A Distinct Public Administration Ethics?

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ABSTRACT

The public administration literature enumerates many values of attributes desirable in civil servants, and it proposes at least two paradigms or frameworks—a bureaucratic ethos and a democratic ethos—associated with such values. The writings also suggest the existence of a public administration ethic. The broader professional ethics literature has similarly posited that each profession has an ethics or morality of its own; in fact, the separatist thesis *holds that such an acquired ethics is role-based and may take precedence over ordinary citizen ethics. This article reports the results of empirical research into a public administration ethic, by testing the importance of twelve public administration values among bureaucrats, elected officials, and voters.*

Within the last two decades or so there has been an outpouring of written works on the subject of ethics, particularly the ethics of those in government service. Numerous writers have identified ethical problems in government, called for moral reform and the enactment of ethics laws and codes, posited what are or should be the components of a bureaucratic and/or democratic ethos for public administration, identified one or more ideals or elements of such a moral guide, hypothesized about a grand theory of administrative ethics and the duties of bureaucrats, explored subject specific dilemmas in government policies, urged the teaching of ethics within the schools of public administration and public affairs, and suggested ethical guidance for practitioners of public management.

Since Watergate and Vietnam the schools of public administration have introduced courses in ethics, texts for the field have been published, the American Society for Public Administration and others have promulgated or reissued their codes of ethics, and federal and state governments have enacted ethics laws—but government official scandals have continued. Public and private professional conduct in many fields has been scrutinized and

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seriously questioned as never before. The questioning of public administration ethics is but a part of the reevaluation of ethics in many disciplines.

Concurrent with the public administration ethics literature of the last twenty-five years and the increasing professionalization of the public service for the last several decades, there have been developments in the professional ethics literature as well, including the articulation of the separatist thesis, which suggests that professions have a morality or ethics of their own, different from and perhaps inconsistent with the morality of ethics of ordinary persons or the general public. Indeed, the separatist thesis holds that this acquired ethics is role based and may take precedence over ordinary citizen ethics. Principles, norms, and values for individual professions have been enumerated, described, defended, sometimes ordered, and compared in the professional ethics literature.

Little empirical research has tested whether there is a separate public administration ethics and, if there is, of what elements it may be composed. Given the fundamentally democratic and representative nature of American government, any separate public administration ethics may have wide implications for public governance and for the practice and teaching of public administration. Research is needed to help fill this empirical gap. This article reports on the testing of normative statements and the potential values of career public servants against those of the citizens and their elected officials, to determine whether the norms and values held by public servants are different from the norms and values held by the public and/or elected officials and, if significantly different, whether they may constitute a separatist professional public administration ethics. The norms and values suggested in professional and public administration ethics literature during the twentieth century have been used to test the following hypothesis: Career civil servant values are not different than those of citizens or elected officials.

Two significantly different fields of literature are relevant to this empirical research: first, the literature about professions and, particularly, professional ethics; second, the literature about public administration and, specifically, public administration ethics.

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

Individual professions have developed over a long time; classic professions, for example, include the clergy, medicine, and law. But with the industrial and information revolutions came

a multitude of professions that have been defined relatively recently. While no clearly accepted definition of the term *profession* exists, professions are nonetheless distinguished from occupations not just by their level of technical knowledge, competence, and specialized training, but also by a commitment to a set of ethics and an obligation to serve faithfully (McDowell 1991, 6; Barber 1984, 597). A set of characteristics of professions, possessed by all professions and only by professions, may not exist (Bayles 1989, 7; Moore 1970, 4-5), but there are some characteristics that appear common to many professions and others that appear central to professions. Features central to professions include extensive training, a significant intellectual component, the provision of an important service in society, and perhaps credentialing; common characteristics include an organization of members and autonomy or self-regulation (Bayles 1989, 8-9). It is arguable whether public administration is yet a profession (p. 9), but it is clear that the public service has at least undergone increasing professionalization and is becoming more like a profession (Mosher 1982, 142; Waldo 1980, 60; Kaufman 1984, 56; Mosher and Stillman 1982, 631-32; Burke and Pattenaude 1988, 225-26).

Ethics is a "system or code of conduct based on universal moral duties and obligations which indicate how one should behave; it deals with the ability to distinguish good from evil, right from wrong and propriety from impropriety" (Josephson 1989, 2). Professional ethics can be viewed as a system of *norms,* meaning how things "should" or "ought to" be (Bayles 1989, 17). This is different than seeking to describe by empirical evidence how people actually behave, a process sometimes misleadingly referred to as *descriptive ethics,* favoring the perspective of the nonjudgmental observer most commonly associated with ethical or moral relativism (Josephson 1989, 5). Descriptive ethics does not lend itself to a comparison of behavior patterns in ethical terms (Bayles 1989, 18). Rather, professional ethics is a normative ethics, concerned with the discovery and application of moral norms or standards that help us distinguish right from wrong; it is based upon a bedrock premise that people ought to do what is right and avoid what is wrong (Josephson 1989, 5). While universal norms apply to all people, role-related norms apply to people in particular roles, including professional roles (Bayles 1989, 17; Goldman 1980, 1-6; McDowell 1991, 27). Ethical relativism does not maintain merely that people have different sets of beliefs and norms, but that these different beliefs all can be correct; it makes meaningful ethical disagreement impossible (Bayles 1989, 18). Ethical relativism is not accepted by many authors (Bayles 1989, 18; Goldman 1980).

