

Core Knowledge Area Module Number 5:  
Organizational Dynamics and Development

Breadth Component

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## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
The Good Society and the Constitutional Machine.....	4
Waldo's Administrative State.....	5
Seidman's Public Administration.....	7
Bureaucracy.....	9
Wilson's Bureaucracy . . . . .	9
The Case for Bureaucracy.....	19
Institutionalism.....	23
March and Olsen's Institutionalism.....	23
Information Technology's Impact on Institutionalism.....	26
Street-level Bureaucracy.....	31
Traditional Model of Public Administration.....	41
Governance.....	42
The Three Concepts Common to both Traditional Public Administration and Governance.....	53
Organizational Culture.....	53
Communication in Bureaucracies.....	55
Accountability.....	63
The New Public Administration Model: Transition from the Traditional Model to the Governance Model.....	65
References.....	69

The purpose of the Breadth section is to examine how modern public administration has changed since its beginning in the Progressive Era. President Wilson is credited with establishing public administration as a discipline as he separated policy making from policy implementation. Since then, academics have studied public administration as the implementation of the decisions of policy makers.

But with the expansion of bureaucracy in the New Deal era and in the Good Society era, administrative agencies began to assume more of a role in policy making. Starting in the late 70s and continuing to present day, bureaucracies began to use nongovernmental partners to carry out governmental functions and to use a new set of tools to provide services. During this time, the gap between the academic study of public administration and the practice of public administration began to widen with the largest split occurring during the 1990s reinvention movement. In the last few years, some academics have launched the governance movement in an attempt to reconcile the academic study of public administration with the new realities in government.

In examining the changes to public administration, the views of several authors of traditional public administration will be examined. First, Waldo's (1984) rationale for public administration will set the foundation for understanding the purposes of public administration. Then, Seidman's (1980) analysis of how America's Constitutional government influences public administration will be discussed. Wilson's (2000) description of the functions and history of American bureaucracy details how public administration has changed since the New Deal and the Great Society while Goodsell (2004) offers a more optimistic view of modern American bureaucracy.

Institutionalism will be examined through the writings of March and Olsen (1989) with an analysis of how information technology has influence public institutions (Fountain, 2001). Lipsky's (1983) study of street-level bureaucrats will display how policy is implemented at the operational levels of government. Finally, all of the above viewpoints will be synthesized into a model of public administration.

After that, the focus shifts to the emerging field of governance. The first part of the discussion will detail how the traditional academic field of public administration has failed to accurately reflect the current practice of public administration. The second part then introduces the concepts of governance and how it attempts to reconcile the differences between academic public administration and practical public administration.

The Breadth then ends by examining the three themes that are present in both traditional and governance public administration: culture, communication, and accountability. The model of public administration will be revisited and revised in light of the findings from governance and how the three themes fit into the new public administration model.

### The Good Society and the Constitutional Machine

The first two authors, Waldo (1984) and Seidman (1980), describe the goals of public administration and the orthodox theory of public administration that formed in the Progressive era with the writings of President Wilson. The orthodox theory is Tayloristic and based on the provisions of the U.S. Constitution and the ideals of American democracy. As Waldo argues, the goal of public administration is to bring about an efficient and well-planned American civilization. Seidman demonstrates how the

orthodox theory of public administration will bring about the planned American society through careful balancing of interests among the three Constitutional branches.

### *Waldo's Administrative State*

Waldo (1984) attempts to answer why there is public administration and the type of society sought by public administrators. He describes the need for a "democratic ruling class" (p. 91) and the characteristics of the "complete [sic] administrator" (p. 97). The thesis of Waldo's conception of public administration is that it exists to bring about the "Heavenly City of the Twentieth Century" (p. 68) or the ideal American society.

Waldo (1984) gives fourteen reasons for the creation and development of American public administration. The first nine reasons reflect a mixture of historical events and aspects of American civilization. These reasons are: "forging a great society [Progressivism]" (p. 8); "the closing of the [Western] frontier" (p. 8); "business civilization" (p. 9); "the modern corporation" (p. 9); "the coming of urbanization" (p. 10); "the U.S. Constitutional system" (p. 11); "the second phase of the industrial revolution" (p. 11); "the advancement of specialization" (p. 12); and "WWI, the Great Depression, WWII, and prosperity" (p. 13). With the exception of the U.S. Constitutional system, the above reasons rose from a combination of 19<sup>th</sup>-century Progressivism and events of the twentieth century.

The five remaining reasons are based on the ideological beliefs in American culture. The first belief is democracy which Waldo (1984) describes not only as a form of government but "a faith and ideal, a romantic vision" (p. 15). The second belief is in the "fundamental law" which is the idea that there exists a higher law that is the

foundation for "a firm and moral society" (p. 16). Both the third and fourth beliefs, "progress" (p. 19) and "efficiency" (p. 20), are closely related and derive out of the final belief of "science" (p. 21). According to Waldo, "[t]his faith in science and the efficacy of scientific method thoroughly permeates our literature on public administration" (p. 21). Public administration, in Waldo's conception, was forged in the events and beliefs of twentieth century America.

Stemming from these beliefs is the ultimate goal of public administration – the creation of the "Heavenly City" or the ideal American society (p. 68). As Waldo (1984) describes it, this good society is "strikingly like a World of Tomorrow futurama" (p. 68) which represents the highest aspirations of humanity. This society is a planned society (p. 69) with a complete mastery of nature (p. 69) and collectivist (p. 70). There is no conflict between business and government (p. 71) and the society is completely urban (p. 73). The prevailing beliefs are individualism (p. 71), materialism (p. 72), peace (p. 72), liberty (p. 73), and equality (p. 73). Taylorism is the method by which public administrators will bring about the Heavenly City and realize these benefits (p. 54).

In order to create and administer the Heavenly City, a "Democratic Ruling Class" (p. 91) must be established. As Waldo explains, the great changes wrought by the scientific method along with the public demand that government be used to bring about the good life requires a governing class of experts and administrators (p. 91). To be the "compleat [sic] administrator" (p.97), the public administrator must first have "an unusual natural endowment of physique, stamina, the qualities of personality which enable him to 'win friends and influence people,' and – particularly – intelligence" (p. 97). In addition, the public administrator must be educated in both cultural and professional subjects

(p. 97) while being knowledgeable about the potential for government in creating the good society.

Waldo's (1984) conception of public administration is the traditional view of public administration stemming from the Wilsonian divide between policy making and policy execution. Public administration is essentially Taylorism used to achieve the good society in the most efficient and scientific way and with respect to the Constitutional and democratic ideals of the American society.

### *Seidman's Public Administration*

Seidman (1980) describes the orthodox theory of public administration as dealing with the "anatomy of government organization" (p. 5) in which the various functions are assigned appropriately (p. 5), the "component parts of the executive branch are properly related and articulate" (p. 5), and "authorities and responsibilities are clearly assigned" (p. 5). Five traits form the core of the orthodox theory. First, the separation of powers as outlined in the U.S. Constitution is strictly interpreted (p. 6). Second, public administration is "exclusive to the executive branch" (p. 6). Third, is the distrust of politics (p. 6) which leads to the fourth trait of separating policy from execution (p. 6). The fifth and final trait holds that efficiency is the single, overriding goal of public administration. The orthodox view holds that there are strong and clearly-marked boundaries between the various agencies and their duties.

This view is reflected in the "layer cake" conception of federalism under the orthodox theory. Layer cake federalism asserts that the powers and responsibilities of each level of government can be precisely defined and that each level is distinct and

independent (p. 175). In contrast, some scholars argue that federalism is more like a "marble cake" in that separation is "impractical and undesirable when governments operate in the same territory, serve the same clienteles, and seek comparable goals" (p. 175). Seidman (1980) criticizes marble cake federalism because it does not recognize that separatism can and does occur in government on its own as a necessary part of performing government functions (pp. 175-176).

A paradox of the orthodox theory is that public agencies fulfill functions of the executive branch (a core trait) but are created and managed by Congress. This paradox leads to continual power struggles in American government. As Seidman (1980) asserts, this paradox prevents the President from directly confronting public agencies in attempting to control the agencies (p. 97). And Congress' power over agencies is diffuse (p. 41) and decisions are made incrementally (p. 45) thus lessening the impact of Congressional action on the agencies. Administrative agencies are constantly subjected to these competing forces and thus are diligent in protecting their turf (p. 174). Any perceived attacks on the powers and functions of administrative agencies will meet with a combined and strong response even from agencies that are naturally competitive with each other in different circumstances (p. 174).

The orthodox theory is similar to Waldo's traditional view in that public administration should work in a precise and planned fashion to fulfill the values of the American democratic and Constitutional society as efficiently as possible. Public administration is only concerned with the most efficient methods to fulfill its functions and should not be concerned with politics. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined

and government is administered by well-trained and educated administrators and professionals.

### Bureaucracy

Bureaucracy describes the various agencies and organizations that exist outside of the three Constitutional branches of government but are subservient to the three branches. Because of the increasing complexity of governing the nation and states, administrative agencies have grown in power and responsibility especially since the New Deal/World War II era. Wilson (2000) describes the functioning of bureaucracies and how they fit into modern American government. Goodsell (2004) is included as contrasting view to the common perception that bureaucracies are slow and inefficient in fulfilling their missions.

#### *Wilson' Bureaucracy*

Wilson (2000) focuses on how bureaucracies operate and the challenges they face in performing their functions and interacting with other parties. He divides agencies into four types and then discusses the three issues that face all agencies. He then discusses the constraints place on agencies and how this affects the agencies as they operate in one of four political environments. Wilson then ends his analysis on how these factors impact decisions made by government executives and how agencies can improve their functioning.

Wilson (2000) categorizes agencies into four types by examining how well the outputs and outcomes can be observed (p. 159). Agencies that both outputs and

outcomes can be observed are designated "production agencies" (p. 159) while agencies where only outputs can be observed are the "procedural agencies" (p. 159). "Craft agencies" are agencies in which only outcomes can be observed (159) and "coping agencies" are typified by the inability to observe both outcome and output (p. 159). The ability to observe outputs and outcomes determines the type of culture and effectiveness of an agency.

Thus, production agencies are easiest to manage (Wilson, 2000, p. 160) achieving agency goals. The coping agencies are the hardest to manage because they cannot recruit good people for jobs they cannot describe, they cannot create a good culture suitable for work because they do not know what good work is in the context of the agency, and they do not know when a crisis actually imperils the agency's work (pp. 168-169). In a coping agency the inability to measure outputs and outcomes makes it impossible to determine if the agency goals are being met.

The remaining two agencies, procedural and craft, fall in the middle between production agencies and coping agencies in terms of manageability. Procedural agencies are "more means-oriented" (p. 164) while craft agencies "encourage a shared commitment" (p. 168). Knowing the type of agency that one is dealing with helps in understanding how the three organizational issues affect the agency.

