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THE CONSTITUTION AND THE COUNCIL-MANAGER PLAN:
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION OPERATING UNDER A SYSTEM WITHOUT
SHARED POWERS

by

Robert A. Schuhmann

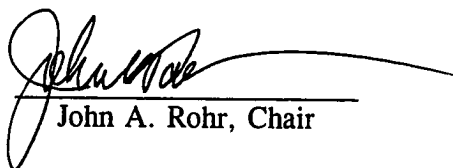
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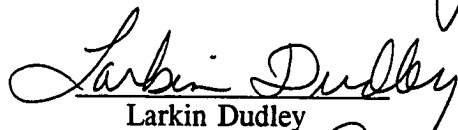
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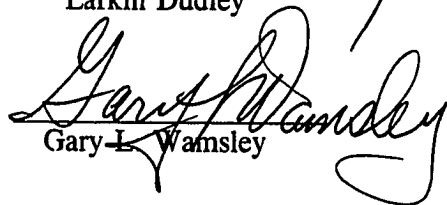
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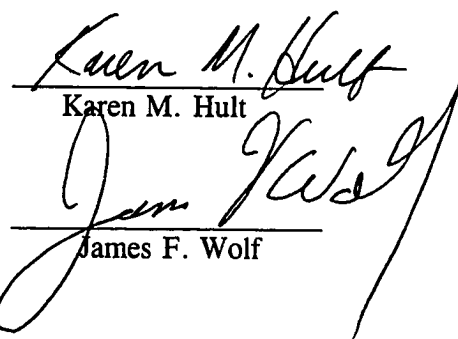
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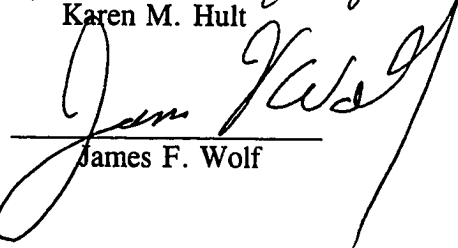
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(ABSTRACT)

This study carries forward the exploration of John Rohr's normative theory of public administration by examining the applicability of the "balance wheel" role for public administrators to local government administration. Because local government charters contain no moral basis for action, and there is no oath of office to uphold which would bind administrators in the pursuit of a set of local regime values, the issue of where local public administrators get their norms for action is an important one.

Local government department heads from South Carolina were interviewed from both mayor-council and council-manager governments in an effort to understand how they viewed their role in the governance process. During these interviews, particular emphasis was placed on where administrators look for guidance when faced with complex or conflicting signals from their environment.

The original hypothesis guiding the research was that form of local government would influence administrators'

responses. That is, administrators from council-manager governments would find it difficult to be guided by Rohr's normative theory of public administration because they operate in a system of government unlike their federal and state counterparts, i.e., no separation of powers exists in this form of government. The data analysis revealed that, when looking for guidance, form of government mattered less than did the type of task area that an administrator works in. In short, sources of guidance for administrators are often dependent upon the type of task an administrator is involved.

This study suggests that when public administration scholars offer normative prescriptions for administrative behavior they should consider a contingency approach that is sensitive to the task area of the administrator. Indeed, data analysis suggests that a local government administrator's profession may be the most important variable in predicting where an administrator will find guidance.

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I.

INTRODUCTION

It is not quite true that Americans only talk about the weather but do nothing about it. There is a long tradition -- ranging from half-demented rainmakers to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration -- of trying to "reform" Mother Nature. And we have been no less industrious in our attempts to control and improve the bureaucracy, an institution which other cultures have often regarded as unchanging as the physical elements.

- Michael Steinman and Robert Meiwald

Americans are fascinated with bureaucratic reform. It represents the timeless battle fought among politicians, reformers, academics, and citizens over the belief that structure is a key variable in the efficient provision of governmental goods and services. When government fails to provide, or fails to provide within reasonable costs, bureaucratic structure is often blamed. History has shown that indeed structure can influence the degree of corruption, the cost and quality of service, and the level of responsiveness (e.g., reforms of the late 1800s, Hoover Commission, and Little Hoover Commissions). However, as with any other political action, when elected officials

demand that the structure of bureaucracy change, tradeoffs are typically involved. Unfortunately, as Judith Gruber notes:

... the choice of a specific control mechanism often seems to depend more on political fads than on careful assessment of the relative merits of various possibilities. Debate over methods, in both the political and scholarly arena, generally has an ad hoc quality, with the focus on the effectiveness of specific procedures, not on how diverse control mechanisms affect the overall problem of reconciling bureaucracy and democracy (1994, 8).

Although the federal government is usually at the heart of any discussion of bureaucratic reform, it is well known that one of the most important, and memorable, reform efforts occurred at the level of local government. Municipal reform of the late 1800's profoundly influenced local government administration. The tenets of this effort required a departure from traditional American constitutional design principles and the implications of that departure merit renewed analysis. It appears possible that in its crusade to revitalize and renew municipal government, the reform movement negatively influenced how local government administrators perceive their important role in the governance process. If this is true, then perhaps we need to reexamine how accurately administrators in local governments are portrayed, and preached to, in the

academic literature by using different governmental models to explore and explain their interactions.

Background

Before the late nineteenth century, the American constitutional tradition of separation of powers flourished in local governments. During this time, municipal governments functioned under a system of separation of powers where both mayor and council influenced policy and administrative processes. Within this system, a large city council, often bicameral in nature, along with a variety of appointed and elected administrative officials, governed most communities. In the absence of any centralized administrative responsibility these numerous separately-elected officials had difficulty coordinating and controlling municipal activities. Furthermore, during this same period, cities and towns experienced rapid urbanization and growth, increased citizen demand for service, and a dramatically changed landscape. The near-geometric increase in demand for local public services led to a need for specialized expertise in supplying these new urban services.

With an effort to combat these failings, the Progressive era was ushered in and with the arrival of municipal reform city government structure became much less "American" or at the very least departed from the traditional Madisonian (*Federalist 51*) model. This reform

effort spawned a system of governance reflecting a monocentric, or unitary, structure rather than the traditional polycentric system of shared powers seen at the federal and state level and in "unreformed" cities.

These Progressive reformers, with their public interest philosophy, had two goals: first, to make government more efficient, and second, to "throw the bums out."¹ These reform efforts called into question our traditional notions of accountability and separation of powers. Where accountability and multiple access points were once of fundamental importance, after reform, values moved to efficiency at, perhaps, the expense of American constitutional tradition. Among the results of this effort was a new form of municipal government -- the council-manager plan. This design would rely on an appointed professional administrator to carry out the day to day operations of the city. He or she would serve at the pleasure of the council and have no personal electoral constituency outside the council. This new system, although patterned after the private sector's corporate model using a board of directors and chief executive officer who is responsible to the board, closely resembled the formal theory of parliamentary government. In the British

¹ The issues involved are somewhat more complex than this. For a further explanation, see Chapter Two.

parliament, "[c]onstitutionally, British civil servants are accountable to ministers and ministers are accountable in Parliament for the actions and conduct of their officials" (Chapman 1988, 265).² This parliamentary style system is not the American constitutional tradition -- a fact that often goes unnoticed -- because it lacks the separation of powers.

After municipal reform, with its emphasis on scientific management and efficiency, effectiveness, and economy (the three e's), fundamental differences in governmental structure would be found in the field of local government. These changes would have far-reaching implications for administrators.

Clearly, administrators at all levels and in all forms of government in the United States must balance competing interests as they exercise their administrative discretion in developing and implementing public policy. The assumption, however, exists that all levels of government in the United States operate within a system of multiple access points and separated power structures -- the traditional

² Here, I refer only to formal theory of the British parliamentary system. The reality is, of course, much more complicated.

Madisonian model -- that precipitates this balancing.³ What must be remembered is that during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries local government administration in the United States moved away from this traditional model toward a monocentric (as opposed to polycentric) structure where power, at the local level, flows from only one branch, the legislature. This change is clearly not in line with Madisonian theory or American constitutional tradition.

An analogous (in terms of a reliance on private management principles) but more modern and contemporary reform effort reflecting similar philosophical shifts can currently be found at the federal level in the "Reinventing Government" movement espoused by Osborne and Gaebler and in Vice President Al Gore's "National Performance Review" (NPR). It is only recently that academics and other observers of the government landscape have begun to question the market-oriented values of this campaign. For example, Ronald Moe mirrors this dissertation's concerns when he asks questions such as where do these changes in emphasis (that is from equity and justice to "customer satisfaction and

³ Strictly applied, the "Madisonian Model" refers only to legislatures. In this dissertation, however, the concept is used in its broader sense, i.e., referring to checks and balances, separation of power, and multiple power structures.

being a "team player") fit with respect to managing the executive branch and how do they fit with traditional public administration values (1994, 112).

Moe argues that it appears that current trends depart from administrative management (reflective of constitutional values) toward entrepreneurial management (reflective of reinventing government and "market oriented" value systems). Perhaps most important for this study, Moe contends:

[i]t is striking, however, how little critical discussion there has been thus far in the scholarly literature of public administration about what the adoption of this paradigm will mean to the American theory of government ... and to public administration as a discipline (1994, 112).

In the above quotation, Moe is referring to the Gore Report on "Reinventing Government." There are, however, many similarities between "Reinventing Government" and the Progressive movement that brought about reformed local governments (there are also important distinctions). It is useful to note that each effort is aimed at making government more efficient by utilizing structural and cultural changes designed to foster efficiency and customer service at the expense of the often cumbersome, apparently antiquated (from the perspective of those doing the reforming) constitutional design principles.

In addition, Moe argues that the Gore Report is premised on the idea that, "[t]he federal government and the

private sector are similar in their essentials and respond similarly to management incentives and processes" (1994, 113). This notion clearly recalls the Progressive reform movement's insistence that the structure of local government follow the private sector's chief executive officer model wherein power flows from one body, the board of directors, while the chief administrative officer would be responsible for the day to day affairs of the corporation.

Theoretical Framework

At the federal and state levels, American constitutional tradition balances interests by separating power among the three branches. A system of checks and balances to prevent the abuse of power is embraced as one of the main features of this system. Formal checks are incorporated by giving power that normally belongs to one institution to another. Perhaps the most prominent example of this feature is the power of the President to check the lawmaking powers of Congress by vetoing a law enacted by Congress. Under the U.S. Constitution, Article I, Sec. VII, the president is vested with the power to veto legislation, thus, this function becomes an executive "check" on Congress.⁴ Additional examples of this feature include the

⁴ This power, of course, can be overridden by the vote of two-thirds of both houses of Congress (Article I, Section VII).

requirement in Article III, Sec. II, where the Senate must approve the appointment of various executive officials. Here, the Senate, a legislative body plays a critical role in the traditionally executive function of appointing officers. Still another example can be found in the judicial role played by the Senate in trying the cases of officers impeached by the House of Representatives. These are examples of American constitutional "checks;" where the power traditionally associated with one institution is vested in another.

Other, less formal, checks exist as well. According to Madisonian theory, a good Constitution encourages multitudes of interests so that no single interest can ever tyrannize the others. The basic assumption is that competition among interests will produce balance. With this in mind, the media, interest groups, citizens, and others check the actions of government and of each other as well.

An additional and important balancing mechanism, according to John Rohr, is the Public Administration. Rohr notes:

Public Administration exercises all three powers [Executive, Legislative, and Judicial] in a subordinate capacity and must make its peculiar contribution in conformity with that subordination. It does this by choosing which of its constitutional masters it will favor at a given time on a given issue in the continual struggle among the three branches as they act out the script of *Federalist 51*, wherein ambition

counteracts ambition and 'the interest of the man ... [is] connected with the constitutional rights of the place' (1990, 81).

Moreover, public administration under this constitutional system is to participate in this balancing of powers by acting as a balancing wheel in support of individual rights.

Rohr maintains that

[t]he role of the Public Administration is to fulfill the objective of the oath of office: to uphold the Constitution of the United States. This means that administrators should use their discretionary power in order to maintain the constitutional balance of powers in support of individual rights (1986, 181).

According to John Rohr, the framers of the U.S. Constitution assigned an important role to public administrators in the federal system; that they should embrace a sense of mission regarding their governing duties within our constitutional system. This role carries a heightened sense of responsibility concerning the pursuit of individual rights and the public interest beyond the mere blind implementation of a superior's request. Administrators are obligated to make morally, as well as technically, correct decisions. Fundamentally, they are bound by oath to uphold the Constitution of the United States. They are called to use their discretionary power in order to maintain the constitutional balance of powers in support of individual rights. In brief, it is their duty to enmesh themselves in this complicated struggle.

Here, Rohr carves out a legitimate role for the public administrator that is much more than that of a technocrat carrying out orders from the president (Barth 1991, 7). These administrators have a legitimate role in governance, grounded in the constitutional tradition itself.⁵ This tradition guides federal administrators as they function within a system of separated powers. However, as was noted above, not all government administrators function within such a system. At the local level, in the traditional, "unreformed," strong mayor-council system, the mayor acts as the executive and the council acts as a legislature and a balancing role for administration in this system can be understood. On the other hand, in the reformed council-manager system, all power flows from council -- there is no separation of power. The executive (the city manager) is hired by council and works at the pleasure of council.⁶ The mayor, the traditional executive, serves largely as a figurehead and has little formal power. The power that he or she may have radiates from the city council. This is a significant departure -- one that affects, nationally

⁵ See also Richard Green, "Prudent Constitutionalism: Hamiltonian Lessons For A Responsible Public Administration." *International Journal of Public Administration*. Vol. 16, no. 2 (1993): 165-186.

⁶ See Appendix E for an organizational comparison of the two forms of government.

(1993), 47.7 percent of all local governments in the United States (Renner and DeSantis 1993, 59).

With this in mind, how, and under what guidance, do administrators working in council-manager systems balance, counterbalance, and "maneuver" in a system that lacks separation of powers? How do they view their constitutional responsibility in the democratic system?

Rationale, Significance, Need For Study

Understanding what guides a government's administrative action is a fundamental concern for public administration and citizens alike. Citizens must believe they have some input into the process. This is an especially important concern for democratic political systems where "unaccountable power flies in the face of the central norms of such political systems" (Gruber 1987, 5).

Furthermore, during these times of shrinking municipal resources, increased demand for services, unfunded mandates from the federal and state governments, and higher demands placed on existing services and infrastructure, local governments are becoming important arenas for public policy clashes. Many of these issues continue to perplex even the most astute government administrators regardless of the organizational arrangement they follow. Pressures for government to do more with fewer resources and the uncertainty about the role of the public administrator have

become sources of increasing frustration for those inside and outside government (Barth 1991, 1). Perhaps the question of legitimacy continues to arise because of the perception of repeated failure of government to perform adequately at all (or any) levels.

In *To Run A Constitution* Rohr attempts quite successfully to "legitimate the administrative state in terms of constitutional principle" (Rohr 1986, ix). He does this in a number of ways. Of central importance is that administrators act within the constitutional system as a balancing wheel; balancing, or counterbalancing, competing interests in the pursuit of public policy -- "Administrative Statecraft" as Rohr calls it. The implications of this role for practicing public administrators are not unimportant. As Barth notes, "according to this theory, the public administrator must determine when an action represents an imbalance in power between the branches of government" (1991, 9).

The practicability, however, of this concept is unclear. As Barth argues,

this is a vague concept at best for top level public administrators who deal with the three branches of government on a daily basis, let alone mid-level careerists who rarely see the head of their own agency. The concept needs to be translated into terms meaningful to practice (1991, 9).

Barth is referring to federal administrators in this passage. The picture is more muddled, as Barth notes, at mid-level management and (this study argues) even more so at the local level where administrators must look at the Constitution through the blurred lenses of the city, the state, and the federal government. The opportunities to adopt Rohr's "balancing" perspective, for those administrators who work in council-manager systems, are even more limited because they work in a system NOT of separation of powers and checks and balances but of a monocentric or unitary power structure where no balancing, thus no choosing between "constitutional masters," can take place.

The opportunity to carry out Rohr's "Statecraft" is, therefore, conspicuously absent in local governments that operate under the council-manager plan. There is no formalized balancing to be done because there are no branches to balance. As in British parliament, administrators "work" for the executive and the executive works for the majority party in the parliament. Other, more traditional, forms of local government, such as the strong mayor form, on the surface appear to offer opportunities for Rohr's balancing to take place. Administrators under these conditions have at least in principle the opportunity to balance the interests of the executive with the interests of council.

Obviously, Rohr's theory is normative rather than descriptive. As even Rohr notes in the preface of *To Run A Constitution*, "[t]he argument of this book is presented more in the form of an essay than as a lawyer's brief or a mathematician's theorem" (1986, xii). Moreover, Rohr recognizes that "administrators often do choose among constitutional masters, but they usually do so as a matter of fact and seldom as a matter of constitutional principle" (81).

A central issue for this dissertation is that **if separation of power exists at the federal level AND bureaucrats should balance these interests in the hopes of establishing more prudent public policy, how does an administrator exercise such prudence in a system where the powers are not formally separated?** This dissertation seeks to offer empirical evidence toward a better understanding of this question.

Purpose

This study extends the work of John Rohr and Thomas Barth by carefully examining the extent to which local public administrators operate under Rohr's normative theory of public administration, thereby filling a literature gap that has excluded local government from any systematic examination of its relation to constitutional tradition.



A study of this nature is worthwhile as a way of attempting to isolate the sources of variance in the role and behavior of public bureaucracies (Peters 1988, 6). As Guy Peters notes, comparisons among bureaucracies within a single country can be especially important exercises in theory building because one of the variables assumed to influence behavior -- national political culture, national character, or whatever one wishes to call it -- is held constant (6).

Research exists regarding where and from whom federal administrators take their cues, e.g., Barth 1991; 1993. However, less information exists on the local level. This study will try to discover what this difference in formal structure means in both the abstract and concrete by: 1) comparing interview responses of federal administrators with their counterparts at the local level in both council-manager plans and strong mayor plans, and 2) comparing interview responses of local government administrators in reformed council-manager governments to their counterparts in unreformed mayor-council governments. If all local administrators answer in the same way as the federal administrators, then it would seem to suggest that in this limited area of endeavor, formal structures are not extremely important. Perhaps what is important is the national political culture of diversified power and multiple

decision-making points. Perhaps this national culture trumps the local formal structure. In short, do all administrators see themselves with a similar obligation of balancing powers despite formal structure?

The specific problem investigated in this exploratory study is twofold and revolves around Rohr's normative theory of public administration. First, empirical evidence will be presented showing how administrators respond to conflicting pressures under a system where there is no theory of balancing powers (council-manager plan). Perhaps local government administrators working in the council-manager plan, because of the monocentric structure in which they work, perceive their role differently from those administrators who operate within a polycentric system. Secondly, this study will examine empirically the factors guiding administrators' behavior. Because local government charters contain no moral basis for action, and there is no oath of office to uphold which would bind administrators in the pursuit of a set of local regime values (unlike the U.S. Constitution and the federal administrators' oath of office), the issue of where local public administrators get their norms for action is an important one. A question of significant concern for this dissertation is whether local administrators are influenced by the principles of American



constitutional tradition even though they work outside its formal structure.

After examination of the empirical evidence presented, this study will better define the dimensions of what it means to be a public administrator embedded in a system of unitary power when the dominant political culture requires separation of powers and checks and balances among competing branches of government. If, because of the monocentric structure of the council-manager plan, practitioners perceive their role differently from federal administrators or from administrators in a strong mayor-council structure, then perhaps Rohr's balance wheel metaphor does not apply to local administrators and further reexamination of public administration at the local level is in order.

Moreover, it appears, at least on the local level, that democratic values have been supplanted or even replaced by market-oriented value systems embraced by present-day government reformers. "Customer service" and "being a team player" are expressions used by local government administrators. The values inherent in these phrases, which are not unlike those used by the "Reinventing Government" reformers at the federal level, are clearly different -- not necessarily mutually exclusive nor incompatible -- but different from democratic values of equity, justice, popular

government, checks and balances, and constitutionalism embraced by the founders.

Guy Peters asks a question that is at the heart of this study: "[d]o variations in governmental structures ... affect the behavior of public employees?" (1988, 7). There is a wealth of information about the way differences in structure relate to behavior of the members of the organization or in the output of the organization for the private sector. We are, however, less certain of this phenomenon in the public sector (11).

Answers to these questions can have broad implications as municipalities and citizens struggle over adopting new forms of local government. Subordinate autonomy or "balancing," as found in Barth's study, tempered by a significant sense of responsibility to competing masters may provide the public administrator with the sense that if a given policy or order is somehow out of line, administrators can exercise administrative autonomy to bring it within acceptable boundaries. If, on the other hand, it is found that administrators simply plow through tasks without thought of the various interests involved, policy decisions and policy implementation can be perceived as lacking the sense of legitimacy that public administration is trying so hard to attain. As Pops and Pavlak contend,

in our constitutional republic, concerned as it must be with fair treatment and participation, commitment to justice as a core value of public administration can promote the public's acceptance of bureaucracy's legitimate role as a constitutional "partner" with the legislative, executive, and judicial branches (1991, 5).

As Thomas Barth notes, public administrators who recognize their role in constitutional subordinate authority see themselves as providing unique perspectives or contributions to help maintain a government of shared powers (1991, 142). He also suggests that if administrators did see their work in constitutional terms, perhaps they would have a more principled basis for making difficult decisions (142-143).

It is largely this change in structure, and thus value systems, that motivate this study. Using evidence gleaned from the research, this study will conclude by addressing three important questions with respect to these issues. First, questions are asked that offer insight into just how administrators at the local level view their role in the governance process -- and perhaps more importantly, what guides that action or behavior. What do they use as a guide for behavior when American political tradition values balancing in a system where no balancing can take place? Secondly, why isn't there balancing -- the answer seems obvious -- there is only one branch. More importantly, however, is there something that takes the place of the separation of powers concept and is there another model of

balancing at the local level that deserves attention? Perhaps new models need to be introduced to explain administrative activity at the local level (or perhaps old models such as a parliamentary one should be used to explore local government administration). Thirdly, what are the implications of not balancing? Should there be balancing? Would policy development be different, or more prudent, as John Rohr argues?

Limitations

This exploratory study does not purport to study actual behavioral or policy outputs. However, as Nachmias and Nachmias note, "attitudes refer to the sum total of a person's inclinations.... An attitude can lead to a tendency to act or react in a certain manner when confronted with certain stimuli" (1987, 255). This speaks, in part, to how we might expect administrators to behave when confronted with the often conflicting environmental demands of their profession.

This study also does not claim to measure cause and effect relationships directly. The essential characteristics measured are administrators' attitudes, inclinations, and potential behaviors. There is little attempt to illustrate the reasons why certain policies are passed at the expense of others. Rather, the dissertation seeks primarily to explore how Rohr's normative theory of

public administration plays out within a system that fails to embrace separation of powers as an organizational criterion. In short, the study aims to end, rather than begin, with improved hypotheses regarding what motivates administrators at the level of local government.

Summary

Judith Gruber anticipates the spirit of this study when she writes:

[a]ccess, fairness, coordination, and many other goals are all desirable for a democratically controlled bureaucracy, but they are by no means the same, nor always compatible. Reforms aimed at realizing one value may impair our ability to realize others (1994, 8).

Reformed local governments have a dramatically different structure than the governmental form envisioned by the founders. The municipal reform movement altered this structure to realize, among others, the goals of efficiency, effectiveness, and economy. If these goals have not been realized (as the literature indicates) then what have we gained? Has our attempt to realize efficiency impaired other democratic principles? This study seeks to offer clues in answering these questions.

Often, we seem to forget that local government is different. It functions under a unique set of rules that in many instances are contrary to American constitutional design principles. No one, it seems, pays much attention to



the fact that there is no separation of powers in the council-manager plan. Local government is to function largely like a business and is not reflective of the Madisonian models found at the federal and state levels. Therefore, when observers discuss the role of the public administrator they couch the discussion within a system of polycentric power. Their discussions fail to include the unique characteristic of local government administration, that it is at least in principle more similar to British parliamentary theory or the private sector's corporate model than the standard multiple access points, shared power, and checks and balances found elsewhere in American government.

This dissertation seeks to highlight the unique structural environment of local government and to explore what these unique characteristics mean, in both the abstract and concrete, for public administration and those who work in it. The assumptions cast at the outset of the study (prior to data collection) were that the structural differences which exist between forms of local government would influence administrators' attitudes and potential behaviors in their roles -- that is, structure matters. After examination of the research data, a different set of conclusions are drawn. In this limited area of endeavor, findings indicate that administrators hold similar attitudes in both reformed and nonreformed local governments regarding

how they view their role in the governance process and the principles that they use to guide their behavior. On this particular dimension, structure has only a limited influence. What may, instead, influence administrators perceptions is the department or "task area" in which an administrator works. Furthermore, Rohr's normative balancing model has little to do with public administration at the local level. What appears more salient for administrators is a body of literature that has largely been discredited over the past fifty years -- the Wilsonian and Progressive literature.

Equally important, the data indicate that public administrators in this study summarily view their role differently from those administrators found in a study conducted by Thomas Barth. Barth, in his examination of federal administrators working in a polycentric system, found that federal administrators acted in ways similar to Rohr's normative theory of public administration. This is an intriguing finding.

This study posits that the roots of these differences can be found in early municipal reform efforts that based structural and cultural changes on parliamentary (e.g., unification of powers in the council and the short ballot)

and business-like tactics.⁷ These strategies put in place by the reformers have permeated local government generally. That is, management practices in all structures of local government rely increasingly on early municipal reform strategies. As a result, in many instances administrators view themselves as simply service providers. Thus, they choose to provide services in a "customer service orientation" (citizen/constituent as "customer"), which, according to the research data, often means providing the best service for the least cost and balancing the wants and needs of these customers with the money available from city council.

This is not to say that politics is meaningless at the local level nor does this dissertation seek to revive the politics/administration dichotomy, even though reports of its demise might be, as Mark Twain would put it, "exaggerated."⁸ This study does, however, reach conclusions that when we speak of "public administration" we must recognize the important and atypical features of local public administration and limit our generalities recognizing

⁷ British influence in the reform effort is often under emphasized. For example, a key player in the reform effort was James Bryce, then British ambassador to the United States.

⁸ See, for example, James Svara (1996).

that public administration at the local level is "different."

Organization of the Dissertation

Toward this goal, this dissertation is organized into six chapters. Chapter Two reviews the relevant literature on the influence of government structures, the influence and roots of municipal reform, and finally the normative view of the public administrator in governance. Included in this chapter is a review of the literature that speaks to the role of the public administrator with emphasis given to how that role has changed over time.

Chapter Three contains the research design and includes an exploration of the advantages and disadvantages of this design and the appropriateness of this method for this exploratory study. Furthermore, specific procedures for data collection will be discussed and the limitations of this study are elaborated. Chapter Four highlights the findings regarding differences between formal government structures, i.e., whether council-manager administrators view their role differently than do mayor-council administrators. Chapter Five explores the idea that what may be the more important variable in how an administrator responds to the study's questions is his or her "task area." Chapter Six, the final chapter, will discuss implications, conclusions and recommendations for further study.

II.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Some types of formal government may *facilitate* the translation of demands; others may *inhibit* the translation of those demands.

- Bryan D. Jones

This chapter will review literature in three areas that are important for understanding the foundation of this study. First, this chapter will review relevant literature that explores the idea that organizational structure *matters* in government. An examination of this subject in its entirety is far beyond the scope of this dissertation; therefore, this chapter will pull on only one thread of this scholarship: the relationship between organizational structure, government, and democracy. Karen Hult and Charles Walcott note, in *Governing Public Organizations*, that there exist various orientations toward organizations which spotlight different aspects of organizational structure.¹ This review will focus primarily on the aspect

¹ For a more articulate and elaborate exploration of these various orientations, see Karen M. Hult and Charles Walcott, *Governing Public Organizations: Politics, Structures,*

of "organizations as political systems" which "underscores the ways in which politics in organizations is channeled, routinized, and legitimized" (Hult & Walcott 1990, 36). This section will sketch this picture using a number of perspectives including *The Federalist Papers*, urban government literature, municipal reform, and the contemporary concerns of Ronald Moe.