Professional ethics can be analyzed properly only against a set of social values and a conception of the general role of that profession in society. The role must be examined from the viewpoint of citizens or the average members of the society (Bayles 1989, 5). Laymen typically judge the behavior of professionals by applying ordinary moral categories and principles to assess the conduct of those professionals (Goldman 1980, 1). Citizens need good reasons to accept the professional ethical norms that regulate individual professions (Bayles 1989, 5) because the conduct of professionals is judged by those citizens on the basis of their "ordinary ethics," while charges of misconduct in the professions are defended by appeal to special professional goals, norms, and roles (Goldman 1980, 1).

Values are core beliefs or desires that guide or motivate attitudes and actions. Some values, such as the importance persons attach to honesty, fairness, and loyalty, are ethical in nature because they are concerned with the notion of moral duty; they reflect attitudes about what is right, good, or proper rather than what is pleasurable, useful, or desirable. A study of history, philosophy, and religion reveals a strong consensus as to a certain core of ethical values that transcends cultures and time to establish ethical norms and standards of moral conduct essential to the ethical life. These values include, for example, trustworthiness, integrity, fairness, and caring. It is the universality of such ethical principles and values that gives support to the notion of moral absolutism, a view that there are eternal principles that exist beyond time and are always and everywhere applicable (Josephson 1989, 2; ASPA 1989, 102).

Any defense or justification of the acts or behavior of professionals is first to professional norms, then to the social or other values that may support the professional norms, and lastly to more general ethical theories (Bayles 1989, 19). Occasionally, specific examples that illustrate such a defense or justification and appeal to such professional standards as can be supported by the citizens are cited, even in the public administration ethics literature (Thompson 1985, 558). Norms themselves can be justified by their being acceptable to reasonable people or ordinary citizens expecting to live in a society in which the norms operate, and often this acceptability depends on the social values reasonable people have (Bayles 1989, 19). The notion of ethics becomes meaningful only as one begins to specify the values considered to be intrinsic to ethics and morality (Josephson 1989, 4).

There are a number of general views or theses about professional ethics (Burke and Pattenaude 1988, 229-33). One view is that there is a single encompassing framework, that of *ordinary*

morality that includes professional ethics, so that the latter is not distinguished from the former (Goldman 1980; Veatch 1972, 531-59; and Williams 1985, 259-69); this suggests the possibility of moral absolutism. A second thesis has been labeled the *separatist thesis* (Gewirth 1986; Freedman 1981, 626-30; Wasserstrom 1983, 25-37; Overman and Foss 1991, 131-46). This article explores the application of the separatist thesis to public administration. A third view is a pluralist or *political approach*, which suggests that there is no unified or single moral authority such that each group, professions included, might have its own group ethics if it has the necessary political will and power. Taken to its extreme this approach can lead to ethical relativism, since such a political approach arises from the idea that each person has an inherent moral right to decide what is right and wrong—a truism, but it does not lead to the conclusion that such personal ethics systems are equally ethical, even if all persons are morally autonomous (Josephson 1989, 5).

Individual professions are expected to have a morality or ethics of their own attached to their professional roles (Freedman 1978; Gewirth 1986, 282). Fundamental values and norms of each profession differ (Goldman 1980, 2). If professional norms are independent of universal norms and social values, then they can require or permit conduct completely different from, or even inconsistent with, that of nonprofessionals; they constitute a distinct ethical system alongside of, and perhaps taking precedence over, the universal ethical system (Freedman, 1978). It is this separatist thesis that assumes that a specific profession has an identifiable set of ethical principles, unique and clearly different from the morality or ethical positions held by ordinary persons or the public in general (Freedman 1978; Overman and Foss 1991, 133). The strong version of the separatist thesis is a form of ethical relativism (Bayles 1989, 21). Others take the position that some appropriate limits exist on professional practice (Gewirth 1986; Burke and Pattenaude 1988), a view that there might be diverse traditions, beliefs, and opinions about morality within a society, but that this does not preclude widely shared agreement on the morality of certain basic practices (Josephson 1989, 102).

The essence of this professional morality involves the idea that professionals are more constrained by their professional values than they would be were they not professionals, because their professional ethics places professional values at a higher position in the ethical hierarchy. Professional morality commits one to a different ordering of values from the very outset; thus, the difference between professional and ordinary morality is the way professionals resolve value conflicts (Freedman 1978). Principles, norms, and values, including the various codes of

professional conduct or responsibility, consistently appear in the professional ethics literature (Gorlin 1994).

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION ETHICS

Within the last two decades in the field of public administration, there has been an outpouring of written works on the subject of ethics, particularly the ethics of persons who govern and those who are in the public service. For example, major works offering applied ethical guidance to practitioners and students have been authored by Rohr (1978), Cooper (1990 and 1991), and Denhardt (1988), and two others have been edited by Bowman (1988 with Elliston, and 1991). Some of these applied ethics publications were stimulated by the interest of the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) and the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) which, following the increasing concern with ethics after Watergate, placed greater emphasis on professional standards and ethics in public service. But ethics and moral virtue are themes that have been present throughout the history of public administration (Denhardt 1991, 92).

