Public Administration History: The Rodney Dangerfield of the Discipline?

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> **Those who cannot learn from history are doomed to repeat it.**
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> **—George Santayana**

> **History is not a recipe book; past events are never replicated in the present in quite the same way. Historical events are infinitely variable and their interpretations are a constantly shifting process. There are no certainties to be found in the past.**
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> **—Gerda Lerner**

Public administration is a highly interdisciplinary field of study, drawing on political science, economics, and many other disciplines. One discipline that has been largely neglected is that of history. Furthermore, when history has been brought into public administration it is largely recent history. This article argues that students and practitioners of public administration need to become more historically minded, that they need to understand the history of the administrative state in order to provide a context to place current arguments within. The article develops a framework that may be used to analyze and categorize trends in the history of the administrative state from the Greeks to the present. It concludes by arguing that an examination of the history of the administrative state can enrich an understanding of current arguments, as well as provide a student of the administrative state with a sense of history, an anchor upon which to fasten his or her understanding of the linkage between the individual and the state.

Public administration is a highly interdisciplinary field; indeed, it defines itself as a discipline by indicating that it draws on a number of other disciplines including political science, economics, business administration, sociology, and

psychology (Adams 1992; Denhardt 1989). Yet, as Gibson and Stolcis (2006) point out, history is one discipline that "is inadequately represented" (63). History is the Rodney Dangerfield of public administrative studies; it garners little, if any, respect. And when American academics do look at administrative history, they generally don't go very far back, generally presenting "administrative history" as starting with Wilson's famous 1887 essay. American public administration's premier journal, *Public Administration Review*, used the 100th anniversary of that article to mark the official centennial of the discipline. The myopic views of most American academics may reflect an ahistorical mind set among Americans. Henry Ford (2006) dismissed history as "…more or less bunk. It's tradition. We don't want tradition. We want to live in the present and the only history that is worth a tinker's damn is the history we make today." As Raadschelders (1998, ix) points out, most public administration academicians, while they may not go as far as Henry Ford, focus on understanding and solving contemporary problems with history—if it is brought in at all—relegated to our very recent past.

This article argues that Americans need to become more historical in our approach to public administration. We need to do so in order to provide a firmer foundation for developing an understanding of current administrative theory and practices. We do, after all, live in an administrative state that has been shaped by that history; we are subject constantly to the influences of organizations. An understanding of the history of the administrative state—how it developed from its earliest clan organizations to the complexity found in the modern nation state—is a useful but neglected part of understanding those organizations, their role in society, and the role of the public administrator in a democratic system.

History: Not Entirely Neglected

A few political scientists and public administrative theorists have looked at experiences earlier than 1887. Matthew Crenson (1975) argues that American public bureaucracy took shape during the Jacksonian era. Gibson and Stolcis (2006) present a case for understanding American public administration beginning with the founding period and continuing on through the present—through an examination of *American* administrative history. Box (2004) also looks at American administrative developments from the founding to the present. Others do go back beyond the founding of the American republic, arguing for the need to understand administrative history in general. Even

here, however, the tendency is to stay in the "modern" era—the era of the nation state. Stillman (1990) looks to the sixteenth century, noting the influence of Tudor institutional practice upon the development of the American administrative state. Waldo (1984) is one of the few to go back to our earliest written histories, arguing that the American state is a mix of Greek civic culture and Roman imperial administration. Yet as Gladden (1972) points out, available evidence makes it apparent that "the [public] official ranked early among the first professionals," (6) predating written history. Indeed, Gladden refers to public administration as the oldest profession. Thus the American administrative state draws upon an intellectual heritage that may be as old as humanity itself. Serious students of public administration should be acquainted with that heritage.

Administrative History: A Framework for Analysis

While administrative history draws upon an intellectual heritage that may be as old as humanity itself, we are limited to that history of which we have adequate record. The focus of this study is upon the development of administrative history from a Western perspective, and as such, it will begin with the ancient Greeks. That is not to imply, however, that Eastern, African, and Native American thought play no part in our understanding of organizations and administration—they most definitely do. These concepts, however, were added to this Western foundation, and we must understand that foundation if we are to understand the way we think of organization.

Sun Tzu (544 - 496 500 B.C.E.) wrote what is widely regarded as the first true text on management with his *The Art of War*, and his work may be used to demonstrate what is meant in the paragraph above. His writing is clearly germane to administrative history, relating to the primary role of government during his time: waging war. His works were "discovered" in the West, but not until approximately the latter part of the eighteenth century. They were read by such people as Napoleon, and are required reading in U.S. military academies. They became part of our knowledge base, however, long after we developed our basic ideas concerning organizations.

Viewing administrative history from the Greeks onward is itself a daunting task. Observers of the developing administrative state from the time of the ancient Greeks through the Founding Fathers developed broad, sweeping theories concerning virtually every aspect of the physical and social world they new. Sorting the material relevant to an understanding of administrative

history from their total work isn't always easy. Even when their work is primarily concerned with organizations and administration, problems remain. Hume's (1981) complaint concerning Bentham's *Constitutional Code* can be applied to nearly all the works of these observers. "The *Constitutional Code*," he stated, "is in some respects a repellant work. Its arrangement is obscure and its language is obsolete and contorted" (Hume 1981, 1). The remainder of Hume's (1981) comment, however, may also be applied to the works of these individuals: "It represents, nevertheless, a remarkable achievement" (1).

