

PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

BARRY
BOZEMAN
EDITOR

*The
State
of the Art*



PUBLIC
MANAGEMENT
The State of the Art

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PREFACE

During the past fifteen years or so, the term *public management* has been offered as a rival to, a substitute for, or a synonym of *public administration*. But certain identifiable themes have emerged, and a number of articles and books have told us what is new and different about public management. Here is yet another view, one not taken from the formal literature:

Public management research entails a focus on strategy (rather than on managerial processes), on interorganizational relations (rather than intraorganizational relations), and on the intersection of public policy and management.

The National Public Management Research Conference

The view of public management just given was provided in the conference call for the National Public Management Research Conference. On September 20 and 21, 1991, seventy-three public management researchers and theorists convened at Syracuse University and presented ideas about the content, meaning, and prospects of public management.

One of the motives for the Syracuse conference was to bring together disciples of various public management theories and approaches. In that sense, if in no other, the conference was a huge success. The mix of management scientists, Freudian theorists, phenomenologists, administrative historians, political economists, and epistemological nihilists (to name a few of the types of thinkers who attended) was a thing to behold. In many cases, the attendees talked past one another. But in a surprising number of instances there was genuine and mutually gratifying dialogue. Public management theory, whatever it is, is not dull.

Public Management does not fully capture the dialogue from the Syracuse conference or its paper presentations, discussions, and informal exchanges. But the book was inspired by the conference, and the contributions

are versions of papers presented there. Perhaps this puts us at risk for "just another conference volume" odium. Since this was not "just another conference," however, that risk is diminished.

The state of public management research and theory was well reflected in the Syracuse conference, perhaps even more than in this book. The announced purposes of the conference were (1) to assess the state of the art in public management research, (2) to present the best and most current public management research, (3) to encourage the development of public management research by identifying gaps in theory, research, and methodology, and (4) to facilitate communication among public management researchers.

If unsolicited testimonials from good friends can be believed, the conference was quite successful in meeting these objectives. (A more impressive effectiveness indicator is the fact that a second National Public Management Research Conference in Madison, Wisconsin, was scheduled for 1993.) More to the point, however, these seem to be good objectives, and so they can serve for this book as well. The chapters in *Public Management* are quite diverse, but they meet the objectives with state-of-the-art reviews (for example, the Bozeman and Behn contributions), excellent new directions in research and theory (Maynard-Moody and Kelly; Frost-Kumpf and associates; Lynn), critical assessments (Golembiewski), and prescriptions for change (Emmert and associates). Let us suspend judgment for now on the meeting of the fourth objective, which depends chiefly on the public management research community's interest in this book.

Organization of the Book

It seems no mark of failure to note that the chapters contained in this book do not fall into nice, tight categories. If an objective is to reflect the best work in a field, and if that field happens to be fragmented and in the throes of intellectual ferment, then a representative volume will be likewise fragmented and reflective of the field's dissonance.

Part One includes a number of succinct statements about the nature of public management—what it is, what it might be, what it should be. These brief statements were prepared specifically for this book. The chapters in Part Two include critical statements about the prerequisites of theory and the state of current public management theory. Part Three includes chapters propounding theories, demonstrating theoretical links, and synthesizing theoretical streams in public management. Part Four presents studies concerned with the effectiveness and strategic dimensions of public management. The intersection of management and politics is the theme of the chapters in Part Five. Part Six includes two contributions that pertain to management information systems and have broader implications for empirical approaches to public management research. Finally, Part Seven focuses on the interaction of management and policy design issues and includes three chapters with implications for prescriptive theory.

Acknowledgments

Without the National Public Management Research Conference, this book would never have been developed. Those who contributed to the conference contributed to this book. From the very beginning, Dean John Palmer of Syracuse University's Maxwell School gave encouragement for the idea of the conference. He, along with Ben Ware, Syracuse University's vice president for research, provided generous funding.

The organizing committee for the conference worked hard and later served as the "editorial board" for this book. All the submissions for this book were reviewed by at least two members of the conference's organizing committee. The review work was a particularly difficult task, since many excellent papers presented at the conference were not included here, because of space limits. (An available proceedings volume includes twenty or so first-rate conference papers not contained in this book.) The organizing committee included Stuart Bretschneider, H. Brinton Milward, Hal G. Rainey, Patrick Scott, and Jack Stevens.

Special thanks are owed to James L. Perry, the consulting editor for Jossey-Bass, who supported the publication of this book and provided many very useful suggestions. Similarly, Alan Shrader, Jossey-Bass editor of the Public Administration Series, is a delight to work with and is a good friend of the public management community.

The faculty, staff, and students of the Maxwell School's Center for Technology and Information Policy (TIP) hosted the conference and did most of the detail work in supporting both the conference and the book. Patricia Simone was the unanimous MVP. She was the primary coordinator for every step and helped organize a disorganized editor (not to mention a few disorganized contributors). Among the other TIP associates who helped with the conference or the book, Scott Dinstell, Monica Gaughan, Gordon Kingsley, Julia Melkers, and Patrick Scott were particularly energetic.

Finally, and perhaps most important, there is a special debt to the contributing authors of *Public Management*. The papers presented at the conference really were the best of contemporary public management research, by many of the best researchers and theorists. One's first impulse is to publish one's work in the premier journals in the field; the journal route is, after all, the shortest route to tenure, promotion, and, often, academic accolades. Many of the conference papers not accepted for this book had already been accepted by the leading journals, but not a single contribution accepted for this book was withdrawn for submission to a journal. It is gratifying that the participants had enough faith in *Public Management* to invest their best effort and ideas.

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