According to Wilson (2000), the three organizational issues that confront each agency are: "critical tasks" (p. 25), defining the critical tasks (p. 26), and achieving autonomy (p. 26). Wilson defines critical tasks as those "behaviors which, if successfully performed by key organizational members, would enable the organization to manage its critical environmental problem" (p. 25). The "critical environmental problem" is the

culture of the organization that is much affected by the agency's typology. As Wilson argues, it is not enough to recognize the critical tasks; there must be widespread, enthusiastic agreement about the definitions of the critical tasks (p. 26). Equally important is the third issue of achieving sufficient autonomy to allow the agency freedom to redefine its tasks and thus, develop a sense of mission (p. 26). Creating a sense of mission is vital to how well an agency will function and succeed.

The sense of mission, argues Wilson (2000), is essentially the goal of the agency (p. 95). But many administrators find it very difficult to develop a sense of mission due to the numerous legal and political constraints they have to manage under (p. 95). Also, most agencies have more than one goal and thus competing cultures that managers must try to combine into a "shared sense of mission" (p. 95). And the number and importance of competing, contextual goals have risen dramatically in recent years (p. 129). This will often lead to vague goals that make it harder to tell employees what they are supposed to do. Thus, employees begin pursuing their own personal goals p. 95). Another factor is how long the agency has existed. Agencies with long histories have deeply ingrained cultures that managers will find almost impossible to change as opposed to newly-formed agencies in which the manager can more readily create a sense of mission (p. 95).

The importance of a sense of mission is in how it aids in defining tasks. A vague sense of mission allows the situation to define the task because the employees are more responsive to the pressures of their present circumstances than to the poorly-conceived goals of the agency (Wilson, 2000, p. 36). But even when goals are clear, the situation can still define the task especially if there is an easier or more attractive way to perform the work (p. 42). As Wilson demonstrates, what determines whether a particular task

definition survives is more a function of its workability and the support of external allies (p. 56) than the sense of mission.

Equally important to developing a sense of mission and defining critical tasks is achieving the autonomy for the agency. No agency can ever achieve complete autonomy due to accountability required by democratic politics but an executive can achieve some measure of autonomy by "minimizing the number of rivals and constraints" (Wilson, 2000, p. 188). Wilson sets out six rules that agencies use in achieving autonomy starting with the first rule of seeking out tasks that no other agency performs (p. 189). Second, do not allow other agencies to perform the tasks that were chosen (p. 189) and third, an agency should only perform tasks that are not significantly different from its mission (p. 190). Agencies are also discouraged to form "joint or cooperative ventures" according to the fourth rule (p. 190) and the fifth rule cautions against tasks that will divide or anger constituencies (p. 191). The sixth and final rule is that agencies should avoid "learned vulnerabilities" (p. 191). Autonomy is important because it gives the agency the freedom to determine its critical tasks and sense of mission and thus help the agency become a production agency rather than a coping agency.

How an agency answers these three issues helps to determine the culture of the organization. All organizations have culture (Wilson, 2000, p. 93) and, in many cases, several cultures depending on tasks definitions (p. 93). Culture is vital because the tasks that fall outside of the culture will not be effectively performed, energy and resources can be wasted when two or more cultures fight for supremacy in an organization, and organizations will resist new tasks that are not part of its culture (p. 101). Culture also determines group cohesion as peer expectations play a vital part in how employees

perceive their tasks (p. 46). Wilson states that good administrators will try to manage culture so that the "chance operation of predispositions, professional norms, interest-group pressures, or situational imperatives" does not form the culture (p. 95).

Even so, administrators are greatly constrained in the freedom they have to form an agency's culture. All government agencies operate under three key constraints imposed by accountability. First, agencies cannot retain or reward employees with any excess funds created by agency operations (Wilson, 2000, p. 115). Second, administrators cannot allocate the "factors of production" where they prefer (p. 115). Third, the agency's goals are determined externally (p. 115). These realities generate a set of standard effects in most agencies.

The first effect is a great attention to process rather than outcome. As Wilson (2000) observes, outcomes are "uncertain, delayed, and controversial" (p. 131) while procedures are known and defined (p. 131). Thus it is easier to hold managers accountable for following rules than attaining a goal (p. 131).

Second, "every constraint or contextual goal is the written affirmation of the claim of some external constituency" (Wilson, 2000, p. 131) and thus administrators have to please a large and often-contradictory group of external stakeholders (p. 131).

The third effect, equity, arises from the first two effects. Administrators are required to follow rules that ensure fair treatment to clients and fairness is much easier to measure than if the client actually benefited from the administrator's actions (Wilson, 2000, p. 132). As Wilson argues, it is easier to measure "whether every pupil got the same textbook" than it is to say if the "pupils were educated" (p. 132).

The fourth and fifth effects are closely related in that they reduce the risk of administrators being inequitable. Managers become more risk averse (Wilson, 2000, p. 132) and thus develop standard operating procedures to ensure that procedures are followed in a consistent and approved manner (p. 133). This leads to the sixth effect of having more managers because it is necessary to have a large number of managers to observe and enforce the many rules (133). Finally, the seventh effect is where lower-level managers consistently push discretionary decisions higher up the organization so as to avoid the penalty of making non-conforming decisions (p. 133).

The result of all these effects is the well-known bureaucratic caricature of "red tape." It is a mistaken belief that agencies create red tape; rather, as Wilson (2000) argues, it is imposed on the agencies by "external actors, chiefly legislature" (p. 121). Agencies, in their quest for autonomy, would not hinder themselves as they are hindered by red tape (p. 121). Red tape is the result of the public's demand for equity (p. 317).

Along with legal constraints imposed by the desire for equity, agencies are also greatly affected by their political environment. Much like the agency typology, the political environment can be divided into four parts based on the concentration of costs versus the concentration of benefits (Wilson, 2000, p. 76). When the benefits of a program are concentrated to a small group but the costs are borne by a larger group, this is known as client politics (p. 76). The small group has an incentive to press for more benefits while the larger population may not notice they bear the cost and thus do not organize in opposition to the program (p. 76).

Entrepreneurial politics is the opposite of client politics in that the benefits are spread over a large group while the costs are concentrated to a much smaller group

(Wilson, 2000, p. 77). The small group strongly opposes the program because of costs while the beneficiaries have no real incentive to push for the program due to the greater diffusion of benefits (p. 77).

In cases where the benefits and costs are felt by small groups, there is a balance of opposition between opponents and proponents of the program (Wilson, 2000, p. 78) – balance politics. And finally, majoritarian politics is the diffusion of both costs and benefits to large groups (p. 78). Neither side has an incentive to organize for or against the program (p. 78). Understanding the particular political environment an agency is in determines how likely it is that external stakeholders have "captured" the agency - compelling the agency to substitute the group's goals for the agency's own sense of mission.

But, according to Wilson (2000), there are three restraints on capture that make it hard for external groups to impose their goals on the agency. First, is the labor involved in organizing people to oppose or promote a program (p. 83). The more diffuse the benefits or cost, the more unlikely people will feel the effects of the program and are driven to action (p. 83). Second, there are more "access points" or channels of communication into the political process and thus more groups can pressure agencies (p. 84). Instead of a small number of elite stakeholders speaking to an agency, there is a multitude of contradictory groups that dilute and weaken the messages that agencies receive concerning the favorability of a particular program. The third constraint is the bureaucrat's sense of duty to the public good that helps them resist the pressures of external groups (p. 86). Although capture is a real possibility, these three constraints plus

the agencies place in the American government impedes external stakeholders in controlling agencies.

Agencies and administrators are more malleable to the branches of the American government than they are to external stakeholders because of the requirements of the U.S. Constitution. Congress has the most impact on administrative agencies because the agency is essentially an agent of the Congress (Wilson, 2000, p. 236). If an agency is not acting in accordance with the wishes of Congress, then it can be called upon for an explanation and correction if necessary (p. 236). Congress also determines the structure and goals of an agency along with the granting of resources necessary to carry out its mission (p. 236).

The Executive branch has some impact on the agencies by the appointments of sympathetic administrators but, sometimes, these appointees thwart the aims of the President by adopting the culture and perspective of the agency – "marrying the natives" (Wilson, 2000, p. 261). Of the three branches, courts have had the least impact on administrative agencies but their influence seems to have grown in the last thirty years. First, the imposition of so many rules and procedures on agencies has caused a great need for attorneys to interpret and explain the new rules. Thus, lawyers are becoming more important in agencies (p. 284). Second, agencies are increasingly sued in court by disgruntled stakeholders and thus courts have often levied costly court orders on agencies (p. 282). Third, courts have become more active in constructing and imposing policies on agencies that they must fulfill (p. 286). This has sometimes resulted in unintended consequences that agencies must now cope with and manage (p. 286). Thus,

administrators have to work under legal constraints, political pressures, and the demands of the three Constitutional branches when managing the government agency.

"Given the constraints on the managers of public agencies, it is a wonder that there is any management at all," observes Wilson (2000) when explaining why administrators often make bad decisions (p. 154). As Wilson explains, managers must defend the core tasks of the agency (p. 174); motivate the employees to perform these tasks (p. 174); maintain the organization (p. 181); and provide innovation (p. 227). This last duty is especially hard because organizations must resist innovation as the demands for equity require the agency to impose standard operating procedures thereby ensuring stability and routine operations (p. 221). When executives do try to innovate, the change often fails because they overestimate the benefits and underestimate the costs (p. 229). Often executives, who are charged with changing the organization, come from outside of the agency and thus are beholden to external stakeholders and ignorant of the agency's culture (p. 229). These executives either end up demoralizing the agency or going native (p. 229) rather than affecting positive change.

Even when executives are not required to change an agency but to just manage it, they are often still ineffective. Executives are often forced to serve several conflicting goals with little guidance on what is an acceptable compromise (Wilson, 2000, p. 349). There is also little incentive for executives to take effective courses of action because they realize no personal gains from their decisions (p. 349). Executives also have less authority to impose effective courses of action (p. 349). Executives are also influenced by the norms of their profession (Wilson, 2000, p. 60) because their roles in the bureaucracy are often poorly-defined (p. 55). Executives often receive more incentives

from their professional colleagues than in their organizations (p. 60). Thus, the incentives for executives are poor while the burdens of the job are great.

One explanation that Wilson (2000) disproves is the idea that there is a bureaucratic personality that is responsible for poor management. As Wilson observes, there is no evidence for such a personality and that there is little difference in the personalities of business leaders and government leaders (p. 70) other than government executives are slightly more politically liberal than business executives (p. 65). It is more that constraints limit professional behavior. Government executives are hired to manage because of their knowledge and experience allows them to make good decisions but then they are constrained from making decisions due to numerous constraints stemming from accountability and equity (p. 149). It is telling that the great public administrators succeeded because they managed their external constituencies well and thus lessened the impact of constraints (p. 203).

Wilson (2000) ends his analysis by suggesting four actions that administrators can take in more effectively managing their agencies but starts off by suggesting that agencies should be kept small so as "to avoid conflicting norms, missions, and goals" (p. 375). Thus, the first task of the administrator is to understand the agency's culture and what the core tasks are in the organization (p. 371). Second, administrators should negotiate agreements with stakeholders to determine what are essential constraints and marginal constraints (p. 372). Third, administrators must match authority and resources to the appropriate tasks (p. 372). Finally, the fourth suggestion is that administrators must judge their agencies by results. By understanding the three issues that challenge

agencies, the constraints that affect agencies and the necessity to manage external stakeholders, administrators can be more effective in managing their agencies.