A Framework for Analyzing Historical Contributions

We use a framework to place various contributors to our understanding of administrative history within. This allows comparison either across time or by themes. The framework has the manner in which an individual views society on one axis and the manner in which an individual sees people on the other. Central to any individual's view of organization is his or her view of humanity. This view is often implicit in the arguments advanced by an individual, but it remains the key to understanding and, more importantly, evaluating them. Those contemporary writers whose works have taken on "classical" status of their own recognized the importance of this. Douglas McGregor's (1957) work provides one prime example. Calling two contrasting views of people "Theory X" and "Theory Y"—terms that now form part of our basic administrative vocabulary—McGregor illustrates the consequences these views have for management in modern organization.

At the most basic, a view of humanity is built upon a belief regarding the nature of people—what makes us behave as we do. In a dichotomous sense, people may be viewed as either creatures differentiated from other animals, and thus distinguished from them, by our ability to reason; or as creatures whose reason is subordinate to desire. In the first view, *reason* becomes the most dominate characteristic of humanity, and any explanation of human behavior must take this into account. In this view, people are rational creatures, recognizing that their needs are caught up in the needs of society. The contrasting view, while not denying human reason, places less faith in our ability to use and rely on it. The dominant force in most people is not reason, but rather *desire*. This desire may be for security, for power, or whatever; it is always selfish and egocentric, outweighing our use of reason, preventing most from always recognizing their true interests. This view of the dominant

force in humanity, reason or desire, becomes the first factor in a framework to evaluate various contributions to our understanding of organizations.

The second element in the framework is the way one views society. Again, a dichotomy is found. Some emphasize the individual as an independent actor, stressing the difficulty of understanding human behavior in organizational contexts. Others discount an emphasis on the individual, arguing instead that individual action only has meaning in a group setting. This first view might be labeled *individualistic*; the latter, view *communal*. Using these two factors, a framework for analysis can be developed as shown in Figure 1.

This framework provides us with four cells, each representing a way of viewing human society and organization. Borrowing in part from Daniel Elazar (1984), these views are labeled as a *marketplace* view (emphasis on the individual, dominated by reason), a *protectorate* (emphasis on the individual, dominated by desire), a *responsive commonwealth* (emphasis on community, dominated by reason), or a *directed commonwealth* (emphasis on community, dominated by desire). Each of these views sees society and organizations differently, both in terms of how individuals behave as members of society as well as members of specific organizations and the role such organizations play in society. Each has influenced the development of the modern administrative state.

Figure 1. A Framework for Analysis

	View of Society	
View of Humanity	Individualistic	Communal
Dominated by Reason	Marketplace	Responsive Commonwealth
Dominated by Desire	Protectorate	Directed Commonwealth

An Approach to Integrating Administrative History into the Public Administration Curriculum

A course dedicated to analyzing the development of administration from the Greeks to the present offers the advantage of tracing threads and re-occurring themes from the earliest developments in the Western through the modern American administrative state. It can provide students with a deeper understanding of why we think about and do public administration today, and thus provide insights into their own thinking. We recommend presenting a course tracing these themes from the Greeks to the present. An alternative approach would be to develop a course based upon a time line, focusing on specific periods. Either approach should use a mix of contemporary and classic readings, but we recommend a theme-based course.

A theme-based course should begin with the *directed commonwealth* view of organizations as this was the dominant view in ancient Greece, best reflected in the works of Plato. A *responsive commonwealth* view would be developed next, again traced to the ancient Greeks, and in particular to Aristotle. The *protectorate* found its best early expression in the works of Niccolò Machiavelli, and should be presented next. The *marketplace* view is the most recent theme, finding its best early expression in the works of Sir John Locke.

The Directed Commonwealth

The *directed commonwealth* can be traced back to the writings of Plato. Like all the ancient Greeks, Plato's focus was on the total community, with one becoming meaningful only through participation in the civic community, the polis. This community was natural, more so than any of its components, including the individuals who composed it. For Plato, the community could be divided into distinct classes, with the majority of the citizens belonging to a lower, artisan class dominated by desire. The state must be ruled by those few, dominated by reason, who constituted the upper class. They, according to Plato (1971), were reluctant to rule but would do so from a sense of obligation: "They must be forced to consent [to rule] under threat of penalty; ... [a]nd the heaviest penalty for declining to rule is to be ruled by someone inferior to yourself" (29).

The *directed commonwealth* view dominated the thought of the Christian Fathers, who saw the clergy, and in particular the Pope, as the best interpreter of natural law, law that ultimately rested on God's authorship. St. Augustine

(1958), in his classic work *City of God*, essentially placed Plato's works into Christian theology. Man is subject to "two cities," the earthly city of men and the city of God:

> . . . for all the difference of the many and very great nations throughout the world in religion and morals, language, weapons, and dress, there exist no more than the two kinds of society, which, according to our Scriptures, we have rightly called the two cities. One city is that of men who live according to the flesh. The other is of men who live according to the spirit. Each of them chooses its own kind of peace and, when they attain what they desire, each lives in the peace of its own choosing. (St. Augustine 1958, 295)

The two cities represent the forces of good and evil—*reason* and *desire*—that each individual must contend with. The earthly city represents man in his fallen state, dominated by self-love. The city of God is dominated by the principle of love of God. The story of mankind, for St. Augustine, was the story of the struggle between the two cities—a struggle that would eventually end with the establishment of a Christian commonwealth. The state plays a role in moving man from the earthly city to the city of God. The state can only do this, however, if it is a Christian state. Therefore, the state must be inferior to the Church, which alone can provide the guidance needed to move men from their fallen state to salvation. Only the Church, guided by God's reason and intelligence, can define the good community. The primary function of the state is the maintenance of peace and order. The monarch (state) also serves in God's plan, and is to be obeyed, even if the monarch is evil.