The role for the career administrator has changed during the present century in three important ways. First, the administrator has become a policy maker; second, the public has demanded both more responsiveness and more responsibility from the administrator; and third, the bureaucracy has become professionalized (Denhardt 1988a, 60). In fact, the possibility of an administrative ethics was dependent on rejection of what was termed the *ethic of neutrality* and the *ethic of structure* in favor of the ability of a public administrator to serve as a policy maker, to be a moral agent and make judgments, and even to be an advocate (Thompson 1985, 556). Beyond Watergate, it is these changes—the tensions between democratic rule and professional expertise and discretion—that have heightened the ethical dilemmas for public administration.

A review of the public administration literature over the last half-century suggests two dominant traditions or paradigms for public administration ethics—*bureaucratic ethos* and *democratic ethos*. This dichotomy is sufficiently broad to fit with many of the ethical frameworks cited by writers, and it is not inconsistent with them. The bureaucratic and democratic ideals clearly described by Denhardt (1989) are built on an earlier dichotomy enunciated by Lilla (1981). However, the bureaucratic-democratic ethos dichotomy has even deeper roots than is noted by these authors. Pugh (1991, 10-11) connects the bureaucratic ethos—which he defines as including the five basic concepts of

efficiency, efficacy, expertise, loyalty, and accountability—with Weber and his model of bureaucracy, with Wilson and the politics-administration dichotomy, with Taylor and scientific management, and with the works of Goodnow and Willoughby, who found the ethos consistent with the study of comparative administration and the application of rationalism. Pugh cites the origins of this ethos as the municipal and progressive reform movement, social Christianity, and scientific management (p. 11). Pugh, Lilla, and others believe it is the dominant paradigm for American public administration.

The democratic ethos, on the other hand, includes the fundamental concepts of regime values as described by Rohr (1978), citizenship as described by Frederickson and Hart (1985) and Cooper (1991 and 1987), public interest as described by Lippmann (1955, 42), and social equity as described by Rawls (1971) and the proponents of the new public administration. Most public administration ethics writers have been drawn to this ethical framework, and much effort has been expended to build it up by contrasting it with the bureaucratic ethos framework. This democratic framework has several origins and thus requires a thorough grounding in history and political philosophy (Pugh 1991, 15-17; Lilla 1981).

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION VALUES

Values have received much attention in the recent literature of public administration (Rohr 1978; Gawthrop 1984, 137-62; Frederickson and Hart 1985, 547-53; Burke 1985 and 1989; Denhardt 1988: Rokeach 1970; Richter, Burke, and Doig 1990; Jennings 1991, 65; Cooper 1991). For example, when public administrators assume their roles, they begin to act out their objective and subjective expectations in the form of particular decisions, organizing them around a set of values and principles that guides specific, personal, individual responses to the generalized objective definition of the role or around a structure of subjective responsibility that is the counterpart of the objective responsibility imposed from outside ourselves (Cooper 1990, 74).

The moral foundations, virtues, ethical characteristics, and attributes desirable in public administrators have been described by many. Bailey (1965) suggests optimism, courage, and fairness tempered by charity. P.G. Brown (1986) posits truthfulness, tolerance, fidelity to law, rhetorical ability, and the virtues of management—intelligence and open-mindedness. Following MacIntyre's work on virtue (1981), Cooper writes about benevolence, courage, rationality, fair-mindedness, prudence, respect for law, honesty, self-discipline, civility, trustworthiness, respect

for colleagues, responsibility for the practices, and independence (1987). He later argues that responsibility is the key attribute of public administrators (1990) and even later argues that civic virtue was the central character trait for public administrators (1991, 169). Cooper adds public spiritedness, prudence, and substantive rationality as corollary virtues as well (1991, 163-67). Dobel (1988) identifies prudence or prudential judgment. Dwivedi (1987) articulates acceptance of public administration as a calling or vocation, genuine care for fellow citizens, and acceptance of service as primary moral obligations. Fleishman and Payne (1980) urge selflessness—primarily motivated by the public good, not self-interest or the interests of those who will benefit by the sacrifices of others. Rohr suggests *regime values,* meaning a discrete set of values in the Constitution or enunciated by the Supreme Court such as property, equality, freedom, and others (Rohr 1978). Frederickson and Hart (1985) note patriotism—an understanding of, and belief in, the American regime values—and benevolence—extensive and noninstrumental love of fellow citizens. Denhardt (1991, 92) suggests that the moral foundation of public administration consists of three elements: honor, benevolence, and justice. Willbern (1984, 102) proposes six levels of morality: basic honesty and conformity to law, conflict of interest, service orientation and procedural fairness, ethics of democratic responsibility, ethics of public policy determination, and ethics of compromise and social integration. Worthley and Grumet (1983) identify the values of the rule of law, accountability, efficiency, responsiveness, competence, objectivity, and fairness. Goodsell (1989, 576-77) suggests values like equality, justice, honesty, fairness, and the protection of individual rights. Jennings and others identify the common good and the public interest as obligations and responsibilities owed by public managers (Jennings, Callahan, and Wolf 1987, 6). Others identify justice as well (Hart 1974; Henry 1975; Pops 1991, 261-85). Sullivan (1986) identities justice, dignity, fellowship, and social interdependence as the elements of civic virtue. Frederickson (1989) names efficiency, expediency, economy, order, and predictability as values of public administration in the past. Guy (1991, 193-200) enumerates CHAPELFIRZ to stand for caring, honesty, accountability, promise keeping, pursuit of excellence, loyalty, fairness, integrity, respect for others, and responsible citizenship. Professional codes of ethics, developed by public practitioners and educators in the field, also offer useful guidance about the characteristics that public administrators should have.