Secondly, this chapter will review literature that explores the normative view of both the public administrator and public administration itself. Four examples of this literature will outline a range of views drawing from the Progressive movement (including Gulick, Taylor, Wilson, and general reform era principles), the New Public Administration movement, John Rohr's writings, and a study by Thomas Barth. This chapter will conclude with a brief example of the implications of structure and show how the normative view is inadequate to help administrators at the local level given the peculiar government environment within which they work - with special emphasis placed on the fact that normative prescriptions fail to account for those public administrators who operate in fundamentally different environments.

and *Institutional Design* (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 1990), pgs. 33-48.

In part, the purpose of this review is to describe a problem that local government administrators share. Although they seek guidance, the literature fails to provide direction tailored to their unique environment. The literature review will reveal that a segment of public administration has been left out of the normative prescription because local public administration fails to operate in the same sort of political environment as the federal and state system.

Throughout the review it becomes apparent that local government is different; different in that administrators working under a council-manager form (and results indicate the mayor-council form as well) of government operate in a private "business-like" culture where multiple access points and checks and balances are not the norm -- where conflicting values are not resolved within the context of polycentric power and multiple access, but in an environment that more resembles a corporate boardroom where being a "team player" is the rule. Though important, this difference is largely unrecognized. Furthermore, it remains unclear what principles guide administrative behavior at the level of local government as a result of this. It also remains unclear whether the normative literature has taken structural and cultural considerations into account when

developing these prescriptions for "all" public administrators.

A. Structure Matters

The Framers

In the United States, political struggles over the structure of government are as old, even older, than the Constitution. Clearly, the form of government, the shape government takes, or the model it is patterned after, must matter. This notion is, in part, the motivation for much early American political writing. *The Federalist Papers*, penned by Publius, and the Anti-Federalist replies by Federal Farmer, Brutus, and others, epitomize this struggle. In fact, the constitutional convention held in Philadelphia in 1787 was motivated by the poor structure, and the resulting weaknesses (no independent executive, no judicial authority, and no other means of enforcing Congress's will), of the Articles of Confederation to provide for meaningful governance in a young nation besieged with problems.

Several design principles guided the debate between the Constitution's framers',² among them, popular government, individual rights, federalism, separation of powers, republican institutions, bicameralism, and efficient

² Even the term "framers" implies someone imposing a particular structure on government.

administration were priorities of the new republic (Rohr 1986, 77). For the purposes of this study, three of these ideas are of special interest because they speak to legal institutions, or the way these institutions are patterned (or structured), rather than concepts. These are federalism, separation of powers, and bicameralism. In illustrating the idea that structure mattered to the framers, I shall rely chiefly on *The Federalist Papers* and the work of Herbert Storing and John Rohr.

Perhaps the most articulate argument supporting the notion that structure mattered to the framers was offered by Publius in *Federalist 51*. The purpose of Publius' essay was to discuss the various mechanisms required to control the abuses of government. Publius argued that people are the primary control of government. He recognizes, however, that "experience has taught mankind the necessity of auxiliary precautions," i.e., formal structure (Cooke 1961, 349). In an effort to lay the foundation for this new brand of constitutional government, Publius articulates the important component of checks and balances which will become a hallmark of the new national government. Publius writes, "... the constant aim is to divide and arrange the several offices in such a manner as that each may be a check on the other" (349). This, as is noted in the text of the essay, is essential to the preservation of liberty and is a direct

reflection of the writings of an earlier political philosopher, Montesquieu.

Montesquieu, born in 1689 and writing in the early 1700s, wrote that, "[t]o prevent the abuse of power, things must be so ordered that power checks power. When both the legislative and executive powers are united in the same person or body of magistrates, there is no liberty" (Richter 1977, 244-245).

Furthermore, in an effort to support bicameralism, Publius notes that in a republican form of government, the legislative authority necessarily dominates. Therefore, the remedy is to "divide the legislature into different branches; and to render them by different modes of election, and different principles of action" (Cooke 1961, 350). Finally, in support of federalism, or a "compound republic," Publius contends that a double security arises because power is divided between two distinct governments (351). According to Publius, "[h]ence, a double security arises to [protect] the rights of the people. The different governments will controul each other; at the same time that each will be controuled by itself" (351). These concerns were important; so important that, in general principle, the

Anti-Federal Brutus agreed to divided power.³ Brutus contends that

[t]o have a government well administered in all its parts, it is requisite [that] the different departments of it should be separated and lodged as much as may be in different hands. The legislative power should be in one body, the executive in another, and the judicial in one different from either (Storing 1985, 187).

Without such a separated system, the result would be tyranny.

The structure of the new government mattered to the framers of the Constitution. The internal structure served as a mechanism through which public policy would develop in a particular kind of way. This method of governance was not designed to be rapid or impulsive. Rather, it was designed to foster debate, dialogue, and reflection. In addition, this system fosters citizen participation through multiple access points; opportunities abound for the policy process to be halted, abruptly, by a contentious congress or citizenry. The drafters of our Constitution deliberately designed an intricate system in order to ensure deliberation and prevent precipitous action. The resulting fragmented institutions had the added benefit of permitting opportunities for environmental and citizen interaction.

³ The Anti-Federalist position still remains different from the federalist position on an important point. The anti-federalist believed in legislative supremacy where power would be housed in a unicameral, or one house, institution.

Urban Government Literature

Urban government literature generally views government structures as mechanisms for making policy. That is, the way demands are processed by government depends upon the type of processing mechanism or processing structure. Plainly stated by Bryan Jones, "formal structures of government condition the way in which policy is made" (1983, 234). An important notion that transcends level of government (i.e., federal, state, local) and speaks specifically to structure is that, as mentioned at the outset of this chapter, some types of government facilitate demands by citizens and others inhibit the processing of those demands. Furthermore, "it [structure] influences whether and how policy issues are recognized, and it helps shape the bureaucratic rationality, representativeness, accountability, and legitimacy of decision making" (Hult & Walcott 1990, 77).

In theory, our federal, polycentric, bicameral system facilitates citizen access to decision makers but at the same time inhibits rapid translation of citizen demands into public policy. Contrarily, monocentric governmental structures (e.g., parliamentary systems or, at the local level, council-manager systems) serve to facilitate the translation of demands into outputs. Having both policy making and policy implementation in the same unit serves to

facilitate governmental action and to decrease opportunities for opponents to slow or halt the policy process. Fewer access points, less opportunity for interaction (or simply knowing that the interaction would be useless) serves to limit inputs into the system.⁴ A discussion of the merits of policies developed within this type of system are beyond the scope of this review. However, the simple conclusion here is that structure indeed influences the policy process. Hence, structure matters.

Yet another dimension of structure is responsiveness. Different structures facilitate responsiveness to different interests or different kinds of demands. The urban literature is quite clear in that highly fragmented municipal government is more responsive to minority needs than those structures that are less fragmented or more "closed." This was in large part responsible for the growth of the municipal reform movement. The reform movement was, in part, an effort to stymie the influence of immigrant and ethnic minorities in the highly fragmented mayor-council systems⁵ and move toward a more closed system that would represent the "public interest" rather than the

⁴ For further elaboration of this issue see James Q. Wilson's example at the end of this chapter.

⁵ According to Banfield and Wilson (1963), by 1900 about one-third of the cities with populations of over 25,000 had bicameral city councils (*City Politics*, 79).



individualistic or disparate interests of the various minority and ethnic communities. What is more reflective of reality, however, is that the reform simply changed the locus of control from minority and immigrant interests to Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, middle and upper middle class power centers. Of particular importance here is what Edward Banfield and James Q. Wilson have to say regarding the relationship of government structure to "two distinct philosophies about the manner in which government ought to operate" (Jones 1983, 241).

Banfield and Wilson raise the issue of an "Ethos theory" and its influence on government structure. In their book, *City Politics*, these authors argue that how a given community views the role of government can influence the form of government adopted. For instance, the Anglo-Saxon Protestant middle class ethos stresses community involvement in a rational search for the "good of the community as a whole," with decisions efficiently implemented by a professional and neutral bureaucracy (1963, 41). This "public-regarding," or "unitary" ethos, in Jones words, "lauds the role of experts in government, and stresses honesty, integrity, and efficiency" (Jones 1983, 242).

On the other hand, the "private-regarding" or "individualistic" ethos is based in the personalistic and familial relationships that European immigrants brought with

them to America. It stresses group and individual gain, with politics as a means to resolve competing interests.

Jones writes that these orientations imply the adoption of certain municipal government forms.

The implied institutional forms of the unitary ethos are the strong executive (especially the council-manager form); at-large representation on the city council, in which all councilpersons are elected from a district that consists of the entire city rather than from individual, single-member districts; nonpartisanship, in which political parties play no role in nominating and electing candidates for office; and a strong civil service system to replace patronage (1983, 243).

The other brand of municipal government, the mayor-council form, then, is representative of the individualistic ethos. Here, members of council are elected from individual single-member districts, often with the backing of a political party, and each member is prepared to halt the political process in order to get a share of the pie. The "public" interest is less of a concern than the interest of a narrow constituency.

Although the Ethos theory is criticized on a number of dimensions, the literature makes clear that Banfield and Wilson are correct in emphasizing that these philosophical orientations imply different governmental forms.⁶

⁶ The criticisms are largely aimed at issues other than structure. For instance, the terms public and private-regarding depict immigrants as selfish and Yankees as good-hearted. For a brief review of the criticisms, see Bryan D. Jones, *Governing Urban America*, p. 243.

Municipal Reform

The genesis of administrative reform started in the late 1800s when moralistic reformers wanted to end graft and corruption in government. These reformers were pushing for a nonpartisan civil service and greater professionalism in government. However, as Knott and Miller note, these sporadic reform attempts did not really begin to transform government until the Progressive era dawned at the turn of the century (1987, 5). The Progressives carried the banner of control, efficiency, and a politically neutral bureaucracy staffed by professional administrative experts (5). In an effort to reach these lofty goals, the engineers of reform approached the problem as any other problem solver might. They simply asked the question: "What organizational structure will best provide the desired goals of efficiency and unified control?" (3).

The first attempt at answering this question and, therefore, reorganizing local government resulted in the commission form of government. First tried in Galveston, Texas, after the city was struck by a devastating hurricane, this form relied on a few commissioners who would each have both administrative and legislative authority. Commissioners were elected at large and were typically prominent local businesspersons who had experience in administration (not necessarily public administration).

Each commissioner administered an area or department of the local government (e.g., police, finance, public works) and served as the chief administrative officer of that department. This form quickly became popular with citizens and reformers and, as Orin Nolting notes, "[the commission form] subsequently spread throughout the country as a fashionable cure for what ailed any city" (1969, 3).

The commission form of local government, however, would quickly be abandoned as proponents of this plan recognized its faults. Although this new structure of government made great strides toward improving service provision and, thus, local government (this structure also began to realize many of the progressive reform goals), the commission form lacked the professional administrators required for the increasing complexity of city government and, additionally, this form "dispersed administrative functions and accountability among several elected commissioners" (Nolting 1969, 6). The symptoms of these faults would manifest themselves in a lack of accountability and in the difficulty of gaining consensus on broad legislation affecting the broader community.

The second attempt (and longest lasting) at developing a professional local government would begin in Staunton, Virginia, with the hiring of a "general manager" who would be directly responsible to the council. Staunton continued to use a bicameral mayor-council arrangement along with the

general manager; however, according to the ordinance providing for this appointment,

The General Manager shall devote his entire time to the duties of his office and shall have entire charge and control of all the Executive work of the City and its various departments, and have entire charge and control of the heads of departments and employees of the city (quoted in Nolting 1969, 6).

This structure would set the stage for the second shoe to fall -- the council-manager plan -- the brain child of Richard S. Childs.

Childs' plan included three major points: the short ballot,⁷ the unification of powers in the council, and the concentration of administrative authority in a professional administrator appointed by, and responsible only to, the city council. The two previous attempts at reform would almost reach these goals -- Galveston's plan would unify the council and Staunton would hire a professional administrator. In 1912, Sumter, South Carolina, would be the first city in the country to incorporate each of these three planks in one municipal government and in 1914 Dayton, Ohio, would become the first city of any significant size to adopt the Plan. After these breakthroughs, municipal government structure would no longer appear similar to its

⁷ Interestingly, Woodrow Wilson was the president of the National Short Ballot Organization and an ardent supporter of the council-manager plan.

federal and state cousins. It would more closely reflect British parliamentary theory or the private sector's corporate model.

The basic features of the council-manager plan have been modified over the past eight decades. However, the major points remain: 1) nonpartisan, at-large election of policy-making officials on a short ballot, 2) unification of powers in one council, and 3) concentration of administrative authority.

These successfully implemented reforms had a much broader impact than simply changing the structure and level of efficiency of government. As Max Skidmore notes, "[i]n many instances, their [the Progressive reformers] efforts led to the attempt to replace political responsiveness with efficiency, which to this day has characterized that progressive invention, the council-manager form of American municipal government" (30).

At the heart of this new government structure is the professional city manager. This person, serving in an executive capacity, is responsible to the city council and performs many of the duties traditionally assigned to the

mayor. The mayor functions largely as a figurehead and is more often than not actually a part of city council.⁸

In this new system, "regardless of the executive power delegated, the manager is always an employee of the council, which retains complete and ultimate responsibility for all legislative and executive activities" (ICMA 1983, 24). The council-manager plan (and its analogue at the county level) is unique in that it is the only unitary form of government in which all the powers of the municipal corporation rest within the council. The community in which the plan is operating is represented by the council which, in turn, often delegates policy formulation to the manager.

This reformed structure is unlike those structures generally implied when discussions of democracy take place in the United States. This reformed system lacks separation of power, lacks multiple access points, and lacks the checks and balances described in the Constitution and the *Federalist Papers*. Administrators operating in reformed city governments function in a system where both policy making and policy execution are contained in one body --

⁸ As Renner and DeSantis (1993) note, 73.1% of mayors in council-manager plans have the full voting power of anyone else on the city council as opposed to only 20.8% of mayors in a mayor-council system. Additionally, only 12.1% of mayors in council-manager systems have veto power compared with 56.1% in mayor-council systems. These statistics indicate that mayors in a council-manager structure are not the chief executives that we normally see in governors and presidents.

unlike their state and federal counterparts. Therefore, a certain degree of sensitivity must be used when discussing the "role" of the public administrator.

Contemporary Concerns

March and Olsen write, "the efforts to reform political institutions are often unsuccessful in accomplishing precisely what was intended" (1989, 53). The implications of reform are broader than the immediate goals. There will be unintended effects, or "spillover" in economic parlance, that are unexpected or unanticipated. As Judith Gruber notes, "reforms aimed at realizing one value may impair our ability to realize others" (1994, 8). This is precisely what has happened in local government reform.

The literature that focuses on structure provides a lens with which to view the implications of reform beyond the particularistic, narrow, problem solving goals articulated by reformers. Most recently, Ronald Moe has had much to say on the subject.

In *The "Reinventing Government" Exercise: Misinterpreting the Problem, Misjudging the Consequences*, Moe explores the implications of the Gore Report (a.k.a. the National Performance Review) and the Reinventing Government movement (a la David Osborne and Ted Gaebler) on traditional public administration values and the consequences likely to



follow if the philosophy of the *Gore Report* and its specific recommendations are implemented (Moe 1994, 111). Moe's broad claim in this article is that there is little theoretical discussion in the scholarly literature regarding current reform efforts beyond the desirability of the immediate recommendations (111). (Here he is specifically referring to the "Reinventing Government" movement.) That is, an examination should take place regarding what theory underpins the recommendations and what relevance the underlying theory has concerning the traditional value systems embraced by government. Without a clear understanding of the theory that motivates the recommendations, Moe argues, although the recommendations may be desirable, they may lead to very different and contradictory ends from those proposed.

Unwritten assumptions about the nature of government underpin reform recommendations. For instance, in the current reform effort, government for all practical purposes is viewed as a private business. In fact, the *Report* treats government administration as private administration and shifts basic managerial values from what Osborne and Gaebler call "bureaucratic government" toward "entrepreneurial government." Implicit here, and in the *Report*, is the notion that public and private administration are the same - an idea that has largely been devalued over the past five

decades at least by the scholarly literature in the field of public administration. According to the *Report*, "[t]hat's how GE did it; that's how we must do it as well" (1993, 68).

Some of the principles of this new, reinvented, "entrepreneurial government" are that this new government is competitive and customer driven (Moe 1994, 112). Clearly, these are principles drawn from the private sector. Furthermore, Moe contends that there are four premises on which this new paradigm rests. Two are important for this study.

1. The federal government and the private sector are similar in their essentials and respond similarly to management incentives and processes.
2. Federal government agencies should be viewed as entrepreneurial bodies which function best in a competitive market environment.

Although bringing these facts to our attention is enlightening and instructive, Moe's important contribution for this study lies in his statement that the adoption of this paradigm⁹ lacks any critical discussion and has thus

⁹ The use of the term "paradigm" is Moe's choice. An important point to consider is whether this change in values is indeed a paradigm shift as Moe contends. According to T.S. Kuhn (1970), a paradigm can be defined in two ways. First, paradigms are defined as the entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques ... shared by members of a given community (175). In the second and more ephemeral definition, paradigms denote a set of instructions (mostly unwritten) that one can employ as models or examples to replace explicit rules as a basis for solving remaining puzzles (175). The second definition seems more appropriate in Moe's example. An analogue to the second definition is a petri dish where

far been left out of the scholarly literature (1994, 112). Moe is concerned over what this adoption could mean to "American theory of government and to public administration as a discipline" (112). Moe refers here to both the principles of separation of powers and the nondelegation of governmental functions to private parties doctrine. As is clear from both a theoretical and practical perspective, private administration does not embrace separation of powers as an organizational criterion¹⁰, thus normally, in private management circles, having to respond to this issue fails to be a concern.

As Moe appropriately notes, the Gore Report represents a departure from past reform efforts at the federal level.

According to Moe:

earlier organizational management studies, principally the Brownlow Committee Report (1937), first Hoover Commission Report (1949), and Ash Council Report (1971), all emphasized the need for democratic accountability of departmental and agency officers to the President and his central management agencies and through these institutions to the Congress (1994, 112).

essential nourishment can be found for the development and foundation of new ideas -- a nourishment in which only certain kinds of knowledge can grow. A paradigm helps to guide expectations and predictions about the world. If, indeed, a paradigm shift is taking place with the adoption of the "reinventing government" reforms, then a very radical change is taking place in government as a result and the foundations of American government need to be seriously questioned.

¹⁰ Neither does the council-manager plan.

Government, according to Moe, is different from the private sector. "The basis for the distinctive character of the governmental and private sectors was to be found in legal theory, not economic or sociological theories" (112).

Implied here is that what works for the private sector may work for the public sector in a very narrow way; however, there are other issues (perhaps more important issues, this study argues) such as accountability, representativeness, separation of powers, and checks and balances that are at stake.

The point of this article for this study is that the "Reinventing Government" reform effort is grounded in precisely the foundation of the municipal reform effort -- private management principles. Had Moe been around during the early twentieth century as the astute observer that he is, this article could have been used virtually verbatim to describe identical concerns. As of this writing, we do not know to what extent the principles described in the Gore Report will be utilized. However, the municipal reform effort fundamentally changed the municipal landscape at the start of this century and similar changes could be realized again at the federal level unless we pay attention to current reform efforts.



B. Normative Role of the Public Administrator

The literature concerning the role of the public administrator is vast. This review does not purport to examine this area in its entirety; instead, it seeks to sketch several examples which represent a range of views on this issue. Each normative prescription is premised on a certain understanding of government. Each normative role reflects a broad understanding of democratic principles. The point of this sketch is to show how some of these prescriptions for administrators fail to reflect the realities of the various levels of government. That is, prescriptions quite suitable at one level may not apply at another.

Unfortunately, some of this literature seems to bear little reflection of life at the local level, or at the very least, is off the mark concerning the everyday events of local government. Interestingly, the literature that most reflects the reality found in the results of this dissertation has been the same literature that has been rejected and, at some levels, discredited over the past fifty years. Other literature is found to be inadequate to guide administrative action in many instances.¹¹

¹¹ For a contemporary commentary on this subject see Charles J. Fox and Hugh Miller, *Postmodern Public Administration*, p. 14, note 1.

This section will focus on several examples including: the Progressive notions of the role of the public administrator, the New Public Administration movement, John Rohr's ideas, and finally, Thomas Barth's study of the role of federal public administrators.

The Progressives - Machine Metaphor

The normative orthodoxy associated with the Progressives and further carried out during the New Deal is nicely summarized by Donald Warwick. Warwick notes:

The basic tenet of this orthodoxy is that efficiency requires a clean line of authority from top to bottom in an organization. The central responsibility of the superior is the faithful implementation of policy directives sent from above and accountability to his own superiors; the key responsibility of the subordinate is obedience (1975, 69).

This role reflects the classic machine metaphor put forth by a number of scholars including Max Weber, Frederick Taylor (and the entire Scientific Management movement), Luther Gulick, and Woodrow Wilson, which further reflects the tightly embraced notions that politics should be separated from administration AND public administration was the same as private administration. Here, the normative role of the public administrator would involve simply, in Woodrow Wilson's words, "the detailed and systematic execution of

public law" (1887, 19). Under this charge, according to Fox and Miller,

... bureaucrats qua bureaucrats are not to have wills of their own, although they may participate in will formation through delimited political activity (i.e., by voting). Bureaucrats are to shed their role in will formation once they pass through the doors of their bureaus. There, in return for security, they are to be functionaries carrying out legitimated commands from each level of superordination... (1995, 22).

The common objective of this period was to achieve greater efficiency in public-sector outcomes. This, reformers believed, would serve the related goal of enhancing democracy by making existing resources go around as far as possible with the least waste.

Luther Gulick's work is indicative of this line of thought and continues to have an influence on public administration. As Brian Fry notes, "if there is a single person who personifies public administration [during the Progressive era] in the United States, it is Luther Gulick" (1989, 73). Gulick's views are particularly appropriate for this study because of the importance he placed on structural reform with a particular emphasis placed on the enhancement of executive power (73).¹²

¹² One element of Gulick's philosophy fails to reflect the feelings of his contemporaries; that is, Gulick rejects the common contention that politics can be separated from administration. Gulick, instead, believed that we should utilize the administrator's expertise in matters of both administration and public policy.

For Gulick, and his contemporaries, the administrator's role is "to understand and coordinate public policy and interpret policy directives to the operating services, but with the unquestioned loyalty to the decisions of elected officials" (Fry 1989, 81). Equally important for Gulick (and for this study), the administrator does not take a policy advocacy position -- administrators must remain value-neutral. With this in mind, the normative role of the public administrator during this period is simply the implementation of a superior's request, using the most efficient method possible. Little latitude is allowed for surveying the normative implications of a given action.

New Public Administration - Social Equity Values

An early critique and potential bridge between the Progressives and New Public Administration came from Dwight Waldo and Norton Long. These authors represent the Administration-as-Politics approach that denies politics can be separated from administration. Equally important, this school of thought argues that public administration differs from its private counterpart because of the political environment in which public administration takes place.

Long writes that administrators are steeped in politics. In "Power and Administration," he argues that "the bureaucracy under the American political system has a

large share of responsibility for the public promotion of policy and even more in organizing the political basis for its survival and growth" (1949, 181). Furthermore, Long notes that "the bureaucracy is recognized by all interested groups as a major channel of representation to such an extent that Congress rightly feels the competition of a rival" (181). This perspective is clearly at odds with Progressive beliefs and would later serve as a foundation for new normative theories of public administration.

In *The Administrative State*, Waldo continued to discredit the entrenched politics/administration dichotomy by casting doubt on the major principles of public administration left from the Progressive movement (1948, 199). Waldo doubted both the "possibility and the desirability" of separating politics from administration (200). Unfortunately, Long and Waldo failed to produce an alternative theory on their own that would replace the conventional wisdom of the period. Later, the New Public Administration movement would build on their works but go beyond mere criticism to develop a normative theory of its own.

Materializing from the Minnowbrook Conference in September of 1968, the New Public Administration movement presented a normative perspective for public administration and the public administrator drastically different from that

of the Progressive movement. Going beyond questions of efficiency and economy, the New Public Administration movement sought to use public administration as a tool to achieve social equity.

Briefly, the New Public Administration movement contends that our pluralistic system of governance systematically discriminates in favor of established bureaucracies ("iron triangles") at the expense of minority interests who lack political and financial support to stake a claim within this milieu (Frederickson 1971, 311). This situation is, according to New Public Administration, intolerable and is ultimately a threat to long-term political stability. According to George Frederickson, "a Public Administration which fails to work for changes which try to redress the deprivation of minorities will likely be ... used to repress those minorities" (311).

With this foundation accepted as fact by those espousing this orthodoxy, the New Public Administration movement contends that administrators are not, and should not be, neutral¹³ (in contradiction to the classic notions of public administration) and that they should actively

¹³ The New Public Administration movement also maintains that there is no evidence of a politics/administration dichotomy. This movement recognizes that administrators are actively engaged with both policy formulation and policy execution.

engage in change. That is, administrators should pursue actions that attempt to redress policies and structures that inhibit social equity. In Frederickson's words, "New Public Administration seeks not only to carry out legislative mandates as efficiently and economically as possible, but to both influence and execute policies which more generally improve life for all" (1971, 314). The normative role, therefore, is "outright policy advocacy" on the part of the administrator.

This normative prescription requires an administrator to take a proactive stance in many instances. If there are variations in equity, they should always be in the direction of more services to the disadvantaged. On this dimension, this perspective is not unlike the requirements of Rohr's constitutional subordinate autonomy. Each require a thoughtful administrator prepared to make a statement and perhaps take a stance based on an underlying moral principle that may be in conflict with the position stated by one's superiors.

Rohr's Normative Theory - Balance Wheel Metaphor

In *To Run A Constitution*, Rohr's normative constitutional theory of public administration maintains:

[t]he role of the Public Administration is to fulfill the objective of the oath of office: to uphold the Constitution of the United States.

This means that administrators should use their discretionary power in order to maintain the constitutional balance of powers in support of individual rights (1986, 181).

The exercise of this role is to take place within the context of subordination to the three branches of government. Rohr again notes,

[t]he Public Administration neither constitutes nor heads any branch of government, but is subordinate to all three of them. Like Congress, president, and courts, the Public Administration makes its distinctive contribution in a manner that is consistent with its peculiar place, which is one of subordination (182).

This "constitutional subordinate autonomy" is the focus of Rohr's balance wheel metaphor. A balance wheel acts as a regulating and stabilizing force. In the case of a watch or clock, a balance wheel regulates the motion of the time piece. This role is critical for both a watch and for public administration because, in the case of public administration, it serves to preserve both the instrumental character of public administration and the autonomy necessary for professionalism (183).

However, what does this role, grounded in the Constitution, mean for Rohr in practice? Rohr admits that public administrators usually act out this role more as a matter of "fact" than as a "matter of constitutional principle" (1986, 182). Administrators are more often caught up with the pressing concerns of organizational

survival than with the lofty pursuits of political theorists. The normative theory that Rohr espouses is, according to Rohr, "intended to encourage administrators ... to think about administrative behavior in constitutional terms" (182-183). According to Rohr, by grounding administrative roles in constitutional terms we can "transform erstwhile lackeys, leakers, obstructionists, and whistle blowers into administrative statesman" (183). If administrators fail to think and behave in constitutional terms, they will have a myopic view of their role in the governance process. What this role does NOT do, however, is permit administrators to pursue their own personal policy preferences. Revisiting the Constitution provides a framework for action and behavior consistent with democratic principles.