This argument was advanced under a series of Popes, beginning with Pope Gelasius I (492-496), who outlined what eventually was to develop into the theory of the two swords. Church and state would become *sacerdotium* and *regnum*, two governments in a single Christian society. The civic ruler was superior to the Pope in temporal affairs, but the Pope was supreme in ecclesiastic matters. And as the civic ruler needed the Church to obtain eternal life, he was expected to heed the Pope's guidance.

This dual authority did not sit easy with either Pope or king. By the time the colonies that were to become the United States were being developed, this conflict was being resolved in favor of the king. Rising nationalism and the emergence of the modem nation-state led to growing subordination of

ecclesiastic power to temporal power. An exception to this was found in the structural arrangements developed by followers of John Calvin.

Central to Calvin's arguments was the sovereignty of God in all matters. The state, then, had significance only to the extent that it furthered God's plan. The Church was a necessary intermediary to man's salvation, and thus princes, as agents of God, were subordinate to it. God was the origin of all that is good. Humanity, since Adam's fall, was evil and corrupt, born in sin, and afflicted with the curse of Adam's transgression. If people were to overcome this fallen state, both temporal and ecclesiastical discipline were required. The state provided the sword, but it was to be wielded under the guidance of the church.

Under this view, civil ministers served an ecclesiastic capacity:

> Civil government is designed, as long as we live in this world, to cherish and support the external worship of God, to preserve the pure doctrine of religion, to defend the constitution of the Church, to regulate our lives in a manner requisite for the society of men, to form our manners to civil justice, to promote our concord with each other, and to establish general peace and tranquility.... (Calvin 1981, 225)

Both church and state were to be controlled by those few in society with the capability of understanding God's purpose. Society was to be a directed commonwealth.

The *directed commonwealth* view was best expressed in England by Thomas Hobbes, and was brought to America by some of his contemporaries: the Puritans. Puritan leaders saw individuals as beings in a fallen state whose carnal natures must be controlled for the good of the commonwealth by strong magistrates operating under God's laws. The England of Hobbes and of the Puritans certainly lent credence to the view of people dominated by desire. The civil strife within England of this period illustrated man at his worst. The Puritan view, however, did not take root in England. As Huntington (1981, 154-58) indicates, England underwent a Puritan revolution without creating a Puritan society; America created a Puritan society without undergoing a Puritan revolution.

The works of two American Puritan leaders illustrate the nature of the directed commonwealth in America: John Cotton and John Winthrop. These two men were the most prominent leaders of church and state during the

formative years of the Puritan commonwealth in Massachusetts. Cotton was by far the most prominent minister in Massachusetts, deriving his extraordinary influence from his achievements as a scholar and his gifts in the pulpit (Polishook 1967, 14). John Winthrop served as governor during most of the early years. Together, these two men were called upon to describe and to defend the system of political government and its relationship to the church in forming the commonwealth. Although Winthrop is usually recognized as the chief spokesman for Puritan theocracy, he consulted Cotton often on these matters as well he might, since he was a member of Cotton's church. Furthermore, it was Cotton who played the major role in answering the charges leveled against the relationship between church and state by Roger Williams.

The attacks by Roger Williams stand in sharp contrast to the quieter internal struggle that is most characteristic of this debate. While many of the opponents of Cotton and Winthrop are known, including such men as William Pynchon, Israel Stoughton, and Thomas Hooker, most opponents remained anonymous, and few people directly attacked either Cotton's or Winthrop's ideas.

These men came to Massachusetts less to establish a "New England" than to establish a "New Zion." In his sermon "A Modell of Christian Charity," probably delivered on board the flagship Arabella during the crossing, Winthrop told the people, "Wee must Consider that wee shall be as a Citty vpon a Hill, the eies of all people are vppon us..." (quoted in R. C. Winthrop 1869, 32). The Puritans considered themselves an elect people who had entered into a covenant with God; they were to serve as a model for the entire Christian world. Fourteen years after the first Puritans established themselves in Massachusetts, Governor Winthrop (1869) wrote, "England is a state of long standing, yet we haue had more positive & more holesome Lawes inacted in our shorte tyme, than they had in many hundred years" (446).

Church and state, in this model, were to be separate but complementary institutions, tied together to preserve peace in the commonwealth and to promote the virtue of the citizenry. As Cotton stated,

> If it were true, that the magistrate has charge only of the bodies and goods of the subject, yet that might justly excite to watchfulness against such pollutions of religion as tend to apostasy. For if the church and people of God fall away from God, God will visit the city and country with public calamity, if not captivity, for the church's sake.