In answer to the question about whether bureaucrats have norms, values, or ethics different than those of citizens and others, a few studies have provided some guidance. One study is

by Lewis (1990, 220-27). Using the General Social Surveys of 1982 and 1988, he compares the political, social, and personal attitudes of the general public with those of public administrators. Lewis concludes that public managers and professionals differ significantly from ordinary people on thirty-five of sixty-five questions asked, although most of the differences are relatively small. His findings support to a degree the statement made by Goodsell (1983, 12) that bureaucrats are really just ordinary people. Yet another study revealed that senior-level federal officials held attitudes alien to democracy, particularly outside of social agency settings (Wynia 1974, 162).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Our literature review suggests the possibility of a professional ethics for public administration. It also has enumerated the separatist thesis—that professionals will have a different set of normative statements and values than ordinary citizens or others not within the profession. A test of such propositions is in order. This review of the ethics literature and ethics theory further suggests a dichotomy for such administrative ethics research, comparing or contrasting the elements of the bureaucratic ethos with those of the democratic ethos.

The bureaucratic ethos is defined as a set of core values that includes accountability, neutral and professional competence, efficiency, effectiveness, economy, impartiality, objectivity, loyalty and obedience to elected officials and superiors, honesty and integrity, consistency and predictability, reliability, diligence and prudence, avoidance of partisanship, and respect and courtesy to both the public and elected officials. Defined in this manner, public administration ethics is procedural due process, organization ethics, bureaucratic ethics, structural ethics, and the ethics of neutrality, deference, and civility.

The democratic ethos, on the other hand, includes a set of core values like obligation to use administrative discretion to advance certain social values, political principles, and the public interest. Under this ethos bureaucrats are responsible for substantive due process and social equity and they must participate in defining, even codifying, regime values through personal ethics. They have autonomy and professional independence; they are compassionate, caring, and communicative; they keep promises; they encourage the public and agency clientele groups to participate; they are creative and innovative, socially conscious, and politically aware. They seek justice, fairness, equity, and support for individual rights through bureaucratic representation and affirmative action, and they may serve as advocates in their

policy-making roles. Defined in this manner, democratic public administration ethics is systems ethics—the ethics of consciousness, awareness, and affirmative obligation (Gawthrop 1984, 149).

Thus, on the basis of this general dichotomy of bureaucratic and democratic ethos and the specific values that have been written about in the professional and public administration literature over many decades, we constructed a test of normative statements and underlying public administration values in order to determine which norms and values have the greatest or least support. Twelve specific values, selected from the existing literature, were chosen to be tested. They are as follows:

Exhibit 1
Values for Each Ethos or Paradigm

BUREAUCRATIC ETHOS	DEMOCRATIC ETHOS
Accountable	Advocate
Competent	Compassionate
Economical	Confidentiality
Impartial	Individual Rights
Predictable	Politically Aware
Trustworthy	Public Interest

This article reports survey findings on these twelve values. These twelve variables appear in separate normative statements made in the questionnaire, and the survey respondents were requested to indicate their agreement or disagreement with each statement. The responses of those answering the survey were coded numerically, based on a nine-point Likert scale with 1 representing strongly agree to 9 representing strongly disagree. Each survey respondent was instructed to select a numeric value from the Likert scale and place it next to each of the following value statements for career civil servants working in the executive branch of state government.

The questionnaire was administered to three groups. The first group was composed of Colorado state government career civil servants in grades 92 through 107, representing midlevel and senior employees who held merit appointments. Equivalent federal government positions are levels GS-13 and above. A random sample of 778 employees or 20 percent of all persons in these grade level positions was surveyed, and of these, 378 or 48.6 percent responded to the mailed questionnaire. A second group was composed of all one hundred elected members of the state legislature—sixty-five members of the House and thirty-five

Exhibit 2
Survey Questionnaire

A career public administrator should:

_____ be accountable (responsible for government program decisions the administrator makes).
_____ act as advocate (speak for or plead on behalf of persons or groups served).
_____ be compassionate (have sympathy and be tender toward persons or groups served by the program).
_____ be competent (have the necessary level of knowledge, experience, and skill in job performance).
_____ *maintain confidentiality (keeping confidential, private or privileged* government information).
_____ be economical (frugal, not wasting money or public resources in government operations).
_____ be impartial (unbiased, not favoring one person or group over another).
_____ protect individual rights (support and foster the constitutional rights of persons served).
_____ be politically aware (conscious of electoral mandates and desires of voters and elected officials).
_____ be predictable (constant in decision making so that persons can know what to expect).
_____ seek the public interest (the common good of all the people, not just a selected or served group).
_____ be trustworthy (dependable and incorruptible, incapable of being false to a public trust).

members of the Senate. Of those surveyed, forty-six legislators or 46 percent of these responded to the mailed questionnaire. A third group was composed of 250 randomly selected registered voters in Colorado, all of whom responded to the survey. Unlike the groups of bureaucrats and legislators, however, the registered voters group was surveyed by telephone.