This normative role requires a very thoughtful administrator - there is no straightforward formula to follow. The public administrator is no longer required to be the obedient child of elected and appointed superiors. As David K. Hart notes, "because of their oath of office, pledging fidelity to the Constitution, public administrators acknowledge the responsibility to be active, independent participants in [governance]" (1987, 348). It requires that the administrator determine the public interest against the broad backdrop of Constitutional principle. As Rohr notes,

"[t]he Constitution transcends a given tax policy, a weapons system, and food stamps. It cannot be confined to any such particulars" (1986, 183).

Barth's Findings

In response to Rohr's constitutional charge, Thomas Barth examines the role this normative theory has for practicing public administrators. Barth argues that the "tensions inherent in serving multiple constitutional masters is most evident at the highest political appointments in the federal government" (1991, 108). He continues, "the more difficult, and perhaps more useful question, is how the views of the more average mid-level public administrator relate to constitutional autonomy" (108). This is also a major question for this dissertation.

Barth seeks to determine the extent to which Rohr's normative theory bears on practicing public administrators. First, he examines written information on three high-level public administrators (Gifford Pinchot, Joseph Califano, and James Landis) for evidence of Rohr's balancing role. Second, Barth uses personal interviews with a number of mid-level public administrators representing a "cross-

section"¹⁴ of the federal government (1991, 13). During these interviews Barth asked questions concerning what guides their actions and what are the implications of Rohr's constitutional theory for each of them (16-17).

Responses of mid-level administrators from these various agencies showed that Rohr's idea of subordinate autonomy, while rarely articulated by administrators, was a relevant theme in their day-to-day lives. Dominant responses to Barth's questions regarding the proper role of administrators included serving the President, checking the President, representing the people, promoting the interests of the agency, and managing the constitutional process. The themes inherent here indicate that administrators do not consider themselves mere automatons -- acting only as their superiors instruct. Instead, they maintain a "heads up" approach when participating in the policy process, one that is guided by senses tuned to a much broader frequency than simply the demands of those higher in the organizational chart.

Barth's respondents indicated that, "an important aspect of the civil servant's role is the responsibility to

¹⁴ This "cross-section" includes the Environmental Protection Agency, Family Support Administration, Department of Justice, General Accounting Office, Social Security Administration, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Agriculture, Office of Management and Budget, and Department of Interior.

confront the political leadership and ground his or her thinking in the 'real world'" (1991, 111). Constitutional subordinate autonomy is expressed here through restrained argument and questioning of superior's actions. Career civil servants noted that they have the sometimes competing responsibility to check or slow the pursuit of [the president's] agenda when in their judgement it is 'going too far' or too fast" (115). The legitimacy for this role radiates from several rationales, including expertise and a balancing perspective, possibly because of the civil servant's protected position in the agency (115). They feel a need to balance directives from political appointees with the integrity of the institution and the individual rights of the employees (117).

Barth's respondents felt that they were "stewards of the taxpayers, ensuring that public funds are not wasted or misused..." (Barth 1991, 121). In their exercise of autonomy in support of individual rights they often struggled between "going by the book" or bending the rules to make a policy reasonable or fair (125). Many of Barth's respondents believed that executive branch priorities were in conflict with the fair application of statutes to individuals in particular cases (126).

Other administrators Barth interviewed felt that their primary allegiance was to their administrative agency,

specifically, the Secretary of the agency. They were often willing to manipulate the "system" to bring critical issues to the forefront when a department's best interests were not being served. To them, administrative action demonstrated that rather than viewing the agency as some independent entity with its own agenda, administrators anchored their actions in the agency's statutory mandate and were willing to press this mandate when other actions attempted to dilute that charge.

Finally, administrators in Barth's study often saw their role as "managers of a legitimizing process" (Barth 1991, 134). They felt that they were responsible for building consensus by balancing all the relevant public and private interests on each issue (134). In many instances if an administrator had the opportunity to improve a proposed action or to bring to light questionable behavior on the part of a superior, they believed it was their duty to do so in order to safeguard the integrity of the process. They viewed themselves as constitutional officers guarding the open and fair disbursement of the public dollar and public trust. The recognition of this fact grounds administrators in their quest for legitimacy.

Rohr's work adds richness and legitimacy to the role of public administrators operating in a system of separation of powers. Barth, then, explores whether warm-blooded

administrators at the federal level function this way. He found that, although not necessarily aware of it, administrators at the federal level are functional components of the balance wheel.

Relevancy of the Normative Prescriptions For Local Government

The Progressive normative prescription fits best with the realities of local government where the principles of reform have been embraced in form and spirit. These normative theorists want administrators to be efficient and effective in the provision of service - just like their private counterparts. It so happens that local government's council-manager plan is structured like the private sector AND administrators feel that they are simply service providers. Thus, this prescription fits well.

The normative theory of New Public Administration has the opportunity to work in the local government arena because it is not premised on the structural conditions of the government environment. This theory calls for individual administrators to act in ways that are based on egalitarian principles concerned with bringing about a more equitable distribution of public benefits. Unfortunately, for a number of reasons, this initiative never fully blossomed (Pops and Pavlak 1991, 16). There are a number of

important questions left unanswered. For example, why choose the value of social equity? There are many other constitutional values equally deserving such as justice, individuality, and freedom. Efficiency is also a value that organizations ignore at their peril. Furthermore, the decision by unelected administrators to redistribute resources runs counter to democratic principles and becomes problematic when bureaucrats are tasked with this role. Finally, elected representatives established the current distribution of goods and services in society as, in theory, a reflection of citizen interest. What right do unelected administrators have to overturn the wishes of elected representatives? For these and other reasons the New Public Administration movement has largely been discredited and therefore fails to serve as a concrete basis for action for administrators at any level.

Rohr's normative theory is the least clear of the three in providing guidance for local government administrators. IF balancing is relied upon as a tool for developing prudent public policy AND in the council-manager plan there are no branches to balance, THEN this prescription fails when an administrator is faced with making complex decisions in an atmosphere of conflict. In addition, constitutional values clearly present the opportunity to transcend levels of

government. Whether they actually serve as a basis for action for local public administrators is less clear.

These three perspectives represent a range of approaches in understanding the normative role of the public administrator. From the machine metaphor of the Progressive movement where efficiency was the catchphrase, to the new challenge of enhancing social equity and the commitment to change espoused by New Public Administration, to the latest constitutional subordinate autonomy described by John Rohr, each requires an administrator to act within our governmental system in a different way. Each approach rests on a different premise. The normative role described by the Progressives is most reflected by this study's research findings perhaps because of the current view of local government as a business founded in the corporate model.

If these prescriptions fail to provide guidance (or provide guidance that citizens find acceptable), then what guides an administrator at the local level? Here lies the challenge of this study.

Conclusion

James Q. Wilson in his book, *Bureaucracy*, makes clear the idea that structure matters. Wilson offered an ideal example that serves to illuminate this idea. He compared the United State's Occupational Safety and Health

Administration (OSHA) with its counterpart in Sweden, the ASV (the *Arbetarskyddsverket*, or Worker Protection Board), developing the idea that the United State's polycentric system serves to influence bureaucratic behavior in a way that Sweden's monocentric, parliamentary system does not. It is very important to note that these are the identical characteristics of the comparisons being made between the federal and local forms of government in this study.

In the United States, OSHA inspectors go "by the book." When inspectors find a violation of a rule they are inclined to issue a citation or a fine which, it is hoped and expected, will motivate a repair or establish a new, safer, method or workplace procedure. If violations in a given company or organization fail to be corrected within a specified number of days, a fine is certainly imposed or the fine originally levied is increased. OSHA inspectors consult a "lengthy" field manual that details each step of the inspection and sanction process.

On the other hand, in Sweden, inspectors for the ASV are "expected to use their discretion and not go by the book" (Wilson 1989, 296). There really is no book to go by. The procedures inspectors are expected to follow are outlined in a six-page pamphlet. Inspectors in Sweden often arrive at a factory only after giving the employer advance notice of the inspection. While on site, inspectors spend

most of their time advising employers on how to improve conditions rather than compiling data, examining the rule and procedure book, and writing citations. If violations are found, the inspector typically makes an oral recommendation on how to improve conditions. And, according to Wilson, "only occasionally will he or she issue a written notice" (296). Fines are rarely imposed and usually levied only after repeated failure to correct past violations. In spite of this loose regulatory structure, the "informal and cooperative Swedish system produces a level of compliance with safety and health rules that was as high or higher than that achieved by the formal and punitive American system" (296).¹⁵

Wilson contends that the differences in these two approaches are the result of structural differences between the governments of the United States and Sweden. Wilson argues that nations with conciliatory regulatory policies (that is flexible, nonpunitive, or accommodationist) have parliamentary style governments. Nations that enforce strict regulatory compliance, supported by rigorous enforcement policies and incentive systems supported by

¹⁵ Wilson's example was gleaned from a study conducted by Steven Kelman, *Regulating America, Regulating Sweden* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1981).

penalties are found in governmental systems that embrace multiple access points and polycentric power.

Why is this so? As Wilson notes, "[t]he puzzle disappears when we realize what political incentives are created by the way in which political authority is organized" (1989, 297). As in the council-manager system, a parliamentary system concentrates virtually all political authority in one institution. And, perhaps most importantly, the political authority for making AND implementing public policy is concentrated in "one set of hands."

In a parliamentary system, if those individuals or interests groups who are bearing the burden of regulation are dissatisfied with the outcomes, there is little room for political end-runs. In Wilson's terms, "if authority is concentrated, the incentives to organize politically are weakened" (1989, 298). These regulated parties cannot find a receptive or supportive ear in another branch of government or on another legislative committee that might be sympathetic to their cause. An agency or administrator is less likely to be placed under conflicting pressures from a variety of sources. Therefore, he or she does not have to resort to a complicated rule book for guidance when political pressure becomes intense.

In a polycentric system where multiple access points are the norm, an agency (and therefore an individual administrator) can be pulled in multiple directions. As Wilson notes, "these institutional arrangements [polycentric power and multiple access points] contribute to the adversarial nature of bureaucratic politics in this country" (1989, 299). All policies under consideration and even after implementation are continuously contested in this highly fragmented system. Administrators are pressured on enforcement strategies from a number of groups. It is simply more convenient and simpler for an administrator to return to standard bureaucratic behaviors or dysfunctions (e.g., Robert Merton's "goal displacement" in the previous example) and find solace in the rule book.

In conclusion, although reform is often aimed at repairing a specific set of faults, the resulting change has broader implications than a simple modification in structure. Changes in government structure influence more than processes or products alone. The structural reforms aimed at managerial efficiency, for instance, can change access, participation, accountability, and responsiveness. The reforms at the local level have been so pervasive that changes in the above factors were bound to occur. These changes set local government administrators apart from their federal and state counterparts. Therefore, these unique

professionals, and their unique environment, should be considered differently when contemporary normative prescriptions are dispensed or, perhaps, set aside.

III.

RESEARCH DESIGN

In the study of organization, the operative employee must be at the focus of attention, for the success of the structure will be judged by his performance within it. Insight into the structure and function of an organization can best be gained by analyzing the manner in which the decisions and behavior of such employees are influenced within and by the organization.

- Herbert A. Simon

This chapter discusses the aspects of the research design most important for understanding the study. Toward this end, the chapter will describe the rationale for the research design, the specific procedures used, and an evaluation of the design.

Research Design Rationale

This study seeks to describe the attitudes and potential behaviors of senior-level (career) local government administrators and to suggest tentative explanations for their responses by focusing on the influence of the form of government in which they work. As Chapter Two noted, little empirical work has been done to

examine Rohr's normative arguments, especially at the local level. This research, therefore, embraces elements of a descriptive study, seeking ways to understand what Rohr's "balance-wheel" and "constitutional subordinate autonomy" might mean in practice. The study's primary purpose is to end, rather than begin, with clearer, more specific hypotheses regarding Rohr's ideas. There is, in addition, a causal proposition underlying the study: senior career officials working in council-manager governments will be less likely to operate with notions of their balancing responsibilities than will senior career officials in mayor-council cities. Therefore, a secondary purpose of this study is explanatory -- to test this prediction.

The study is built largely on the elements of survey research. Robert Yin offers three conditions which help the researcher determine the most appropriate research method for a given study: 1) the type of research question posed, 2) the extent of control an investigator has over actual behavioral events, and 3) the degree of focus on contemporary as opposed to historical events (1989, 16-17). According to Yin, the responses to these conditions should help determine the most appropriate research strategy. (See Table 3.1.)

Table 3.1 Relevant Situations For Different Research Strategies

Strategy	Form of Research Question	Requires Control Over Behavioral Events?	Focuses on Contemporary Events?
Experiment	how, why	yes	yes
Survey	who, what, * where, how many, how much	no	yes
Archival analysis	who, what, * where, how many, how much	no	yes/no
History	how, why	no	no
Case Study	how, why	no	yes

* "What" questions, when asked as part of an exploratory study, pertain to all five strategies (Yin 1989, 17).

In an effort to determine the most appropriate design, Yin's conditions must be considered in light of the study's purposes and the research questions posed. First, a survey is easily constructed to count the "whats," whereas a case study would be neither efficient nor advantageous when studying large numbers of administrators.¹ The key for

¹ As Yin notes, the case study's strength is dealing with "operational links [that] need to be traced over time" (1989, 18). Although a case study can report frequencies, when numerous individuals are interviewed a survey is a more efficient (in terms of time required to conduct it) when

this study is the desire to describe an administrator's environment and reach tentative conclusions about what guides their responses to various struggles. In order to do this, research questions were characterized by "what," "how many," and "how much" -- concepts that are more efficiently explored by a survey.

Second, this project can control neither an administrator's environment nor the problems he or she encounters (for Yin these are called "behavioral events"). As in much of social science, the questions of interest here cannot be addressed in a laboratory setting where the researcher directly manipulates the relevant variables. Analogues to such direct controls, though, were incorporated into the research design where possible.

Finally, in an effort to satisfy Yin's third condition, the survey is preferred in examining *contemporary* events when behaviors and attitudes cannot (or need not) be manipulated. This study enjoyed the luxury of querying currently employed administrators about recent or near-recent events using direct observation through face-to-face interviews. This format allowed probing questions when initial responses were less than clear, which had the advantage of enriching the data.

enumeration is the goal.

Although features of several research strategies address the goals of this study, on the whole, a survey design seems most appropriate because answers to Yin's queries most neatly dovetail with the survey design.

Pilot Study and Instrumentation

Pilot interviews were conducted prior to finalizing the survey instrument and the sample in order to: 1) develop and adapt the questionnaire used for interviewing; and 2) verify, or potentially reconceptualize, the sample of administrators to be interviewed.

Thomas Barth developed the original instrument used here. As Chapter Two explained, Barth studied the attitudes and self-reported behavior of senior-level federal government administrators for the purposes of exploring Rohr's concept of balancing. The pilot study used here further refined Barth's instrument and adapted it for use with local government administrators. The instrument omitted questions that were found to be redundant or unnecessary and added questions that would assist in the development of the study's hypothesis. This study initially hypothesized that administrators in council-manager forms of government have little opportunity to balance because they work in monocentric systems. Therefore, with this notion motivating the study, questions about understanding Rohr's

balance-wheel in a local government environment were constructed and added to the questionnaire. For example, if the Constitution serves as a guide for federal administrators, and there is no local government "Constitution" as such (local charters embrace no moral or normative component), an important element of the new instrument needed to be designed around how to understand guidance, and particularly those elements that provide guidance, at the local level (e.g., does the Constitution continue to provide guidance for administrators although it must be viewed through three levels of government?).

In the revised survey instrument, seven questions were designed to investigate these motivating concerns. Each of these primary questions had a set of associated "sub-questions" or follow-up questions. The primary questions became "themes" for the purpose of analysis and discussion. (See Table 3.4 for a list of these themes.)

The pilot interviews were conducted with two senior-level administrators in the town of Blacksburg, Virginia, using one parks and recreation official and one police official (both administrators worked in a council-manager form of government). These individuals were contacted at least one week prior to the interview and informed of the nature and scope of the interview process. Questions used for the two pilot interviews came from the redesigned survey

instrument described earlier. Each pilot interview was taped and transcribed.

Interviewing the parks and recreation official was productive (i.e., various interview techniques were developed and different phraseology was used to clarify the instrument) and produced slight modifications in the survey instrument. One original question was changed because of a perceived redundancy. Specifically, the original question asked, "were there times in your career when you had discretion in the formulation or the implementation of a policy or program?" The official found the underscored terms to be too similar. It appears that local government administrators are involved, concurrently, with both formulation and implementation, often on the same policy or program. The terms were combined into the question: "Were there times in your career when you had discretion while working on a policy or program?"

The interview with the police official, however, was unsuccessful in terms of the quality of responses but productive in terms of the lessons learned. The officer's responses during this interview were, it appeared, motivated largely by a rule driven, top-down framework, resulting in little illumination of the study's motivating propositions. Illustrative responses by this official included her opinion that there was little discretion available to administrators

working in the department because most behavior was already prescribed by law and policy manuals. Guidance, therefore, was found only in "what the chief wants" and what was contained in the rule book. Information offered by this type of official would decidedly lack the richness necessary to explore Rohr's balance-wheel metaphor and, thus, police personnel were dropped as potential sources of information for this study.²

The Sample

Broadly, the study relied on a purposive, multi-stage cluster sampling strategy. Using this approach, the investigator sampled, first, states, then cities within the state, then agencies within cities, and, finally, administrators, to narrow the pool of possible interviewees. In the end, individual respondents were selected for interviews so that, based on the study's motivating proposition, one could see if variations in the independent variable (form of government) could be linked to variations in the dependent variable (individual responses to

² This response characteristic was, perhaps, the result of the individual rather than the task environment of policing. Other attempts to interview police personnel were unsuccessful. This type of response need not mean police personnel do not "balance." Future research at the local level might explore these types of responses in light of Rohr's normative theories.

questions). Additionally, this process reduced the likelihood of alternative explanations for the study's results by systematically controlling for extraneous variables.

The tentative prediction in this study was that form of government would influence self-reported administrative behavior. That is, administrators working in structures with multiple centers of power -- mayor-council systems -- were expected to balance governmental interests as Rohr's normative argument suggests (and Barth's empirical evidence at the federal level supports), while administrators working in monocentric systems -- council-manager systems -- would have few opportunities for balancing of the kind Rohr discusses.

Administrators interviewed for this study came wholly from a single state. The decision to focus on a single state was made because: 1) it enabled control of regional variables so that any variation in responses could not be attributed to differences in state or regional political culture,³ and 2) it controlled for potential differences

³ The political culture of South Carolina is classified as largely "traditionalistic." According to Elazar, like its 'moralistic' counterpart, the traditionalistic community accepts government as a positive force, although that force is limited to maintaining the existing social order. Bureaucracy is generally confined to ministerial functions under the aegis of the established powerholders (1984, 118).

resulting from state-mandated forms of government. In this "most similar systems" approach, the number of shared characteristics sought in the sample is maximized and the number of disparate characteristics minimized so that differences in responses can be attributed to the disparate characteristics -- here, form of local government (Przeworski and Teune 1970, 33). The idea is to narrow the possible range of plausible explanations for any difference in self-reported behavior so that, with more confidence, any differences in the dependent variable can be attributed to variation in the independent variable(s).

The state of South Carolina was chosen: 1) because the balance of representation between mayor-council and council-manager forms of government there approached that of the nation (59.1% and 35.5% respectively in the state versus 44.3% and 47.7% in the nation), and 2) because the researcher had professional contacts in the state which facilitated access to senior-level local government administrators.

According to the International City Management Association (ICMA), there are ninety-three incorporated municipalities in South Carolina (both members and non-members of the Association) with populations above 1,000. Of those, there are thirty-four council-manager cities and fifty-nine mayor-council cities. However, cities with

populations above 5,000 are more evenly distributed with regard to government structure. Of the fifty-four cities with populations above 5,000, twenty-six (48 percent) are council-manager, with the remaining twenty-eight (52 percent) being mayor-council.

The 1993 *ICMA Municipal Yearbook* was chosen to tap the variable of "government form" because it is the definitive guide to local government structure. (An examination of two other relevant resources, the *City/County Data Book* and *U.S. Census Reports*, indicated that each acquires its information on government structure from the *Municipal Yearbook* published by the ICMA.) It is interesting and important to note that the ICMA categorizes municipalities based upon the degree of separation of powers. As Anderson writes,

The mayor-council communities have an *elected* chief executive. In delegating executive power to the city manager, the council-manager cities have an *appointed* chief executive. Both positions have limited roles. However, the limitations are the results of differences in the structure of their local governments. If politics is the science of "who gets what, when, and how," the structure of local government strongly influences "who does what, when, and how" [emphasis in original] (1989, 25).

In short, cities and towns were classified depending upon whether their government's structure embraced a unitary power structure consolidated within the council (council-manager) or whether power was divided, or separated, between the council and the mayor (mayor-council). The latter



closely resembles the classic federal and state notions of separation of powers and is the chief independent variable for this study.

The Municipal Association of South Carolina's 1994 *Directory and Products/Services Guide* was used as an additional source of local government information. Efforts to cross-check or triangulate the variable "government form" revealed discrepancies between the *Directory* and the *ICMA Yearbook*. Of the original twenty-six council-manager cities, only twenty were confirmed by both sources. In addition, of the original twenty-eight mayor-council governments, only thirteen could be confirmed. Therefore, only thirty-three cities with populations above 5,000 could, with confidence, be placed into one of the two government structure categories.

Other requirements for inclusion in the sample were that selected administrators hold department or agency head responsibilities. Only senior-level administrators in a position to exercise discretion in decision making and in charge of directing a staff were eligible. This position in the organizational chart puts the administrator one level below an elected official or political appointee and makes them responsible, in an administrative sense, for implementing and molding public policy in a given task

environment.⁴ Thus the administrator would be in a position to "balance" interests in the pursuit of public policy.

Furthermore, individual administrators were chosen from specific task areas that were handled in all selected cities and that reflected diverse community functions. According to Karen Hult, the inclusion of differences such as these strengthen the inferences that can be drawn from observation of similar outcomes (1987, 34). That is, if similar results are reported despite differences in task area then the validity of the results is increased. Contrarily, if responses vary according to these differences while other systemic characteristics are held constant (e.g., state political culture, form of government), reported differences can be attributed to those variables that are different (Przeworski and Teune 1970, 32-33). If variations are found along the dimension of task area, then a different set of conclusions may be drawn; in this limited area of interest,

⁴ In three cases, department heads in council-manager governments, according to organizational charts, reported to an assistant city manager rather than directly to a city manager. However, on some issues, these department heads formally reported directly to the city manager. Additionally, in the past, these department heads reported, organizationally, directly to the city manager (i.e., in the past, there was no assistant city manager). Whether they actually report directly to the city manager is of little concern. The critical feature of each position is that administrators have discretion in both formulation and implementation of public policy.

perhaps task area is the more important variable. Overall, the goal of this type of approach is to retain the internal validity but enhance the reliability and the external validity of such a design (Hult 1987, 33).

Municipal directories indicate that departments of parks and recreation and public works met the criterion of consistent task area across all sampled cities. These departments are also consistent with the second criterion of diverse community functions by virtue of their differing technical environments, constituents served or scope of service provided, and sizes.⁵ First, public works is a scientifically-oriented field of civil engineering, which relies on highly technical approaches to many problems (e.g., water treatment, bridge construction, and recycling). This environment dictates to public works officials a particular decision making approach: available technology often prescribes responses because the organization is rewarded for effective and efficient control of their production systems (Scott and Meyer 1991, 122-128). For example, as more efficient methods of road construction

⁵ For a more thorough discussion of an organization's technical environment, see, for example, W. Richard Scott and John W. Meyer, "The Organization of Societal Sectors: Propositions and Early Evidence." In *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, eds. Walter W. Powell and Paul J. DiMaggio, 108-140. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991.

evolve, the new technology often drives decision making. The use of recycled rubber in the mixture of highway paving materials has increased road surface life due to the newer, more flexible road material. As a result of using this new product, the impact of temperature on road wear is lessened because the road surface can expand and contract with the seasons without cracking or developing what are known as "alligator marks." Administrators allow science to influence decision making in this example because the new materials and methods may save the taxpayer money by reduced construction and maintenance costs, or these innovations may simply increase the quality of service.

Contrarily, there is a lower or limited level of technology associated with recreation.⁶ Technology seems to have a limited role in the development of recreation programs for baseball, tennis, or swimming. The agency responds more to professional belief systems that define how a given program operates than to technology. Decisions in recreation are often based on need, interest, or what the city can afford given the concerns of multiple, competing citizen groups.

⁶ Arguably, the technology in recreation is not limited, just different. In either case, the purpose of choosing these departments is just that -- they are different.

Second, public works services are provided to all residents without consideration of citizen demand or a constituent's interest. That is, clean water, paved streets, stop signs, and garbage collection are received by all citizens regardless of income, interest, or age.⁷ The constituency for public works consists of the entire city. Recreation, on the other hand, primarily serves a particular segment of the population - citizens who choose to recreate. Not all citizens are directly served by a parks and recreation department; not all citizens choose to (or are able to) recreate.

Third, public works is generally the largest department in a city in terms of both budget and personnel. Recreation departments are generally the smallest department in terms of personnel; recreation is often a seasonal department, with drastic expansion during the summer months and some level of contraction during the winter. Additionally, at least according to recreation administrators, recreation departments often receive the smallest (and most expendable) budgets.

⁷ Some segments of the population will often receive different quantities and qualities of these services. This is not an important factor for this study because the critical factor is simply that the tasks of and the demands on public works and recreation departments are different.

The sample narrowed as further examination of municipal government information determined which cities with the confirmed government structures had units responsible for each of the two task areas. Upon review, it was clear that direct one-to-one comparisons could not be made for all departments in all cities. Ten mayor-council and twelve council-manager communities had both public works and recreation departments. However, two director of recreation positions were vacant in the council-manager cities. This left ten council-manager cities that had "interviewable" public works and recreation directors.

At this stage, then, ten council-manager and ten mayor-council cities were identified as having public works and recreation directors for direct comparison. The municipal government information also revealed that five of the ten mayor-council governments having public works and recreation departments also had planning departments. Additionally, nine of the ten "interviewable" council-manager cities indicated that they had planning departments as well. Planners in these cities were interviewed wherever possible to further enrich and broaden the data.

Data Collection

In-depth interviewing is the fundamental data collection technique used in the study. The research relied

on a semi-structured survey protocol to gather primarily qualitative data. Generally, and for the purposes of this project, interviewing refers to "[a] conversation between two people in which one person tries to direct the conversation to obtain information for some specific purpose" (Gorden 1992, 2). This definition focuses on information gathering because, as Gorden notes, "without the information gathering function we may have a lecture or a sales pitch but not an interview" (2).

As opposed to a standardized interview, the primary goal of an in-depth interview is to "develop ideas and research hypotheses rather than to gather facts and statistics" (Oppenheim 1992, 67). Facts are not unimportant here. However, this research seeks to shed light on a previously unexplored subject and thus demanded the use of a technique that offers opportunities for both fact finding and idea collection. Although facts were sought (e.g., what percent of administrators found the city council a source of guidance?), the information gathering aspect of the in-depth interview remains critical because it served to enrich the data by allowing the respondent to discuss, at length, his or her thoughts and feelings on a given subject (or many subjects), which assisted the researcher in understanding the respondent's environment. This technique can help guide the researcher through uncharted territory.