> Did ever God commit the charge of the body to any governors to whom he did not commit (in His way) the care of souls also?... The truth is, church governors and civil governors do herein stand parallel one to another. (quoted in Polishook 1967, 73-74)

Church governors and civil governors "stand parallel one to another," then, in a joint effort to secure peace in the commonwealth and to ensure that the laws of the commonwealth are in accord with the laws of God. The extent to which civil authority was to parallel religious authority can be seen from one representative sample of Cotton's *An Abstract, or the Lawes of New England as They Are Now Established*, a document Winthrop called "a model of Moses his judicials, compiled in an exact method," which stated that no one is to be permitted to live more than a mile from a church meeting house, for "all civil affairs are to he administered and ordered so as may best conduce to the upholding and setting forward of the worship of God in church fellowship" (Emerson 1965, 144-46).

Political participation was limited to those in good standing in the church. Residents who were not members of a church—and some 80 percent of the population were not—were guaranteed their rights under law, but could not participate either in choosing the magistrates or in defining the laws. Members of the churches were considered freemen of the commonwealth and could participate in civic affairs. For both Cotton and Winthrop, however, this did not mean that they could determine those affairs. Democracy, for Cotton (1959), was not "a fit government either for church or commonwealth. If the people be governors, who shall be governed?" (8). In his "Little Speech on Liberty," Winthrop (1959b) defined the role of the governor and governed: "The covenant between you and us is the oath you have taken of us, which is to this purpose: that we shall govern you and judge your causes by the rules of God's laws and our own, according to our best skill" (19).

Thus public administration was directed from the top. Civil ministers were to enforce the will of God, as interpreted by an elite. All aspects of community life were under the watchful eye of the state, and rules and regulations were strictly enforced in order to enable the citizens to live in accordance to God's laws. "Thus stands the cause between God and vs," Winthrop stated, "wee are entered into Covenant with him for this worke, wee haue taken out a Commission, the Lord hat giuen vs leave to drawe our owne Articles wee haue professed to enterprise these Accions . . ." (quoted in McGiffert 1969, 31).

The elect people, then, had been given leave to draw their own articles of government. Thus, while close cooperation was called for between church and state, the Puritans insisted that they were separate institutions—the old argument of concerning the nature of *sacerdotium* and *regnum*, begun by Gelasius I as a means of strengthening papal influence over temporal affairs, had been recast as a system in which the same individual exercised both powers, but with civil authority serving to buttress religious power. Civil authority and religious authority were to be bound together for the betterment of the commonwealth. Rejecting Roger Williams's arguments in favor of freedom of religious expression, Cotton argued that it would be unreasonable to suppose that God would condone the existence of competing religious philosophies within one state. As Miller points out, "Moses and Aaron, the priest and the statesman, were equally the vice-regents of God, and the notion that one could contaminate the other was insanity" (quoted in McGiffert 1969, 46).

If religious and civil leaders "were equally the vice-regents of God," it would follow that the civil leader must hold impeccable credentials as a follower of His word, and this is the position taken by Winthrop and Cotton. Church membership was the essential prerequisite for public service. Traditional or hereditary leadership was not totally rejected but was made subordinate to standing in the church. High birth carried with it the right of preeminence in society, but not in government. While persons of high birth would be given preference in elections to the magistery, they could qualify for such positions, according to Cotton (1959), only if they were "godly men, who are fit materials for church fellowship, . . . For the liberties of the freemen of this commonwealth are such as require men of faithful integrity to God and the state, to preserve the same" (12).

Magistrates were to be guided by God's laws, not by the dictates of the people. The freemen of the commonwealth did have a check on the exercise of authority by the magistrates in the yearly election at the General Court each May. It was a check that was seldom utilized, however, and few freemen bothered to exercise their franchise. Winthrop's (1959b) argument that God "will also teache his ministers the Judges what sentence to pronounce, if they will allso observe his worde, & trust in him," and that "Judges are Gods upon earthe" (448) was not seriously challenged. The only time the General Court voted to remove a governor occurred in 1637 when Governor Vane was removed, and that removal was based on Vane's stance on religion. The freemen saw elections not so much as a method of choosing a leader, but "as

an emergency safeguard, as a means, short of revolution, for removing those rulers whom they found unacceptable" (Breen 1970, 53).

Yet even in this early period, the views of Cotton and Winthrop did not go unchallenged. The seeds of a more democratic view of the commonwealth, a *responsive* rather than a *directed commonwealth*, were sown during this period. By the time the colonies were starting to break with England, this *directed commonwealth* view, held by such intellectual descendants of Cotton and Winthrop as Jonathan Mayhew and Daniel Leonard, was being modified by the *responsive commonwealth*, and by individualistic views of the state.

The Responsive Commonwealth

The *responsive commonwealth* can be traced back to the ancient Greeks, with Aristotle serving as its best proponent. He agreed with the general Greek view of nature and society. The polis—the civic community—was both natural and the highest expression of humanity. Aristotle makes this clear in the *Politics* (1979):

> We thus see that the polis exists by nature and that it is prior to the individual... all individuals are so many parts all equally depending on the whole [which alone can bring about self-sufficiency]. The man who is isolated-who is unable to share in the benefits of political association, or has no need to share because he is already self-sufficient-is no part of the polis, and must therefore be either a beast or a god. (6-7)

People, for Aristotle, are social creatures defined by their ability to reason. We are seekers of the good community; we strive for justice for ourselves and for others. We seek moral perfection, even though we have thus far fallen short. Yet, even falling short, we succeed through striving for the good community.