### *The Case for Bureaucracy*

Goodsell's (2004) book, *The Case for Bureaucracy*, gives a more positive view of bureaucracy than Wilson (2000). Goodsell argues that it is a common view in both the academic community and the general population that bureaucracies are inherently bad and fail in the same ways (p. 42). But, in examining the evidence, he finds that many of the myths concerning bureaucracy are untrue and that bureaucracies significantly contribute to society.

As Goodsell (2004) observes, bureaucracies were seen as necessary to achieve the higher goals of America such as "combating the Great Depression in the 1930s, fighting World War II in the 1940s, launching the Interstate Highway System in the 1950s, and, in the 1960s, seeking to achieve civil rights, an end to poverty, safer consumers, and a protected environment" (p. 8). It was in the 1970s that bureaucracy came under severe and sustained attack by politicians and the public (p. 8). Since then, there have been various reform movements that have attempted to cure the problem of bureaucracy. But, even though the general public is critical of bureaucracy in general, survey after survey demonstrates that satisfaction with specific agencies is high (p. 25) and that "citizen assessments of specific, personal experiences with administrative agencies tend to be positive" (p. 31).

Some reasons for the general negative view of bureaucracies are that agencies cannot solve problems, cannot implement solutions, are not focused, and generate too

many burdensome procedures. The first view is based on a misperception of the public in how administrative agencies handle problems. As Goodsell (2004) points out, the job of many agencies is not to solve the public problem, but to manage it (p. 82). Many public problems can never be fully solved and eliminated so the best an agency can do is minimize the effects of the problem (p. 82).

The second view, inability to implement, is a valid point because in the modern American society, many programs are complex and cut across agency boundaries (Goodsell, 2004, p. 65). The third view concerning agency focus is also valid because multiple, contradictory goals are imposed on agencies and they have to satisfy multiple stakeholders who have contradictory expectation (pp. 60-61). These conditions are just the nature of the bureaucratic environment and increase the difficulty of managing public problems.

The final view that there is too much red tape in the bureaucracy is not the fault of the agencies. Agencies must operate under a system of checks and balances and under the constant scrutiny of the Congress, the media, and the public over all their activities and policies (Goodsell, 2004, p. 5). All this is necessary because agencies must be accountable to "due process procedures, ethics laws, accounting and auditing requirements, procurement rules, civil service regulations, and Freedom of Information laws" (p. 64). As noted in an earlier section of this paper, what is a burdensome regulation to one is equity to another. Thus, the negative view of bureaucracy is unwarranted because bureaucracies are given difficult public problems that are impossible to solve, contradictory goals and expectations, are in an environment where

coordination is difficult, and are further constrained by the demands for accountability and equity.

In disputing this negative view of bureaucracies, Goodsell (2004) argues that the major contribution of bureaucracies has been a substantial rise in socioeconomic progress in America in this century and especially in the last three decades (p. 39). Bureaucracies may have not been the sole source for this accomplishment but "government agencies are often at the center of it all" (p. 39). And bureaucracies continue to contribute to society in four ways: encourage civic participation (pp. 136-137); make elections count (p. 133); "provide a sustained and long-term effort to solve problems" (p. 132); and generate funds for government operations (p. 131). Bureaucracies are essential in keeping American democracy working and progressing.

After demonstrating the positive contributions of bureaucracy, Goodsell (2004) then examines several myths concerning bureaucracy and demonstrates why they are unfounded. The first myth concerns the substantial cost of regulation. As Goodsell finds, studies have shown that the benefits from regulation outweigh the costs of regulation by three to five times (p. 35).

A second myth is the perception of big government composed of large and growing bureaucracies. Actually, small size is common in the bureaucracy and most of these small agencies have few dealings with each other and are often rivals (p. 5) "Fifty-two percent of field units employed fewer than 5 individuals and 69 percent 10 persons or less. Just under 93 percent of the facilities had staffs of under 100," (p. 112) stated Goodsell in describing the makeup of the federal bureaucracy. Agencies are small to begin with and they often contract in size rather than expand (p. 124). When agencies do

grow, it is in response to their assigned tasks (p. 124). And growth seems to have a positive bearing on the performance of the agency in that "bigger bureaucracies actually work better than smaller ones" (p. 124).

A third myth is that businesses performs better than bureaucracies and are more productive. Again, Goodsell (2004) shows that there is no evidence for this assumption (p. 55) and that measures for federal productivity actually show a slight advantage over business productivity from 1967 to 1982 (p. 37). What is also interesting about the federal productivity statistics is that from 1982 to 1984, the federal bureaucracy showed the greatest decline in productivity during the height of the bureaucratic reforms (p. 37). In terms of customer service, bureaucratic agencies consistently rank high. For example, in a study comparing the telephone service of eight companies against the Social Security Administration (SSA), the SSA "ranked highest overall in telephone service and at least second in all categories except one (queue time where it ranked last)" (p. 35). Essentially, many surveys showed that citizens are satisfied with the direct performance of bureaucratic agencies and that overall government productivity is quite close to the private sector (p. 38).

Two remaining myths are that bureaucracies are not innovative and that bureaucrats have certain personalities that make them inflexible and irresponsive to public needs. As to innovation, Goodsell (2004) points at documented cases where bureaucratic agencies have proven more innovative than the private sector and studies of award competitions for governmental innovation demonstrate substantial and widespread innovation in the bureaucracy (p. 58). In regards to the myth of the bureaucratic personality, "numerous empirical studies strongly refute the concept of a unified,

pervasive bureaucratic personality characterized by inflexibility, conservatism, alienation, timidity, ruthlessness, [and] uncaring haughtiness" (p. 101). Bureaucrats show no real difference from the business personality other than a difference in motivation.

Bureaucrats are motivated by their agency's mission and a belief in public service (p. 106) and will often take an active in policy formation (p. 134).

The value of Goodsell's (2004) analysis is that he demonstrates the benefits of bureaucracies and how many of the perceptions of a bloated, indifferent, and out-of-control bureaucracy are not supported by any evidence.

### Institutionalism

Institutionalism also deals with bureaucracies but it places the agencies into the larger scheme of Constitutional government, citizens, interest groups, and other government stakeholders. March and Olsen (1989) lay out the foundations of institutionalism while Fountain (2001) describes the impact of information technology on institutionalism. As Fountain discovers, despite the great changes wrought by the Internet in creating virtual collaborative networks, institutions are still vital to modern government.

#### *March and Olsen's Institutionalism*

Institutionalism is a theory of public administration that argues that bureaucratic agencies are necessary to bring order and structure to the natural chaos of the political environment. "[F]ree political competition" (March & Olsen, 1989, p. 21) and "temporal

sorting" (p. 21) cause political action to be potentially chaotic (p. 21) and thus rules are necessary to tame the chaos.

Rules are defined as the "routines, procedures, conventions, roles, strategies, organizational forms, and technologies" that shape political activity (p. 27). Rules are logically necessary for five reasons. First, actions must be appropriately fitted to the situation (p. 38) leading to the second logical necessity of institutionalizing actions in rules and procedures. The third logical necessity is that rules give a historical context to the action (p. 38). Rules can also create deviation and variability thus leading to innovation according to the fourth logical necessity (p. 38). Trust is the fifth logical necessity in that it sustains the "network of rules and rule-bound relations" (p. 38).

Underlying the need for rules is the concept of appropriateness (p. 160). As March and Olsen (1989) assert, political institutions are essentially "collections of interrelated rules and routines" (p. 160) that determine what actions are appropriate based on the situation and roles of the participants (p. 160). When individuals first "enter an institution, they try to discover, and are taught, the rules" (p. 160). It is through rules and appropriateness that "political institutions realize order, stability, [and] predictability" (p. 160) and "flexibility and adaptiveness" (p. 160). Institutions essentially create the political environment and help participants understand their role and how to appropriately react to a situation.

Not only do institutions organize the political process and thus bring meaning to the participants (March & Olsen, 1989, p. 52) but they also help allocate attention, give leaders authority, create trust, and buffer conflicts. In regards to attention, it is a "scarce good in politics" (p. 27) and that controlling attention is important. Institutions help to

channel attention productively through rules and procedures (p. 27). Institutions also grant authority to leaders by virtue of the division of labor (p. 33). The boundaries of institutions aid in creating trust because they represent a "form of mutual delegation" (p. 27). But the most significant political value of buffers is in their ability to buffer political conflicts (p. 27).

Another important feature of institutions is in the division of labor. By dividing labor into specific defined roles, expertise and specialization is created. As March and Olsen (1989) state, "[e]xpertise is a collection of rules" (p. 30) and institutions enforce the rules and ensure that professional standards are being met (p. 30). Specialization is also the result of institutions because of the necessity of organizing action into a role that is governed by rules and procedures (p. 26).

Therefore, institutions benefit society by organizing political action in a productive and appropriate structure. But, according to March and Olsen (1989), institutions also make change difficult. Any change in a complex system produces a cascade of actions and reactions that are often obscured and may not be immediately detectable. These changes may join with other changes to produce unintended consequences or outcomes contrary to the desired end result (p. 57). Failure then may thwart the change and thus the system is the worse for it (p. 60). Nevertheless, institutionalism is an important concept in understanding how government agencies form and operate.

*Information Technology's Impact on Institutionalism*

Fountain (2001) examines the impact of information technology on institutionalism; an analysis which he claims has not been performed before (p. 193). Fountain observes that "[i]n governments around the globe . . . policymakers view the Internet as a force to increase the responsiveness of government to its citizens or as a means to further empower the state" (p. 3). He further explains that even though the Internet itself is just a "telecommunications spinal cord" (p. 10), it is a force of change because it reduces the costs of communication and coordination to almost nothing and creates an "enormous array of new uses" (p. 10). Information technology was the centerpiece of the National Performance Review and continued to be a focus in the National Partnership for Reinventing Government (p. 20). The use of information technology by government will be different due to institutionalism and thus the "development of the virtual state is not likely to resemble the growth of electronic commerce" (p. 13).

The increasing of Internet technologies in government has given rise to the virtual state composed of virtual agencies. Fountain (2001) defines the virtual state (his term) as "a government that is organized increasingly in terms of virtual agencies, cross-agency and public-private networks whose structure and capacity depend on the Internet and web" (p. 4). Virtual agencies are created by technology that allows the information of agencies to be integrated while leaving the "structure, jurisdiction, or budget autonomy" (p. 27) intact. Thus, a "Post-Weberian" bureaucracy is created in which the capability of creating "communication and information flows unavailable in the Weberian bureaucracy" (p. 32) and the ability to access information anywhere in the organization

will lead to the "potential for significant shifts in power" (p. 32) and enormous implications for the "structure and capacity of the state" (p. 32).