The individual interviews were semi-structured. That is, although the encounter between interviewer and respondent was structured using a predetermined protocol and the major aspects of the study were explained in advance, respondents had considerable liberty, through the use of open-ended questions, to express their responses to the questions presented (Nachmias and Nachmias 1987, 237).⁸ In addition, interviews used probing questions, which were often not part of the original protocol, in order to explore more deeply into the experiences of the administrator. (For a copy of the interview instrument, see Appendix A.) For example, one interview question asked, "How much influence does the mayor have in your decisions?" Respondents often answered, "Not much" or, contrarily, "Quite a bit." Probing questions were asked in these instances to expand the respondent's answer and explore the underlying meaning and motivations for responses. In another example, when one respondent was asked how meaningful Rohr's constitutional subordinate autonomy was in his day-to-day administrative life, the respondent answered, "Yea, I think it fits." The in-depth interview, through the use of a probing question (in this case, "How does it fit?"), yielded this response:

⁸ This type of interview is also referred to as a "NonSchedule-Structured" (Nachmias and Nachmias 1987, 237) or "focused" (Yin 1989, 89) interview.

... [it fits] in terms of a confidence level that I might enjoy with the council and the mayor. If I'm enjoying a fairly good relationship with the council and the mayor then I have a lot more influence and a lot more latitude to encroach on even those issues that they might feel strongly [about].

Whether this response is meaningful for Rohr's idea of constitutional subordinate autonomy or not, without the opportunity for using a probing question, the level of detail required for understanding the response would have been lost.

Respondents

Letters explaining the project's purpose, the nature of the questions, guarantees of confidentiality, and requests for interviews were sent to a total of forty-seven administrators (twenty-three administrators in mayor-council cities and twenty-four in council-manager cities) during the first week of December 1994, using names and addresses provided in the *1994 South Carolina Municipal Directory*.⁹ Follow-up phone calls were made to these administrators approximately one week later, confirming receipt of the letter and requesting an interview date. Of these, only one

⁹ Of the original fourteen planners listed in the *Municipal Directory*, seven were found (after phone calls) to be "regional planners" jointly used by both a city (or cities) and a surrounding county (or counties). These administrators failed to meet the original selection criteria and were dropped from the list of potential interviewees.

outright rejection was tendered and one additional person responded, "I'm not an administrator, I just work for the Mayor." It was decided that this latter individual would not be interviewed because of an apparent lack of understanding of his role in the public administration profession, in particular, and in governance, in general.¹⁰ Further phone calls led to the discovery that two additional public works positions were vacant.

During this round of phone calls, interviews were scheduled for the four week period beginning 15 December 1994 and ending 15 January 1995. A total of twenty-one interviews were scheduled for this period with the idea that after these data were collected, further interviews would take place if necessary.¹¹ The first twenty-one respondents were chosen because, in addition to the characteristics previously explained, they worked in different sized cities representing various city populations throughout the state -- large, small (5,000 remains the floor for this study), and medium (see Table 3.2). The purpose of this was to reduce the likelihood that results

¹⁰ As King, Keohane, and Verba note, "[i]f an interview might be interesting but is not a potential observable implication of the theory under consideration, then it will not help in evaluating our theory" (1994, 47).

¹¹ One interview was canceled on the morning of the interview because of a respondent's illness. This left a total of twenty interviews for analysis.

could be accounted for by city size. The information in Table 3.2 indicates that almost equal numbers of mayor-council and council-manager cities were chosen (five and six, respectively). There were, however, (as shown in the "total" columns of Table 3.3) almost twice as many interviewees from council-manager cities (thirteen) than mayor-council cities (seven). As Table 3.3 also indicates, almost equal numbers of public works and recreation officials (ten and seven, respectively) were interviewed along with three planners. Importantly, however, only one of these public works officials was from a mayor-council city.

Table 3.2 Interview Sample

Site	Form*	Population	Task Area
Columbia	CM	98,052	Public Works
Columbia	CM	98,052	Recreation
Columbia	CM	98,052	Planning
Charleston	MC	80,414	Public Works
Charleston	MC	80,414	Recreation
Charleston	MC	80,414	Planning
N. Charleston	MC	70,218	Planning
Greenville	CM	58,282	Public Works
Greenville	CM	58,282	Recreation
Rock Hill	CM	41,643	Public Works
Rock Hill	CM	41,643	Recreation
Aiken	CM	19,872	Public Works
Aiken	CM	19,872	Recreation
N. Augusta	MC	15,351	Recreation
Easley	MC	15,191	Recreation
Newberry	CM	10,542	Public Works
Newberry	CM	10,542	Recreation
York	CM	6,709	Public Works
York	CM	6,709	Recreation
Cheraw	MC	5,505	Recreation

Note. Cities are listed in order of declining population. Columbia is the capital and largest city in the state.
* Form of Government: CM (Council-Manger), MC (Mayor-Council)

Table 3.3 Respondents: Task Area By Form Of Government

Task Area	Form Of Government		TOTAL
	MC	CM	
Public Works	1	6	7
Recreation	4	6	10
Planning	2	1	3
TOTAL	<u>7</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>20</u>

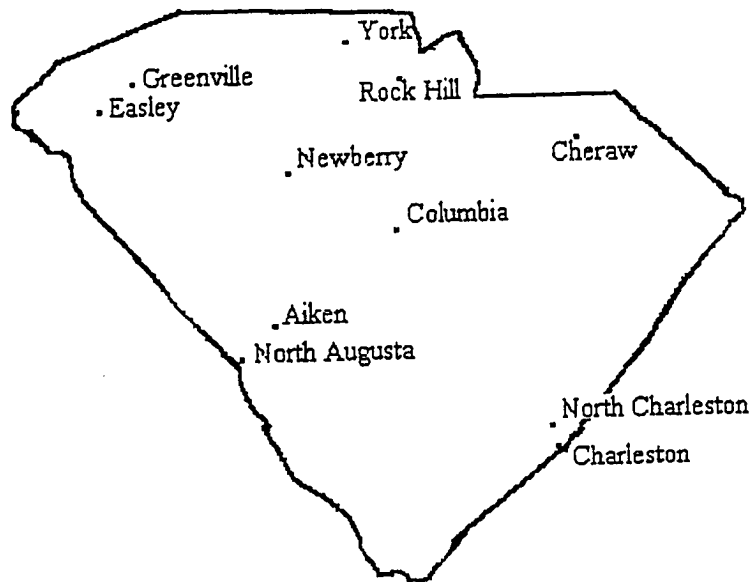


Figure 3.1 Cities In South Carolina Where Interviews Were Held

On-Site Process

In each case, the interviewer travelled to the municipality for the scheduled interview. Interviews



averaged between fifty and ninety minutes, with one interview lasting only thirty minutes. Each interview was taped and transcribed. Interviews invariably took place either in the respondent's office or in an adjacent conference room. No respondents objected to the use of a tape recorder (although one respondent hesitated at first until reassured of confidentiality).

To minimize the influence of the interviewer on the respondent's answers, each interview consistently followed a pattern designed to limit interviewer bias. Each interview consisted of:

1. explaining the purpose of the study;
2. asking predetermined research questions;
3. handling incomplete or inappropriate answers;
4. recording answers;
5. dealing with interpersonal interactions (O'Sullivan and Rassel 1989, 189-190).

This protocol helped the interviewer limit extraneous remarks and maintain consistency throughout the interview process.¹¹

The range of responses to interview questions reached a saturation point early during the process. Quickly, it became obvious that "the series had reached the point where

¹¹ There were times when this procedure was unable to be strictly applied due to the environment of the interview. That is, sometimes particular questions were not asked if the respondent had answered them in an earlier response. It was only at the end of each interview when the dialogue and protocol were relaxed that information was allowed to flow in a variety of directions.

no new ideas were emerging" (Oppenheim 1992, 68). Similar responses were heard regardless of task environment or government structure. Additional interviews failed to yield new information. It was clear that the interview process, to put it in economic parlance, had reached a point of diminishing returns. Finally, quality, rather than quantity, of interviews was and generally should be the essential determinant of the number of interviews when theory building is the goal. Therefore, twenty in-depth interviews reached most critical goals.

Data Analysis

As discussed earlier, all interviews were tape recorded and transcribed. Immediately after each interview the interviewer completed a "contact sheet," noting demographic information as well as personal impressions and important themes that arose during the interview (for an example of a contact sheet see Appendix B). Later, these contact sheets were attached to the completed questionnaire used during the interview (where various notes were taken during the interview) and ultimately placed in a package with the tape transcription. Once transcribed, each interview was checked for accuracy by comparing the written transcription with the taped interview. Changes were made to the transcription where necessary.

As the transcriptions were checked for accuracy, codes were placed in the margin beside each question specifying the particular question and the resulting response. Margin notes were added at this time along with marks identifying important points to review.¹² Equally important, large chunks of text were "crossed out" where the response was irrelevant to study concerns. Examples of this included conversations surrounding technical details of the municipality and "war stories" having no relation to the research questions. This served to reduce the amount of data analyzed.

Following the review and correction of the interviews, copies were made of the transcriptions for data management and analysis. Each interview was given a unique code signifying the respondent, the municipality, the form of government, and the task area (for individual codes, see Appendix C). Interview questions were then grouped into one of the seven "themes" according to the original framework of the instrument. Each interview transcription was separated according to one of these themes, and responses relevant to the same themes were placed together for comparison and analysis -- that is, all respondents' answers to "Theme One" were grouped together, answers to "Theme Two" were grouped

¹² Identifying marks included stars, check marks, and underlining text.



together, etc. Each respondent's code was attached to each answer (or group of answers, i.e., "theme") for later comparison. (See Table 3.4 for a list of themes.)

Table 3.4 Data Analysis Themes

Theme #	Theme
Theme 1:	Have You Ever Been Caught In The Middle On A Significant Issue You Were Working On? Where Did You Look For Guidance?
Theme 2:	To Whom Are You Responsible?
Theme 3:	Characterize The Level Of Influence Of Various Government Actors In Your Decisions.
Theme 4:	Have You Ever Felt That A Policy Was Somehow Out Of Line? If So, Where Did You Look For Guidance?
Theme 5:	Hypothetical Conflict Between Two Formal Governmental Actors: What Do You Do?
Theme 6:	Hypothetical Conflict Between Citizens And Government Actors: What Do You Do?
Theme 7:	Does "Constitutional Subordinate Autonomy" Have Meaning For Senior Level Administrators? Does It Have A Role In Their Activities?

In order to better focus on the main issues of this study, data analysis relied on a "Ladder Of Analytical Abstraction" to progress from the reconstruction of the interview to integration of the data into an explanatory



framework (Miles and Huberman 1994, 90-92). The "ladder" process has two advantages: first, it is quite simple; second, it assists the researcher in drawing valid conclusions through a natural process of "telling a first 'story,'" to locating key variables, to showing how those variables are connected and how they influence each other (91). In climbing this "ladder," according to Miles and Huberman,

[y]ou begin with a text, trying out coding categories on it, then moving to identify themes and trends, and then to testing hunches and findings, aiming first to delineate the "deep structure" and then to integrate the data into an explanatory framework. In this sense we can speak of "data transformation" as information is condensed, clustered, sorted, and linked over time (91).

The first step, then, in analyzing the interviews was to begin developing categories for individual responses to the interview questions. Placing all responses to individual questions together facilitated this process, allowing for patterns to emerge. All responses to each question (or theme) were then considered consecutively in order to develop a sense of the range of responses.

Next, a matrix was constructed with individual respondents listed, by code, on the vertical axis and the sub-questions within each theme across the horizontal axis (all matrices can be found in Appendix D). Responses were read for a final time, with the distilled, or coded,

responses to each question placed within the matrix in the appropriate box. Final codes for responses consisted of, in many instances, entire words (e.g., professionalism, technology, politics, law). The limited number of both responses and respondents allowed use of complete words where coding categories would have been confusing and unnecessary, while allowing the matrix to remain on only one or two pages, with a separate matrix for each theme. Unique responses were noted throughout this process. Other chunks of data useful for further analysis were marked as well.

This method of data analysis uses the idea of "data displays" as a visual tool for presenting information systematically. As Miles and Huberman note, the typical (i.e., traditional or classic) data display uses unreduced text in the format of field notes. The analyst then scans through the text, attaching codes to "chunks" of text and extracting coded segments and, finally, drawing conclusions (91). Relying on this method alone is often weak and cumbersome because:

1. it is dispersed over many pages and is not easy to see as a whole;
2. it is sequential rather than simultaneous;
3. it is usually poorly ordered, bulky, and monotonous;
4. comparing several extended texts carefully is very difficult (91).

Therefore, simple data displays such as matrices are preferred because they permit viewing a full data set on

only one (or a few) page(s) and can be arranged in a way that facilitates data analysis.¹³ Most importantly, by using a data display such as a matrix,

the chances of drawing and verifying valid conclusions are much greater than for extended text, because the display is arranged coherently to permit careful comparisons, detection of differences, noting of patterns and themes, seeing trends, and so on (Miles & Huberman 1994, 92).

The "Ladder of Abstraction" has clear advantages when working with qualitative data. Coding schemes do not have to be elaborate or complex. Simplified words or phrases that signify the meaning of the original text can be constructed with little effort, eliminating the use of elaborate codebooks. The original lengthy transcript can be distilled as extraneous remarks are removed and relevant information is repackaged. In this sense, the data are transformed as information is "condensed, clustered, sorted, and linked" (Miles & Huberman 1994, 91).

Strengths And Weaknesses Of The Research

Three of the most important standards used to judge social scientific research are reliability, internal validity, and external validity. First, the reliability of a study concerns its replicability under similar

¹³ By using this technique, the original data set was reduced from 498 to thirteen pages.

circumstances (Rudestam and Newton 1992, 38). In order to enhance replicability, the qualitative investigator should collect and code the raw data in systematic ways so that another researcher can understand the themes, collect similar data, and generally replicate the data analysis (King, Keohane, and Verba 1994, 25-26). To heighten reliability here, all materials have been documented, organized, and presented as Appendices. Procedures for collecting data have also been well documented. In addition, interviews were carried out using a consistent set of questions under similar conditions following similar procedures. Furthermore, the Ladder of Abstraction was used consistently throughout data analysis as a technique to bring each answer from the original "raw" data into a manageable framework.

Internal validity refers to the accuracy of causal inference or the soundness of associating a particular output with a particular input (did "X" in fact lead to "Y"?). According to Rudestam and Newton, in a naturalistic inquiry, such as a qualitative, in-depth interview,

credibility or truth value is ascertained through structural corroboration. Such corroboration might be accomplished by [among others] exploring the participant's experience in sufficient detail (persistent observation) (1994, 38-39).

This was the method used in this study. When a respondent's answers were unclear or inconsistent, further probing

questions were used to clear up these concerns where possible. Furthermore, triangulation of responses took place through redundant questions built into the interview instrument or from follow-up questions.

In addition, in this study, causal links are less important than they would have been had more fully developed hypotheses been available at the outset. In order to heighten the internal validity, additional methods of establishing it could have been used (e.g., attempts to triangulate individual responses by using other sources such as newspaper accounts or co-workers' observations to support respondents' answers). Also, a larger pool of city administrators could have been interviewed and further comparisons made. In fact, a clear limitation to the internal validity in this study is that only one public works director from a mayor-council city was interviewed.¹⁴

This study's main purpose, however, is theory building, to understand more about the relevance of Rohr's constitutional subordinate autonomy. Furthermore, the study does not "prove" or decide once and for all whether Rohr is right or wrong. It does bring empirical information to bear on one important way of understanding public administrators. The purposive, multi-stage cluster sampling process used in

¹⁴ For further discussion of the implications of this limitation, see Chapters Four and Five.

this project attempted to include a representative sample of public works and recreation administrators from a single state so that any variation in reported attitudes would less likely be attributable to variables other than the one of primary interest, form of government. The purpose of interviewing a sample that was typical of senior local government administrators in South Carolina was to enhance internal validity in light of the study's goal.

Finally, external validity refers to the generalizability of the findings to a larger population, i.e., to other municipal administrators in other states or to South Carolina administrators who were not interviewed. Again, as Rudestam and Newton note, a qualitative study emphasizes the

"thick description" of a relatively small number of subjects within the context of a specific setting. ... [b]ut generalizations to other subjects and situations are always modest and mindful of the context of individual lives (1994, 39).

With this in mind, the external validity of this study is limited. The results of the study cannot be confidently generalized to all local government administrators. Its generalizability exists only to "theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes" (Yin 1989, 21). As stated above, this study's primary goal is to determine whether Rohr's normative theory of public administration has

any meaning for local government administrators who operate in a fundamentally different environment than their federal counterparts. The primary idea, here, is to expand and explore theories.

Conclusion

Factors influencing the attitudes and decision making of local government careerists are currently not well understood. When the waters are particularly muddy, and little information exists about the surroundings, qualitative research using in-depth exploratory interviews can provide the greatest range of information without precluding a search for explanations. Knowing the underlying motivations and guiding principles of administrative decision making will illuminate this study's major research question: do constitutional principles (and Rohr's balance-wheel metaphor) in fact contribute to, or have an influence on, decision making on the local level?



IV.

RESEARCH FINDINGS FOCUSED ON THE VARIABLE
"FORM OF GOVERNMENT"

The main thing is to keep the main thing
the main thing.

- Groucho Marx

This chapter presents the initial findings of the study carried out among senior-level local government administrators in South Carolina. Specifically, findings are targeted to understand more about the concerns motivating the study: are senior career officials working in council-manager governments less likely to operate with notions of "balancing" responsibilities and "constitutional subordinate autonomy" than their counterparts in mayor-council cities?

This chapter, in broad compass, reflects how local government administrators view their role in the governance process along a number of dimensions. These reflections on their personal contributions provide rich data on what it means to be a public administrator both in the context of a

government of shared powers and in a government where corporate models are the design instrument. In addition, these reflections will offer insight into the applicability of John Rohr's notion of constitutional subordinate autonomy at the level of local government. Toward this goal, this chapter searches for factors that appear to guide administrative decision making.

The research findings are presented for each of the seven themes noted in Chapter Three. Then, the findings are compared across the themes. Again, emphasis is on the extent to which form of government seems to influence responses. The data analysis technique, "Ladder Of Analytic Abstraction," discussed in the previous chapter, allows information to be arranged around these themes. The results are presented in both text and tabular formats. The seven data displays are included in Appendix D to facilitate the presentation of data and to support the discussion section found in the chapter's conclusion.

In the next chapter, a watchful eye will be turned toward another independent variable, "task area" (here, a control variable). This variable has little to do with Rohr's balancing metaphor and discussions of the influence

of this variable on responses will be deferred so as not to distract from the primary research question.¹

Theme 1: Where Do Administrators Look For Guidance When They Find Themselves "Caught In The Middle"?

When senior-level administrators were asked the question, "Can you recall any times in your career when you felt caught in the middle or torn on a significant issue you were working on?," all twenty respondents not surprisingly answered "Yes." The nature of the troublesome issue fell into one of the seven areas presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Type Of Issue Administrators Find Themselves Caught In The Middle Of: By Form Of Government

Response	Mayor-Council ^a	Council-Manager	Total Responses
Expertise vs. Politics	1	6	7
Low Taxes vs. Quality Services	1	3	4
Elected Officials vs. Constituent Interests	1	1	2
Expertise vs. Public Opinion	1	1	2
Constituents vs. Council	0	2	2
Republicans vs. Democrats	1	0	1
Mayor vs. Council	1	0	1
Number of Respondents	6	13	

Note. Column numbers refer to the number of administrators who tendered each response. "Number of Respondents" refers to the number of administrators who provided valid responses; it will not always equal the sum of all responses since officials frequently gave multiple answers.

^a One respondent did not provide a valid answer.

¹ Where the variable "department" is found to influence the empirical relationship between form of government (independent variable) and answers to the study's questions (dependent variable), appropriate discussions will take place within Chapter Five.



According to Table 4.1, the response heard most often indicated that administrators were torn on issues regarding expertise and politics.² Thirty-seven percent of the administrators who offered valid responses indicated that their expert judgment pushed them in one direction while pressure from elected officials led them in another. Table 4.1 also shows that 21 percent of administrators indicated that they were torn on issues related to saving taxpayers' money while trying to provide quality services (the second most often heard response). Three other responses were each heard twice, accounting for an additional 32.5 percent of all responses. These responses indicated that administrators often struggled with issues relating to: 1) professional expertise vs. public opinion, 2) elected officials vs. constituents, or 3) city policy vs. constituent interest. The total of these five issues accounted for 90 percent of all responses.

When responses were separated by form of government, Table 4.1 shows that, in mayor-council governments: 1) there was no consistent response, and 2) responses varied more than those from administrators in council-manager governments despite fewer interviews. In contrast,

² In the context in which the answers were given, "politics" refers to the perceived interference of elected officials in the "business" of careerists.

responses by administrators in council-manager governments showed a narrower overall range of responses, with almost 50 percent of administrators indicating that they felt torn on a single issue, where their expert judgment pushed them in one direction and the wishes of elected officials pushed them in another.

The second question within this theme speaks more directly to Rohr's normative theory of public administration and is, therefore, more directly instructive for this study. The question asked during the interview was, "In the situation(s) you described (in your previous response), where did you look for guidance?" Answers to this question (see Table 4.2) yielded eight types of responses, with 79 percent of administrators (fifteen out of nineteen) indicating that they look to their professions and their professional responsibilities for guidance when faced with conflicting inputs from their environment.³ Other notable responses included finding guidance in: 1) their supervisor and 2) official policy or law.

Moreover, as also indicated in Table 4.2, when sorted by form of government, sources of guidance varied only slightly between administrators in mayor-council and those

³ It should be noted that throughout the study the term "profession" indicates the administrator's technical training (i.e., in public works, recreation, or planning), not the broader public administration profession.

in council-manager governments; however, interviews of mayor-council administrators yielded a narrower range of responses. In answering this question, mayor-council administrators gave only five different responses to the question, with little agreement on sources of guidance beyond the profession. In contrast, council-manager administrators offered a wider range of responses with, again, the majority of council-manager administrators indicating that the profession provided guidance.⁴

Table 4.2 Sources Of Guidance When Administrators Are "Caught In The Middle": By Form Of Government

Response	Mayor-Council ^a	Council-Manager ^b	Total Responses
Profession	5	10	15
Citizens Interest	1	1	2
Supervisor	2	3	5
Official Policy (Law)	1	3	4
Advisory Board	1	1	2
Personal Judgment	0	2	2
Staff	0	1	1
City Lawyer	0	1	1
Number of Respondents	6	13	

Note. Column numbers refer to the number of administrators who tendered each response. "Number of Respondents" refers to the number of administrators who provided valid responses; it will not always equal the sum of all responses since officials frequently gave multiple answers.

^a One respondent did not provide a valid response, and three respondents provided more than one response.

^b Seven respondents provided more than one response.

⁴ The finding that there was a wider range of responses tendered by council-manager administrators is not surprising--there were twice as many interviews of administrators in council-manager cities.

In sum, the findings on Theme One provide evidence that the primary source of guidance for an administrator's activities, regardless of form of government, is his or her profession. Dilemmas encountered on the job are, especially for administrators in council-manager governments, associated with conflicts between their profession, or professional expertise, and pressure from elected officials. The findings are less clear that there is a similar concern with the profession versus elected official dilemma in mayor-council governments. In this form of government, administrators are more likely to find dilemmas in a variety of places.

A number of brief conclusions may be drawn from analysis of these data. First, it is clear that the politics-administration dichotomy, at least for the administrators studied in South Carolina, is alive and well and continues to play a part in the lives of local government officials.

Second, and perhaps more closely related to the motivations for this study, professionalism serves as the strongest source of guidance when administrators face complex issues. Rohr contends that constitutional values should play an important role in guiding administrative decision making. If this is indeed the case, the question becomes how the administrator's "task-oriented" profession

and the broader public administration profession can best provide this type of constitutional guidance.⁵

Furthermore, the data indicate that there is largely no difference in responses between the two forms of local government regarding this dimension of an administrator's life. In this limited area of inquiry, whether one has opportunities for balancing, multiple access points, or multiple masters, responses were consistent, i.e., local government structure did not have significant influence on responses to these questions. It seems, instead, that notions of professionalism have permeated local government generally with attachments to the work substance, the techniques of the profession, and professional norms, important in both settings.⁶

Theme 2: To Whom Are You Responsible?

When senior-level administrators were asked the two-part question, "Reflect on your roles and responsibilities: who or what are you responsible to in your work in both a) a

⁵ Relevant differences between areas of professional expertise will be explored in Chapter 5.

⁶ Throughout this study, the terms profession and professionalism are used to connote specialized knowledge, science, and rationality -- that there are correct ways of solving problems and doing things which are defined by a relatively clear-cut occupational field. See, for example, Frederick Mosher (1986), Democracy and the Public Service, pp. 99-133.

narrow, formal, 'organizational chart' way, and b) a broader, more 'fundamental' way?," a narrow range of responses was tendered.

Table 4.3 Who Administrators Are Responsible To In A Narrow, Formal "Organizational Chart" Way: By Form Of Government

Response	Mayor-Council*	Council-Manager	Total Responses
Mayor	7	0	7
City Manager	NA	11	11
City Administrator	2	NA	2
Asst. City Manager	NA	2	2
City Council	1	0	1
Number of Respondents	7	13	

Note. Column numbers refer to the number of administrators who tendered each response. "Number of Respondents" refers to the number of administrators who provided valid responses; it will not always equal the sum of all responses since officials frequently gave multiple answers.

NA= Not Applicable: city managers are not employed by mayor-council cities and city administrators are not employed by council-manager cities.

* Two respondents answered with more than one response.

As shown in Table 4.3, when administrators answered part "a" of the question, responses clustered according to form of government. All administrators in mayor-council governments responded that, in a formal, "organizational



chart" way, they were responsible to the mayor.⁷ Only two respondents felt some "secondary" responsibility to the city administrator and one respondent felt some "secondary" responsibility to the city council. Furthermore, all administrators in council-manager governments believed they owed narrow, formal, "organizational chart" responsibility to the city manager (eleven responses) or assistant city manager (two responses).⁸

When responding to the second part of the question "Who are you responsible to in a broader, more 'fundamental' way?" officials again gave a narrow range of answers. In the aggregate, Table 4.4 indicates that, overwhelmingly, administrators believe that they owe a fundamental responsibility to citizens more than to any other actor or institution.

⁷ There were ten responses to this question from seven administrators. All seven administrators interviewed first answered that they were responsible to the mayor. Two administrators, only after answering that they were primarily responsible to the mayor, indicated some secondary responsibility to the city administrator and the council.

⁸ See discussion in Chapter Three on relationships between assistant city managers and city managers.

Table 4.4 Who Administrators Are Responsible To In A Broad, "Fundamental" Way: By Form Of Government

Response	Mayor-Council ^a	Council-Manager ^b	Total Responses
Citizens	6	9	15
Staff	0	2	2
City Manager	NA	2	2
City Ordinances	0	1	1
Number of Respondents	6	12	

Note. Column numbers refer to the number of administrators who tendered each response. "Number of Respondents" refers to the number of administrators who provided valid responses; it will not always equal the sum of all responses since officials frequently gave multiple answers.

NA= Not Applicable: City managers are not employed in mayor-council governments.

^a One respondent did not provide a valid response.

^b One respondent did not provide a valid response, and two respondents answered with two responses.

When responses are separated by the variable "form of government," Table 4.4 shows that all administrators in mayor-council governments indicated broad responsibility was owed to citizens. Responses from administrators in council-manager cities yielded a slightly wider range of answers, yet the majority of officials (75 percent) indicated that they owed broad responsibility to citizens more than to any other source. Additional answers in this category indicated that administrators owed broad responsibility to: their staff (two administrators), the city manager (two administrators), and the city's ordinances (one administrator).



