	20	21
Japan	57	18	24
Sweden	47	26	20
UK	63	22	19
BRICs			
Brazil	61	20	19
China	37	14	43
India	56	11	39
Russia	45	19	25

Sources: [World Development Report 2010](#)

principles of *democratic citizenship*, *new public administration* concerns with citizen participation, questions about '*publicness*', and with a dollop of *post-modernism* thrown in.

While Table 3 gives an indication of the relative role of market-mediated networks in human governance, dialogue-mediated networks are harder to count. Though hard, it's not impossible to measure dialogue-mediated networks. Table 4 (below) takes a whack at this.

Civic responsibility – Civic responsibility emphasizes obligations that citizens have to their society, and their government. The central point of the Network Paradigm is to get the public manager to acknowledge a world outside of the public agency box, not least a world to which the agency manager needs to account and to work with. This is all fine and good, but I doubt that government is possible if it is all about what government can do for the people, and so the role of citizens becomes that of the infant, screaming and banging her/his rattle, and demanding more. Instead, public administration needs a *responsible* citizenry, perhaps best stated by John Fitzgerald Kennedy: "...ask not what your country can do for you - ask what you can do for your country" (Inaugural speech, January 20, 1961).

	<u>Social spending</u> ¹		Civic engagement ²
	Public	Private	
United States	19.4	10.2	60
Australia	18.7	2.8	59
Canada	18.2	5.1	54
France	32.1	2.8	31
Germany	26.3	2.0	43
Italy	28.1	0.7	26
Japan	22.4	3.3	26
Sweden	28.2	2.8	39
United Kingdom	23.9	5.3	57

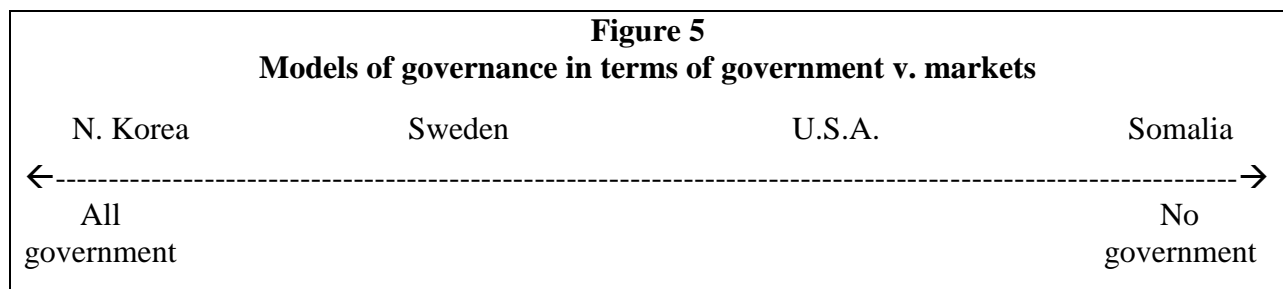
Notes:

1 – From the OECD's [Statistics Portal](#), under Social Spending, year 2012 for Public, 2009 for Private.

2 -- Gallup's [Civic Engagement Index](#). This is a 0-100 scale.

The civic participation of the Networked Paradigm will be difficult if administrators are tasked with creating consensus among the public, but the public isn't equally tasked with responsible citizenship. Responsible citizenship has been grossly under-emphasized, both in terms of asserting the importance of this to citizens, and in training the public manager what to do in the face of an irresponsible citizenry. This will be a recurring theme of this course.

The central dichotomy among these approaches in contemporary American political debate is, though, between government and markets, or my 'market-mediated networks' and bureaucracy. It might be thought of as indicated in Figure 5, below:



III. An example: health care

In 2012 the [Supreme Court ruled that it is Constitutional](#) to promote the general welfare through requiring everyone to hold private sector health insurance, and a program known as the [Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act](#) (all 955 pages of it) is consistent with their interpretation of the Constitution. Table 6 presents a range of indicators that illustrate the imperative of reform in US health care. The key contrast is the world beating costs (twice as much per person than any other country in this sample) of the US health care system, yet our mediocre results.