The responses to this survey from the three groups permitted assessment of the degree to which such norms and values were held by each group. The research questions to be answered were as follows: Do the three groups hold significant differences in preferred norms and values? If there are significant differences, what are these differences? What are the value rankings among the groups? Do norm and value differences suggest a separate professional public administration ethics for career government employees? If so, is such a professional public administration ethics more like the bureaucratic ethos or the democratic ethos?

FINDINGS

Bureaucrats value being *competent* above all the other possible eleven characteristics of career government employees. Both legislators and members of the public value career public servants being *trustworthy* above all other possible values. Yet all three surveyed groups ranked these two characteristics and *accountable* as the three most important among the twelve total values tested.

Bureaucrats believe that to be *politically aware* and *advocate* are the least important of the twelve values surveyed. Legislators believe that to be an advocate is the least important attribute for career bureaucrats. The public thinks that to be *predictable* is the least important value tested for career public managers. Substantial rank order differences were also noted for *confidentiality* and *public interest.*

The rank order of each value tested was unique for each of the three groups—bureaucrats, legislators, and the public. The order of ranking for the responses for each group is found in exhibit 3, along with the respective means for each value.

A comparison of the differences in the value means for each of the twelve values was made among bureaucrats, legislators, and the public, using a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), in order to make adjustments for the multiple comparisons. Using the Student-Newman-Keuls test, significant differences were

Exhibit 3
Rank-Ordered Value Means for Groups

Rank Order	Bureaucrats		Legislators		Public	
1.	Competent	1.28	Trustworthy	1.24	Trustworthy	1.21
2.	Trustworthy	1.38	Competent	1.32	Competent	1.31
3.	Accountable	1.57	Accountable	1.41	Accountable	1.48
4.	Confidentiality	1.66	Economical	1.45	Economical	1.66
5.	Economical	1.78	Individual rights	1.50	Public interest	1.80
6.	Impartial	2.01	Impartial	1.68	Individual rights	1.81
7.	Individual rights	2.13	Confidentiality	1.76	Impartial	1.82
8.	Public interest	2.36	Public interest	2.21	Confidentiality	2.02
9.	Compassionate	3.00	Predictable	2.49	Politically aware	2.29
10.	Predictable	3.03	Politically aware	2.50	Compassionate	2.70
11.	Advocate	3.11	Compassionate	3.29	Advocate	3.04
12.	Politically aware	3.11	Advocate	4.53	Predictable	4.00

Exhibit 4
Value Means Differences Between Groups

Value	Bureaucrats	Legislators	Public
Accountable	1.57	1.41	1.48
Advocate[AC]	3.11[A]	4.53[AC]	3.04[C]
Compassionate	3.00	3.29	2.70
Competent	1.28	1.32	1.31
Confidentiality	1.66	1.76	2.02
Economical[A]	1.78[A]	1.45[A]	1.66
Impartial	2.01	1.68	1.82
Individual rights[A]	2.13[A]	1.50[A]	1.81
Politically aware[AB]	3.11[AB]	2.50[A]	2.29[B]
Predictable[BC]	3.03[B]	2.49[C]	4.00[BC]
Public interest[B]	2.36[B]	2.21	1.80[B]
Trustworthy	1.38	1.24	1.21

[A]There are significant differences at the .05 level between bureaucrats and legislators using the Student-Newman-Keuls test.
[B]There are significant differences at the .05 level between bureaucrats and the public using the Student-Newman-Keuls test.
[C]There are significant differences at the .05 level between legislators and the public using the Student-Newman-Keuls test.

found for bureaucrats in six of the values. Bureaucrats were significantly different than legislators on four of the twelve values—*advocate, economical, individual rights,* and *politically aware.* Bureaucrats were significantly different from the public on three values—*politically aware, predictable,* and *public interest.* In addition, legislators were found to be significantly different from the public on two values—*predictable* and *advocate.*

Using the Least-Significant Difference test (equivalent to doing multiple t tests between all pairs of groups, with no multiple-comparisons protection) additional differences were found for three more values. For the values of *economical* and *predictable* there were significant differences between bureaucrats and legislators. For *compassionate* there was a significant difference between legislators and the public.

Many of the significant mean differences cited above have levels of confidence higher than the traditional 95 percent level for social science research. Exhibit 5 illustrates such probabilities. Moreover, exhibit 5 makes clear where bureaucrats rate higher or lower some of the critical values in a representative democracy. Notable differences are shown in perception, among the three groups, regarding the roles of career civil servants.

Exhibit 5
Comparison of Significant Differences in Value Means Between Groups

Comparison	Value	Probability
Bureaucrats *higher* than legislators	Advocate	.0000[C]
Bureaucrats *lower* than legislators	Economical	.0321[A]
	Individual rights	.0028[B]
	Politically aware	.0260[A]
	Predictable	.0377[A]
Bureaucrats *higher* than public	Confidentiality	.0039[B]
	Predictable	.0000[C]
Bureaucrats *lower* than public	Compassionate	.0375[A]
	Individual rights	.0059[B]
	Politically aware	.0000[C]
	Public interest	.0000[C]
	Trustworthy	.0145[A]
Legislators *higher* than public	Predictable	.0001[C]
Legislators *lower* than public	Advocate	.0001[C]

[A]Significant differences at the .05 level using the t test.
[B]Significant differences at the .01 level using the t test.
[C]Significant differences at the .001 level using the t test.