In both forms of government, then, formal organizational responsibility is consistent with accepted local government orthodoxy. Results reflect the notion that administrators in mayor-council governments are primarily responsible to the mayor (their formal superior), and administrators in council-manager governments are primarily responsible to the city manager (their formal superior). Although city councils can wield significant formal influence (in terms of budgeting and policy development), administrators failed to see this connection, or at most, downplayed its importance. Moreover, if the analogy is to be made between the federal model of checks and balances and mayor-council governments, it seems certain that any comparison is less than clear and fails to adequately reflect the perceptions of local careerists. Local government administrators do not see themselves as subordinate to both branches. In fact, administrators in both forms of government responded similarly to this question as if they were working in a system of monocentric power (as, at least formally, only council-manager administrators do).

In a broader sense, when viewing fundamental responsibility (part two of the question), administrators' responses were relatively consistent, with citizens being the primary concern in both forms of government. The

possibility exists, however, that such answers are viewed by administrators as having a high degree of social desirability. That is, administrators believe that the public "wants" to hear that administrators are fundamentally responsible to citizens. This pressure may influence the interview responses. This would be evidence of a response set: officials were merely giving the "socially desirable" answers. What is interesting, however, is that 25 percent of administrators in council-manager governments reported that they owe primary fundamental responsibility to actors other than citizens. This finding is consistent with a more insulated system where responsibility to citizens may be less immediately important than responsibility either to organizational superiors, or as was heard numerous times, to the "team."⁹ This type of response is also consistent with the orthodoxy of the council-manager plan -- government should be run more "like a business" with less interference (for administrators) from the environment.

⁹ This type of response is particularly interesting during a time in South Carolina local government when increased pressure is being placed on government by the media, citizens, and the public administration profession to provide a "customer service" approach.

Theme 3: Characterize, On A Scale From 1 to 5, The Degree Of Influence Other Government Actors Have In Your Decisions

During the interview process, administrators were asked to respond to the following question: "On a scale from 1 to 5, characterize the degree of influence the following actors have in your work. Specifically, how much do they influence your decisions?" (5 equals high influence; 1 equals low influence). Table 4.5 presents their answers.

Table 4.5 Mean Level Of Influence Of Various Formal Actors In The Decisions Of Government Officials: By Form Of Government (1=low influence; 5=high influence)

Response	Mean Levels Of Influence		Aggregate Mean
	Mayor-Council	Council-Manager	
Mayor	3.07 (1.17)	2.50 (1.53)	2.70 (1.40)
Council	1.68 (.77)	1.80 (1.34)	1.76 (1.15)
City Manager	NA	4.38 (.77)	NA
Citizens	3.50 (1.15)	3.30 (1.13) ^a	3.38 (1.11)

Note. Standard deviations are in parentheses.

NA= Not Applicable: city managers are not employed in mayor-council cities and questions regarding these actors were omitted there.

^a Three respondents in this category did not provide valid answers.

According to the aggregated interview responses (excluding the category of city manager), citizens were rated highest and the city council was rated lowest in terms

of average level of influence.¹⁰ More meaningful comparisons, however, can be made when answers are separated by the variable "form of government." In general, administrators in mayor-council governments considered that citizens had the most influence in their decisions (3.50), followed by the mayor (3.07), and, finally, the city council (1.68).

In council-manager governments, administrators answered differently. Here, the city manager had the most influence (4.38), followed by citizens (3.30), the mayor (2.50), and the city council (1.80).

Moreover, as was expected, mayors were reported to have a higher level of influence in mayor-council governments than in their council-manager counterparts (3.07 and 2.50 respectively). In relative terms, the city council had only slightly higher influence in the council-manager form of government than in mayor-council forms (1.8 and 1.68 respectively) with less variation in responses from administrators in mayor-council cities. Citizens were reported to have only slightly more influence in mayor-council forms of government than their counterparts in

¹⁰ Although most officials in council-manager cities reported that the manager had the highest single level of influence, this category is left out of the aggregated findings because the question regarding city managers was asked only of administrators working in council-manager governments.

council-manager systems (3.5 and 3.3 respectively). Interestingly, however, when comparing the chief executive officers of each form of government, city managers were rated higher on the influence scale (with noticeably less variation in responses) in council-manager governments than mayors in mayor-council governments (4.38 and 3.07 respectively). Indeed, citizens outranked the mayor in mayor-council forms of government.

Other factors that influence the decisions of administrators not reported in Table 4.5 included the administrator's "staff" (the answer tendered on seven occasions), advisory commissions (mentioned three times), and the business community, technology, and a local university (each mentioned once).¹¹

Overall, the results reported in Table 4.5 are, for council-manager governments, largely consistent with the foundations of this form of government. The city manager as Chief Executive Officer has the most reported influence on an administrator, with the mayor and the city council having the least. The findings show that the mayor-council form of government appears slightly more open and slightly less insulated from pressure from elected officials and, perhaps, citizens. Here, citizens appear to wield the most

¹¹ Levels of influence were not calculated for these actors.

influence, with the mayor ranked second. This may be explained by the more "constituency-sensitive" and "partisan" nature of the mayor-council form. In this form of local government, the structure was designed to be citizen and elected official "friendly." Many of these pressures are those the municipal reform movement (and the resulting council-manager form of government) sought to minimize.

Responses along this Theme seem to imply that some type of balancing can take place in both mayor-council and council-manager governments. It is not, however, the same brand as Rohr's constitutional subordinate autonomy describes. That is, there are two highly influential actors in local governments: citizens and chief executive officers. In mayor-council governments, the citizens are reported to have more influence; in council-manager governments the city manager has more influence. It would appear, then, that opportunities exist for administrators to support a particular actor on a particular issue so as to lend weight to a given outcome as Rohr would believe possible - although in a different way.

Theme 4: Have You Ever Felt That A Policy Was Somehow Out Of Line? If So, Where Did You Look For Guidance?

When asked whether they had ever felt that a policy was somehow out of line, sixteen of twenty administrators answered "Yes" (see Table 4.6). In this question, "out of line" was defined as a policy that was not in the best interest of the community, the constituents (citizens), the city government, the administrator's agency, or the individual administrator.

Table 4.6 Administrators Who Have Felt That A Policy Was Somehow Out Of Line: By Form Of Government

Response	Mayor-Council	Council-Manager
Yes	6	10
No	1	3
Number of Respondents	7	13

When administrators were asked where they looked for guidance if they believed a policy or program was out of line, Table 4.7 shows that eleven different responses were tendered. Some administrators answered more than once for a



total of thirty-one responses.¹² Of these various responses, fifty-eight percent of administrators (or eleven out of nineteen¹³) responded that they were guided by the notion of "profession/expertise/service value."¹⁴ The second most frequent response was "personal ethics" (4 responses), followed by "the best interest of the department/program" (3 responses).

¹² When administrators responded that they had never faced a policy that they considered to be "out of line," they were encouraged to think about where they might look for guidance if they were faced with such a situation. Their answers were treated as responses to the second part of the question. Importantly, in examining responses to this part of the question, no significant difference was found between administrators who originally reported believing a policy was out of line and those who answered that they had never felt a policy was out of line but were encouraged to hypothesize about such a situation.

¹³ One administrator did not provide a valid response.

¹⁴ Although this answer combines three slightly different responses, they imply the same idea. That is, the administrator, based on his or her professional expertise and experience, has a sense of: 1) what is in the best interest of the community, or 2) how to provide the best, most cost-effective service.

Table 4.7 Sources Of Guidance When Administrators Feel A Policy Is "Out Of Line": By Form Of Government

Response	Mayor-Council ^a	Council-Manager ^b	Total Responses
Profession/Expertise/ Service Value	3	8	11
Personal Ethics	3	1	4
Interest of the Department Council	2	1	3
Citizens' Wants Mayor	1	1	2
Elected Officials	1	0	2
City Manager	1	1	2
Self-Preservation	NA	2	2
Management Team	0	1	1
Official Policy	0	1	1
Number of Respondents	7	12	

Note. Column numbers refer to the number of administrators who tendered each response. "Number of Respondents" refers to the number of administrators who provided valid responses; it will not always equal the sum of all responses since officials frequently gave multiple answers.

NA= Not Applicable: City managers are not employed in mayor-council governments.

^a Six respondents provided more than one answer.

^b One respondent did not provide a valid answer, and five respondents gave more than one answer.

Here, the results show a slightly different distribution between mayor-council and council-manager governments. Administrators in council-manager governments were almost twice as likely to answer that their profession was a source of guidance than were their mayor-council counterparts. For mayor-council administrators, there was no primary source of guidance; however, these administrators were more likely to respond that personal ethics were important than were their council-manager colleagues. As opposed to council-manager administrators, responses from

mayor-council administrators were distributed more evenly across the range of answers, with no single response in the majority.

Responses to this question reflect those reported earlier regarding sources of guidance. When administrators in council-manager governments confront complex issues, their profession continued to serve as a strong influence. Administrators in mayor-council governments continued to look to their profession as they had earlier, though with less strength; here, when a policy was "out of line," personal ethics played a more significant role.¹⁵

Again, along this dimension, the Constitution fails to serve as an overt source of guidance. When administrators looked for assistance, they first looked to their professions. If the profession can impart constitutional guidance, then there is some opportunity for Rohr's normative theory of public administration to be realized. It is unclear whether this is indeed taking place. Furthermore, little opportunity for balancing is present. When a policy is "out of line," administrators (particularly

¹⁵ The idea of a policy being "out of line" clearly has a personal dimension attached. That is, a policy that is personally distasteful may not be professionally troubling. This may explain, in part, why more administrators in responding to this question reported using personal ethics as a guide. It does not, however, explain why that response was tendered more by mayor-council administrators than by council-manager administrators.

in council-manager governments) fail to survey, in any depth, their environments, citizens, or elected officials. Administrators instead look to their professions or to their administrative superiors. This finding is consistent with the tenets of municipal reform and the council-manager plan. The reform movement appears to have achieved much of its goal of "professionalizing" or at least making the professional organization a focal point in the lives of administrators and has diffused more generally in local government, regardless of formal governmental organization.

Theme 5: Hypothetical Policy Conflict Between Two Formal Governmental Actors: What Do You Do?

When asked, "Hypothetically, if there is a conflict between two formal governmental institutions (e.g., the mayor and council, the manager and the mayor, etc.) what would you do?," administrators answered with the seven categories of responses shown in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8 Actions Administrators Take When Faced With A "Hypothetical" Conflict Between Two Formal Governmental Actors: By Form Of Government^a

Response	Mayor-Council ^b	Council-Manager ^c	Total Responses
Provide Information/Education	3	8	11
Stay Out	1	4	5
Mediate	1	3	4
Provide Recommendation ^d	2	1	3
Whatever The Mayor Wants	2	0	2
Whatever The City Manager Wants	NA	2	2
Use Citizens To Pressure Council	1	1	2
Number of Respondents	7	13	

Note. Column numbers refer to the number of administrators who tendered each response. "Number of Respondents" refers to the number of administrators who provided valid responses; it will not always equal the sum of all responses since officials frequently gave multiple answers.

NA= Not Applicable: City managers are not employed in mayor-council governments.

^a Possible conflicts between formal governmental institutions include those that occur between the mayor and city council, the manager and the mayor, or the city manager and city council.

^b Three respondents provided two answers.

^c Six respondents provided two answers.

^d "Provide a Recommendation" refers, in this case, to administrators providing a recommendation to whichever government official requests one.

Fifty-five percent of all administrators (eleven out of twenty) responded that their role under these conditions was to provide information and education to the parties involved (e.g., the mayor, the council, the city manager) while avoiding any battle between elected officials. This answer was tendered more than twice as often as the second most frequent response: simply "stay out" of the conflict (five out of twenty administrators). Additional responses



included "mediate" (four administrators) and "provide recommendations" (three administrators).¹⁶

When broken down by form of government, Table 4.8 shows that providing information remained the most frequent response regardless of governmental form. However, administrators in council-manager governments were more likely to offer this response (eight out of thirteen or 62 percent) compared with their counterparts in mayor-council forms of government (three out of seven or 43 percent).

As indicated above, although providing information was the most often heard response in mayor-council governments, responses from mayor-council administrators were more evenly distributed across the range of answers than were those from their council-manager counterparts. No single response was heard significantly more often than any other. In contrast, in council-manager governments, "providing information" was heard twice as often as the next most frequent response, "staying out." Moreover, administrators in council-manager governments were more likely to answer that "staying out" was a legitimate action than were their mayor-council

¹⁶ Although in some ways similar, there is a clear distinction between providing information and providing a recommendation. The role of providing information does not require an administrator to take a position relative to his or her superior, whereas providing a recommendation may require such a posture. This is critical and, for the purposes of this study, necessitates the separation.

counterparts. In fact, respondents answered "staying out" of the conflict slightly more than twice as often in council-manager governments (30 percent) than in mayor-council governments (14 percent).

The second part to this question asked administrators to identify where they would look for guidance when faced with this hypothetical conflict.

Table 4.9 Sources Of Guidance When Administrators Are Faced With A Conflict Between Two Formal Government Actors: By Form Of Government^a

Response	Mayor-Council ^b	Council-Manager ^c	Total Responses
Professional/ Personal Judgment	3	6	9
City Manager	NA	5	5
Mayor	3	0	3
Council	1	2	3
Team	0	2	2
Agency	0	1	1
Number of Respondents	4	11	

Note. Column numbers refer to the number of administrators who tendered each response. "Number of Respondents" refers to the number of administrators who provided valid responses; it will not always equal the sum of all responses since officials frequently gave multiple answers.

NA= Not Applicable: city managers are not employed in mayor-council cities and questions regarding these actors were omitted there.

^a Possible conflicts between formal governmental institutions include those that occur between the mayor and the city council, the city manager and the mayor, or the city council and the city manager.

^b Three respondents did not provide a valid answer, and two respondents provided more than one answer.

^c Two respondents did not provide valid answers, and seven respondents provided more than one answer.

In the aggregate (see Table 4.9), administrators were almost twice as likely to respond that their professional or

personal judgment would guide them when placed in a conflict between two formal governmental actors than they were to give any other answer. In mayor-council governments, administrators looked to their own professional or personal judgment for guidance as much as they did to their mayor.¹⁷ Similarly, administrators in council-manager governments were almost equally likely to rely on their professional or personal judgment as to go to their city manager for help.

Additional responses for mayor-council administrators included one administrator who answered that he would consult both the mayor and the council for guidance. No other actor or institution provided guidance for administrators in this form of government.

Not surprisingly, for administrators in council-manager governments, the mayor provided no guidance. Additional sources of guidance here included the city council, the management "team" (each mentioned by two administrators) and, finally, the agency or department (one administrator).

Again, in response to this question, reported guidance came largely from one's profession or organizational superior - not from citizens or explicitly constitutional

¹⁷ It is important to note, however, as indicated in Table 4.9, that only four officials provided valid answers here.

concerns. These responses are largely consistent with results noted earlier.

Theme Six: Hypothetical Conflict Between Citizens And Government Officials: What Do You Do?

When the question was asked, "Hypothetically, if citizens demanded service 'X' and governmental officials wanted to supply service 'Y,' how would you handle (or deal) with this situation?," administrators answered with nine different responses (as shown in Table 4.10).

Table 4.10 Actions Administrators Take When Faced With A Conflict Between Citizens And Government Officials: By Form Of Government

Response	Mayor-Council	Council-Manager	Total Responses
Provide Information/Education	5	12	17
Stay Out	0	3	3
Mediate	0	0	0
Provide Recommendation ^a	3	2	5
Whatever The Mayor Wants	2	0	2
Whatever The City Manager Wants	NA	2	2
Use Citizens To Pressure City Council	2	2	4
Whatever The City Council Wants	0	3	3
Whatever Politicians Want ^b	0	1	1
Number of Respondents	7	13	

Note. Column numbers refer to the number of administrators who tendered each response. "Number of Respondents" refers to the number of administrators who provided valid responses; it will not always equal the sum of all responses since officials frequently gave multiple answers.

NA= Not Applicable; city managers are not employed by mayor-council governments. Questions here were omitted.

^a "Provide Recommendation" refers to administrators providing a recommendation to citizens or government actors.

^b One respondent used the generic term "politicians." Clearly, the mayor and the council members are "politicians"; however, it seems most true to the interview to use three separate response categories for recording this information.

According to Table 4.10, in the aggregate, 85 percent of administrators responded that when faced with a conflict



between citizens and government, their role was to "provide information and/or education." They gave this answer more than three times as often as the second most frequent response, "provide a recommendation."¹⁸

"Providing information" remained the most frequent response regardless of whether the official worked in a mayor-council or a council-manager city. For mayor-council administrators, this response was followed by "providing a recommendation" (3 administrators), "doing whatever the mayor wants," and "using citizens to pressure council" (two administrators each). The more interesting results appear for council-manager administrators. Here, the second most likely response (tied, however, with doing "whatever the council wants") was for administrators to "stay out" of the conflict (three administrators). Interestingly, although half as many total responses were given by mayor-council administrators, none indicated that they would "stay out." (See Table 4.10 for additional responses.)

In part two of this question, administrators reported five sources of guidance for making these difficult decisions (see Table 4.11).

¹⁸ In these responses, administrators would provide a recommendation to whomever asked, i.e., to elected officials or citizens.

Table 4.11 Sources Of Guidance When Administrators Are Faced With A Conflict Between Citizens and Government Officials: By Form Of Government

Response	Mayor-Council	Council-Manager ^a	Total Responses
Professional Judgment	4	8	12
City Manager	NA	2	2
Mayor	2	0	2
Community Interest	1	1	2
Resources Available	0	1	1
Advisory Council	0	1	1
Number of Respondents	7	10	

Note. Column numbers refer to the number of administrators who tendered each response. "Number of Respondents" refers to the number of administrators who provided valid responses; it will not always equal the sum of all responses since officials frequently gave multiple answers.

NA= Not Applicable: city managers are not employed in mayor-council cities and questions regarding these actors were omitted there.

^a Three respondents failed to provide a valid answer; three respondents reported more than one answer.

Again, professional judgment continues to guide an administrator through these situations more often than any other source. In fact, this response was tendered six times as often as any other answer. When sorted by form of government, the results are similar. For both forms of government, the profession and professional judgment provides important guidance. In addition, for officials in both forms of government, the second most frequent response was that their organizational superior (the city manager or the mayor) supplied guidance when they were faced with a



conflict between citizens and government. Additional responses can be seen in Table 4.11.

Several conclusions can be drawn from an analysis of these data. First, it is important to note that 23 percent of administrators from council-manager governments chose to "stay out" of any conflict between citizens and government officials. In contrast, no administrators from mayor-council governments chose this course of action. Once more, this appears to be consistent with the tenets of local government reform and its emphasis on "depoliticizing" local government administration. Second, an administrator's profession continued to maintain a strong influence, regardless of form of government, when administrators are faced with complex and potentially volatile issues. Third, an administrator's organizational superior, the person to whom the administrator is formally accountable, remains an important source of guidance, second only to the official's profession. Again, as noted in the analysis of Theme Five, any overt discussion of constitutional values was absent from administrative guidance.

Theme Seven: The Relevance of Constitutional Subordinate
Autonomy: Rohr's "Balance Wheel"

The richness of the responses to the question, "Does constitutional subordinate autonomy have meaning for you? Does it have a role in your activities?" cannot be captured by a table. Thus, the following paragraphs will alone explore the results.

After constitutional subordinate autonomy was explained to respondents, only two administrators disagreed with any concept of an advocacy or proactive role for an administrator. Both worked in council-manager governments.¹⁹ No administrators from mayor-council governments expressed a negative reaction to administrators taking a policy advocacy role or to Rohr's ideas.

With the exception of one administrator from a mayor-council government, however, administrators generally felt that "going public" or being a "banner carrier" for a given issue was inappropriate if the issue was contrary to the city's "philosophy."²⁰ They deemed this type of public approach improper for a number of reasons. First, going public with a position that ran counter to the city's

¹⁹ In each of these cases, the officials observed that any proactive role for the administrator was precluded by the city manager's management philosophy.

²⁰ "City philosophy" is referred to here as the generally accepted position of the majority of the elected officials.

established philosophy could embarrass the city's elected officials. When this happened, administrators believed they lose credibility with and the trust of elected officials. According to one administrator working in a large mayor-council government, that established trust, developed over time and by virtue of their expertise and responsible (i.e., conservative) behavior allows some latitude to pursue personal agendas on issues where elected officials are indifferent or ambivalent.

Second, and a corollary to the first, administrators generally accept the legitimacy of "behind the scenes" advocacy. This style of advocacy spins off from the notions of expertise and professionalism associated with being a public administrator (that is, "good" public administrators operate in a closed system where confrontation is dealt with behind closed doors rather than in a public meeting). In this way, conflicts are less vulnerable to public pressure that can overshadow an otherwise professional (expert) opinion. This strategy promotes a private advocacy role, supported by one's professionalism and being sensitive to one's political superiors so as to not shed doubt on the city's leaders.

Third, administrators generally contended that the way to press an issue publicly (while not carrying the banner themselves) was to have citizens present it for them. As

one official in a council-manager government noted, "I've used citizens, discretely, to be the hammer against management." Another council-manager official remarked:

[c]itizens can say things publicly that I should not say because I'm a public official. You must look at the realities of politics. If the administrator takes it on, someone may take retribution [on me].

In this way, administrators provide expertise and information to citizens so that citizens in turn can press their case more vigorously without administrators opening themselves up for criticism and controversy. This notion remains consistent with both the "information providing" and "staying out" roles discussed above.

Equally important is the notion that administrators should remain "team players." As one council-manager official mentioned, administrators resist "swimming up stream." Another administrator noted, "I often allow my own principles to be overrun by someone else's decisions [in order to present a unified front]." In pursuing this idea further, the administrator acknowledged a "credibility gap between citizens and government" and that presenting a unified front often reduces the gap. Government is perceived as being the expert source of knowledge on issues affecting the public (that is, expertise means knowing "the one right way..."). If the government experts fail to

appear unified, this argument suggests, the citizens lose faith in their government.

Furthermore, administrators do not want to alienate individual members of the city council. Although the council possesses little formal power over administrators, such alienation can start a political firestorm which may ultimately embroil the administrator and his or her organizational superior. The resulting pressure can be detrimental to "the cause" and to the administrator and the city manager. Additionally, it can reflect a lack of unity among "experts."

Finally, many of the administrators interviewed believed that "issue" advocacy and articulating policy positions should be handled by the city manager or the mayor. In the case of city managers, department heads argued that the manager was the only administrative official responsible for communicating with elected officials.

In sum, any public advocacy role for administrators was largely pushed aside in favor of a behind-the-scenes approach. This latter strategy most closely dovetails with notions of professionalism and expertise. The exception is an often employed strategy of using citizens and citizen groups as surrogate policy advocates. This approach allows individual agendas to be pressed through those whom administrators believe are more legitimate policy actors.

The presentation of a unified front among city officials is required, from an administrator's view, to soften the "we-they" feelings expressed by citizens. The presentation of this front appeared more important than other associated governmental priorities such as making sure citizens have input into the decision process.

A second significant finding regarding this theme is that Rohr's idea of "balancing" government actors in support of particular policies held little meaning for local careerists. A potential form of balancing exists, however. In the local context, because of the amount of influence each wields, balancing could take place between citizens and chief executive officers. Nevertheless, responses indicate that citizens were used more as a vehicle for policy advocacy than they were a balancing tool. This appears consistent with the hypothesis that few opportunities for balancing in council-manager governments exist. And, even in governments that present, structurally, opportunities for balancing and maneuvering among governmental actors, little evidently takes place.

It may still be the case that bureaucracy is the most representative government institution. However, the local government administrators interviewed in this study failed either to see or be conscious of their representative role or to assume their constitutional place in the democratic

system. It appears, then, that government at the local level is more analogous to the ideal typical for-profit setting (or to a unitary government such as a parliamentary system) than a federal, Madisonian model of shared powers and checks and balances.

Conclusion

This study reveals a number of insights into the world of local government administration. Table 4.12 summarizes the findings reported on the seven research themes.

Table 4.12 Summary of Findings

Theme	Finding
THEME 1: Where Do Administrators Look For Guidance When They Find Themselves "Caught In The Middle?"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administrators in council-manager governments are most often torn on issues where their expertise pulls them in one direction and elected officials push them in another. - Administrators in mayor-council governments are not torn on a consistent issue. - Regardless of the type of issue, all administrators were likely to look to their professions for guidance.



THEME 2:

To Whom Are You Responsible?

- All administrators reported they owed formal responsibility to their organizational superior (i.e., the mayor or the city manager).

- For all mayor-council administrators, "fundamental" responsibility was owed to "citizens."

- For council-manager administrators, "fundamental" responsibility was owed to "citizens" in 75 percent of the responses, while other internal government actors were noted in the remainder.

THEME 3:

Characterize The Degree Of Influence Other Government Actors Have In Your Decisions.

- In mayor-council governments, citizens were seen as most influential.

- In council-manager governments, city managers were ranked most influential, with citizens second.

THEME 4:

Have You Ever Felt That A Policy Was Somehow Out Of Line? If So, Where Did You Look For Guidance?

- Administrators in council-manager governments reported looking to their professions for guidance.

- Administrators in mayor-council governments looked equally often to their profession and to personal ethics for guidance.

THEME 5:

Hypothetical Policy Conflict Between Two Formal Governmental Actors: What Do You Do?

- A majority of administrators in council-manager governments believed their role was to "provide information," followed by "stay out of the conflict."
- Mayor-council administrators most often contended their role was to provide information, but with less frequency than council-manager administrators. These administrators tendered a wide range of response, with no single answer in the majority.
- Administrators in mayor-council governments believed that guidance should be found in their professional and personal judgment.
- Administrators in council-manager governments found guidance in their professional and personal judgment and in the city manager.

THEME 6:

Hypothetical Conflict Between Citizens and Government: What Do You Do?

- Administrators in both forms of government believed their role was to provide information.
- Three out of thirteen administrators in council-manager governments believed their role was to "stay out." No mayor-council administrators believed this was their role under these circumstances.
- Guidance was most often found in both forms of government in the profession, followed by organizational superiors (the mayor or the city manager).

THEME 7:

Does The Idea Of
Constitutional
Subordinate Autonomy
Have Any Meaning For
You?

- Constitutional subordinate
autonomy has little practical
meaning for local government
administrators.

The causal proposition motivating this study, that officials in council-manager governments would be less likely to operate with Rohr's balancing responsibilities in mind than officials in mayor-council cities, was partially supported. Although the data suggest that relatively few opportunities for balancing exist, where there is some balancing room, officials in council-manager governments are less likely to avail themselves of the opportunity. The findings regarding the hypothesis motivating the study, however, are most interesting when viewed in light of the fact that virtually no official reported believing that there was any balancing responsibility in local government. In short, local government officials in South Carolina generally failed to embrace Rohr's notion of a balancing responsibility regardless of government form.

Almost all the administrators studied here legitimized their activities via their professional expertise rather than the Constitution or democratic "governance" values. Legitimacy is, or can be, problematic in this regard. No matter how upright and decent the members of a profession

might be, they will at times demand exceptions from ordinary rules and, when they do, they must justify their demand in terms of the overriding value of their profession for the society whose rules they would transcend. Such an argument invites close scrutiny and more than a little skepticism because of the constitutional values our government was founded upon.

As public administrators, Rohr notes,

we are, of course, held accountable to and responsive to the political leadership, but we should not be subjected to "political interference," "meddling," "partisan pressure" or other forms of manipulation. Professional orthodoxy commits us to the belief in resistance to such influence as a cardinal principle of our professional ethics. What tends to be ignored, however, is the self-serving character of this principle (1992, 436-437).

Professionals crave autonomy. In saying that government officers should oppose an elected official's "inappropriate" leverage, they carve for themselves a realm of autonomy within the governmental process. Such independence is important for any organization that longs for professional status. For example, the storekeeper does not tell the police officer how to arrest the thief; the writer does not tell the librarian how to shelve a novel; the traveller does not tell the civil engineer when the bridge is safe; and the politician does not tell the administrator how to administer. In each of these

illustrations, there is a range of professional independence that police officers, librarians, civil engineers, and public administrators guard jealously. It is in their interest to do so, but it is, supposedly, also in the interest of those that they serve. Administrators believe it is in their interest to be protective of their turfs and, in doing so, they believe they make government more efficient and effective and thereby promote the public interest.