Table 6
Comparative health indicators

	US	UK	Australia	Canada	France	Japan	Italy	Brazil
Life expectancy (years)	77.9	79.1	80.9	80.3	80.2	82.3	80.3	71.7
Infant mortality (per 1000 births)	6	5	5	5	4	3	4	31
Physicians (per 100k pop.)	256	230	247	214	337	198	420	115
Health spending (\$ per capita)	6096	2560	3123	3171	3040	2293	2414	1520
Health spending (% of GDP)	15.4	8.1	9.6	9.8	10.5	7.8	8.9	8.8
Health spending (% from government)	44.8	86.4	67.7	69.4	78.1	80.8	78.2	54.5
Alcohol consumption (liters p.c., 15+ years)	8.4	11.8	9.0	8.0	11.4	7.6	8.0	5.8
Smoking %	23.6	26.5	19.5	25.0	34.5	33.1	26.7	33.8
Obesity %	32.2	24.4	16.4	14.9	11.3	3.1	14.9	11.1
Economic freedom	7.60	7.71	7.98	7.81	7.16	7.44	6.81	6.19
Civil/political freedom	1	1	1	1	1	1.5	1.5	2

Sources: [Human Development Report 2008](#); World Health Organization, [Data and Statistics](#); [Freedom in the World Report 2011](#); [Economic Freedom of the World Report 2011](#).

Folks who study health administration identify four basic models of national health systems, with the US system (as we'll see) a hybrid of two of these. The four models³:

- The [Beveridge](#) model – or ‘socialized medicine’. In this system health care is provided by government owned hospitals and clinics, and financed through taxation. Exemplars are the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Cuba. This is what critics of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act incorrectly refer to as “complete government takeover of health care”.
- The Bismark model – a non-profit insurance system is financed jointly by employers and employees, with the provision of health services through private doctors and hospitals. Tight

³ In this discussion I'm relying heavily on a final exam presentation by Amanda Hill, a student in the UNF-MPA program. See also [a PBS special](#).

government regulation yields cost control. Exemplars are Germany, France, and Japan. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, with its [impeccably conservative, market-based origins](#), seeks to extend a variant of this model.

- National Health Insurance Model – A single government health insurer, with private sector providers (doctors, clinics and hospitals). The market power of the single insurer creates savings through negotiating for lower prices⁴. The nonprofit government insurer saves on marketing, profit payouts, and reduces the incentive to deny claims. Exemplars are Canada⁵ and South Korea. This is the ‘single payer’ model that many ‘progressives’ favoured.
- Out-of-pocket model – You get sick, you pay for health care. You can’t pay, you stay sick and/or die. Exemplars are India, and much of South America and especially Africa.

The American hybrid model – We use different models for different people:

- Veterans and the armed forces: the socialized medicine of the Beveridge Model, with government run health providers and government payment of costs.
- Elderly: National health insurance model, or socialized health insurance. This is Medicare for the elderly.
- Working Americans: the Bismarck model, though this is in decline, as [more and more workers lose](#) their employer-provided coverage or see it reduced.
- The uninsured: the out of pocket model.

These health care options indicate how these different approaches to governance can all be applied to achieve a single goal. To return more broadly to my paradigms:

- Pre-modern: I add the ‘pre-modern’ paradigm mostly to make the point that there is global best practice, and there are countries that have not reached that. See, for instance, the [recent Ebola crisis](#) in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea. This is the [libertarian, minimal government paradise](#). But beyond this:
- Bureaucratic: we can establish a government agency and directly provide a good/service, and the focus is on continual improvement of that service provision. This is the Bismarck model, or the British National Health Service.
- Normative: emphasizes the importance of values in public administration, especially the value of accountable, honest government in the provision of this health service.
- Network approaches: there is less and less that government does wholly on its own. There are two major forms of this networked approach to human governance:
 - Market-mediated. Buy and sell (including public services) in open markets. Ours is the single health care system in the rich world that features a majority of private *funding*. The provision of that health care is overwhelmingly private. As an example, hospitals are about 80% non-government (and most of the government hospitals are state and local, rather than federal -- [source](#)).
 - ‘Dialogue’-mediated. Government, citizens and other civic groups meet and discuss. There is a lot of this, and the German model, with its nonprofit insurers, is an approximation of this.

⁴ Something prohibited by Congress during the Bush administration. [See link](#).

⁵ Which actually has provincial plans, not a single national insurer.

- Civic responsibility. Civic responsibility focuses on the relationship of citizens to their government and society; and especially the obligations of citizens to their society. Stop smoking!

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