There are more differences between the three groups in the several values constituting the democratic ethos than in the bureaucratic ethos.

A composite value or index was developed for both the bureaucratic ethos and the democratic ethos by averaging the six values in each of these two paradigms. The six values for each ethos or paradigm are listed in exhibit 1. The differences in the mean values for the bureaucratic ethos index and for the democratic ethos index for each of the three groups surveyed are found in exhibit 6. Legislators had the largest variance between their ethos index means, with 1.02, and the public the least with .36; bureaucrats had a variance of .72. It is clear from these indices that the bureaucratic ethos is more popular or accepted than the democratic ethos for all of the groups, as measured by these twelve values.

It is apparent from exhibit 6 that, in general, bureaucrats find themselves between legislators and the public on the bureaucratic ethos index, but somewhat closer to the public than to legislators. On the other hand, bureaucrats are closer to

Exhibit 6
Bureaucratic and Democratic Ethos Indices for Groups

Group	Bureaucratic Ethos Index	Democratic Ethos Index	Means Difference
Bureaucrats	1.84	2.56	.72
Legislators	1.58	2.60	1.02
Public	1.91	2.27	.36

legislators than the public on the democratic ethos index, even though they are still positioned between the legislators and the public. Notwithstanding this middle position of bureaucrats, a comparison of the means of both indices between groups demonstrates that bureaucrats are significantly different than legislators on the bureaucratic ethos index and significantly different than the public on the democratic ethos index. Exhibit 7 presents these findings, as well as the strength of such findings, based upon the t test.

Comparing the bureaucratic and democratic ethos index values, illustrated in exhibit 6, significant differences also were found. Using the Student-Newman-Keuls test, significant differences were noted between bureaucrats and legislators, and between legislators and the public, on the bureaucratic index. Using the Least-Significant Difference test, a significant difference was found between legislators and the public for the democratic index. Exhibit 8 illustrates these differences, using only the more discriminating Student-Newman-Keuls test.

Exhibit 7
Comparison of Ethos Indices Between Groups

Comparison	Value	Probability
Bureaucrats *higher* than legislators	Democratic index	.8059
Bureaucrats *lower* than legislators	Bureaucratic index	.0084[B]
Bureaucrats *higher* than public	Bureaucratic index	.2490
Bureaucrats *lower* than public	Democratic index	.0008[C]
Legislators *higher* than public	Bureaucratic index	.0278[A]
Legislators *lower* than public	Democratic index	.0891

[A]Significant differences at the .05 level using the t test.
[B]Significant differences at the .01 level using the t test.
[C]Signifcant differences at the .001 level using the t test.

Exhibit 8
Ethos Indices Differences Among Groups

Value	Bureaucrats	Legislators	Public
Bureaucratic index[AC]	1.84[A]	1.58[AC]	1.91[C]
Democratic index	2.56	2.60	2.27

[A]There are significant differences at the .05 level between bureaucrats and legislators using the Student-Newman-Keuls test.
[B]There are significant differences at the .05 level between bureaucrats and the public using the Student-Newman-Keuls test.
[C]There are significant differences at the .05 level between legislators and the public using the Student-Newman-Keuls test.

There were other interesting findings from the survey. There were some significant differences based on gender in the values given by all survey groups. Value rank-order differences appear greatest among bureaucrats, based on gender, for the values of *confidentiality* and *predictable* and among legislators for *confidentiality,* with females ranking *confidentiality* higher than do males, and males ranking *predictable* higher than do females. Female bureaucrats even ranked *confidentiality* above *trustworthiness.* Notwithstanding these notable differences, exhibit 9 shows general agreement between the sexes in the rankings of all twelve values.

Exhibit 9
Rank-Ordered Values Means, by Gender, for Each Group

	Bureaucrats		Legislators		Public	
Value	F	M	F	M	F	M
Accountable	4	3	5	3	3	3
Advocate	10	12	12	12	11	11
Compassionate	9	10	11	11	10	10
Competent	1	1	2	2	2	2
Confidentiality	2	5	3	7	6	8
Economical	5	4	6	4	4	4
Impartial	6	6	8	6	8	6
Politically aware	11	11	10	9	9	9
Predictable	12	9	9	10	12	12
Individual rights	7	7	4	5	5	7
Public interest	8	8	7	8	7	5
Trustworthy	3	2	1	1	1	1