This idea often fails to provide a basis for legitimacy in the eyes of citizens. Public Administration must execute policy that is in the public's interest, not necessarily the profession's. E. Pendleton Herring noted over sixty years ago,

[t]he public interest is the standard that guides the administrator in executing the law. This is the verbal symbol designed to introduce unity, order, and objectivity into administration. This concept is to the bureaucracy what the "due process" clause is to the judiciary. Its abstract meaning is vague but its applicability has far-reaching effects (1936, 77).

As mentioned at the outset of this study, the attempt of public administration to ground public administrative legitimacy in something more than the profession has been largely elusive. Scholars are struggling to plant the seeds of legitimacy in the potentially fertile soil of the Constitution. Administrators, according to the findings

presented in this chapter, have not yet recognized these potential benefits.

This chapter's conclusion suggests that one's profession is clearly important. If this is the case, then different "technical" professions may influence responses in different ways. As is well known, individual professions often require participants to adhere to specific value systems. These value systems may influence officials' responses.

The next chapter specifically explores the influence of an administrator's profession on how he or she answered the interview questions. That is, the chapter focuses on whether and how different task areas (public works, planning, and recreation) influenced responses to questions.

V.

TASK AREA AS A VARIABLE
IN REPORTED ADMINISTRATIVE BEHAVIOR

Things which you do not hope happen more frequently than things you do hope.

- Titus Plautus
Mostellaria, Act I, sc.iii

The initial study design included a test of a possible alternative explanation for officials' responses other than the type of city government in which they worked. In Chapter Four several themes suggested that empirical relationships existed between the independent variable "form of government" and administrators' responses. This chapter seeks to understand the nature of those relationships through the effects produced by introducing another variable. "Task area" is a second independent variable; it was included as a control variable, allowing for further investigation of officials' answers. This chapter explores the impact of this variable.¹

¹ For the purposes of this study, "task area" equates to one's department, e.g., public works, recreation, or planning. More formal definitions of this concept will be discussed in the Conclusion.

In several cases the findings suggest that the influence of task area alone was more striking than the influence of "form of government." It is necessary to note at the outset, however, the tentative nature of the findings contained in this chapter. Findings are especially tentative since only one public works official from a mayor-council city and only one planner from a council-manager city were interviewed. Additionally, findings are questionable because cell sizes become very small when one looks at the impact of both form of government and task area. While any relationship is uncertain, the nature of this study was exploratory -- to end, rather than begin, with more fully developed hypotheses. The results reported in this chapter indicate that further exploration of the influence of task area is warranted.

Theme 1: Where Do Administrators Look For Guidance When They Find Themselves "Caught In The Middle?"

As indicated in Chapter Four, all administrators in the study responded in the affirmative when asked whether they were ever "caught in the middle" on a significant issue. Results there also suggested that form of government was a notable influence on the type of issue administrators found troubling. After introducing the control variable "task



area," the relationship between form of government and administrators' responses weakens; task area may offer a better explanation than form of government.

As shown in Table 5.1, when using the control variable, the results indicated that task area influenced the type of issue in which administrators found themselves "caught in the middle," while the influence of form of government was minimal.

Table 5.1 Type Of Issue Administrators Find Themselves Caught In The Middle Of: By Task Area And Form Of Government

Response	Public Works		Recreation		Planning	
	MC	CM	MC ^a	CM	MC	CM
	Total		Total		Total	
Expertise vs. Politics	1	3	0	2	0	1
Low Taxes vs. Quality Services	0	1	1	2	0	0
Politics vs. Constituent Interests	0	0	1	1	0	0
Expertise vs. Public Opinion	0	1	0	0	1	0
Constituents vs. Council	0	1	0	1	0	0
Republicans vs. Democrats	0	0	1	0	0	0
Mayor vs. Council	0	0	0	0	1	0
Number of Respondents	1	6	3	6	2	1
		7		9		3

Note. Column numbers refer to the number of administrators who tendered each response. "Number of Respondents" refers to the number of administrators who provided valid responses; it will not always equal the sum of all responses since officials frequently gave multiple answers.

^a One respondent did not provide a valid answer.

Public works officials were more likely than their recreation or planning counterparts to feel compromised on issues where expertise pulled them in one direction and pressure from elected officials pulled them in another. Specifically, over 50 percent of public works administrators, 22 percent of recreation officials, and 33 percent of planning officials tendered this response. In addition, public works directors tendered this response four times more often than their next most frequent response. In comparison, there was no consistent response for recreation or planning directors. In each of these categories, form of government showed minimal influence; that is, similar responses were tendered by public works administrators in both forms of government and, although a wide range of responses were offered by recreation and planning officials, no pattern emerged which appeared linked to city type.

Table 5.2 Sources Of Guidance When Administrators Are "Caught In The Middle": By Task Area And Form Of Government

Response	Public Works		Recreation		Planning	
	MC	CM ^a Total	MC ^b CM ^c	Total	MC ^d CM	Total
Profession	1	6	3	4	1	0
Citizens' Interest	0	0	1	1	0	0
Supervisor	0	0	1	2	1	1
Official Policy (Law)	0	1	0	2	1	0
Advisory Board	0	0	1	1	0	0
Personal Judgment	0	0	0	2	0	0
Staff	0	0	0	1	0	0
City Lawyer	0	1	0	0	0	0
Number of Respondents	1	6	3	6	2	1
		7		9		3

Note. Column numbers refer to the number of administrators who tendered each response. "Number of Respondents" refers to the number of administrators who provided valid responses; it will not always equal the sum of all responses since officials frequently gave multiple answers.

^a Two respondents provided more than one response.

^b One respondent did not provide a valid response, and two respondents provided more than one response.

^c Five respondents provided more than one response.

^d One respondent provided more than one response.

Differences were also seen along the dimension of task area when administrators were asked where they looked for guidance when "caught in the middle." As Table 5.2 shows, all public works administrators and seven out of nine (78 percent) recreation officials looked to their professions. Only one out of three (33 percent) planning officials responded similarly. Here, the results again suggest that form of government had little or no influence on administrators' responses. Specifically, administrators in both forms of government tendered responses at almost the same rate: e.g., all mayor-council and four out of six council-manager administrators in recreation and all mayor-council and all council-manager administrators in public works tendered similar responses.

An additional finding is suggested by examining the total number of responses (rather than respondents) in a particular task area. As noted above, although seven out of nine recreation administrators indicated that the profession served as a source of guidance, the profession was only one of several ingredients guiding these administrators. Specifically, 63 percent of all responses from recreation officials (seven administrators offered more than one response) indicated that they discovered guidance in places other than, or in addition to, the profession. This finding differs from that suggested for public works directors.

The results in Tables 5.1 and 5.2 indicate that task area influenced not only the issues officials perceived as troubling, but also where guidance was found when administrators faced these problems. Specifically, although almost half of all council-manager administrators found themselves caught in the middle of issues where their expertise pushed them in one direction and pressures from elected officials pulled them in another, half of these answers were tendered by public works administrators. Given the highly technical nature of the public works task area it is reasonable to assume that these administrators, despite form of government, closely guard their expertise and deem any outside pressure troubling.

The findings presented here suggest that little relationship exists between form of government and administrators' responses when one controls for task area. Any relationship between form of government and administrators' responses reported in the last chapter was probably spurious. The variable "task area" was the more important influence. Any conclusions, however, drawn for planning officials are restricted because of the limited data in that task area.

Theme 2: To Whom Are You Responsible?

According to the data presented in Table 5.3, all administrators, regardless of their task area or form of government, reported that they were formally responsible to their administrative superior. For administrators in council-manager governments this was the city manager (or assistant city manager)²; for administrators in mayor-council governments this was the mayor. For administrators in mayor-council governments, in only two cases was some "secondary" level of responsibility felt to the city administrator (two responses) and to the city council (one response). This finding suggests neither task area nor form of government influenced administrators' responses beyond the fact that form of government evidently influenced the administrators to provide a response indicating the relevant administrative superior.

² See discussion in Methodology chapter on relationships between assistant city managers and city managers. For the purposes of analysis and discussion in this study, they are considered the same.

Table 5.3 Who Administrators Are Responsible To In A Narrow, Formal "Organizational Chart" Way: By Task Area And Form Of Government

Response	Public Works			Recreation			Planning		
	MC	CM	Total	MC	CM	Total	MC	CM	Total
Mayor	1	0	1	4	0	4	2	0	2
City Manager	NA	6	6	NA	5	5	NA	0	0
City Administrator	0	NA	0	2	NA	2	0	NA	0
Asst. City Manager	NA	0	0	NA	1	1	NA	1	1
City Council	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
Number of Respondents	1	6	7	4	6	10	2	1	3

Note. Column numbers refer to the number of administrators who tendered each response. "Number of Respondents" refers to the number of administrators who provided valid responses; it will not always equal the sum of all responses since officials frequently gave multiple answers.

NA= Not Applicable: city manager are not employed in mayor-council cities and questions regarding these actors were omitted there.

Chapter Four suggested that form of government was influential when administrators were asked about broader sources of responsibility. When using a control variable, the findings indicate that task area also influenced administrators' responses. As shown in Table 5.4, all recreation officials, 71 percent of public works officials, and 67 percent of planning officials responded that they were "fundamentally" responsible to citizens. Additional responses from public works and planning officials suggested that broad responsibility remained largely internal to the city government (to, e.g., the staff, the city manager, or the city ordinances). A careful review of the data for planning directors shows that although two out of the three administrators responded that they were fundamentally



responsible to citizens, both of these officials worked in mayor-council settings. The council-manager planning director indicated that he was fundamentally responsible to the city manager -- a much different type of response.

Table 5.4 Who Administrators Are Responsible To In A Broad, Fundamental Way: By Task Area And Form Of Government

Response	Public Works			Recreation			Planning		
	MC	CM ^a	Total	MC ^b	CM ^c	Total	MC	CM	Total
Citizens	1	4	5	3	5	8	2	0	2
Staff	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
City Manager	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
City Ordinances	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Number of Respondents	1	6	7	3	5	8	2	1	3

Note. Column numbers refer to the number of administrators who tendered each response. "Number of Respondents" refers to the number of administrators who provided valid responses; it will not always equal the sum of all responses since officials frequently gave multiple answers.

^a Two respondents each gave two answers.

^b One respondent failed to provide a valid response.

^c One respondent failed to provide a valid response.

In short, public works and planning officials in council-manager governments were the only administrators who found fundamental responsibility in places other than citizens. This may suggest that both task area and form of government are important variables for planning and public works officials; thus, task area and form of government had an *interaction* effect on administrators' responses.³

³ An interactive relationship is found when the relationship between two variables changes depending upon the category (e.g., public works, planning, or recreation) of the control variable. More concretely, the influence of form of

Interestingly, part of what signals an interaction effect is that form of government was not evidently relevant for recreation officials. Some of this difference may be explained because recreation is a highly "open" organization where citizens' concerns drive administrative decisions. If recreation officials fail to provide services that citizens prefer, program participation will be low and, subsequently, the program may be deemed a failure. Thus, it is important that recreation officials be responsive to citizen demands. Failure to do so would be counter-productive. Recreation department funding is often driven by how heavily citizens participate in activities. This scenario does not clearly apply for public works and planning.

Theme 3: Characterize The Level Of Influence Of The Following Government Actors: Do They Influence Your Decisions?

Table 5.5 presents the responses from administrators when asked about the level of influence they believed various actors had in their decisions.

government on administrators' responses depends on the task area. See, for example, Kenneth Meier and Jeffrey Brudney (1987), *Applied Statistics for Public Administration*, pgs. 256-258.

Table 5.5 Mean Level of Influence of Various Formal Actors In The Decisions Of Government Officials: By Task Area And Form Of Government (1=low involvement; 5=high involvement)

Response	Mean Levels Of Involvement								
	Public Works			Recreation			Planning		
	MC*	CM	Mean	MC	CM	Mean	MC	CM ¹	Mean
Mayor	4.5 * (1.7)	2.8 (1.7)	3.0 (1.7)	2.9 (1.4)	2.3 (1.6)	2.6 (1.5)	2.8 (.4)	2.0 *	2.5 (.5)
Council	2.5 * (1.5)	1.4 (1.5)	1.6 (1.4)	1.6 (.9)	2.2 (1.3)	2.0 (1.2)	1.4 (.2)	2.0 *	1.6 (.4)
City Manager	NA NA	4.7 (.6)	4.7 (.6)	NA NA	4.2 (.9)	4.2 (.9)	NA NA	4.0 *	4.0 *
Citizens	4.0 * (1.6)	3.0 ^b (1.6)	3.2 (1.4)	3.9 (.5)	3.5 (.9)	3.7 ^c (.8)	2.5 (2.1)	3.5 *	2.8 (1.6)

Note. Standard deviations are in parentheses.

* Denotes a category with only one respondent. Standard deviations were not calculated.

NA= Not Applicable; city managers are not employed in mayor-council cities and questions regarding these actors were omitted there.

^a There was only one respondent in this category.

^b Two respondents failed to provide valid answers.

^c One respondent failed to provide a valid answer.

^d There was only one respondent in this category.

Although Chapter Four revealed the variable "form of government" had a strong influence, the analysis presented here indicates that responses also varied according to task area; thus, another possible interaction effect exists. When controlling for task area, the most notable differences in responses between forms of government were offered by public works officials. Here, controlling for task area most clearly shows that form of government influenced their answers. For example, in each of the response categories, the mayor-council public works administrator always gave a

higher level of influence to elected officials and citizens than did his council-manager counterparts (by at least one full point). Contrarily, in the departments of planning and recreation, differences in responses between forms of government are less notable. Here, differences in the level of influence attributed to planning and recreation officials were generally smaller between the two forms of government (the mean difference between forms of government was .5 for recreation officials and .8 for planning officials). Responses from recreation and planning officials also varied between whether mayor-council or council-manager governments were more influenced by elected officials and citizens with no consistent pattern emerging. That is, no pattern emerged indicating that either the mayor-council or council-manager government was generally more sensitive to pressures from elected officials or citizens. Likewise, no pattern emerged indicating that planning or recreation was more or less sensitive to elected officials or citizens. These findings generally indicate an interaction effect, i.e., the task area determined whether (and in what way) form of government influenced responses.

Additional analysis reveals that generally, when holding form of government constant, the level of influence of a particular actor varied according to task area. For example, for all council-manager administrators, the mayor

was most influential in public works departments (2.8), followed by recreation (2.3) and planning (2.0). For mayor-council administrators, the council was most influential in public works departments (2.5), followed by recreation (1.6) and planning (1.4).

As stated earlier, a complicating factor results from interviewing only one public works official in a mayor-council government and only one planning official in a council-manager government. Thus, results remain tentative.

As noted in Chapter Four, administrators in mayor-council governments appeared more open to and less insulated from citizen pressure than were their colleagues in council-manager governments. This, however, fails to hold true for all task areas. The design of the council-manager plan was intended to add a level of insulation from the pressures of citizens and, perhaps, elected officials. This design principle appeared to manifest itself only for public works officials.

Theme 4: Have You Ever Felt That A Policy Was Somehow Out Of Line? If So, Where Did You Look For Guidance?

When administrators were asked whether during their career they felt that a policy was somehow "out of line," Table 5.6 shows that in the aggregate 80 percent answered



"Yes."⁴ When separated by task area, 71 percent of public works, 80 percent of recreation, and all planning officials answered in the affirmative. Though some variation existed across departments, the results suggest that neither task area nor form of government were influential variables.

Table 5.6 Administrators Who Have Felt That A Policy Was Somehow Out Of Line: By Task Area and Form Of Government

Response	Public Works			Recreation			Planning		
	MC	CM	Total	MC	CM	Total	MC	CM	Total
Yes	0	5	5	4	4	8	2	1	3
No	1	1	2	0	2	2	0	0	0
Number of Respondents	1	6	7	4	6	10	2	1	3

When asked where they looked for guidance in such a situation, Chapter Four reported that form of government was an influential variable. Specifically, council-manager administrators were more likely to report that the profession was a source of guidance than were their mayor-council counterparts. When controlling for task area, however, this relationship disappears. As shown in Table 5.7, 86 percent of public works and all planning officials

⁴ Those administrators who answered that they never experienced a policy that was out of line were urged to consider, in the follow-up question (and following table), what they would do if they found a policy to be out of line.

looked to their professions when they believed a policy was "out of line," while there was no consistent response for recreation administrators (only 20 percent looked to their profession).

Table 5.7 Sources Of Guidance When Administrators Feel A Policy Is "Out Of Line": By Task Area and Form Of Government

Response	Public Works			Recreation			Planning		
	MC	CM*	Total	MC ^b	CM ^c	Total	MC ^d	CM ^e	Total
Profession/expertise/									
Service Value	1	5	6	0	2	2	2	1	3
Personal Ethics	0	0	0	2	1	3	1	0	1
Interest of the Dept. Council	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Citizens Wants	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	0	1
Mayor	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0
Politicians	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0
City Manager	NA	1	1	NA	0	0	NA	1	1
Self-Preservation	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Management Team	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Official Policy	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Number of Respondents	1	6	7	4	6	10	2	1	3

Note. Column numbers refer to the number of administrators who tendered each response. "Number of Respondents" refers to the number of administrators who provided valid responses; it will not always equal the sum of all responses since officials frequently gave multiple answers.

NA= Not Applicable: City managers are not employed by mayor-council governments.

- * Two respondents provided two answers.
- ^b Each respondent provided two answers.
- ^c One respondent provided three answers; one respondent provided two.
- ^d Two respondents provided two answers.
- ^e This respondent provided two answers.

Although the conclusions drawn here are limited due to the small sample size, the results reported in Table 5.7 suggest that an administrator's profession serves as an important source of guidance for officials from public works and planning departments, while no clear source of guidance exists for recreation officials. These results support the

conclusion that form of government mattered little and an administrator's task area was instead the more important variable in predicting responses. Thus, the results reported in Chapter Four were probably spurious.

Theme 5: Hypothetical Policy Conflict Between Two Formal Governmental Actors: What Do You Do?

Although the findings in Chapter Four suggested that form of government was an important variable in determining administrators' responses to this question, once task area is taken into account any relationship between form of government and administrators' responses weakens significantly.

According to Table 5.8, public works and recreation officials were more likely than planners to respond that their role, when two other governmental actors disagreed over policy, was providing information and education. Seventy-one percent of public works administrators and 60 percent of recreation administrators focused on the information and education role, while no planners tendered this response. Planning officials, on the other hand,

indicated that they would do what their supervisors⁵ wanted; only one of these officials indicated that he would also mediate. Moreover, more recreation administrators than either public works or planning maintained that "staying out" of the conflict would be an appropriate role (40 percent).

Table 5.8 Actions Administrators Take When Faced With A "Hypothetical" Conflict Between Two Formal Governmental Actors: By Task Area And Form Of Government*

Response	Public Works			Recreation			Planning		
	MC ^b	CM ^c	Total	MC ^d	CM ^e	Total	MC	CM ^f	Total
Provide Information/Education	1	4	5	2	4	6	0	0	0
Stay Out	0	1	1	1	3	4	0	0	0
Mediate	0	1	1	1	1	2	0	1	1
Provide Recommendation	1	1	2	1	0	1	0	0	0
Whatever The Mayor Wants	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Whatever The City Manager Wants	NA	1	1	NA	0	0	NA	1	1
Use Citizens To Pressure Council	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0
Number of Respondents	1	6	7	4	6	10	2	1	3

Note. Column numbers refer to the number of administrators who tendered each response. "Number of Respondents" refers to the number of administrators who provided valid responses; it will not always equal the sum of all responses since officials frequently gave multiple answers.

NA= Not Applicable: city managers are not employed in mayor-council cities, and questions regarding these actors were omitted there.

* Possible conflicts between formal governmental institutions include those that occur between the mayor and the council, the manager and the mayor, or similar actors/institutions.

^b The only respondent in this category provided two answers.

^c Two respondents provided two answers.

^d Two respondents provided two answers.

^e Three respondents provided two answers.

^f The only respondent in this category provided two answers.

These responses appear consistent across forms of government. For example, recreation administrators in both

⁵ In the case of the planner working in the council-manager government, the supervisor was the city manager. For planners working in the mayor-council governments, their supervisor was the mayor.



forms of government responded that their role was to provide information and education in almost equal proportions (50 percent and 66 percent respectively).

The only category of responses that may have a link to form of government is "stay out." Out of five total responses, four were tendered by council-manager administrators -- three of which were given by recreation officials. This may suggest another interaction effect between form of government and task area.

In short, it appears from the data shown in Table 5.8 that when a conflict arises, public works and recreation administrators are more inclined to try to remain neutral, while planners tend to choose the side of their supervisor.

The second part of this question asked administrators to identify sources of guidance when faced with the hypothetical policy conflict. Table 5.9 reports these findings.

Table 5.9 Sources Of Guidance When Administrators Are Faced With A Conflict Between Two Formal Government Actors: By Task Area And Form Of Government*

Response	Public Works			Recreation			Planning		
	MC ^b	CM ^c	Total	MC ^d	CM ^e	Total	MC ^f	CM ^g	Total
Professional/ Personal Judgment	0	2	2	2	4	6	1	0	1
City Manager	NA	3	3	NA	1	1	NA	1	1
Mayor	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	0	2
Council	0	1	1	1	1	2	0	0	0
Team	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1
Agency	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Number of Respondents	0	6	6	4	6	10	2	1	3

Note. Column numbers refer to the number of administrators who tendered each response. "Number of respondents" refers to the number of administrators who provided valid responses; it will not always equal the sum of all responses since officials frequently gave multiple answers.

NA= Not Applicable: city managers are not employed in mayor-council cities and questions regarding these actors were omitted there.

* Possible conflicts between formal governmental institutions include those that occur between the mayor and the council, the manager and the mayor, or similar actors/institutions.

^b There is only one respondent in this category and he did not provide a valid answer.

^c Two respondents failed to provide a valid answer; two respondents provided two answers.

^d Two respondents failed to provide a valid answer; one respondent provide more than one answer.

^e Two respondents provided more than one answer.

^f One respondent provided more than one answer.

^g This respondent provided more than one answer.

The findings in Chapter Four suggested that the profession and one's organizational superior provided guidance for administrators in both forms of government; thus, form of government was not particularly influential in

administrators' responses.⁶ When task area was controlled for in Table 5.9, 60 percent of recreation administrators indicated that professional judgment served as an important source of guidance, a response tendered by almost equal numbers of council-manager and mayor-council administrators. Here, as in Chapter 4, analysis also suggests that form of government was not influential for recreation administrators.

For planners and public works officials the limited number of responses for Table 5.9 failed to provide enough data to draw firm conclusions.⁷ However, the fact that the recreation officials responded in a relatively clear pattern, which is different from the responses of the other two task areas, would seem to indicate that task area made some difference; thus, a possible interaction effect existed.

⁶ Not surprisingly, however, mayor-council administrators chose the mayor as their supervisor, and council-manager administrators chose the city manager as their supervisor.

⁷ The only public works official from a mayor-council government failed to give a valid response, severely limiting the results.

Theme 6: Hypothetical Conflict Between Citizens And
Government Officials: What Do You Do?

When administrators were asked the question, "Hypothetically, if citizens demand service 'X' and government officials want service 'Y,' how would you deal with this situation?," Chapter Four revealed that form of government had negligible influence. The results presented here suggest that an administrator's task area appears to be a more influential variable, notable largely in the responses of recreation administrators.

As shown in Table 5.10, public works and planning officials gave a narrow range of answers, and all officials in both of these task areas indicated that their role would be to provide information and education. On the other hand, although responses from recreation officials indicated that their role also would largely be to provide information and education (80 percent), they mentioned many additional duties, which included providing a recommendation, using citizens to pressure the council, and doing what their supervisor wanted -- something administrators from other task areas failed to do.

Table 5.10 Actions Administrators Take When Faced With A Conflict Between Citizens and Government Officials: By Task Area And Form Of Government

Response	Public Works		Recreation		Planning	
	MC	CM	MC	CM	MC	CM
Provide Information/Education	1	6	3	5	2	1
Stay Out	0	2	0	0	0	1
Mediate	0	0	0	0	0	0
Provide Recommendation	1	0	2	2	0	0
Whatever The Mayor Wants	0	0	2	0	0	0
Whatever The City Manager Wants	NA	0	NA	2	NA	0
Use Citizens To Pressure The Council	0	0	1	2	0	0
Whatever The Council Wants	0	2	0	1	0	0
Whatever Politicians Want	0	0	0	1	0	0
Number of Respondents	1	6	4	6	2	1
						3

Note. Column numbers refer to the number of administrators who tendered each response. "Number of respondents" refers to the number of administrators who provided valid responses; it will not always equal the sum of all responses since officials frequently gave multiple answers.

NA= Not Applicable: city managers are not employed in mayor-council cities and questions regarding these actors were omitted there.

^a One respondent used the generic term "politicians." Clearly the mayor and council members are politicians; however, it seems most true to the interview to use three separate response categories for recording this information.



When these data are viewed in terms of total responses from a particular task area, out of twenty-one responses from recreation officials, only 38 percent of those tendered indicated they should provide education and information. The remaining responses from recreation officials suggested that they should also act in other ways. These results differ from those gathered from public works and planning officials. Seventy-five percent of all responses from planners and 58 percent of all responses from public works officials indicated they should provide information and education. Recreation officials evidently feel they have broad duties when faced with a conflict, while public works and planning directors are more narrowly focused.

When administrators were asked about sources of guidance under these circumstances, all public works and planning officials indicated that the profession would serve as a source (see Table 5.11). Responses from recreation officials were again more varied, with only 50 percent indicating that the profession would serve as a source of guidance (the majority of responses). Other notable sources of guidance for recreation directors included the city manager, the mayor, and "community interest."

When these responses were recoded into two categories - citizens and the government,⁸ only recreation officials indicated that citizens would be a source of potential guidance, with over one-quarter of the responses (but 40 percent of officials) focusing on citizens.

Table 5.11 Sources Of Guidance When Administrators Are Faced With A Conflict Between Citizens and Government Officials: By Task Area And Form Of Government

Response	Public Works			Recreation			Planning		
	MC	CM ^a	Total	MC	CM ^b	Total	MC	CM	Total
Professional/									
Personal Judgment	1	4	5	1	4	5	2	0	2
City Manager	NA	0	0	NA	2	2	NA	0	0
Mayor	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0
Community Interest	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0
Resources Available	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Advisory Group	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Number of Respondents	1	4	5	4	6	10	2	0	2

Note. Column numbers refer to the number of administrators who tendered each response. "Number of respondents" refers to the number of administrators who provided valid responses; it will not always equal the sum of all responses since officials frequently gave multiple answers.

NA= Not Applicable: city managers are not employed in mayor-council cities and questions regarding these actors were omitted there.

^a Two respondents failed to give valid answers.

^b Two respondents gave two answers.

^c There were no valid answers in this category.