Aristotle was more practical than his mentor, Plato, in his views. He spent time on how the state should be organized, including just what offices were needed. For Aristotle, the good organization had to balance the needs of the mass of the people with the needs of an elite. In political terms, the need is for a mixed constitution—a state that will balance power among the social classes. Administration was to reflect this balance.

The good community is built upon specialization of function: agriculture, arts and crafts, defense, land ownership, religion, and government service.

These functions are divided along class lines, following the example of Plato's *Republic*, but without the absolute class division advocated by Plato. The more mundane functions are left to a separate, lower class. The higher functions—defense, religion, and government—are the province of the citizens, and each should be involved in each function. Young citizens will take care of defense, middle-aged citizens government, and religion was the province of the aged. Function, therefore, was related to the physiology of the citizenry—a concept endorsed for modern organization by Frederick Taylor (1911).

Aristotle's greatest contribution was not in his exposition concerning specific offices and the characteristics of those who should hold them, but in his development of constitutionalism—in his arguments that true freedom in society can be achieved only if men participate in making the laws which they are compelled to obey. Applied to modern organization, Aristotle's arguments support the concept of participative management. Organizational man, for Aristotle, is self-motivated, and has a desire to contribute to the good of the organization. Yet unlike many modern theorists with this view, Aristotle recognizes that not everyone can participate at the same level. Organizational man still needs direction from an organizational elite.

Cicero helped bring this view forward through history. The key to the *responsive commonwealth*, he felt, was found in education. This would allow a natural aristocracy to arise, one which could respond to the collective reason of the community and create the good state:

> And when men have felt ... that, to the powers of mind received from nature and developed by experience in public affairs, they should add also scholarly interests and a richer acquaintance with life, such men must be universally conceded to be superior to all others. (Cicero 1927, 198)

In what could serve as a motto for the administration state, he adds, "What, indeed, can be more glorious than the union of practical experience in great affairs with an intelligent enthusiasm for the liberal arts?" (Cicero 1927, 216).

As the impact of the Enlightenment spread to America and linked to the colonial experience, some inheritors of Puritan thought adopted similar arguments. John Wise, writing in 1717, rejected Cotton and Winthrop's arguments concerning the relationship between governed and governors. Civil government, he argued, "must needs be acknowledged to be the effect of human free-compacts and not divine institution: it is the produce of man's

reason" (Wise 1959, 30). This free compact, for Wise, was a natural state: man needed to "maintain a sociableness with others, agreeable with the main end and disposition of human nature in general" (1959, 31).

In making his arguments, Wise was influenced by the growing "natural law" school of thought, a school that tended to stress the Lockean view of the individual. Although Wise continued to emphasize the communal nature of society, other thinkers began to stress the individual as the key. One of the most significant of these thinkers was John Adams.

The communal view of the state placed an emphasis on securing virtue; the growing individualistic emphasis was on securing individual rights. Adams, in his writings, mixed both. In his "Thoughts on Government . . . ," written in 1776, Adams argued that "the happiness of man, as well as his dignity, consists in virtue" (1959, 102-03). He goes on to cite such communal theorists as Zoroaster, Socrates, and Mahomet to support his contention. Yet he next draws on Locke, Milton, and others who emphasize the individual. He does this, as Webking (1983) points out, "without indicating an awareness of the tension between the two sets of principles" (3).

The *responsive commonwealth* found its best expression in the nineteenth century in the work of the Fabian Socialists in Great Britain, and in the writings of T. H. Greene. Responding to the intolerable working and living conditions industrialization had brought to Great Britain, Fabian Socialists called on government to restore the commonwealth—to take action to ameliorate the plight of the working poor. The *marketplace* might be providing freedom to some, they argued, but it was doing so at great cost to society as a whole. T. H. Greene put it this way:

> ... the most pressing political questions of our time are questions of which the settlement… is sure to be resisted in the sacred name of individual liberty, not only by all those who are interested in keeping things as they are, by others to whom freedom is dear for its own sake, and who do not sufficiently consider the conditions of its maintenance in such a society as ours. (quoted in Rodman 1964, 45-46)

Conditions similar to those in Great Britain were found in the United States during the latter part of the nineteenth and first part of the twentieth centuries, stimulating similar reform movements. In a series of articles written for the *New York Times* Jacob Riis (1978) described the conditions of working-class

poor in New York City:

> Today three-fourths of its people live in the tenements, and the nine¬teenth century drift of the population to the cities is sending ever-increasing multitudes, to crowd them. The fifteen thousand tenant houses that were the despair of the sanitarian in the past generation have swelled into thirty-seven thousand, and more than twelve hundred thousand persons call them home. . . . In the tenements all the influences make for evil; because they are the hot-beds of the epidemics that carry death to rich and poor alike; the nurseries of pauperism and crime that fill our jails and police courts; that throw off a scum of forty thousand human wrecks to the island asylums and workhouses year by year; that turned out in the last eight years a round half million beggars to prey upon our charities; that maintain a standing army of ten thousand tramps with all that implies; because, above all, they touch the family life with deadly moral contagion. This is their worst crime, inseparable from the system. That we have to own it the child of our own wrong does not excuse it, even though it gives it claim upon our utmost patience and tenderest charity.
>
> What are you going to do about it? is the question of today. . . . The remedy that shall be an effective answer to the coming appeal for justice must proceed from the public conscience. Neither legislation nor charity can cover the ground. The greed of capital that wrought the evil must itself undo it, as far as it can now be undone. Homes must be built for the working masses by those who employ their labor; but tenements must cease to be "good property" in the old, heartless sense. . . (134-135)

The Great Depression brought the problems detailed by Riis and others out of the tenements of the central city and into the heartland of America. Wide-spread unemployment, soup kitchens, etc. brought the problems of the poor to the national political agenda. The election of Franklin D. Roosevelt saw the rise of a *responsive commonwealth* view in the United States, a view reflected in the administrative principles underpinning New Deal and Great Society programs. Unemployment compensation and Social Security may be the premier examples of public policies reflecting the *directed commonwealth* view.

The Protectorate

A focus on the individual is more modern in the development of the intellectual origins of the administrative state. One of the first to focus on the individual, Niccolò Machiavelli, saw that individual as dominated by desire and wrote a classic treatise on how to govern in this context.

Machiavelli rejected the natural, communal state, arguing instead that the state had no reality apart from the individuals it comprised. He also rejected the idea that these individuals were themselves governed by natural law determined through reason. Instead, he argued that "[t]here is no inherent purpose in the state. Any direction it may receive must be imposed upon it by the ruler" (Machiavelli 1952, 16). This ruler must understand human nature and manipulate it to rule effectively.

The *protectorate* view did not become a dominant view in colonial America. While some observers have placed many of the Federalists, notably Alexander Hamilton, in this category, this article will argue that the individualist view in colonial America fits within the *marketplace* view of man and state.

The *protectorate* view has never emerged as a dominant view in the two centuries since America's founding. Some notable American politicians may fit within this classification. Henry Kissinger and those like him who emphasize "realpolitic" probably come the closest to the *protectorate* view. Some current neoconservatives may fit here. Still, it has never been a dominant view in the United States. Most Americans with an individualistic approach have a *marketplace* orientation.

The Marketplace

The *marketplace* is the most recent theme to influence the development of the modern administrative state. A key marketplace theorist for the American experience was Sir John Locke. His writings, particularly his *Letter on Toleration* and his *Second Treatise of Government*, greatly influenced political discourse in both England and the English colonies that were to become the United States. Yet Locke was only one of many sources of British political thought that influenced the development of a *marketplace* view. English opposition thought of the last half of the seventeenth and first half of the eighteenth centuries was crucial in shaping the American mind.

Among the most effective opposition writers were those who associated themselves with the republican theorists of the Civil War period—writers who traced their thoughts from Milton and Harrington through Neville, Sidney, and Locke—particularly John Trenchard and Thomas Gordon. For Americans,

states Bailyn (1967a), their writings "ranked with the treatises of Locke as the most authoritative statement of the nature of political liberty and above Locke as an exposition of the social sources of the threats it faced" (35). In addition to these writings of the left a number of writings from the right also influenced American thought, particularly the writings of Lord Bolingbroke. "The people of the colonies," wrote Burke (1968) at the start of the war in 1775,

> …are descendants of Englishmen. England... is a nation which still, I hope, respects, and formerly adored, her freedom. The colonists emigrated from you when this part of your character was most predominant; and they took this bias and direction the moment they parted from your hands. They are therefore not only devoted to liberty, but to liberty according to English ideas and on English principles. (57)

Key among these English principles as developed by opposition theorists was the concept of a mixed constitution: a government that would balance monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy. Whereas Locke's arguments led to legislative supremacy, with the ministers under the control of the legislature, opposition theorists sought to balance the legislative, executive, and judicial powers and thus argued that ministers should be accountable to more than one power. Indeed, it was their belief that too much power was being concentrated in a ministerial plot, resulting in a growing imbalance of power that made their arguments so appealing to Americans faced with an increased use of executive power.

Unlike Cotton and Winthrop, who saw civil ministers and churchmen in a cooperative arrangement to lead society forward, opposition writers exhibited a marked distrust of the magistery. Writers of the left and right were in agreement on this. Civil ministers, wrote Trenchard and Gordon, "will endeavor to bribe the electors . . . so to get a council of their own creatures; and where they cannot succeed with the electors, they will endeavor to corrupt the deputies after they are chosen" (quoted in Bailyn 1967b, 44). Such corruption, Bolingbroke added, "was a natural enough phenomenon. Public ministers naturally lie under great temptations, through the infirmities and corruption of human nature, to prefer their own *private interests* to that of the *community*"(quoted in Bailyn, 1967b, 46). For these writers, then, the reality of the ministerial plot was both unquestionable and inevitable. The struggle

for power was constant, and only through equally constant vigilance could free men hope to remain free.