These implications can be summarized into three main categories. First, information technology has become a catalyst for organizational change to the extent that it is difficult for public managers not to use the technologies if they want their agency to operate efficiently and effectively in the new networked environment (Fountain, 2001, p. 196). Agency structures have been flattened both vertically and horizontally as "layers of command" (p. 22) and the "functional division[s] of labor" (p. 22) have been reduced. Red tape has been diminished and delivery of government services to citizens has been accelerated as more services and information is available through the Internet and specifically the World Wide Web (p. 22). Information technology has become vital in the infrastructure of governments (p. 195).

The effects of information technology on agency operations are also profound. The largest effect is the altering of time, distance, and institutional memory (Fountain, 2001, p. 33). Citizens can interact with government outside of the normal workday and from their own home. Records are easier to maintain and access thus allowing agencies to more effectively utilize their institutional memory. This leads to a similar effect of the "simultaneous centralization and decentralization" of agency operations as information from headquarters is more easily shared with field locations and field operations can submit information to headquarters quickly and with fewer hierarchical barriers (p. 35). Tasks can be redesigned rapidly and either delegated or centralized as necessary with all personnel in headquarters and in the field being able to freely access the agencies central data sources (p. 35).

The increasing use of information networks has also had the effect of greatly increasing the complexity of relationships in an agency and with contractors. "Internal contracting within the federal bureaucracy, public-private partnerships, and networks among federal, state, and local agencies, nonprofits, and firms are proliferating" (Fountain, 2001, p. 26). These relationships are much more complex than "simple outsourcing contracts" (p. 26). These networks also have the effect of altering "notions of jurisdiction" (p. 26) as transaction costs become almost nonexistent (p. 26). Agencies ability to organize, control and coordinate activities among its partners is becoming heavily dependent on information technology (p. 26).

A related effect is the change in how agencies deal with information. Fountain (2001) observes that the "network structures are more effective than large hierarchical structures at scanning their environment for changes, interpreting environmental changes, and responding to change" (p. 74). Agencies are also affected by the increasing standardization of information because it makes redundancies transparent, discourages different agencies from storing redundant data elements, and aids in better analyzing the information (p. 27). Probably the most profound impact of information standardization is the inevitable political battles over which agencies will own what data (p. 27).

Another effect stems from the combination of the previous effects in that information technology choices will increase path dependence (Fountain, 2001, p. 32). Path dependence is the concept that once initial technology decisions have been made, further choices are constrained by the initial decisions (p. 32). For example, if a particular operating system is chosen, all future software applications must be able to run on that operating system and any networking applications must be able to interface with

the operating system. Political battles will also be inevitable over path dependence issues (p. 32).

A final effect will be the changes in the work of agency employees. Information technology will deskill some work and thus automate routine functions while enhancing other work by augmenting the ability and skills of the employee (Fountain, 2001, p. 42). Jobs may also become enlarged as tasks are combined and decision support tools become available to aid the employee in taking on the new responsibilities (p. 37). Fountain argues that functional division of labor necessary to organize and process information is being replaced by computer systems (p. 25) and therefore, causing more fluid roles and job descriptions in "order to accommodate cross-functional and network configurations" (p. 25).

Information technology has also increased the importance and effectiveness of social networks in agencies. Social structure, the "flows and networks of informal communication, influence, and advice" (Fountain, 2001, p. 66), is an important component of bureaucracies and has existed even before the advent of information technologies. Informal networks exist both inside the agency and across agencies where they are known as "interorganizational networks" (p. 65). These informal networks depend heavily on social capital as a means of keeping relationships productive (p. 71). As Fountain explains, trust is "a key property of social capital" (p. 72) and this trust can be transitive as in "A trusts C because B trusts C and A trusts B" (p. 72). This allows large networks to have "generalized trust" (p. 72) even though there is little actual personal contact. Reciprocity is also vital to social capital as is the property to forego immediate self interest in favor of organizational interests or long-term self interest (p.

72). When all these properties are present, the social networks are strong and help contribute to the agencies success (p. 72).

Despite the importance of social capital in agencies, traditional bureaucracies have impeded the flow of information necessary to social networks. Fountain (2001) attributes this to the "inward, insular focus" (p. 77), "secrecy" (p. 77), "expectations of organizational loyalty that dampen information-sharing" (p. 77), "centralized authority" (p. 77), and the "predominantly vertical flows of information" (p. 77) that exist in traditional bureaucracies. But, with the increasing use of information technology, informal networks have experienced a resurgence thanks to the Internet (p. 67). Even though the Internet does not "substitute for the development of social relations" (p. 80), it aids in augmenting and maintaining informal networks (p. 67).

Even with all impact that information technology has had on governments, virtual agencies are still embedded in a heavily-institutionalized environment (Fountain, 2001, p. 101). Virtual agencies are still accountable to Congressional oversight and subject to the rules and procedures that govern all government agencies (p. 101). Thus, there is constant tension as agencies continue to implement information technology solutions and the necessity of informal networks rises while balancing agencies try to preserve their staff, budget, and jurisdiction (p. 101). The bureaucracy is still active and present but interorganizational networks have permeated and "'sedimented' on top of" (p. 80) the traditional bureaucracies (p. 80). Information technology is just an enabler (p. 82) and not a substitute for the "institutional infrastructure required to support coordinated practices, procedures, cultures, incentives, and a range of organizational, social, and political rule systems that guide behavior and structure agencies" (p. 6). And information

technology only aids creating interorganizational networks but "provides none of the social skills that networking requires" (p. 82). Thus, information technology has both enhanced and challenged institutionalism. Its impact on institutions is still evolving and its ultimate effect is still unknown.

### Street-level Bureaucracy

The previous authors have examined bureaucracy from a top-down perspective where policy is made at the top and it assumed that the front-line bureaucrats just implement the handed-down policy. In Lipsky's (1983) analysis, he argues that policy is "actually made in the crowded offices and daily encounters of street-level workers" (p. xii) as a result of workers and citizens struggles during the "client-processing" function of agencies (p. xii). Street-level bureaucrats are the "major recipients of public expenditure" (p. xvi) and they are the direct experience of government for citizens (p. xvi). The aggregate of their decisions, to deliver goods or to confer a status on a citizen, is agency policy (p. 3). The decisions that street-level bureaucrats make that can be life-changing for their clients (p. 9) and most debates about the scope and function of government is really about the actions and roles of street-level bureaucracy (p. 4). Street-level bureaucrats help preserve relationships between citizens and the government (p. 180) and they are used to control the masses (p. 191) and divert public anger away from the "political forces that ultimately account for the distribution of social and material forces" (p. 191). Essentially, as Lipsky asserts, street-level bureaucrats mirror the larger society (p. 188).

To understand how street-level bureaucrats make policy, Lipsky (1983) describes the nature of their work. The work of the street-level bureaucrat is very difficult due to chronically-inadequate resources; demand constantly increasing to meet supply; ambiguous, vague, or conflicting goal expectations; great difficulty in measuring performance; and non-voluntary clients (pp. 27-28). Because of the limited resources, street-level bureaucrats can not use resources to improve service but are compelled to add more services which further reduces quality in existing services (p. 36). Due to the demanding nature of their work, street-level bureaucrats develop three ways to cope with their jobs. First, they develop "patterns of practice that tend to limit demand, maximize the utilization of available resources, and obtain client compliance over and above the procedures developed by the agencies" (p. 83). Second, they redefine their jobs so as to shorten the gap between objectives and available resources (p. 83). And third, they work to transform citizens into "clients" so as to make them easier to work with (p. 83). Street-level bureaucrats are quite adept at creating shortcuts and simplifying their work in order to cope with the crushing workload, minimize the danger of their work, and increase their personal gratification (p. 18).

As a result of the immense burdens of the street-level bureaucrats and their response to their work, Lipsky (1983) claims that public service has been perverted (p. xiii). "These work practices and orientations are maintained even while they contribute to the perversion of the service ideal or put the worker in the position of manipulating citizens on behalf of the agencies from which citizens seek help" (p. xiii). This perversion is inherent in the nature of the work and affects all street-level bureaucrats (p. xii). Even though street-level bureaucrats may enter their occupations

with idealism and a commitment to service, the "dynamics of street-level bureaucracies combine" (p. 185) to convince workers that they will be unsuccessful in making any real change in their clients' lives (p. 185) and thus, street-level bureaucrats become alienated in their work (p. 75).

This alienation makes street-level bureaucrats "more willing to accept organizational restructuring" despite the impact on clients (p. 79). Even though street-level bureaucrats are expected to advocate their clients' interests (p. 72), the nature of the work prevents advocacy. The first reason is that advocacy is performed on an individual basis that is impossible in a mass-processing environment (p. 73). The second reason is that the limited resources constrains advocacy (p. 73) while the third reason is that advocacy conflicts with controlling clients (p. 74). The fourth reason deals with the street-level bureaucrat's requirement to objectively present their client to other street-level bureaucrats (p. 74). Therefore, the cost in time and resources prevents street-level bureaucrats from performing their expected roles as advocates.

In fact, street-level bureaucrats are not punished for bad service. "Street-level bureaucracies usually have nothing to lose by failing to satisfy clients" (Lipsky, 1983, p. 55). In some cases, street-level bureaucrats are "even rewarded for reducing their clientele" (p. 55) because it helps to reduce demands on the agency or at the least, has no effect on the agency (p. 101).

Thus, street-level bureaucracies create a "cycle of despair" and a "cycle of mediocrity". In the cycle of despair, street-level bureaucrats come to believe that nothing they will do will change their clients' lives and this attitude is transmitted to the client who then begins to expect little from the street-level bureaucrat thus reinforcing the

initial belief (p. 186). This is closely related to the cycle of mediocrity in which any improvement in an agency's services is quickly absorbed by an increase in client demands that negates the improvement and returns the agency back to a mediocre level of service (p. 38). In addition, the coping mechanisms that street-level bureaucrats create to deal with their jobs often runs counter to agency goals and this contributes to the further perversion of service (p. 19).

In examining the work of street-level bureaucrats more closely, Lipsky (1983) describes seven aspects of their work: goal conflict and goal ambiguity; the complicated relationship with management; inability to measure performance; mass-processing of clients; the influence of peer expectations; the great discretion; and the subversion of accountability. These seven aspects form the foundation for the street-level bureaucrats treatment of citizens as clients in the "case processing system."

Starting with the first aspect, Lipsky (1983) lists three sources of goal conflicts: "[c]lient-centered goals conflict with social engineering goals" (p. 41); "[c]lient-centered goals conflict with organization-centered goals" (p. 41); and "street-level bureaucrats role expectations are communicated generally through multiple conflicting reference groups" (p. 41). Street-level bureaucrats are constantly required to sort out conflicting goals imposed by other parties in order to perform their daily work (p. 17). This goal ambiguity also leads to role ambiguity for street-level bureaucrats as they try to satisfy competing demands (p. 46). Further adding to goal ambiguity is the uncertain nature of social science technologies (p. 41) and what Lipsky defines as "receding horizon goals" that are goals that have an "idealized dimension that makes them difficult to achieve and confusing and complicated to approach" (p. 40). As goals accumulate onto the agency's

mission, the agency finds it better not to resolve goal conflicts as they may impede functionality (p. 41). Thus, the street-level bureaucrat must cope with goal conflicts and ambiguity while being inadequately trained for resolving these problems (p. 31).