Analysis reveals that recreation administrators responded differently than public works or planning officials. In only four responses out of twenty was there any indication that something other than the profession or

⁸ The government variable includes the profession and the administrator's supervisor; the citizen variable includes community interests and advisory groups.

one's superior should be used for guidance, and all were from recreation officials. Additionally, it was recreation officials in *mayor-council* governments who were least likely to find the profession a source of guidance. This is a notable variation. Thus, responses show that although task area does not appear to influence whether form of government matters for public works or planning, findings for this question suggest that task area indeed influences whether form of government matters for recreation officials. This is indicative of the possibility of another interaction effect.⁹

Conclusion

The results presented in this chapter suggest that the variable "task area" helps explain more clearly the variation in administrators' responses to interview questions than does the variable "form of government." This is consistent with a great deal of the literature in political economy, institutionalism/neo-institutionalism,

⁹ Theme Seven is not included in this chapter. This Theme, the exploration of "constitutional subordinate autonomy" was treated fully in Chapter Four. As noted there, constitutional subordinate autonomy was largely rejected by all local government administrators.

and organizational theory -- to name only a few of the important streams.¹⁰

The analysis in this chapter reveals that one's profession can be an important source of guidance -- depending on the task area or one's department. Although any conclusions must be tentative, public works professionals may be more likely than planning or recreation officials to find their particular profession to be a source of direction.¹¹ This may also account for the finding that these administrators often feel torn on issues where expertise pulls them in one direction and pressure from elected officials pulls them in another. If the public works profession serves as a foundation for their expertise and guidance, then it is not surprising that any "political" interference in their work would be cause for concern.

Another significant finding is that officials from the public works and planning task areas were less likely to feel "fundamentally" responsible to citizens than were

¹⁰ For an example of the political economy literature see Wamsley and Zald (1973); for organizational theory literature see Hult and Walcott (1990); and for examples of institutionalism/neo-institutionalism literature see DiMaggio and Powell (1991) and Scott and Meyer (1992). For a more detailed review of these literatures and how they relate to the findings presented in this chapter, see the Conclusion chapter.

¹¹ That is, they find guidance not from the broader public administration profession but in their specific "technical" profession.

recreation officials. Although a majority of the former administrators (71 percent of the public works and 66 percent of the planning officials) indicated that fundamental responsibility belonged to citizens, 29 percent of public works and 33 percent of planning officials indicated that it belonged elsewhere (e.g., with the staff or the city manager, in the city ordinances). The data here also point to a relationship between the variable "form of government" and administrators' responses; council-manager officials in planning and public works were the only administrators who maintained that fundamental responsibility belonged to actors other than citizens (see Chapter Four). This is unlike recreation officials where unanimous responses indicated fundamental responsibility was owed to citizens. Thus, the analysis suggests an interaction effect between form of government and task area in administrators' responses.

Another element that differentiated public works directors from their recreation and planning counterparts was how the former viewed their role in the face of conflict between two governmental actors and how they viewed their role in the face of conflict between citizens and government. More than 70 percent of public works officials in the first case and 100 percent in the second case maintained that their role was to provide information and

education. In neither instance did recreation directors respond this way with as much frequency. For planning directors, the data are less clear. In the case of conflict between government officials, no planning official answered that his or her role was to provide information. Instead, their answers focused on doing what their supervisor wanted. In the second case, conflict between citizens and government, all planning administrators answered that they would provide information and education.

Throughout, public works directors responded with a narrower range of answers, focusing steadily on the influence of their profession, expertise, neutrality, and "answering to the boss." Administrators involved in providing recreation services did not follow suit. When these administrators were asked about sources of guidance, few consistent, clear patterns emerged. When asked about sources of guidance when policies were "out of line" or when administrators were "caught in the middle," responses were scattered across the spectrum of responses. More focused responses were tendered when these administrators faced concrete "external" dilemmas, i.e., problems between two specific actors rather than the "internal" dilemmas associated with the personalized reactions of an administrator who is "caught in the middle." In these external dilemmas, recreation officials reported looking for

guidance in the profession and in other intra-organizational sources (e.g., the city manager or the mayor) but with much less frequency than officials in other task areas and with an assortment of other responses (Tables 5.9 and 5.11). It appears, then, that recreation officials were less prone to look to their profession for guidance than were public works officials. Instead, they used a myriad of sources to help generate reactions.

In addition, the type of issue that recreation administrators struggled over evidently was different from that identified by public works professionals. Where public works directors reported feeling largely "caught in the middle" of issues where their expertise pulled them in one direction and pressures from elected officials pushed them in another, answers tendered by recreation directors revealed a host of problems with none of them receiving significantly more attention than any other.

Overall, planning officials responded in ways similar to recreation officials. Although there were fewer responses from planners, the analysis suggests that sources of guidance were slightly more varied than for public works officials, with a tendency for planning administrators to look only to their supervisor when faced with a conflict between two formal governmental actors. Additionally, unlike public works directors (but similar to recreation

officials), planning officials reported a number of different issues on which they felt caught in the middle. Their responses were equally distributed among conflicts between expertise and politics, expertise and public opinion, and mayor and city council.

Thus, interview responses generally varied according to the administrator's task area. At the same time, there were some interaction effects between task area and form of government. Task area may then provide an additional explanation for administrators' responses to interview questions along with the type of city government in which they worked. Only tentative conclusions can be drawn, however, because of the limited nature of the sample. From an exploratory perspective, more research should be carried out on the influence of task area and its relationship to administrative guidance. It seems reasonably clear, though, that American regime values had little overt influence on any self-reported administrative behavior.

The concluding chapter will offer some explanation for these results, highlight opportunities for further research, and discuss the implications of these findings for professional practice and theory building.

VI.

CONCLUSION

The clear, quick, definable, measurable answers are ruled out. In this twilight of power, there is no quick path to a convenient light switch.

- Adlai Stevenson

Everywhere in American life, the professions are triumphant.

- Kenneth S. Lynn

This study explored sources of guidance and responsibility among South Carolina local public administrators. Its major finding is that local government administrators do not feel compelled to uphold the Constitution, but rather feel their chief responsibility is to their profession and to their superiors. A second, and somewhat unexpected finding was that an official's department or task area may have influenced how administrators perceived their role in the governance process and also where they looked for guidance when faced with difficult decisions.

In this chapter, a brief overview of the findings will be presented. Particularly important, the chapter will also

explore why task area might have been so influential. Weaknesses in the analysis are identified and linked to opportunity for future research. Finally, implications of the study for professional practice and theory building are discussed.

The Balancing Hypotheses Revisited

This research does not support the hypothesis that Rohr's normative theory of public administration applies to practitioners on the local level as it does to their federal counterparts. For Rohr, public administrators participate in the constitutional system by fulfilling the objective of their oath of office: to uphold the Constitution of the United States. What this means in practice for Rohr is that federal administrators should use their discretionary power in order to maintain the constitutional balance of powers in support of individual rights. This role carries a heightened sense of responsibility concerning the pursuit of individual rights and the public interest beyond the mere blind implementation of a superior's request. Local administrators queried in this study felt no such responsibility. In many instances the findings suggest they were simply doing (or would do) as they were told. These types of actions may not have been "blind" implementation of public policy but would, at least from the perspective of

this study, be considered policy implementation without overt constitutional guidance.

Instead of American regime values guiding administrators, life on the local government level along the dimensions studied here often reflected corporate administration models cast aside decades ago by the public administration community. These models ebbed because of their supposed inability to reflect public administrative reality. The results of this study suggest that these models may indeed reflect the administrative reality of public administration, but at the *local* level. What this may mean in practice for local government, then, is that there is some degree of applicability of a politics/administration dichotomy. Local administration finds itself embracing management principles while turning its head on overt political influences.

This study's findings also failed to reflect Barth's contribution to the balance-wheel metaphor. Barth found through empirical investigation that to a considerable extent federal administrators viewed their role from the perspectives of checks and balances and managing the constitutional process. This was not the case at the local level in South Carolina. There, local government administrators failed to see themselves as part of a system of polycentric power. Even in the non-reformed, strong



mayor-council systems where some degree of separation of power exists, administrators discerned no formal distinctions among governmental actors. No evidence, either anecdotal or in direct responses to interview questions, revealed any inclination to side with actors other than the city's chief executive officer. Although the legislative and the executive are formally separated in the mayor-council system, administrators there reported little or no attraction to the city council. They felt little responsibility to the city council and very little pressure to perform to its standards. The department officials studied here frowned, however, upon an outright alienation of individual city council members (or the city council as a whole) but acknowledged no opportunity, reason, or incentive to side with them. If administrators were to take up the city council's banner, they would be viewed as jumping from the management ship to the politics ship. This was frowned upon by their colleagues and their profession. The result would surely be a drowning administrator.

Furthermore, given the responses reported, one could assume that if an administrator did share an individual councilperson's perspective on a given issue that ran counter to accepted government philosophy much pressure would be placed on the administrator by his or her superiors and peers to sever the linkage and side with the management

"team." Siding with the council in these types of circumstances would be viewed by administrators as an abdication of management responsibilities. In short, South Carolina administrators generally believed, or at a minimum felt compelled to report, they were part of the executive branch and subordinate to the executive -- but to no one else.

Moreover, local government administrators viewed their roles in narrower ways than those federal administrators studied by Barth. The South Carolina local government administrators believed their roles were largely confined to acting as information providers and educators. They failed to mention "checking," "managing the constitutional process," or "representation."¹ Moreover, a number of administrators believed they should "stay out" of political conflicts and, in essence, do as they were told -- something quite contrary to Barth's results.

Other findings in this study, however, are consistent with Barth's. As Barth notes,

if a public administrator is to be effective, prudence dictates that one can only go so far with

¹ Barth argued that, in part, the idea of a "representation" role was tapped by responses that focused on being careful with public funds. If this is a "representation" role, then it indeed surfaced in the responses to this study. Responsible spending, however, is not a concern for public sector employees alone. Providing value in service provision is one dimension of professionalism generally.

questions or challenges before losing the confidence of political superiors. The autonomy must be balanced by a healthy respect for the subordinate position of the administrator (1991, 113).

Barth's contention that constitutional subordinate autonomy is expressed through private, restrained argument forms the basis of many responses noted in this study. Administrators were prepared to press their case as long as they did so behind closed doors. Public betrayal of the government's policies was seen as "going too far," a way for citizens confidence in, and the credibility of, the administrator to be damaged.

Private dialogue and debate, here, was recognized by administrators as prudent, particularly if it was founded on professional expertise. This type of response, however, reflects wise practices in both the public and private sectors and can be found in prudent practices of occupations on both sides of the public/private dividing line.

There is another similarity between Barth's findings and those reported here. Through both anecdotal and direct responses to interview questions, the respondents indicated that they were representing citizens as guardians of the "public trust." For example, one public works official said, "I see my role to provide innovative ways to provide good, perhaps better, service at the best possible price.



... [w]e look at how best we can serve the public." Another recreation official noted,

I am responsible to see that those dollars that come from citizens relate to the functions of my department and that those [dollars] are spent as efficiently and as productively as possible.

Moreover, as Table 4.11 suggested, when administrators believed a policy was out of line, they most often looked in part to what provided the best "service value" (as determined through their expertise and training) as a criterion for decision making. It seems, however, that the ideas behind stewardship of the purse is a function of both public and private administration and is not solely planted in constitutional values or American democratic principles.

In addition to the results presented within each theme, a comparison across tables uncovers an interesting finding. There was a difference between the actor to whom an administrator felt responsible and how he or she was guided. Although respondents clearly noted that they were formally responsible to the city's chief executive officer and fundamentally responsible to citizens, they failed to look to either of these actors for guidance. Instead, administrators reported being guided largely by their professions. Individual rights and constitutional values were never mentioned. Instead, the protection of individual

rights and the exercise of prudent public policy appeared to emerge from technical and professional solutions.

Additionally, whatever "balancing" role exists for local government administrators is quite different from what Rohr's model proposes. In council-manager governments, there are no formal branches to balance - and thus no maneuvering between branches. In mayor-council systems, there are branches to balance but administrators failed to see themselves connected to the legislative side. In effect, they also considered themselves to be working in a monocentric governing system.

Where some balancing could take place (and the data are unclear on whether administrators utilize this opportunity) is between citizens and the mayor or, in the case of council-manager administrators, between the city manager and citizens. This opportunity exists because administrators seem to generally feel they owe fundamental responsibility to citizens and formal responsibility to their CEO. Under these conditions there are two important actors for administrators to consider (and possibly balance) in policy formulation; thus, balancing can occur. Findings suggest, however, that administrators found themselves compelled to follow only their superiors' requests, leaving citizens to fend for themselves. The only support administrators were

willing to provide was information. Opportunities for balancing existed but they did not appear to be exercised.

The only explicit type of balancing administrators referred to throughout the interview process was between providing the best services to citizens and having the finances available to support those services. This appears less of a balancing act than it does a typical cost/benefit analysis. It is certainly not the type of action Rohr refers to in the "balance wheel."

Possible Ways To Explain The Influence Of Task Area

A separate research finding focused on the role of task area. Originally unexpected, task area evidently had important bearing on administrators' perceptions of their role in the governance process. This study argues that scholars should take task area into account when considering prescriptions for administrative behavior.

The literature supporting the conclusions drawn in the "task area" portion of the study is extensive, and the purpose of the following section is not to rehash the findings or review the literature in its entirety. Instead, the aim is to point out how this literature may help explain the importance of task area and to highlight a body of literature that may assist normative theorists and those who counsel public administrators. This brief review will

target literature aimed at the idea that different task areas exist within a single organization, for the purposes of this study, a city government. Each of these task areas has unique characteristics which may influence those administrators who work within them.

A. Political Economy

In the early 1970s, Wamsley and Zald brought to the attention of the public administration community the notion of an "internal political economy" existing within public organizations.² The idea refers to the interrelationship between matters of legitimacy and distribution of power as they affect an agency's existence ("politics") and the arrangement of the division of labor and allocation of resources for task accomplishment within a given agency ("economy") (1973, 64). This early sketch highlighted an intra-organizational system where each individual unit reflects unique values regarding the "structure of authority and power and the dominant values, goals, and ethos institutionalized in that structure" (67). These authors focused on both the instrumental nature of these structures (e.g., facilitating the accomplishment of some task) and the

² The original article published in *Public Administration Review* dealt with both internal and external political economies.

broader idea that political economies provide a basis for more wide ranging political functions (e.g., development of agency mission, recruitment and socialization, oversight, and adaptability to outside pressures).

The important point for this study is the early recognition that these various intra-organizational systems exist within public (and private) organizations. These internal structures place pressure on employees to behave in certain observable ways (Wamsley and Zald 1973, 70). The recognition that these "internal forces" move and react in response to their own internal dynamic supports the findings here. That is, individual task areas or departments are guided by different sets of assumptions. These different assumptions may be incongruous with broader constitutional values and American democratic tradition.

The departments of public works, planning, and recreation highlighted in the study reflect the political economies described by Wamsley and Zald. That is, administrators' responses to interview questions generally varied by department. These different sets of responses often reflected different values, preferences, and structures of authority. For example, administrators from public works were more often than other administrators to find fundamental responsibility in actors other than citizens. This is a particular preference and approach to

authority reflected by only public works administrators. As Wamsley and Zald noted, this perspective influences administrators to act (or at the very least they reported to act) in certain observable ways which were then reflected in the study's results.

B. Neoinstitutionalism

Another important body of literature is found in the area of neo-institutionalism. This literature is rooted in the "old institutionalism" literature and brings with it important insights. Although there are many similarities between the old and new, a distinction important for this study is, namely, how neo-institutionalists conceive of the organizational environment.³ According to DiMaggio and Powell, for "old institutionalism," the focus was on the organization embedded in its local, largely geographic environment. (For example, Selznick's Tennessee Valley Authority was embedded in the local Tennessee Valley culture.) The "new institutionalism" focuses "instead on nonlocal environments, either organizational sectors or fields roughly coterminous with the boundaries of

³ For a good comparison between the two literature streams see, for example, DiMaggio and Powell's, (1991) *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, 12-13.

industries, professions, or national societies" (DiMaggio and Powell 1991, 13). As the authors further explain,

[e]nvironments, in this view [the neoinstitutionalist], are more subtle in their influence; rather than being co-opted by organizations, *they penetrate the organization, creating the lenses through which actors view the world and the very categories of structure, action, and thought* (emphasis added) (13).

It is this sort of "vertical" institution that exists within the broader organization (i.e., the city government) that is important to the study's findings. According to this idea, the environment of each task area is unique and as such it pierces the city's governing organization inserting into the larger structure a unique set of imperatives. Each of these vertical institutions (e.g., public works, recreation, and planning) share similarities with other corresponding institutions -- public works administrators share more values with other public works administrators in other cities than they do with their recreation counterparts who are working for the same city government. Although this was probably true for Selznick's Tennessee Valley, the old institutionalism literature chose not to focus on this dimension. Instead, the focus was on the values of the local community and their ability to influence (permeate) an entire organization.

In addition, DiMaggio and Powell note,

[n]eoinstitutionalists view institutionalization as occurring at the sectoral ... levels, and consequently interorganizational in locus. Thus whereas the old institutionalism viewed organizations as organic wholes, the new institutionalism treats them as loosely coupled arrays of standardized elements (1991, 14).

These "loosely coupled arrays of standardized elements" are precisely what this study found. That is, respondents from similar task areas (or sectors) tendered similar responses to interview questions while respondents from different task areas within the same city government tendered different responses.

Scott and Meyer call these vertical institutions "societal sectors."⁴ These are defined as "a collection of organizations [institutions or sectors] operating in the same domain, as identified by the similarity of their services, products, or functions" (Scott and Meyer 1991, 117). The boundaries of these sectors are defined in functional, not geographical terms (118). Societal sectors embrace a number of characteristics, not the least important of which is that each of these sectors embrace an important set of values that influence the structure and performance of the task area and those administrators that inhabit it.

⁴ Other authors have different labels reflecting similar concepts, e.g., Wildavsky's (1979) "public policy sector," and DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) "organizational field."

Scott and Meyer report much evidence for the existence of societal sectors through the use of either cross-sectional comparison, cross-societal comparison, or longitudinal approaches. This study identified the existence of these sectors through a cross-sectional analysis comparing public works with recreation and planning at one level of government.

What, then, is the utility for public administration of identifying these sectors? Each type of societal sector is driven by a different set of values. "Technical" sectors such as public works develop structures that insulate them from external forces. Such organizations, as Meyer, Scott, and Deal note, "are under pressure to become relatively closed systems, sealing off their technical cores from environmental factors" (1981, 152-153). These types of systems prescribe particular roles for participants. In turn, these participants are motivated and guided by different sets of values than, say, "institutional" sectors are. "Institutional" sectors such as recreation departments, are, instead, motivated by the framework of the larger organization or the environment that they inhabit. "These societal [institutional] sectors must conform to institutional rules -- including community understandings -- in order to survive" (Meyer, Scott, and Deal 1981, 153). In short,

the technical sector faces inward, toward its technical core and turns its back on the environment, while the institutional organization turns its back on its technical core in order to concentrate on conforming to its institutional environment (153).

These concepts are clearly found in this study's results. For example, recreation was the only task area that looked broadly to its environment for guidance. These administrators used a wide range of sources for support when faced with complex problems. The sources were largely extra-organizational which included "citizen interests," "advisory boards," and "law." Of all administrators interviewed, recreation administrators were least inclined to look inward, toward their profession. Contrarily, when public works administrators sought guidance they responded more narrowly than recreation administrators by looking only to their technical core, i.e., their public works profession and their training and expertise.

There is a vast literature explaining why different task areas develop different cultures (i.e., technical or institutional). The point here is that there is literature to support the idea that diverse sectors exist within a given city government (and other governments as well) and each of these sectors conforms to a different set of moral imperatives. These complex environments present unique challenges for public administration teachers and

researchers. The results of this study suggest that the culture of each sector type may influence how administrators respond to stimuli by influencing where those administrators look for guidance; thus, task area should be taken into consideration by public administration scholars in an effort to better fit normative prescriptions to administrative reality.

C. Governance Structures

Another important contribution to the idea of multiple institutions inhabiting a single organization is found in Hult and Walcott's idea of "governance structures."

Governance structures emerge

as people in organizations strive to develop patterned ways in which to discover and articulate goals, select among means, cope with uncertainty and controversy generated both within and outside the organization, and foster legitimacy and commitment inside and outside of the organization (Hult and Walcott 1990, 36).

Governance structures outline who shall lead, the power configurations within the structure, and the adaptability of the structure (77-78). According to this model, organizations contain "clusters" of individual governance structures which emerge or are "activated" in a number of ways (37). Some are more or less permanent, some are routinely activated, and still others may be *ad hoc* - "improvised in the face of unanticipated crisis or

opportunity" (37). For the purposes of this study, reasons why these structures are generated are less important than the fact that they exist within a single organization (city government) -- serving particular purposes for that task area (e.g., to reduce an environment of uncertainty or conflict or to assist public organizations in advancing particular process values, such as bureaucratic rationality, accountability, representativeness, and legitimacy). More to the point, according to Hult and Walcott,

[g]iven numerous -- and, probably, mounting -- sources of ambiguity and controversy, *one can expect to find considerable evidence of differentiated governance structures in most public organizations* (emphasis added) (38).

The purpose of examining these structures in organizations is to help us appreciate how different task areas (or more broadly, governments) respond to change and how they resolve problems (including which participants are included in the resolution) - a critical concern for this study. Another reason for examining governance structures is based on the idea that these distinctive structures influence not only how policy issues are recognized, but (as mentioned above) how they shape abstract values associated with American democratic decision making, e.g., representativeness, accountability, and legitimacy (Hult and Walcott 1990, 77). In short, not only are governance structures affected by their environment, but they, in turn,

influence the environment; thus, impacting the perceptions of citizens. These are concerns important to the examination of task area influence on administrative decisions.

For example, according to Hult and Walcott's "governance structure" framework, public works departments arguably are characterized by goal consensus and technical certainty. These officials then have little need to look beyond the dictates of their profession for guidance. Perhaps decisions in recreation, in contrast, are more often characterized by goal uncertainty (or controversy) and technical uncertainty -- producing the need for collegial-competitive or collegial-consensual decision structures that might well include citizen input. If this is accurate, then governance structures would indeed influence the types of factors that guide decision making. Thus, in some instances (e.g., recreation) there are more opportunities for abstract American democratic values to guide administrators as they look outward toward citizens for support. If, on the other hand, a task area has a high degree of technical certainty, there is little reason for administrators to look beyond their profession for guidance. Administrators believe that answers can largely be found within their profession; thus, reinforcing a degree of separation of politics from administration.

This brief review of relevant literature would seem to indicate that prescriptions for local civil servants (as well as perhaps those at other levels of government) should take into account possible variation in the constraints, opportunities, and norms that characterize varying departmental, or task area, settings -- a contingency approach. A normative theorist may wish to embrace a sort of contingency approach when offering advice and guidance to the seemingly diverse field of public administration. Perhaps certain task areas will always be guided by private administration principles. Or, perhaps more accurately, certain task areas such as public works will be guided by technical norms, while others like recreation will be guided by a broader framework of the institution and regime values.

Explanations

This study attempted to find whether in an effort to revitalize and renew municipal government, the reform movement influenced how local government administrators perceived their role in the governance process. Its findings suggest that the reform movement was successful in imbuing local government with many of the values associated with private administration. The goals of the private, corporate model are different from those associated with American democratic tradition. The municipal reform

movement, therefore, may have shaped administrators' perceptions.

There can be a number of explanations for differences in administrators perceptions of their role beyond the municipal reform effort, however. First, the business logic found in this study may reflect the general environment of local government politics and administration. That is, unlike state and federal government operations, much of local government operates in a highly competitive environment which permeates the entire local government system. Unlike its state and federal counterparts, most local governments exist in a competitive environment because *comparing* local governments is inevitable, particularly among the general citizenry. Examples of such local intergovernmental competition abound. Tax rates are compared, as are local services and features such as convention and recreational facilities, and prices for water and sewer service. Corporations and, in some instances, individuals assess these characteristics and make locational and other decisions based on comparative assessments.⁵

Moreover, to the extent local government officials think

⁵ For a more complete discussion on the locational influences of local government taxing see, for example, James D. Rodgers, "Sales Taxes, Income Taxes, and Other Nonproperty Tax Revenues." In *Management Policies In Local Government Finance*, 229-259. Washington, D.C.: International City Management Association.

that such competitive pressure exists, they may act accordingly. These types of comparative assessments certainly suggest a competitive framework and perhaps a private administration mindset as a result.

Secondly, when considering how local government may be different, it must be noted that the weight of any counterbalancing forces existing at the local level are much less substantial than those posed by the counterbalancing forces (legislative and executive branches) at the state and federal levels. In most cases, local government administrators work full-time, while local elected officials work perhaps a few hours or days each week. More importantly, "legislative" and "executive" branches in local government do not have strong staff support systems that compare to those available at the state and federal level where large, full-time, well-trained staffs are the norm for elected officials. Thus, even in the face of a full-time elected executive like a strong mayor, local administrators still lack substantive balancing mechanisms (or counterweights) that may emerge at the state and federal levels.

Assessing the implications of these differences may be difficult. In the end, the local government environment perhaps allows the development of a traditional base of administrative power -- expertise -- to an extent not

possible where administrative power may be offset by the existence of full-time (or near full-time) and well-staffed legislatures and executive offices.

It appears, however, that citizens or government officials have little interest in changing this reality. It seems that administrators and citizens alike are content with the idea that local government serves the role of *housekeeper or service provider* - an extension of the state that provides either a product (e.g., safe drinking water, police protection, paved streets, and garbage collection) or confers status (e.g., delinquent, mentally ill, or criminal).⁶ If this is an accurate description, then under this role the opinions and perspectives of these local government administrators make sense and therefore "fit" well within this culture.

This can, in a number of ways, have unfortunate implications for citizens. As Lipsky notes,

public service workers currently occupy a critical position in American society. ... the actions of most public service workers actually constitute the services "delivered" by government (1980, 476).

Local government is particularly important in this regard. The services provided by local public service workers constitute a majority of government-citizen interaction.

⁶ The conferring of status often involves other levels of government as well.

The way in which these local administrators approach their work sends clear messages to citizens regarding how government (all government) is perceived. Local government administrators are in unique positions to provide perhaps a citizen's only personal, face-to-face experience with government -- these bureaucrats can have considerable impact on people's lives. The consumers of administrative decisions (i.e., citizens) can leave this experience with either positive or negative feelings about government. Thus, the bottom line is that although local public administrators provide products and services to citizens, not, in many respects, unlike MacDonal'd's, IBM, and Chrysler, these public employees **represent government** in these interactions and must, therefore, be aware of and represent issues of justice, equity, individual rights, and other American constitutional values lest citizens perceive government in simply a corporate light. This is especially important to remember when public administrators punish citizens or deprive them of their property or limit their use of it.

Whether policy would be different if administrators performed some balancing role is unclear. What can be an important contribution of local government administrators to governance is their recognition of the important place they hold in American government. A recognition of this sort may

provide the public administrator with the sense that if a given policy or order is somehow "out of line," administrators can exercise administrative autonomy to bring it within acceptable boundaries. This alone may provide administrators with the sense of importance and legitimacy they deserve.

Opportunities For Further Research

This project does not purport to study actual behavioral or policy outputs, nor does it claim to investigate precise cause and effect relationships. Instead this project was aimed at exploring how Rohr's normative theory of public administration plays out within a governing system that fails to embrace separation of powers as an organizational criterion. A primary goal was for this study to end, rather than begin, with improved hypotheses regarding what motivates administrators at the level of local government.

This project's ability to generalize to broader populations is limited as is its ability to predict behavior. In addition, although attempts were made to interview a representative sample of administrators from a number of subgroups (e.g., small, medium, and large cities; mayor-council and council-manager cities; public works, planning, and recreation directors) direct comparisons were

unable to be made consistently across all task areas. More specifically, there were almost twice as many council-manager administrators interviewed than mayor-council administrators, only one interview of a public works director from a mayor-council city, and only one interview of a planning official from a council-manager government. This results in decreased internal validity and generalizability.

Furthermore, many changes could have been made that would have lessened the study's limitations. For example, given the open-ended nature of the questions, multiple responses were tendered by some administrators while others offered only a single answer. This may have had the effect of inflating certain response categories, thus, making it look like these categories were more important than they really are. These multiple responses, however, may reflect multiple sources of guidance. On the other hand, administrators who answered with only one response may have believed guidance came from only one source. What is most important for this study, however, is that opportunities existed through the interview process for respondents to offer all sources of guidance which reflects administrative reality. In future studies, asking officials to rank these multiple responses along a Likert scale might be helpful in order to try to tap the intensity of the answer.