Exhibit 10
Value Mean Differences, by Gender, Among Groups

Value	Bureaucrats F	Bureaucrats M	Legislators F	Legislators M	Public F	Public M
Accountable	1.41	1.64	1.42	1.41	1.35	1.60
Competent	1.20	1.31	1.23	1.36	1.25	1.37
Economical	1.72	1.80	1.50	1.44	1.51	1.79
Impartial	1.98	2.02	1.92	1.59	1.81	1.84
Predictable	3.03	3.02	2.08	2.66	3.45	4.52
Trustworthy	1.40	1.37	1.00	1.34	1.20	1.22
BUR INDEX	1.79	1.86	1.46	1.63	1.76	2.06
Advocate	2.77	3.27	3.08	5.13	2.79	3.28
Compassionate	2.73	3.13	2.38	3.66	2.24	3.12
Confidentiality	1.24	1.85	1.31	1.94	1.73	2.29
Individual rights	1.98	2.20	1.33	1.56	1.68	1.93
Politically aware	2.80	3.26	2.29	2.59	1.91	2.64
Public interest	2.20	2.43	1.83	2.35	1.76	1.84
DEMO INDEX	2.29	2.68	1.98	2.87	2.02	2.52

Specific value means, by gender, within each group, are found in exhibit 10. Because the three groups composing the survey were so different in total size, no overall or total comparison of all groups, based on gender, is meaningful. In general, females rated values higher than did males, as can be seen when the gender responses for each of the ethos indices are compared.

Exhibit 11 illustrates the relatively few significant differences between the sexes for each group surveyed. The largest number of differences occurs between female and male bureaucrats; the smallest number of differences occurs between female and male legislators. Bureaucrats illustrate five differences in values, legislators one, and the public four, based on gender. Note that differences in gender occur most frequently in values associated with the democratic ethos.

Notwithstanding the relatively small number of gender value differences (ten among thirty-six possibilities) in exhibit 10, when the bureaucratic and democratic indices are compared the differences are noticeable. Exhibit 11 shows significant differences in the democratic index for each of the groups—bureaucrats, legislators, and the public—and a significant difference in the bureaucratic index for the public, based on gender. In each instance, females rate higher than do males the value set making up the democratic and bureaucratic ethos.

Exhibit 11
Gender Differences Within Each Survey Group for Each Value

Value	Bureaucrats P Value	Legislators P Value	Public P Value
Accountable*	.0348[A]	.9714	.1219
Advocate**	.0145[A]	.0367[A]	.0709
Compassionate**	.0268[A]	.0890	.0005[C]
Competent	.0992	.5638	.3785
Confidentiality**	.0000[C]	.1990	.0169[A]
Economical	.4180	.8037	.1090
Impartial	.7972	.3705	.8928
Political awareness**	.0189[A]	.5737	.0036[A]
Predictable*	.9535	.2898	.0005[C]
Individual rights	.1458	.3992	.2025
Public interest	.1465	.3727	.7056
Trustworthy	.7410	.1059	.8873

[A]There are significant differences at the .05 level using the Student-Newman-Keuls test.
[B]There are significant differences at the .01 level using the Student-Newman-Keuls test.
[C]There are significant differences at the .001 level using the Student-Newman-Keuls test.

Exhibit 12
Gender Differences Within Each Survey Group for Ethos Indices

Value	Bureaucrats P Value	Legislators P Value	Public P Value
Bureaucratic index	.3053	.3573	.0174[A]
Democratic index	.0001[C]	.0151[A]	.0007[C]

CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of all respondent rankings of the twelve values tested, those values most closely associated with the bureaucratic ethos are valued more highly than those associated with the democratic ethos. We conclude from the rankings in exhibit 3 that there is general agreement among all three survey groups about the importance of *trustworthy, competent,* and *accountable*—all part of the bureaucratic ethos—as the premium values in the survey. There is a correspondingly lower valuation among all survey groups of attributes most closely associated with the democratic ethos. The lower half rankings of values among each of the three surveys contain a preponderance of values associated

with the democratic ethos—only the value of *predictable* in each survey and the value of *impartial* in the public survey run against this pattern.

The rank-ordered valuations from the bureaucrats survey are consistent with the politics-administration dichotomy. At the top of the values hierarchy are the concepts of *neutral competency, accountability,* and *trustworthiness*; at the bottom are *advocacy* on behalf of clientele served by agencies, and *political awareness*. The continuing relevancy of the politics-administration dichotomy appears rooted in the real-world valuation paradigm of career civil servants themselves.

From the rank-ordered data available, however, we do see some differences on the basis of gender of these value rankings among groups. The differences between male and female respondents are most identifiable with the democratic ethos value of *confidentiality,* and the bureaucratic ethos value of *predictable.* Beyond these values, however, the rankings illustrate best the parallelism of the responses based on gender, not their differences.

On the basis of the above findings, it appears that Colorado mid- to high-level state civil servants are different than ordinary citizens, or at least Colorado registered voters. On the basis of twelve characteristics of career civil servants written about in the public administration literature, public administrators in Colorado are significantly different than the public on more than 58 percent of the characteristics. Bureaucrats do not appear as different from Colorado legislators as they do from ordinary citizens, however. They are different from legislators only 42 percent of the time. Nonetheless, these are still substantial differences. These findings suggest a rejection of the null hypothesis that bureaucrats are just ordinary people.

Moreover, it is not simply the percentage or total absolute number of value differences that the career bureaucracy has with elected officials and the citizenry that is so compelling. Rather, it is the values themselves on which they differ that are both interesting and troublesome. For example, mid- to high-level bureaucrats value *confidentiality* and *predictable* significantly more than the public does. Is it possible that government employees could value *confidentiality* more than citizens—not to protect citizens but to contribute to the power of the bureaucracy itself? Is there such a difference in *predictable* because government employees have had too many past allegations and troubles from the public and the media about inconsistencies? More problematic, however, are the five values that bureaucrats find of significantly less

worth than does the citizenry served by those very government employees—the public interest, political awareness, individual rights, trustworthiness, and compassion! In our democracy, where sovereignty lies with the people, how can we long operate with such fundamental perceptual differences about values that are so basic to our constitutional system?