The second aspect is the complicated relationship between street-level bureaucrats and their supervisors. Both parties are mutually dependent on each other but the relationship is often conflictual (Lipsky, 1983, p. 25). As described earlier, the nature of the street-level bureaucrat's work requires them to redefine their work based on their personal goals. These personal goals are often in conflict with the stated agency goals and thus there is tension between supervisors and street-level bureaucrats over which goals to follow (p. 16).

Goal ambiguity also influences the third aspect which is the inability of measuring the performance of street-level bureaucrats (Wilson, 1983, p. 49). Even though an agency may establish performance measures these do not have any relation to the street-level bureaucrat's effectiveness (p. 50) because there are too many variables to measure (p. 48) and the services that street-level bureaucracies cannot be defined on a market-transaction basis (p. 38). Also, much of what street-level bureaucrats do is shielded by privacy requirements (p. 169). Thus, agencies tend to measure "what they can readily quantify without intruding on worker's interaction with clients" (p. 52) and so the most important aspects of their job is never measured (p. 168).

Street-level bureaucrats often work to manipulate performance measures in their favor. They do so by concentrating on the measure activities to the exclusion of their other duties (Lipsky, 1983, p. 166) and will "play to the measures" by making decisions that will improve their scores rather help the client (p. 166). Street-level bureaucrats will

sometimes resort to fraud and deception if it is necessary to raise their performance scores (p. 167). One example of fraud is the practice of "creaming" where street-level bureaucrats choose their clients based on the client's ability to succeed in terms of the "bureaucratic success criteria" (p. 107)

Mass processing is fourth aspect. It reflects the paradox of ideal goal of providing individualized service to clients on a mass basis (Lipsky, 1983, p. 44). As established before, street-level bureaucrats have large case-loads (p. 29) and much of their time is taken up with housekeeping chores particular to the agency and performance measures (p. 30). Thus, street-level bureaucrats develop modes of mass-processing that, at best, deals "fairly, appropriately, and successfully" with clients (p. xii). But mass-processing can also lead to "favoritism, stereotyping, and routinizing – all of which serve private or agency purposes" (p. xii).

Fellow street-level bureaucrats may have the greatest influence on the behavior on the street-level bureaucrats because they help to maintain morale especially in environments where the goal ambiguity is high (Lipsky, 1983, p. 47). This fifth aspect prevents clients from being the "primary reference group of street-level bureaucrats" (p. 47). Thus, clients have no affect on defining a street-level bureaucrat's role (p. 47).

The sixth aspect is the great discretion that street-level bureaucrats possess. They have "considerable discretion in determining the nature, amount, and quality of benefits and sanctions provided by their agencies" (Lipsky, 1983, p. 13). The discretion is created and strongly held by street-level bureaucrats (p. 19) because of the three benefits it provides. First, it allows flexibility in complex situations (p. 15). Second, it allows the street-level bureaucrat to respond to a client in a more empathetic manner (p. 15). Third,

it increases the self-regard of the street-level bureaucrat (p. 15). Essentially, discretion helps the street-level bureaucrat handle their job more effectively (at least in terms of their personal goals).

Management attempts to limit the discretion of street-level bureaucrats but more rules actually increase discretion. "They [rules] may be so voluminous and contradictory that they can only be enforced or invoked selectively" (p. 14). Plus, managers are highly dependent on information from street-level bureaucrats and unable to "intervene extensively in the way work is performed" (p. 24). Thus, management may have little impact on curbing the great discretion enjoyed by the street-level bureaucrat.

This final aspect, subverting accountability, flows from the first six aspects. Because managers are so dependent of information from street-level bureaucrats, street-level bureaucrats can determine what to report and what to keep hidden from their supervisors (Lipsky, 1983, p. 163). As Lipsky observes, management control practices can also subvert accountability in three ways. The first way is by specifying methods of client treatments as a means of controlling discretion and increasing accountability. These specifications can actually reduce client services (p. 164). The second way is the fact that not all street-level bureaucrats can be observed at all times (p. 164). The third way is that management control efforts may only provide a "veneer of accountability" (p. 164) without actually limiting the behavior of the street-level bureaucrat (p. 164).

All of the above aspects contribute to the debasement of services according to Lipsky (1983). As he states, if service quality is difficult to measure, so is the reduction in quality (p. 171). Agencies are also under constant pressure to save money so they take

measures to debase services without actually appearing to (p. 171). In the drive to save money and increase productivity, service quality is often sacrificed (p. 171).

The great discretion of street-level bureaucrats also allow them debase services in response to management pressure or dissatisfaction with their job environment. They can act out by excessive absenteeism (Lipsky, 1983, p. 17), aggression toward the organization (stealing, cheating, and deliberate wasting) (p. 17), negative attitudes toward work (p. 17), and through unions and collective bargaining (p. 17). Some of these actions are extreme and can lead to dismissal, thus many street-level bureaucrats avoid these actions unless they perceive no alternative.

So, what is the nature of the service that street-level bureaucrats provide? As Lipsky (1983) explains, the street-level bureaucrat wants to make their job "psychologically easier to manage" (p. 141) and "reduce the strain between capabilities and goals" (p. 141). Thus, they develop the client-processing mindset (p. 141). People come to the agencies as "unique individuals with different life experiences, personalities, and current circumstances" (p. 59) but are transferred into "clients" and placed into categories so as to make it easier for the street-level bureaucrat to mass-process (p. 59). "An important part of this process is the way people learn to treat themselves as if they were categorical entities" (p. 59). Ultimately the treatment received by the client is in response to the "stereotype their label evokes" (p. 131) and not to their actual circumstances. The poor are most affected by this process because often the necessary services can only be obtained from the street-level bureaucratic agencies (p. 54) and thus the street-level bureaucrat exercises great discretion over the poor (p. 6).

There are two components to the client-transformation process. First, the street-level bureaucrat uses various methods and extracts certain costs to maintain control of the client. Second, the street-level bureaucrat trains the client to accept their client status. In examining the first component, Lipsky (1983) lists seven methods that are used to control clients. These are: "us[ing] office settings to influence clients"; isolating clients; presenting services and procedures as benign; requiring clients to come in for service; structuring interactions so that the street-level bureaucrat controls "content, timing, and pace"; strict control routines are used to handle problem clients; and sanctions are used to punish "disrespect to the routines of order" (p. 185). Along with methods, street-level bureaucrats use four types of costs to manipulate clients. The first is monetary in which fees may be charged so as to ration services (p. 89). The second is time where the street-level bureaucrat can expedite service as a reward for good behavior or delay service as a sanction for bad behavior (p. 89). Giving and withholding information is the third cost and it used both as a rationing device and punishment (p. 90). The fourth cost is psychological where the most common technique is to make a client wait inordinately for a service so as to indicate a lack of respect and thus reduce client demand (p. 93). Once a client is controlled, they can be trained.

Training clients is the second component of the client-transformation process and it enables street-level bureaucrats to mass-process clients with their willing consent. The fundamental axiom of the training process is that the client is always wrong (Lipsky, 1983, p. 56). Once that is established, the street-level bureaucrat uses four methods to train clients. They distribute the benefits and sanctions provided by the agency as their first method (p. 60). In their second method, street-level bureaucrats are careful to set the

context in which all interactions take place (p. 60). Then they teach "clients how to behave as clients" as the third method (p. 60). The fourth and final method is the allocation of psychological rewards and punishments based on the client's behavior (p. 60).

At all times, the client is expected to meet the standards of behavior set by the street-level bureaucrat (Lipsky, 1983, p. 11). The client willingly adheres to this behavior because "they accept the legitimacy of the street-level bureaucrat's position and decision, anticipate that dissent would not be productive, or consider themselves favored by the decision or action taken" (p. 57). In the cases of particularly disruptive clients, pressure specialists are used to handle the client (p. 133). The goal of the client-transformation process is achieved when the client refers to themselves in the categories set by the street-level bureaucrat and unquestioningly accepts the decisions and treatments offered to them.

But, as Lipsky (1983) points out, some clients are treated differently. It could be because society demands it (p. 105); street-level bureaucrats want to improve a particular client's life (p. 105); an agency is required to differentiate (p. 106); or a street-level bureaucrat just wants to achieve a success with at least one client (p. 106). Oftentimes though, it is just that the street-level bureaucrat has a personal preference for one client over another (p. 108). In these cases, street-level bureaucrats will declare an emergency so as to increase their discretion and gain greater access to resources necessary for the specific client (p. 138). Overall, most clients are not differentiated and must accept whatever results from the mass-processing routines the street-level bureaucrat has created.

### Model of Traditional Public Administration

Taken together, the preceding sections can be blended together to create a model of traditional public administration. This model consists of four levels with the constitutionally-created branches of government (the Congress, the Executive, and the Courts) at the top. These three branches set out the broad vision for American society that brings about (more or less) the Waldo (1984) view of the Heavenly City. This top level is considered solely responsible for policy making and sets out the constraints and responsibilities for the levels below it.

The second level is the upper management and headquarters of the various bureaucracies. At this level, executives are charged with implementing the policy decisions and vision of the top level. As Wilson (2000), Goodsell (2004), and March and Olsen (1989) point out, there are clear divisional boundaries between the agencies and constant struggles over funding, resources, and jurisdiction. Fountain (2001) did demonstrate that there are growing interorganizational networks but even his research reaffirmed the strong institutional boundaries of the agencies. Executives at this level are concerned with fulfilling their agency's mission and bringing about the "Good Society."

The third and fourth levels are the levels of the street-level bureaucrats and the field offices of the bureaucracies. The supervisors of the street-level bureaucrats make up the third level where they are tasked with coordinating the directives from the second level while managing the street-level bureaucrats. Lipsky (1983) presents the supervisors as caught in the middle of attempting to implement the commands from their superiors while attempting to control the policymaking activities of the street-level bureaucrats. Lipsky would argue that on the fourth level, street-level bureaucrats bring about the

mass-processed "Managed Society" rather than the idealistic Good Society. At this level, the personal goals of the street-level bureaucrats often conflict with the agency's goals and thus the implementation of policy is never fully realized as envisioned by the first and second levels. This is one model of traditional public administration. But, as the next section will demonstrate, traditional public administration is being challenged by recent events.

### Governance

Public administration began in the twentieth century Progressive era as academics and practitioners sought to divide policy making from policy administration (Kettl, 2002, p. 8). This traditional public administration concerned itself with how public agencies operated as they executed policy in hierarchical institutions composed of specialized functions (Salamon, 2002, p. 6). From its beginnings in the early twentieth century, public administration as an academic field has been faced two opposing goals: "an accepted place in academic theory and a voice in the debate over important policy puzzles" (Kettl, 2002, p. 16). This tension is forcing public administration toward the breaking point (p. 16).