Given the important influence of an administrator's profession, future studies should be aimed at understanding what these professions teach. Does professional training provide any reference to the Constitution or an administrators' role in the governance process? Does the tendency to look inward, toward the profession, cut off dialogue between government officials and citizens, and does it also limit citizen debate and citizens' access to the decision making process that is so important to American constitutional tradition? Future studies should empirically evaluate these concerns and expand awareness of these possibilities and the importance of varying public service professions.

Mosher highlighted the unique role of the public service profession almost thirty years ago in his book Democracy and the Public Service (1968). He noted that "professions are the conveyor belts between knowledge and theory on one hand and public purpose on the other" (103). He recognized then the important role these professions can have -- he also recognized the limited attention they were receiving in American government literature when he noted, "the prominent role of American governments in the development and utilization of professions seems to have gone largely unnoticed" (103). The results presented here attempt to re-energize the importance of professions in the

public service by illustrating how much impact they can have not only on an administrator, but, more broadly, the influence they can have on public administrative decision making.

Implications

On the basis of this study's findings, it appears that administrators at the local level are largely guided not by overt constitutional principles but by more immediate and tangible sources such as their individual professions.

There are countless examples where the most professionally or technically correct decision was not designed to protect individual rights. For example, in the Supreme Court case *Delaware v. Prouse* (1979), a New Castle County, Delaware, patrolman used his professional discretion to stop an automobile in order to check the driver's license and registration. As the patrolman approached the vehicle he smelled marijuana smoke and after he moved closer viewed marijuana in plain sight. The driver of the vehicle was subsequently arrested and charged with possession of a controlled substance. The Supreme Court held that professional discretion alone is not a sufficient mechanism to justify intrusions upon Fourth Amendment interests.

Because bureaucrats often govern through authority that is discretionary, and because they are not elected, the

ordinary means of popular control of government officials is inapplicable. Administrators, therefore, must respect constitutional values in order to be viewed as legitimate government actors. As Rohr notes,

[t]o the extent that formal, legal, or institutional controls over the bureaucrat's behavior are either nonexistent or ineffective, bureaucrats have an ethical obligation to respond to the values of the people in whose name they govern. The values in question are not popular whims of the moment, but rather constitutional or regime values (1989, 4-5).

These competing views and traditions leave local administrators with a dilemma. We ask them to be guided by fundamental constitutional principles, yet they fail to find significance in them. In short, it appears problematic for local government officials to be guided by their professions, alone, as the data in this study suggest they are.

If, as answers from this study indicate, professions (rather than traditional constitutional values) are serving as surrogate sources of guidance, then much more concern should be focused on how professions, in both form and content, are providing this leadership. This places professions in singular positions. They have the opportunity to shape decision making in a constitutional context. *An emphasis on constitutional principles and an administrator's obligation to honor them needs to be an*

essential element in the on-going professional education of a public servant. Unless this becomes a concern, we are bound to continue in the shadow of Mosher's words,

[e]xcept for those professionals who grow beyond their field, the real world is seen as by a submariner through a periscope whose direction is fixed and immutable (1968, 108).

The implications of this study's findings for current theory signify the need for a renewed awareness of the possibly unique nature of local government public administration. The analysis presented here may suggest that, regardless of form, administrative life in local government more closely mirrors the classic corporate model than the Madisonian model arguably found at the federal and state levels. If this is indeed the case, perhaps public administration scholars should qualify normative remarks aimed at the generic "public administration" profession and make clear how these prescriptions fit the distinctive environment found in local government and link them to particular tasks and responsibilities.

In practice, local government officials in South Carolina reportedly behave as though they operate in monocentric organizational structures. They fail to follow polycentric models and are thus unable to comply with prescriptions requiring such a framework. In short,



choosing between constitutional masters is neither practical nor relevant in many instances.

Administrators are directed by a chief executive officer and are responsible for carrying out policy. As is already well known, the council-manager movement is formally patterned after this business model and was conceived to be unlike traditional government models with their associated "political" pressures. The designers did not want this plan of government to act like "traditional government." This being the case, administrators working in such an environment should not be expected to follow standard governmental normative prescriptions.

Along several dimensions, the non-reformed mayor-council system has taken on (consciously or unconsciously) many council-manager qualities and embraced them, e.g., a reliance on professional norms, superior/subordinate responsibility, and a monocentric organizational character. In this case, corporate models have much to say for directing the behavior of these administrators as well. As was indicated in the interview responses, these administrators failed to see themselves working in a polycentric system and believed they were only formally responsible to the chief executive officer of this form of government, the mayor. The professionalism designed into



the fabric of the council-manager plan now appears to be woven into the mayor-council plan as well.

Conclusion

This study has found that: 1) local government is different from its federal counterpart, 2) form of government is not a particularly useful indicator of administrators' responses to interview questions, and 3) within local government, different task areas influence administrators' perspectives on their perceived role in government and where they look for guidance. As previously noted, a contingency approach may therefore be warranted when developing normative theories of public administration. This study finds that different systems of guidance serve different societal sectors, institutions or, in the parlance used for this study, task areas. It seems that some public administration theories simply do not "fit" particular task environments. This finding should be taken into account when prescribing normative behaviors for the so-called "generic" public administration community.

APPENDIX A
SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Part I - Introduction

1. Introduction of the interviewer
2. Explanation of the purpose of the study
3. Explain that the interview will last approx. 45 minutes
4. Explain that confidentiality will be maintained and your name will not be linked to anything you say here, and that the questions are not "market research type" but will range widely around that person's professional experience. "Most people find these interviews very interesting."
5. Do you mind if I record our conversation? It helps me to remember afterwards what you said, and it saves me from taking notes.
6. Would you like to/can you tell me a little about yourself?

EXAMPLES:

- a. education
 - b. work experience
 - c. professional associations
 - d. high school/college graduation year
7. Discuss your formal role in the organization. [That is, what do you do, e.g., Captain of police department or assistant director of parks and recreation - responsible for]



Part II - Questions

I'm trying to get a realistic picture of the sometimes complicated process by which administrators make decisions and how they view their roles and responsibilities as public administrators and how their roles and responsibilities influence how they make difficult decisions.

1. Can you recall any times in your career when you felt "caught in the middle" or "torn" on a significant issue you were **WORKING** on?

If so, what was the nature of the issue(s), and what were you caught in the middle of, or torn between?
[Describe some specific issues.]

How much discretion did you have in handling the situation?

In the situations(s) described above, where did you look for guidance?

What did you do?

Why did you do it that way? What was "driving" your decision?

2. Reflect on your roles and responsibilities...

Who or what are you responsible to in your work? [In both a narrow, formal, "organizational chart" way and in a broader, more "fundamental" way.]

3. On a scale from 1 to 5, characterize the degree of influence of the following "actors" in your decisions (5 equals high influence; 1 equals low influence.)

1. Mayor	1	2	3	4	5
2. Members of city council	1	2	3	4	5
3. City Manager	1	2	3	4	5
4. Citizens	1	2	3	4	5

Are there other influences or "actors" who are not mentioned that play an important role in your day-to-day activities or decisions?

If so, who/what are they?

How would you characterize their influence on this scale?

1 2 3 4 5

4. Have you ever felt that a policy or order is somehow "out of line?" [Out of line as in not in the best interest of government or citizens or your agency?]

If so, what did you do?

Where did you look for guidance?

Part III - Hypothetical Situations

I would next like to ask you some hypothetical questions. In doing so, I would like you to place yourself in the situation (in your current position or work role) and try to answer as best you can.

1. Hypothetically, if there is a conflict between the policy preferences of two formal governmental actors or institutions [e.g. between the city manager and city council, between the mayor and city council, between your boss and the city manager, etc.], what would you do?

Where would you look for guidance?

2. Hypothetically, if citizens demanded service "X" and governmental officials wanted service "Y," how would you handle (or deal) with this situation?

Who would you look to for guidance?

Part IV - Constitutional Subordinate Autonomy

Of increasing importance in the public administration literature is the idea that public administrators have an important role in the governance process. That is, that administrators have a responsibility that is greater than blindly carrying out the will of their superiors.

In fact, some argue that administrators have a responsibility to "balance" competing interests in the pursuit of the most prudent public policy. These interests include those of the mayor, city council, city manager, and the agency's interests. Toward this end, the role for administrators is a very active role, a thoughtful role, one that looks out for the greater good. Equally important, administrators should reflect on those values espoused in the U.S. Constitution when making policy decisions because they serve as a basis for decision making.

Does this have any meaning for you?

Do you believe this concept has a role in your activities?

Part V - Conclusion

"...well, I think we have covered everything I needed to ask you. Thank you very much."

"Is there anything else that you would like to add?"

"Is there anything else that you would like to ask me?"

"If I have further questions, can I get back in touch with you?"

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE CONTACT SHEET

Contact Summary Form

Name: _____ Contact Date: _____

Site: _____ Population: _____

Type: _____ Department: _____

1. Education Level: _____

Professional Associations: _____

2. Main issues or themes in this contact:

3. Characteristics of respondent:

4. Anything salient, interesting, illuminating or important in this contact?

5. Other:

APPENDIX C

LIST OF INTERVIEW CODES

<u>Code</u>	<u>Site</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Dept.</u>
1MCPL	N. Charleston	MC	70,218	Planning
2MCPL	Charleston	MC	80,414	Planning
3CMPW	Rock Hill	CM	41,643	Pub. Works
4CMRE	Columbia	CM	98,052	Recreation
5CMPW	Greenville	CM	58,282	Pub. Works
6CMRE	York	CM	6,709	Recreation
7CMRE	Greenville	CM	58,282	Recreation
8MCPW	Charleston	MC	80,414	Pub. Works
9MCRE	Charleston	MC	80,414	Recreation
10CMPW	Columbia	CM	98,052	Pub. Works
11CMPW	Aiken	CM	19,872	Pub. Works
12CMRE	Aiken	CM	19,872	Recreation
13CMPW	Newberry	CM	10,542	Pub. Works
14CMPL	Columbia	CM	98,052	Planning
15CMRE	Newberry	CM	10,542	Recreation
16CMRE	Rock Hill	CM	41,643	Recreation
17CMPW	York	CM	6,709	Pub. Works
18MCRE	N. Augusta	MC	15,351	Recreation
19MCRE	Cheraw	MC	5,505	Recreation
20MCRE	Easley	MC	15,191	Recreation

APPENDIX D

DATA DISPLAYS: BY THEME

Theme #1: Caught In The Middle

Case # Q: Have you ever been caught in the middle? Q: What was the nature of the issue? Q: Where did you look for guidance?

1 MC PL	Yes	Mayor vs. Council	Mayor
2 MC PL	Yes	Professional expertise vs. public opinion	What's right for the city
9 MC RE	Yes	No Answer	Profession & advisory board
18 MC RE	Yes	Republicans vs. Democrats	Constituents
19 MC RE	Yes	Low taxes vs. effective services	No Answer
20 MC RE	Yes	Parents vs. mayor and council	Mayor & the profession
8 MC PW	Yes	Technology vs. Politics	Profession & Technology
14 CM PL	Yes	Professional judgment vs. city's position	The city's position
4 CM RE	Yes	Professional judgment vs. politics	Citizens
6 CM RE	Yes	City policy vs. customer service	Professional & personal judgment & what's best for citizens
7 CM RE	Yes	Quality service vs. saving taxpayer money	City Manager & the profession
12 CM RE	Yes	Council vs. citizens	Expertise, data, & citizen needs

15 CM RE	Yes	Low taxes vs. quality services	Profession, personal judgment, & staff
16 CM RE	Yes	Constituent needs vs. policy	Policy, city manager, advisory commission
3 CM PW	Yes	Politics vs. professional judgment	Experience & state regulations
5 CM PW	Yes	Politics vs. professional judgment	Professional expertise
10 CM PW	Yes	Technology vs. citizens	Profession & technology
11 CM PW	Yes	Money vs. efficient service	Professional expertise
13 CM PW	Yes	City policy vs. community interest	Experience & efficiency
17 CM PW	Yes	Professional expertise vs. policy	Profession & lawyers

Theme #2: To Whom Are You Responsible?

Case # Q: To Whom are you responsible
in a narrow organizational
chart way? Q: To Whom are you
responsible in a more
broad, fundamental way?

1 MC PL	Mayor	Citizens
2 MC PL	Mayor	Citizens
9 MC RE	Mayor	Citizens
18 MC RE	Mayor & City Administrator	Citizens
19 MC RE	Mayor, City Administrator, & Council	No Answer
20 MC RE	Mayor	Citizens
8 MC PW	Mayor	Citizens
14 CM PL	Asst. City Manager	No Broad Responsibility
4 CM RE	Asst. City Manager	No Answer
6 CM RE	City Manager	Citizens
7 CM RE	City Manager	Citizens
12 CM RE	City Manager	Citizens
15 CM RE	City Manager	Citizens
16 CM RE	City Manager	Citizens
3 CM PW	City Manager	Citizens, Staff
5 CM PW	City Manager	City Manager
10 CM PW	City Manager	Staff
11 CM PW	City Manager	Citizens
13 CM PW	City Manager	Citizens
17 CM PW	City Manager	Citizens, Ordinances

Theme #3: Characterize The Level Of Influence Of The Following Government Actors?

Case #	Mayor	Council	City Manager	Citizens	Other
1 MC PL	3.0	1.25	Not Applicable	0.5	Staff
2 MC PL	2.5	1.5	Not Applicable	4.0	Advisory ... Commission
9 MC RE	3.5	3.0	Not Applicable	3.5	Advisory Commission
18 MC RE	2.0	1.0	Not Applicable	4.0	Advisory Commission
19 MC RE	1.5	1.5	Not Applicable	4.5	Business Community
20 MC RE	4.5	1.0	Not Applicable	3.5	
8 MC PW	4.5	2.5	Not Applicable	4.0	Staff
14 CM PL	2.0	2.0	4.0	3.5	
4 CM RE	3.5	3.5	4.5		Technology
6 CM RE	0.5	0	5.0	3.5	
7 CM RE	1.5	1.5	2.5	2.5	
12 CM RE	2.0	2.0	4.0	3.5	Staff
15 CM RE	1.5	2.5	4.0	3.0	
16 CM RE	5.0	3.5	5.0	5.0	Staff
3 CM PW	5.0	2.0	5.0	5.0	Local University
5 CM PW	1.0	1.0	5.0	2.0	Staff
10 CM PW	4.0	4.0	5.0	3.5	Staff
11 CM PW	2.0	1.5	3.5	No Answer	
13 CM PW	1.0	0	5.0	1.5	
17 CM PW	3.5	0	4.5	No Answer	Staff

Theme 4: Have you ever felt that a policy was somehow out of line? If so, where did you look for guidance?

Case #	Policy out of line?	Where did you look for guidance?
1 MC PL	Yes	The Profession Personal Ethics
2 MC PL	Yes	The Profession City Council Makes Last Decision
9 MC RE	Yes	Constituents Interest The Mayor Has Final Decision
18 MC RE	Yes	Mayor's Decision Personal Interest
19 MC RE	Yes	The Program Politicians Have Final Say
20 MC RE	Yes	The Program Personal Ethics (Honesty, Fairness)
8 MC PW	No	The Profession (efficiency/expertise)
14 CM PL	Yes	City Manager The Best Interest Of Citizens
4 CM RE	Yes	Personal Interest, Politics, and Self Preservation
6 CM RE	Yes	The Profession (cost/benefit) The Department
7 CM RE	Yes	Profession (cost/benefit)
12 CM RE	No	No Answer
15 CM RE	Yes	What Do The Citizens Want
16 CM RE	No	The Management "Team"
3 CM PW	Yes	The City Manager
5 CM PW	Yes	What's In The Citizens' Best Interest (cost/benefit)
10 CM PW	Yes	The Profession Citizens Best Interest (Cost Benefit)
11 CM PW	Yes	How To Best Serve The Citizens City Council



13 CM PW	No	Whatever Provides The Best Service At The Least Cost (Cost/Benefit)
17 CM PW	Yes	Service Value (Cost/Benefit) The Official Policy

Theme 5: Hypothetical Conflict Between Two Formal Governmental Actors. What Do You Do?

Case # If there is a conflict between to government institutions. What do you do? Where did you look for guidance?

1 MC PL	Provide recommendations that are in concert with the Mayor's policy	Mayor
2 MC PL	Direction comes from Mayor	Mayor Personal and professional judgment
9 MC RE	Mediate	No Answer
18 MC RE	Educate Use citizens to pressure council	What's best for citizens (tax burden) Whatever the mayor and council want
19 MC RE	Provide information and recommendation	What's best for the community
20 MC RE	Stay out	No Answer
8 MC PW	Provide information and recommendation	No Answer
14 CM PL	Accept CM position, mediate	City Manager Team player
4 CM RE	Stay out	Team player Judgment
6 CM RE	Stay out provide information	Whatever the CM tells me to do
7 CM RE	Provide information, mediate	Advocate issue you think is best What's best for the public
12 CM RE	Provide information	Whatever council votes we do Efficiency
15 CM RE	Stay out provide information	Use citizens, staff, and profession to provide information

16 CM RE	Citizens lobby council on department's behalf	What's best for agency
3 CM PW	Provide information	City Manager
5 CM PW	Stay out	
10 CM PW	Whatever CM says	City manager Economics Interest of public
11 CM PW	Mediate provide information educate	City manager profession
13 CM PW	Provide information	No Answer
17 CM PW	Provide information and recommendation	Whatever council says

Theme 6: Hypothetical Conflict Between Citizens and Government Officials. What Do You Do?

Case # If citizens demand service "X" and gov't officials want service "Y," what do you do? In this situation, where do you look for guidance?

1 MC PL	Provide information and research	Technical expertise
2 MC PL	Provide information	What's in the best interest of the city
9 MC RE	Provide opinion	Profession
18 MC RE	Follow mayor's lead Educational role Use citizens to pressure politicians	Mayor
19 MC RE	Make professional recommendation Educate citizens and council Use advisory commissions to inform public	Community needs
20 MC RE	Whatever mayor says	Mayor
8 MC PW	Provide information and professional opinion/recommendation Educate	Profession
14 CM PL	Stay out Share information	No answer (based on prior answer)
4 CM RE	Follow CM's request	City Manager
6 CM RE	Provide information and recommendation	Experience (prof.) Constituents
7 CM RE	Whatever CM says Educate Provide professional advice	City Manager Money available
12 CM RE	Provide information Do whatever council wants	What's in the community's best interest (paternalistic)

15 CM RE	Find innovative way to do both Use citizen's groups and advisory groups to lobby council	No answer
16 CM RE	Educate/provide info Use citizens' groups to inform council Do what politicians want Use citizens' groups as a buffer	What's in the city's best interest (paternalistic)
3 CM PW	Stay out Protect council Try to get citizens on government's side	No answer
5 CM PW	Provide info to CM	No answer
10 CM PW	Educate both parties	No answer
11 CM PW	Provide information and education Whatever city council wants Talk to CM	No answer
13 CM PW	Provide information Stay out	Value of service to community (prof.)
17 CM PW	Provide research and information	What's in the citizens' best interest (best value of service)

Theme 7: Does "Constitutional Subordinate Autonomy Have Meaning For Senior Level Administrators? Does It Have A Role In Their Activities?"

Case # Does constitutional subordinate autonomy have meaning for you? Does it have a role in your activities?

1 MC PL	<p>a) If I have a good relationship with council I enjoy higher influence and latitude to pursue the issues I feel strongly about.</p> <p>b) You must be politically sensitive to avoid mine fields.</p> <p>c) Don't embarrass the city.</p> <p>d) You can be an activist but it must be done carefully.</p>
2 MC PL	<p>a) I'm pre-disposed to that position.</p> <p>b) I agree that you're more than a bureaucrat.</p> <p>c) Hopefully [through the profession] the mayor recognizes your capabilities and they are interested in your views.</p>
9 MC RE	<p>a) Yes it does. Council and Mayor put a lot of trust in dept. heads.</p> <p>b) Balancing between what we can and can not do for citizens.</p> <p>c) Playing or balancing council members off each other -- be careful not to alienate members of council.</p> <p>d) No matter what we do, it is important the mayor looks good.</p> <p>e) I am the policy maker for the government.</p>
18 MC RE	<p>a) The role of the administrator should be helping to determine, not final, but give information to political leaders to make decisions.</p> <p>b) It is important to know your political people.</p> <p>c) Leadership role of administrators includes working with other government agencies.</p> <p>d) Funding limitations motivates changes in the role of administration - we must be more creative.</p>
19 MC RE	<p>a) Administrator should have vision for his department and the community.</p> <p>b) We are hired as professional administrators to lead the government agency.</p> <p>c) Elected officials set policy; we should create ideas.</p> <p>d) The typical bureaucracy is where no one wants to make the decision.</p>

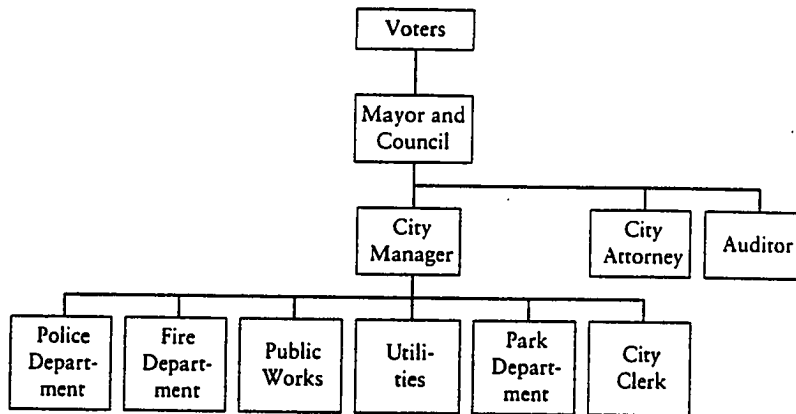
20 MC RE	<p>a) Good idea; takes some pressure off of the mayor and council.</p> <p>b) Could cause problems for the city if administrator went off on his own.</p>
8 MC PW	<p>a) Appropriate depending on environment.</p> <p>b) Occasionally you are a crusader [because you have an answer to their problem based on a professional opinion].</p> <p>c) If I believe it would be good for citizens I'd pursue it [policy] even though it would get uncomfortable.</p> <p>d) I know who the key players are and there's more than one way to skin a cat.</p> <p>e) I'm not a "yes" person - not a team player in that sense. I [understand the mayor's philosophies] and take that into consideration.</p>
14 CM PL	<p>a) I can make recommendations and suggestions.</p> <p>b) Don't undercut the city's policies.</p> <p>c) I only carry the city's banner.</p> <p>d) I often allow my own principles to be overrun by someone else's decisions.</p> <p>e) I believe in working within the system - that's how to make change.</p> <p>f) I work behind the scenes.</p> <p>g) I'm not going to stand up in public and question the city manager or city policy (use citizens to do that).</p> <p>h) Don't agree with the advocate role (only behind the scenes advocacy) - not in a public setting.</p>
4 CM RE	<p>a) No, I don't agree with that.</p> <p>b) Doesn't work for me. Must be behind the scenes.</p> <p>c) Those people who will be affected by the decision must carry the ball rather than those people charged with implementing it.</p>

6 CM RE	a) The personality of the city manager precludes this type of action.
7 CM RE	a) We're all salesman - I'm selling trees and leisure activities because it's good for the community. b) I think we play an advocacy role but more of a trainer, teacher, supporter, and empowerer. c) I've used citizens, discretely, before to be the hammer against management. d) Volunteers are the best sales tool. e) Citizens can say things publicly that I should not say because I'm a public official. f) You must look at the realities of politics. g) If the administrator takes it on, someone may take retribution. h) Must balance overall city resources.
12 CM RE	a) If you are not doing that already [being an advocate for city policy], you're in for some problems. b) I won't oppose a policy [publicly] but I won't be a visible proponent.
15 CM RE	a) I try to make citizen's voices heard (it's not always what I want to hear). b) I try to be a voice for the public (mayor and council hear the rich voices). c) I'm not going to go out with a picket sign but I'll make sure somebody hears.
16 CM RE	a) What we are trying to do is be low profile; not banner carrying but behind the scenes through advisory committees. b) We take an activist role in trying to build consensus. c) I'm not simply doing what the city manager wants, I've also got enough sense to know that I like my job and I want to stay here. d) I am team oriented (TQM); I don't want to swim up stream. e) Low profile activist. f) Loyal to city manager. g) It's good to use citizens to be activist. h) I don't want to influence the public. Instead, I want to respond to their needs (customer service).
3 CM PW	a) If council makes a decision, whether we agree with it or not, morally, I think I should go along with it. b) I think it would be foolish for any government official to not go along with the program. c) Once the city makes a decision it behooves me to follow their trail. d) If I thought it was not in the best interests of the community, I'd let them (city council) know. e) I look for consensus in decision making.

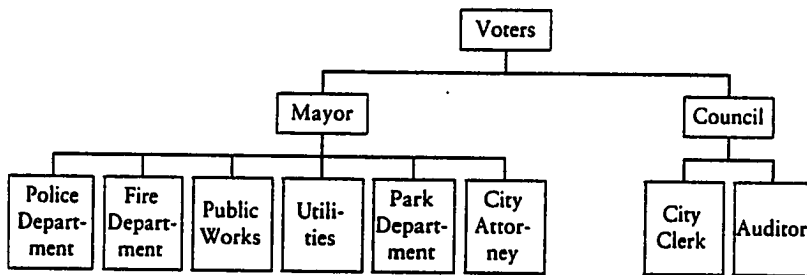
5 CM PW	<p>a) It has no meaning for me. The only one who communicates with council is the city manager.</p> <p>b) The city manager is the one who espouses [policy] behind closed doors.</p> <p>c) The process requires us to do what we're told or get fired.</p>
10 CM PW	<p>a) It very much [plays a role] - I came here under the auspices of pushing economic development through providing quality services - I don't want the status quo.</p> <p>b) This is not a political position but I stay in close contact with them giving them the best information - I plant seeds in politicians minds.</p> <p>c) Public works directors must drive some of the sub-agendas [due to their understanding of the field, or their expertise].</p> <p>d) You can take a position contrary to council but you must do it tastefully and tactfully through a professional opinion.</p>
11 CM PW	<p>a) Balance citizens' needs with council's needs - using professional judgment.</p> <p>b) A part-time council relies on department heads to lead the way.</p>
13 CM PW	<p>a) Yes.</p>
17 CM PW	<p>a) Very true.</p> <p>b) Some policies are handed to you from other government agencies (EPA, Health Dept.) and you must be an advocate.</p>

APPENDIX E

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE TWO MAJOR FORMS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT



Mayor-Council Government



Council-Manager Government

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1991-1994	Graduate Teaching Assistant, Department of Political Science, Virginia Tech
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1990	Instructor, Department of Political Science/Criminal Justice, Appalachian State University, Boone, North Carolina
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1996, *Local Government Administrators: A Balance Wheel Breakdown*, Public Administration Theory Conference, Savannah, Georgia

1995, *Teaching Civic Virtue to Public Administrators*, South Eastern Conference of Public Administration, Savannah, Georgia

1990, *Race Gender, and the State Legislature*, Western Social Science Association, Portland, Oregon

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Association Memberships:

Member, American Society for Public Administration
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Consulting:

Consultant - Midwest Trail Riders Association (provided public policy analysis and assisted with organizational analysis and development), 1994.

Consultant, with Dr. Joel Thompson - Communi-Care Pro Rehabilitation Services (provided research and policy development assistance assessing the benefits and cost-effectiveness of medical rehabilitation), 1993.

Consultant - National Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (provided data collection support and case analysis for the use of laser equipped speed-detection devices during a test in Charleston, South Carolina), 1991