Further, how can our republican form of government—in which we elect individuals to make policy and then oversee the implementation of those public policies for the benefit of all the people—have such inherent differences of opinion on *individual rights* and *political awareness*? Notwithstanding the increase in specialization and even professionalism among our career civil servants, these core values seem critical. Further, the clash over the value of *economy* or frugality in government services, so prevalent now with budget debates, appears from this research to actually pit elected officials against the career bureaucracy itself. On the other hand, the research findings about the role of advocacy to be played by bureaucrats seems grounded in the need for elected officials to service selected constituencies well in order to be reelected.

Remembering that we have only tested twelve specific values, it seems at least consistent with the survey data results that public administrators have a professional ethics—a system of norms, meaning how things *ought to* be—and values, meaning core beliefs that guide or motivate attitudes and actions. Public administrators value competence, including its components of knowledge, experience, and skill, above all else. They apply their expertise to the job at hand in a way less sensitive to the public interest and individual rights than the public, directly and through their elected representatives, would prefer. Their protected civil service status provides some cover both from outside political forces and from within the government and insulates them somewhat from such pressures; this allows them to apply their expertise in a predictable fashion in the administration of government programs. Bureaucrats value trustworthiness, but not at the expense of competency as their dominant value. It is this very expertise that provides them with power and some autonomy and legitimizes their reasonable claims to advocate for and act compassionately on behalf of their agency clientele. Perhaps bureaucrats are less different from their elected representatives than they are from the public in their normative expectations and their values because their public administration ethic is tied closely or related to a larger government service ethic encompassing all those in government service, including elected officials.

The use of the indices developed as a part of this reported research does convey that bureaucrats are in the middle of, or between in this numerical sense, legislators and the public on each of the indices as reported in exhibit 6. However, this middle position does not mask the notable differences in important values reported in exhibit 5. Furthermore, as exhibit 5 shows, the other two groups more nearly resemble one another, whereas the bureaucrats are "more different!" Generally, bureaucrats rate bureaucratic values significantly lower than legislators do, and bureaucrats rate democratic values significantly lower than the public does. While this might on its face seem no more than interesting, we have to understand—given our governmental system—that it is to legislators that bureaucrats are bureaucratically accountable, and it is ultimately to the public that they are democratically accountable, both directly and through elected officials. In a sense, bureaucrats are in the worst position for both indices; they are in a position to be whipsawed by both other groups. The representative nature of the bureaucracy, about which much has been written in the public administration literature, does not seem to carry over into our bureaucracy's reflection of our democratic and governing values.

The research findings tend to validate those public administration writers who have believed that the bureaucratic ethos or framework is dominant within the career civil service. At least as measured by these twelve values, it is more prevalent. But it is also dominant for the public and for legislators as well. All groups rate traditional bureaucratic values of greater worth than traditional democratic values. Legislators rated the bureaucratic ethos highest among the three surveyed groups. Correspondingly, legislators rated the democratic ethos lowest. While the public rated the bureaucratic ethos lowest of the three surveyed groups (and the democratic ethos highest of the groups), the public nonetheless favored the bureaucratic ethos over the democratic ethos as well. Furthermore, females have a paradigm more like the democratic ethos than do males, although for both genders the bureaucratic ethos is dominant.

The empirical research also suggests there is a greater consensus between any public administration professional ethics and any ordinary ethics within the bureaucratic ethos or paradigm. The clash in values can and sometimes does happen within this ethos, but it is more likely to occur over values that are a part of the democratic ethos value set. To some extent, the research findings are consistent with the notion that a professional ethics may be inconsistent with an ordinary public morality or democratic ethos set.

To be sure, the scant data above from an empirical study of twelve values written about in the public administration literature for decades do not at this point prove the existence of a separatist professional ethics. Nevertheless, the findings do tend to illustrate that bureaucrats are not just like the public or even their elected representatives. Some of their norms and values are significantly different. As noted above, any separate public administration ethics has wide implications both for public governance and the teaching of public administration—and further research would be helpful.

As an increasingly professional public administration enters the twenty-first century, with all the accompanying technological metamorphosis and changing governmental structures that progression may suggest, we must necessarily ask ourselves the extent to which ethical expectations for public administrators should differ among citizens, elected officials, and the career bureaucracy itself. In our democratic society, with a republican form of government, is the career bureaucracy to be a representative bureaucracy, as writers have urged? If so, how much of a separate and distinct public administration ethics can be accommodated? Do significant differences in normative expectations and core values for public administrators account for the seeming failures of some policy implementation? Will a career bureaucracy with norms and values unlike those of ordinary citizens be trusted with future implementation of policies, or perhaps make more likely an increased use of outsourcing and other forms of privatization? The successful transition of public administration into the twenty-first century may depend more heavily than we have understood previously on the congruency of values among citizens, elected officials, and the career civil service and on the professional ethical framework of our civil servants remaining within broadly embraced bounds.

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