The legacy of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century opposition thought for Americans was the conviction of the need to maintain a mixed state and to ensure that the magistrates of such a state did not become a threat to individual liberty. The English tradition of liberty had been developed in America as the natural birthright of humanity. Whenever liberty had been achieved—in the Roman Republic of Cicero or under the mixed constitutionalism of English law—it had been lost when the moral and political virtues of the societies decayed. These views were presented in the emerging nation by a number of people; this article focuses upon Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton. Of the two, Jefferson dealt more with theory—although he certainly understood practical politics—and Hamilton more with the pragmatic application to the affairs of government.

Jefferson has often been identified as the most Lockean of the Revolutionary era leaders. Locke's *Second Treatise of Government* found its colonial expression in Jefferson's authorship of the *Declaration of Independence*. Jefferson agreed with Locke's emphasis on the individual, dominated by reason. Like Locke's, however, Jefferson's faith in man's reason seemed to lessen with time. In a letter to Henry Lee, written in 1824, Jefferson reaffirmed his belief in the individual, while tempering it by indicating the limits of their wisdom:

> Men by their constitutions are naturally divided into two parties. I. Those who fear and distrust the people, and wish to draw all power from them into the hands of the higher classes. 2ndly those who identify themselves with the people, have confidence in them, cherish and consider them as the most honest and safe, altho' not the most wise depository of the public interests. (quoted in Caldwell 1964, 113)

Jefferson, while not always convinced of the wisdom of the people, still believed them the best guide for the state to follow. "In a government like ours," he stated, "it is the duty of the Chief Magistrate.... to endeavor, by all honorable means, to unite in himself the confidence of the whole people" (quoted in Caldwell 1964, 107). To staff this government, Jefferson argued in favor of selecting the best and brightest among society. In a letter to John Adams, he wrote, "I agree with you that there is a natural aristocracy among

men. The grounds of this are virtue and talents..." (quoted in Peterson 1977, 534). The best government, then, is that "which provides the most effectually for a pure selection of these natural aristoi into the offices of government" (quoted in Peterson 1977, 534-35).

Jefferson, basically an egalitarian, "was coincidentally an individualist, loving men as persons, cherishing them collectively in the abstract, but distrusting them to the point of fear when massed together in cities" (Caldwell 1964, 105). Some of this same mixture of "loving men as persons" while not completely trusting them in particular was shared by his contemporary and political rival Alexander Hamilton.

Hamilton, like Jefferson, dealt in theory, but his true emphasis was on the pragmatic affairs of government. "How widely different the business of government is from the speculation of it," he wrote, "and the energy of the imagination dealing in general propositions from that of execution in detail" (Flaumenhaft 1976, 145). Hamilton saw the individual as dominated by reason: "The supreme being gave existence to man, together with the means of preserving and beautifying that existence. He endowed him with rational faculties, by the help of which to discern and pursue such things, as were consistent with his duty and interest . . ." (quoted in Flaumenhaft 1976, 175). This reason, for Hamilton, was universally shared. Hamilton was one of a handful of people anywhere in the European world of his day to state that blacks were equal in facilities—and rights—to whites (Flaumenhaft 1976, 177-79).

Like Jefferson, Hamilton felt that the administrative state was best served by attracting the service of those qualified by reason. He argued that most men, if properly trained and educated, could serve quite well—a view later echoed by Andrew Jackson. Hamilton was among the first to address the link between the emerging technology and administration, the first to address the potentials and problems of technocracy. Hamilton stressed such organizational features as division of labor, training and development, and planning for diversifying and improving the supply of labor. He argued for what contemporary administrators would call job enrichment, basing his argument on the different capacities of people, and on one's need for personal development. "It is a just observation," he argued, "that minds of the strongest and most active powers for their proper objects, fall below mediocrity, and labor without effort, if confined to uncongenial pursuits" (Hamilton 1959, 163).

In making his arguments, Hamilton sounds modern; he links an active, creative mind with practical experience to present clear and compelling

arguments concerning the proper way to organize human behavior. His contributions make it clear that, by the dawn of the nineteenth century, the basic ideas that were to underpin the American administrative state were firmly in place.

The Framework Today

The two dominant views of man represented by the Founding Fathers were the *directed commonwealth* view drawn from their Puritan heritage, modified by some movement toward the *responsive commonwealth* view, and the *marketplace* view emerging in the eighteenth century. Each of these views sees a different role for public administrators. The *marketplace* view, in particular the arguments of Locke, dominated the *Declaration of Independence* and the *Articles of Confederation*; the Constitution drew more heavily upon English opposition thought, particularly Trenchard and Gordon's Cato's Letters, (in Hamowy 1995) influenced by the Puritan legacy.

Both the *responsive commonwealth* view and the *protectorate* view played lesser roles in the intellectual origins of the American administrative state. While an argument can be made that many Americans—and certainly some current managers—operate on the protectorate scheme, it played only a small role in developing the origins of the administrative state.

The *directed commonwealth* view of the state played an important role in developing American views of the administrative state and continues to be a factor in current debates over the nature of that state. The *directed commonwealth* view argues that those few in society who are dominated by reason must create the commonwealth and, once they have created it, must direct it toward the betterment of man. Power must be concentrated at the top of organizations, enabling those organizations to lead man toward a common good. As most men are incapable of determining what the common good is, organizations cannot respond to an aggregate common will. Rather, they must develop a mechanism to identify those few in society dominated by reason, and then bring them into the organizational hierarchy. Organizations, therefore, must be tightly connected, enabling them to work in unison to direct society to the common good.