According to Kettl, public administration has become fragmented in the twenty-first century and it no longer has any influence on the policy world (p. 21). As Kettl observes, the theoretical base of public administration does not fit current reality and it lacks the tools to devise new theories over the new policy realities (p. 19). It seems that the academic field of public administration lagged behind the practice of public administration (p. 19). This is because the foundation of public administration theory is built on a "theory of hierarchy and authority that is clear and straightforward, with a

tradition that has continued for millennia" (p. ix). In the current practice of public administration, managers do not rely on authority as much and use other means to administer policy in an increasingly less hierarchical environment (p. ix). The boundaries that once defined traditional public administration are strained (p. 24) and governments are having to deal with "citizen's antipathy toward government and their insistence on government services and protection" (p. 27).

Kettl (2002) continues his analysis by reviewing the major theories in public administration and discussing why they fall short in describing today's policy environment. The first theory he examines is institutional choice theory which he defines as creating bureaucratic institutions based on equalizing competing political forces (p. 105). According to Kettl, this theory works well in explaining traditional government institutions but as governments increasingly rely on outsourcing with the private sector and alliances with the nonprofit sectors, the mixture of private and public goals has shifted much of policy administration away from the traditional bureaucratic institutions for which institutional theory cannot account for (p. 143).

He then discusses the field of policy analysis which uses microeconomic analysis to analyze public problems (Kettl, 2002, p. 7). The main problem with policy analysis is that it is limited in its analysis of the actual implementation of public programs (p. 7). This was a failing with more traditional public administration issues and has only increased as government has become increasingly privatized and a "substantial part of the for-profit and nonprofit sectors" (p. 123) have become "governmentalized" (p. 123). As Kettl observes, "America's preeminent policy strategies have tended to grow beyond the nation-state, to linkages with international organizations, tend to focus below it, on

partnerships with sub national, for-profit, and nonprofit organizations" (p. 123) and thus eludes the tools of policy analysis.

Kettl (2002) finds network theory promising in understanding the new public administration environment in that it has "provided a framework for defining the central problem, understanding how organizations operate with each other across the boundaries they share" (p. 112) but it has yet to answer the fundamental theoretical questions on how networks develop and behave (p. 112). Kettl argues that the public management movement shows even more promise and seems to be more mature (p. 103). Public management scholars present their field as distinct from public administration because it focuses on the managerial aspects of public administration and represents more of a business perspective of managing public agencies (p. 93). But it also has its failings as evidenced by the reinvention movement.

Kettl (2002) asserts that reinvention highlighted the schism between public administration theory and public administration practice (p. 18). Many practitioners eagerly adopted reinvention (p. 18) while many academics attacked the findings and lack of theoretical basis for reinvention (p. 92). As Salamon (2002) states, reinvention proponents caricatured government operations in order to justify reinvention (p. 7). The proponents also downplayed the difficulties inherent in reinvention and may have ignored the fact that their reforms were the source of, rather than the cure for, many of the problems they were trying to solve (p. 7). In any case, the above theories do not account for two major developments in public administration.

There are two developments that have greatly altered public administration starting in the early 90s. The first, as Lynn, Heinrich, and Hill (2001) maintain is that

public administration in the United States has become a "complicated web of states, regions, special districts, service delivery areas, local offices, nonprofit organizations, collaborations, networks, partnerships, and other means for control and coordination of dispersed activities" (p. 1). This is vastly different from the standard "bureau model" in which government agencies directly provided services (p. 1) and has greatly increased the complexity of studying government operations.

The second development is globalization that, according to Kettl (2002), poses two questions for American public administration. The first question concerns the role of the American national government among the increasingly strong influence of international organizations (p. 136) and the second question is what "capacity does the federal government need to play in this emerging role?" (p. 136).

Along with these two developments is that the hard and fast boundaries that defined traditional public administration has become fuzzy. Kettl (2002) asserts that the biggest challenge for public administration is to develop "new theoretical and practical tools for understanding the boundary-spanning issues that have become the field's knottiest and most important problems" (p. 115). He goes on to list the six fuzzy boundary issues that define the new issues in public administration: "policymaking versus policy execution" (p. 69); "public versus private versus nonprofit sectors" (p. 69); "layers within the bureaucracy" (p. 69); "layers between management and labor" (p. 69); "connections between boundaries" (p. 69); and "connections with citizens" (p. 69). Thus, Kettl along with other academics argue for a new conceptualization of public administration theory that recognizes the new realities of public administration and provides relevant theoretical guidance for practitioners.

This new conceptualization is called governance and is defined in various ways. Lynn, et al. (2001), observes that governance "is widely used in public and private sectors" (p. 5) and concerns the arrangements for control, the exercise of power, how citizens can express themselves, and how public policy decisions are made (p. 5). Kettl (2002) defines governance as "the way government gets its jobs done" (p. xi). Salamon (2002) further extends on the definition by emphasizing the collaborative nature of twenty-first century public administration (p. 8). Due to recency of governance theory, there is yet a consistent and comprehensive definition of the field, but academics have delineated a number of characteristics that make up governance.

The first characteristic is that the rule of law underlies governance. Governance starts with lawmaking, then on to the implementation of laws through administrative agencies, and ending with the consequences of that implementation:

"This process links several discrete aspects of collective action: the values and interests of citizens, expressed politically; choices by legislative bodies, expressed in statutes and appropriations acts; the strategies and actions of executive agents functioning within the constraints of their organizational structures and roles; the production and delivery of collective goods and services by primary workers in the public sector and, contractors, in the private sector; and ex post oversight and assessment by legislatures, courts, elected executives, and publics. The combined influence of these elements has significant consequences on the effectiveness or performance of government as perceived by stakeholders." (Lynn, et al., 2001, p. 28)

The second characteristic is the two assumptions that underlie the public manager's role. Public managers are assumed to want to optimize their achievements within their administrative environment and it also assumed that public managers represent their agencies as they participate in the politics of the coalition (Lynn et al., 2001, p. 7).

The third characteristic is that governance provides structure and processes that "create constraints and controls" (Lynn, et al., 2001, p. 32) and "confer or allow autonomy and discretion" (p. 32) for all administrative actors. Lynn, et al., argue that these structures and processes can be visualized hierarchically and that this logic of governance can be seen as a series of relationships between all the administrative actors and the general public (p. 32).

Kettl (2002) lays out ten principles of governance that closely resemble the above characteristics and adds some additional considerations. He argues that hierarchy and authority will not be replaced but must be changed for the "transformation of governance" (p. 168). Related to this is the acknowledgement that hierarchical organizations still exist but they now have complex networks layered on top of them (p. 168). Also, information is a "basic and necessary component" (p. 169) and transparency is the "foundation for trust and confidence" (p. 169). Finally, Kettl contends that the government's nongovernmental partners must stress civic responsibility in their operations (p. 170).

Along with the characteristics, Lynn, et al. (2001), describes the three levels of governance. The "institutional (public choice) level" (p. 35) is the broadest form of governance and deals with broad strategic alignments on the legislative level (p. 35). The "managerial level" (p. 35) is the middle level in that it deals with issues between organizational actors (p. 35) while the "technical level" (p. 36) deals with governance at the "primary work level" (p. 36). Taken together, the listed characteristics and the three levels capture the complexity of the governance model as a reflection of the new public administration environment.

Five big issues make up the new public administration environment contends Kettl (2002) and thus forms the research agenda for governance. The first two issues deal with the government attempting tasks that have never been attempted before and developing the capacity to perform these two tasks (p. 160). The second two issues, legitimacy and sovereignty, arises from the increasing use of nongovernmental partners to carry out public policy. American government must assert its sovereignty to avoid being just one voice "among many in the network" (p. 161) and that nongovernmental partners must legitimately exercise their derived public power (p. 160). The fifth issue is that the public interest must be served at all times by both the government and nongovernmental partners (p. 161).

Governance also faces three problems as government transforms itself in reaction to the double trends of networked government and globalization. The first problem is how government will integrate new horizontal systems into the existing vertical systems (Kettl, 2002, p. 147). The second problem concerns scale or the "sorting out the functions of different levels of governance" (p. 148) and the third problem concerns the ability of government to create the capacity to "govern and manage effectively" in the new environment (p. 147). As can be perceived, these problems stem from the transformation of government as it evolves from the traditional bureau model to the new networked and decentralized environment.

In the new governance paradigm: "governance tools" replaces the program and agency (Kettl, 2002, p. 9); network replaces hierarchy (p. 9); public versus private is replaced by public and private (p. 9); negotiation and persuasion is preferred over command and control (p. 9); and "enablement skills" replaces management skills (p. 9).

In understanding the implications of the new paradigm, Kettl discusses the four different intellectual traditions in American politics.

The four intellectual traditions are named after the presidents that initiated them and describe their style of governing. The Hamiltonian tradition represents top-down government and a strong executive (Kettl, 2002, p. 29); the Jeffersonian tradition advocates bottom-up government and a weak executive (p. 29); the Madisonian tradition attempts to balance power among political forces (p. 29); and the Wilsonian tradition represents the traditional view of public administration (p. 29). Each tradition is an attempt to answer a central dilemma in government. For the Wilsonian tradition, it is "[h]pw can we secure efficient and responsive public administration when there is no chain of hierarchical authority linking policymakers with those who deliver public services?" (p. 54). The Madisonian dilemma concerns the need for a strong authority in a system of constitutional separation-of-powers diffuses authority (p. 56). The diffusion of accountability among the federal, state, and local governments is the Jeffersonian dilemma (p. 57) while the Hamiltonian dilemma concerns the effectiveness and responsiveness of government in the same decentralized political environment (p. 59). Essentially the traditions and dilemma represent the balance between centralized government and decentralized government and the sharing of authority and accountability between policymakers and policy administrators.

The traditions and dilemmas have been fundamentally altered in response to the twin forces of devolution and globalization (Kettl, 2002, p. 118). The rise of networks in government has greatly diffused authority and accountability in government at the same time government must learn to integrate horizontal partnerships into the existing vertical

institutions (pp. 129-130). Still the questions posed by the traditions impact the tools of public action that have evolved to meet the needs of the public administration environment.

Salamon (2002) defines a tool of public action as "an identifiable method through which collective action is structured to address a public problem" (p. 19). Public administration has always relied on tools such as direct government, social regulation, grants, and economic regulation (p. 21) but new tools have been created to handle the demands of devolved government. These tools include contracting, government corporations, and vouchers (p. 21). In cataloging the tools, Salamon introduces four measures that somewhat relate to the dilemmas of the four traditions. The first measure is visibility that describes the extent that the resources behind the tools appear in the normal budgeting process (p. 35). Directness, the second measure, indicates the "extent to which the entity authorizing, financing, or inaugurating a public activity is involved in carrying it out" (p. 29). The third measure of automaticity describes whether the tool uses an existing administrative structure or requires a wholly new structure (p. 32). Coercion evaluates the question of whether a tool restricts a behavior as opposed to encouraging or discouraging a behavior (p. 25) and is the fourth measure. By evaluating a specific tool against the four measures, it can be determined whether the tool is an example of centralized or decentralized government and the diffusion of authority and accountability. In doing so, Salamon discovered the "paradox of the tools" which describes the political pressure that policymakers are under to select the tools that "are the most difficult to manage and the hardest to keep focused on their public objectives"

(p. 37). This may be one explanation for the rise of indirect government and associated problem of less accountability in government operations.

Kettl (2002a) describes how tools that rely on nongovernmental partners (such as contracting) cannot be managed by the traditional command-and-control systems present in the administrative hierarchy (p. 491). To effectively manage nongovernmental partners, public managers must develop different skills such as negotiation, financial management, and goal setting (pp. 500-501). Possibly the most important skill is the ability to structure good contracts and a deep knowledge of financial accounting so that the public manager can effectively track the progress of the nongovernmental partner (p. 497). Unfortunately, traditional public servants do not possess the necessary skills for managing indirect government (p. 499). "The traditional civil service system's very strength – its clear structure and rules – makes it hard for government to adapt to the fast-changing world of indirect government" (p. 499). The inability to effectively manage indirect government only exacerbates the problem of accountability in devolved government.

Making government accountable was the main aim of the Progressive movement and that is why such strong barriers existed in traditional bureaucracies (Kettl, 2002, p. 7). In creating the modern administrative state, Progressives tried to find a balance between a strong and effective administrative state without risking tyranny (p. 7). Thus, accountability was one reason behind the Wilsonian split between policymaking and policy administration.

But, in the new public administration environment, accountability is once again a major concern especially in dealing with nongovernmental partners asserts Kettl (2002a).

He traces this to five sources. The first source is due to the influence that nongovernmental partners have over lawmakers in designating resources to the nongovernmental partners (p. 525). The next two sources revolve around the voluntary participation of nongovernmental partners and the fact that the partners often have a monopoly over services (pp. 525-526). Also, the complex implementation chains (the fourth source) (p. 528) often leads to the fifth source, "information asymmetries", that favors the nongovernmental partner in negotiating and executing the contract (p. 527). Due to the accountability problem, there is often goal diversion and the nongovernmental partner may reap a fiscal windfall at the expense of the government (pp. 529-530). Moral hazards are also present as there is a great temptation of fraud on either side of the contract (p. 530). "Perverse fiscal incentives" can also occur in poorly-written contracts and there is the ever-present danger of opportunistic partners that attempt to execute contracts as inexpensively as possible without regards to quality of service (p. 531).

Governance is posed as the solution to resolving the disconnect between public administration theory and public administration practice. It recognizes that the devolution and globalization have eroded the boundaries that formed the basis for traditional public administration and that government is not only practiced by public agencies but is also administered by nonprofits and the private sector. This new public administration environment raises new issues such as the problem of accountability and the problem of legitimacy as government functions and authority become more diffuse. Whether governance will become the public administration theory of the 21<sup>st</sup> century still remains unresolved but, it is valuable in pointing out the limitations of traditional public administration theory today.

## The Three Concepts Common to both Traditional Public Administration and Governance

Three concepts are central to both traditional public administration and governance. The first is the organizational culture of a bureaucracy. Culture is the key factor in whether an agency is effective in fulfilling its mission, pathologically ineffective, or just essentially nonfunctional. Communication is the second concept and it is key to both promulgating the organizational culture and the internal functioning of the agency. The third concept is accountability and this is the obligations and responsibilities that the agency owes to its stakeholders and to society. Each concept will be examined in turn and then the traditional model of public administration will be reexamined through the lenses of governance and the three concepts.

### *Organizational Culture*

Reason (1997) defines organizational culture as the "[s]hared values (what is important) and beliefs (how things work) that interact with an organization's structure and control systems to produce behavioural [sic] norms (the way we do things around here)" (p.192). Khademian (2002) extends upon this definition in describing Schein's three levels of culture framework. The first level, "Basic Assumptions", concern how members relate to the "environment, time, space, reality, and each other" (p. 19). The second level, "Values and beliefs", is made up of the members' beliefs about the work of the organization (p. 19). The third level, "Artifacts", is the "[s]ymbolic representations of values and beliefs and basic assumptions" (p. 19). These definitions demonstrate the importance of organization culture because they show how members conceptualize the environment of the organization and act according to that conceptual environment.

Aggregating all of the members' behavior creates the behavior of the organization. An example of this can be seen in the earlier section on street-level bureaucrats. As the street-level bureaucrats work to reduce their work burden and maximize their personal goals, that behavior creates the client-transformation process that is common in most street-level bureaucracies.

So, what makes culture such an integrative force that compels members of the organization to adopt certain norms? According to Khademian (2002), there are three attributes: "promotion of excellence" (p. 21), "robustness" (p. 21), and "capacity to adapt or learn" (p. 21). Promotion of excellence deals with how the organization values individual initiatives and responsibility and the decisions arising from group processes (p. 21). Robustness is the "depth with which members of an organization hold dimensions of a culture" (p. 21). This is indicated by roles, stories, and unique terminology (p. 21). How open a culture is to change, teamwork, diversity, and learning indicates the capacity to adapt or learn (p. 21). The stronger these attributes are, the stronger the culture and the more influential it is among the members.

In attempting to understand a culture, Khademian (2002) advises that the public manager must first determine the "commitments" that make up the culture. Khademian defines commitments as the "common understanding held by people working together in an organization or program" (p. 3). "Together, commitments and the numerous ways in which they manifest form a *culture* [italics in the original]" (p. 3). As she explains, commitments serve as the reference point in the culture and can aid or hinder the work of an organization (p. 4). Commitments range from simple coping mechanisms to innovative catalysts and can bring order to an organization (p. 4). Conversely,

commitments can impede the functioning of an organization and create chaos in the organization by "impeding coordination, limiting innovation, and stalling communication" (p. 4). It is important to understand the nature of the commitments because they are deeply embedded in the "work of an office, organization, or several organizations working together" (p. 4). What an organization does is influenced by commitments and commitments are, in turn, influenced by the work of the organization (p. 57). Thus, it is important for the public manager to first discover and understand the commitments in the organization.

Khademian (2002) states that managers cannot manage a culture but they can influence and shape the commitments that make up the culture by managing the "process of integration" (p. 43). The process of integration is how the roots of the culture (tasks, resources, and environment) are combined to influence commitments (p. 43). Cultures form from how the roots of culture are integrated so as to coordinate the skills and resources of the agency in performing its public mission (p. 43). Thus, if a public manager wants to change the culture, they must first understand how to change the commitments and then articulate the change needed (p. 65). To be successful, the articulated change must be continuously communicated and practiced with any incremental change immediately institutionalized (p. 48). Changing an organization's culture is a long-term effort in most cases.

### *Communication in Bureaucracies*

Understanding communication in a bureaucracy is key to understanding its culture and its behavior. Bureaucracies have traditionally been information-intensive entities and

this even more so in the devolved and globalized environment in which they operate.

Thus, an examination of communication in bureaucracies will give great insight into how bureaucracies function.

First, the terms "data", "information", "communication", "information management", and "knowledge" will be defined to clarify the proceeding analysis. Graber (2003) defines data as "accounts about happenings" (p. 2) and states that information results when the data "are arranged in meaningful patterns" (p. 2). Communication is defined as the "use of symbols to share information" (p. 2) and information management arises from the "carefully planned and controlled steps taken to collect information and to communicate successfully" (p. 2) that information. Once information becomes an "organized body of thought" (p. 2) it is knowledge (p. 2).

Graber (2003) see data as having three types. The first type is data related to pending decisions, the second type is performance information, and the third type is information to explain an agency's actions if needed to "avoid embarrassment" (p. 33) about its performance (p. 33). She also describes the interaction patterns of communication as being one of four types. There is the "circle" in which information traveling from one person to the next (p. 104) and the "wheel" where all communications pass through a central node (p. 105). "All-channel" is the pattern in which messages travel freely in any direction and the serial pattern of the "Chain" (p. 105). Finally, she describes the three places that organizations retrieve information. Organizations can retrieve it from "recent and long-term organizational memory", create information from "reading or research", or contact others for their information (pp. 32-33).

The quality of information is also an important factor. As Graber (2003) observes, information is bad when it "lacks relevance, when it contributes little that is new, or when it is misleading or erroneous" (pp. 158-159). And too much information can sometimes be worse than too little information (p. 45). Quality is also being affected by the new public administration environment of agencies as the personnel become more diverse and there is an increasing need to communicate technical or specialized information to non-technical audiences (p. 6). To aid public managers in determining the quality of information, Graber lists six high-quality information indicators: "clear, timely, reliable, valid, comprehensive, and diverse" (p. 49).

Along with quality problems, there are barriers to accessing information. Graber (2003) details six reasons why communication fails in public agencies that center around the hierarchical nature of public agencies and their characteristics of specialization, centralization, and information hoarding (p. 58). According to her, agencies are resistant to disclosure and will opt out of information sharing relationships (pp. 34-36). This may less so in the new networked government, but access barriers still exist.

Communication plays a vital role in creating and sustaining the culture of an organization (Graber, 2003, p. 134) because communication creates the climate that is the "link between the organization and the individual" (p. 130). Unfortunately, for most public agencies, creating a productive organizational climate is difficult because of the organization's "size and rigidity" (p. 124) and diversity of the members in an organization (p. 124). Public managers must account for these communication difficulties when changing the culture of an agency.

Being complex organizations, public agencies require a great deal of information and especially technical and political information (Graber, 2003, p. 25). Most information collected by an agency is "instrumental" as it relates to the agency's mission (p. 30) but agencies also collect information for symbolic and tactical reasons too (p. 25). The more complex the decision, the more information is needed (p. 157). Four factors form the basis for an agency's information requirements. The more an agency is in "conflict, competition, or systematic contact with the external environment" (p. 54), the more information it needs. The second factor is dependent on the amount of internal support and unity is required in an organization (p. 55). The third factor is that organizations also need information depending on how much their "internal and external environments require scientific data" (p. 56). And the fourth factor is the correlation between the size, structure, heterogeneity of an organization that requires the need for information (p. 56).

In collecting the information, the agencies select various information sources. By choosing or not choosing a particular information source, public agencies create an information environment which shapes the types of decisions made by the agency (Graber, 2003, p. 26). In all decisions concerning information selection and use, politics are the basis for deciding what information to collect, who will collect the information, and how issues are defined (p. 26). Along with the political aspects of information selection, agencies must also consider the costs of acquiring, storing, and analyzing data. This can become costly and, as Graber asserts, the basis behind some agencies' decisions to retain past policies and the preference for incremental change (p. 32). Also, a person's position in an organization determines their ability to communicate and select

information (p. 72). Because of such influences, two maladies affect the information environment of an agency. First, as the agency grows and matures its information channels become hardened and resistant to change (p. 34) and are very stable because they serve existing power relationships (p. 72). Second, agencies develop a style of communicating that is influenced by the many legal and regulatory requirements placed upon them and need to assert their authority (p. 140). Once information is selected, bureaucracies can further impede the flow of information.