Contemporary heirs of the Puritans are found among members of the Reagan and both Bush administrations as well as among today's fundamentalists; in those who believe in absolute truth and who evidence a distrust of democracy as damaging to the national morality and spirit. The

administrative state, and the career administrators who compose it, are to follow not only the laws of the state, but also the laws of God. They would agree with Cotton that this is a Christian nation whose government is ordained by God.

The other key view of man, the *marketplace* view, was dominant in the period leading up to the Revolutionary War. Those adopting a *marketplace* view believe that people will behave rationally in the organization. We will have a desire to cooperate, understanding how our contribution advances the good of all, including ourselves. The value of the individual remains paramount, and organizations can be judged normatively in terms of how they treat the individual. Furthermore, these organizations come into being as a result of demands made by individuals, and they can be judged in terms of how well they respond to those demands. This is true whether the organization is governmental or private. In this view, government is to respond to the articulated needs of individuals. It should be staffed by those who, using reason, can help meet these needs and direct the affairs of state in the interest of the individuals that it comprises. Individuals, however, remain responsible for their own well-being. *Marketplace* theorists oppose governmental programs they see as creating a dependency class, including social welfare programs. George Will (2005) represents this marketplace view well. He discussed the issue of Social Security on This Week with George Stephanopolis. Mr. Will is a *marketplace* theorist through and through—a classic liberal who wants limited government. When asked about the "crisis" facing Social Security he responded by stating that of course there was no crisis in a fiscal sense, but that the real crisis was moral. Social Security, he argued, was part of a number of government programs that were creating a dependency on government, and this was the problem. He favored private accounts so that the market would take care of the issue.

The *responsive commonwealth* is best represented by modern liberals and best exemplified by the New Deal and Great Society legislation from the 1930s through the 1960s. Society should respond to the articulated demands not of individuals, but of groups coalescing to represent majority will. Once that will has been determined, it binds all in society. A key problem for many who view society as a *responsive commonwealth* is found in reaching a true majority will. They argue that the inability of many if not a majority of Americans to gain input to the system must be addressed. Thus Great Society legislation often included provisions for "maximum feasible participation"—provisions that called on public managers to take a leading role in mobilizing

members of disadvantaged. Those with this view would agree with the current school of thought exemplified by Chandler's (1984) argument that administrators are more representative of the public than are legislators.

Significance for Public Administrators

Public administrators may argue that an understanding of administrative history, while interesting, lacks any real relevance for what they do. Many of these public administrators have Master of Public Administration or Master of Business Administration degrees; degrees which prepared them for an administrative career by providing them with an arsenal of technical skills and techniques. They understand the relevance of cost/benefit analysis and can discuss the relative benefits of differing budgetary approaches. Most, while they have some idea of who Jefferson and Hamilton were, have no real knowledge of what they argued, let alone what the meaning of *regnum* and *sacerdotium*, nor do they see the need. Yet these managers can benefit from a knowledge of this history in at least two ways: first, they may gain a better understanding of their role in a democratic system of government; second, most will be exposed to different political cultures, to marketplace and commonwealth.

Sayre's Law states that public and private management are alike in all unimportant aspects. The important aspects relate to the fact that public administrators operate within and are part of the political process. They are citizens who are subject to the outcomes of those processes while at the same time helping to determine those processes. Luther Gulick (1990), writing for the 50th anniversary issue of *Public Administration Review*, argues

> ... most political science majors graduate with enough civic education to become effective citizens. But the focus of public administration programs has been increasingly on functional skills and techniques--health administration, transportation, budgeting methods, and so forth. Effective combination of civic values in general education with specialization in technical education still awaits attack.
>
> Few if any public affairs faculties have discovered how to counter the anti-government drift of the national culture. (60)

Providing MPA students with an understanding of administrative history is

one way to counter the "anti-governmental drift" for public managers.

Public managers work in extremely complex social environments, environments that are becoming even more complex. Understanding how American society reached this level of complexity, and providing the framework developed in this study, can help them analyze and cope with that complex social environment. It is not uncommon for a public administrator to relocate from an area dominated by one view to an area dominated by another. A public manager used to operating in a marketplace environment who moves to a *directed commonwealth*, for example, is likely to not only experience culture shock, but to quickly find her/himself in political trouble. We have dealt with city managers who lost their jobs not due to a lack of technical skill but to a lack of understanding of how to operate in a different political culture. It may be as important, then, to prepare them to face and understand these differences as it is to teach them how to use differing budgetary approaches—approaches which will work differently in different political cultures. As Gerda Lerner states (2006),

> We can learn from history how past generations thought and acted, how they responded to the demands of their time and how they solved their problems. We can learn by analogy, not by example, for our circumstances will always be different than theirs were. The main thing history can teach us is that human actions have consequences and that certain choices, once made, cannot be undone. They foreclose the possibility of making other choices and thus they determine future events.

The history underpinning the American administrative state is rich and varied. This article has only scratched the surface of what it has to offer the contemporary student of administration in the United States. An examination of this heritage can enrich an understanding of current arguments as well as provide a student of the administrative state with a sense of history, an anchor upon which to fasten his or her understanding of the linkage between the individual and the state.

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