Graber (2003) surveyed several different ways that bureaucracies can impede the flow of information. Bureaucracies can contain many levels that prevents the easy flow of messages, makes it difficult to pass implicit messages, and to determine what messages are real (require an action) and what messages are symbolic (no action is required) (p. 76). Bad news also does not travel well in a bureaucracy, especially upward in the hierarchy (p. 77). Subordinates will often alter the communication, ignore the communication, or even conceal the information in order to look good to their superiors (p. 77). Subordinates are also acculturated by their superiors to show loyalty to the organization and to present a positive view to public and, thus critical questions are discouraged along with information that is contrary to the acculturation (p. 77). And the very structure of the bureaucracy impedes information flow. The more central an agency, the more the important information is passed on to the top of the hierarchy which causes information overload for the executives and a delay in decision making for the organization (p. 80). Specialization also results in impeding information because of the difficulty in understanding the specific jargons of the specialized units in the agency (p. 79).

Graber (2003) further continues her analysis of communication flows by analyzing problems associated with upward and downward communication flows in the agency hierarchy. As she asserts, "messages that flow upward often provide skewed versions of reality" (p. 87) because subordinates feel inhibited in communicating with superiors or they attempt to manipulate their superiors (p. 87). Communication flows upward also suffer from the paring effect, as lower levels decide what information to discard and what information to pass up (p. 33). Depending on the number of levels, this paring can be substantial (p. 33). Sometimes, even information is discarded in favor of a subordinate's inferences from the information that can completely change the meaning of the intended message – "uncertainty absorption" (p. 54). Because executives cannot always detect uncertainty absorption, they make decisions based on the opinions of their subordinates rather than the actual information (p. 172). According to studies cited by Graber, less than two percent of the original information survives the transmission from the lower levels of the hierarchy to the highest level (p. 54). "Intelligence thus deteriorates routinely between initial collection and its final use in a policy decision" (p. 54).

Downward flows of communication can also suffer in a hierarchy. The chief problem is the establishment of an authoritarian climate. Graber (2003) states that because superiors feel freer in communicating with their subordinates they often give many orders to their subordinates (p. 83). Coupled with that, is the little opportunity for feedback especially in organizations with formal processes (p. 83). Thus, an authoritarian climate is created in which the leader dominates and subordinates are

tempted to conceal and distort information from the fear of invoking penalties from the leader (p. 128).

In any system of communication flows, downward and upward, gatekeepers are the individuals, in a formal or informal role, who determine how and where the information flows (Graber, 2003, p. 108). In doing so, they make four crucial decisions. The first is "admitting messages to the network or rejecting them" (p. 108) with the second decision is how quick to transmit the selected messages (p. 108). Gatekeepers also decide how to edit the messages and, then, their fourth decision is how to route the message (p. 108). The routing of messages is crucial because they can route messages to "inappropriate or unsympathetic" thus allowing another party to kill the message (p. 108). Gatekeepers also have great power in altering messages by paraphrasing the message and thus reframe the message and affect the perceptions of that message (p. 109).

Gatekeepers make their decisions based on two motivations. First, they want to save face for the agency and its goals (p. 142). Second, they want to maintain the image that executives have attempted to acculturate among employees (p. 142). In cases where restricting information or rephrasing information fails gatekeepers will resort to their final tactic of information overload. As Stevenson (2001) observes in his example of the Defense Department's protection of programs, they are always setting up committees (p. 381). Thus, any inquiry can be answered by stating that a committee is being formed, the question is still being considered, or that the committee just recently finished its work (p. 381). Ever so often, a massive report is released that essentially buries the critical information in a blizzard of bureaucratic speak and mounds of extraneous information.

Given the above problems stemming from information selection, communication flows, and gatekeepers, public agency executives find it difficult to obtain the good information they need to make decisions. Public agency executives require a great deal of information about the political climate, available agency resources, and the likelihood of success for various tactics before they can make an informed decision (Graber, 2003, p. 26). Therefore, executives try to obtain as much information as they can in order to reduce the uncertainty of a decision. But, as Wilson (2000) observes, this information is often a "torrent of incomplete facts, opinions, guesses, and even self-serving statements about distant events" (p. 228).

To counter these effects and the bad information, executives often create lateral communication networks. Graber (2003) describes this phenomenon as "boundary spanning" and "convergence" (p. 114). Boundary spanning is "when bureaucrats reach across organizational barriers to communicate" (p. 114) and convergence is the "increased sharing of information among government units" (p. 114). Bureaucracies constrain lateral communication more so than the private sector because of the size of agencies and the competition among agencies for scarce resources (p. 86) but they are growing in the new devolved, networked government. Many of these networks are informal "friendship networks" where executives tap into the shared wisdom of their colleagues for advice and guidance (p. 95). The friendship networks can be helpful for executives to obtain information that has not been altered by uncertainty absorption or gatekeepers but these networks may also prevent the executive from hearing objective criticism and diverse opinions (p 95).

### *Accountability*

"Accountability is the link between bureaucracy and democracy" (Lipsky, 1983, p. 160). As Lerner and Wanat (1992) claim, accountability in government substitutes for the market mechanism of the private sector that guides the behavior of private firms (p. 7). "Accountability is the central and characterizing mark of public administration" (p. 7). Elected officials want agencies to be held accountable because of their duty to represent the people and their personal desire to be reelected (p. 7). Accountability is also necessary because the more freedoms citizens enjoy, the more restrictions are placed on the power of the bureaucracy (p. 10).

This need for accountability requires that public managers to work under severely constrained environments that demands a "managerial artistry of providing needed services under very restrictive circumstances" (Lerner & Wanat, 1992, p. 11). Lipsky (1983) details four prerequisites of a bureaucratic accountability policy. First, agencies must determine the functions of their workers (p. 161). Second, agencies must measure worker performance (p. 161). Third, agencies need to establish a standard for comparing the performance of one worker against the other workers (p. 161). Fourth, agencies must be able to sanction workers and provide incentives (p. 161). These policies have negative effects for administrators because at the same time they are to provide accountability, public managers are also pressured to minimize costs and increase productivity (p. 170).

Trying to achieve the opposing goals of accountability and efficiency is especially difficult for the public manager because of the numerous constraints that they must operate under. As Lerner and Wanat (1992) comment, ever present constraints surround and permeate public administration (p. ix). Agencies must be legislatively enabled (p. 7)

and are required to follow numerous administrative rules and regulations in all their operations and functions (p. 8). Every year of their existence, agencies must face intense scrutiny concerning their operations and budget (p. 8) and all spending decisions are imposed by legislation (p. 8). Personnel regulations greatly limit the manager's authority and power concerning employment matters (p. 8) and almost all decisions and agency processes are open to public scrutiny (p. 9). Constantly shifting public opinion affects agency programs and budgets as they come into and fall out of favor on the political agenda (p. 5). Finally, agencies are required to serve all of the public including the "marginal customer" who requires a great deal of effort and attention to meet their needs (p. 3).

What compounds the affect of constraints is that they do not occur in isolation but often occur in clusters (Lerner & Wanat, 1992, p. 12). "When they [constraints] do come together in specific circumstances to create a problem, the manager is likely to experience them as the hand grenade of the week" (p. 12). It is because public management is so constrained that private sector management practices are often not appropriate (p. 3). Where the market cannot provide, government must supply the "residual services, the hard cases, the nonroutine services" (p. 3).

Despite the importance of accountability, the current environment of public administration makes it much harder to assign accountability. The increasing use of nongovernmental partners, the devolution of government, the rising volatility of interest group politics, and the increasing complexity of bureaucratic politics has made assigning accountability much more indefinable (Kettl, 2002, pp. 96-97). Meanwhile, the problem of accountability among street-level bureaucrats still remains (Lipsky, 1983, p. 159) and

may have grown harder to control among the networks of nongovernmental partners. As Goodsell (2004) argues, the increasing privatization of government has increased the need for public managers to monitor contractor activities along with their traditional duties (p. 77). Contractors are also adept at influencing legislators and "external constituencies" to influence the agency and ultimately the work that the contractor performs (p. 77). It is also difficult for agencies to manage the quality of public services performed by contractors because of the public manager's "remoteness from program activities" (p. 78).

#### The New Public Administration Model:

##### Transition from the Traditional Model to the Governance Model

The most immediate impact of governance on the traditional public administration model is the blurring of boundaries in all four levels. This is due to increasing number of collaborations, networks, partnerships with other agencies and the use of nongovernmental partners to carry out agencies' missions. But, at its core, the traditional model still exists during the transition to governance.

Lynn (2001) and Kettl (2002) describe three characteristics of governance that are also central to the traditional model. First, both models have the rule of law as a foundation. Second, public executives want to optimize the achievements of their agencies while still participating in intergovernmental coalitions and this means that the struggle for resources, funding, and jurisdiction still continue. Third, constraints and controls still exist and the agencies still operate in a hierarchical arrangement. Kettl

observes that hierarchical organizations still exist but they now have complex networks layered on top of them.

Another common feature is how the three levels of governance correspond to the four levels of the traditional model. The governance "institutional (public choice) level" (Lynn, et al., 2001, p. 35) corresponds to the top level of the traditional model as that is they are levels where policy is made. The governance "managerial level" (p. 35) corresponds to the second and third levels of the traditional model and the governance "primary work level" (p. 36) corresponds to the fourth level of the traditional model.

It is at the primary work level where governance and the traditional model differ. In governance, nonprofits and private sector companies use the various tools of governance to carry out the work that was performed by the street-level bureaucrats of the traditional model. Street-level bureaucrats still exist in modern bureaucracies but not in the great numbers that they did before the 1990s. This is a significant change in public administration and has great implications because of the diffusion of culture, communication, and accountability in public agencies. As Lipsky (1983) demonstrated with his analysis of the work of street-level bureaucrats, the three top layers of traditional public administration had great difficulty in controlling the street-level bureaucrats and making them accountable. This problem with accountability has only grown worse as Salamon (2002) argues in his survey of the tools of governance.

Another major impact of the nongovernmental partners is their political influence on the legislature, courts, and executive branch. The nongovernmental partners can use this influence to exert pressure on the very agencies that they work for and thus may have

even more power over policy making and policy implementation than the street-level bureaucrats.

Thus, the new model of public administration would still retain the four levels of traditional public administration but with more diffuse borders between the second and third layers to demonstrate the increasing use of alliances and partnerships. The fourth level will be greatly expanded and consist of street-level bureaucrats, nonprofits, and private-sector partners who carry out the work of implementing the agencies' missions. There will also be a feedback loop between the nongovernmental partners and the top level to signify the political influence that the nongovernmental partners have on policymaking and forging the constraints under which the agencies operate under.

In this new model, there will be more conflict as the cultures of different agencies and the nongovernmental partners collide in the process of governing. Communication will also be more difficult because of the increased number of governmental and nongovernmental partners and thus the increased number of agendas, information needs, and coordination activities. Finally, as mentioned before, it will be harder to determine accountability among the greater number of partners.

It is clear that public administration has greatly changed since the days of the Progressive Era and that the fundamental concepts of public administration need to be reexamined. Governance provides the framework for reconceptualizing public administration in light of increasing complexity of governing and the challenges of globalization. Governance also draws from the four intellectual traditions of American government in determining the role of public administration in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. It is still

uncertain how public administration will change in the future but governance provides the best method for studying those changes.

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