As we approach the socialization experience for you and other incoming MPA students, I hope you will take a few minutes to pause and reflect upon the following question: *What does it mean to be a professional in public service?*

You might answer this question by describing the type of work you hope to do now and in the future. You might list certain values that guide your (current or future) career and work. In order to think about how this question might be answered, I want you to reflect upon the attached essay by James Perry. Perry discusses how public administration scholars have described public service over the last half century.

To gain a more contemporary perspective, I am also providing links to two podcasts from *GovLove*, a podcast from Engaging Local Government Leaders (ELGL). While the podcast focuses on local government, the topics in these two podcasts outline questions being discussed across levels of government and around the world.

Episode #48: Getting Millennials to Choose Government
Episode #188: NFBPA: Diversity with Christine Edwards & James Gaston

Investing time to review these resources and think about the question above will prepare you for our introductory discussion on Monday, August 6. I look forward to meeting you soon. Thank you for your commitment to public service.

Best regards,
Eric Zeemering
Associate Professor & MPA Director
Department of Public Administration and Policy

Invited Essay

Democracy and the New Public Service

James L. Perry

Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis

In 1968, Frederick Mosher published his influential book *Democracy and the Public Service*. This article revisits themes Mosher developed in the book to assess the status of our democracy in the context of a new public service. The author argues that the new public service poses significant challenges for democracy. One is that new public service is simultaneously more heterogeneous and more loosely tied to traditions of public service. Another attribute is that the rules embedded in new governance structures, which are tied to market forces, are likely the most compelling influences on behavior in the new public service. A third attribute is that the flexibilities of the new public service create a work world in which attachments are temporary and their temporariness may break down bonds among citizens and public servants. The author offers four proposals for reconciling democracy and the new public service.

Keywords: *democracy; public service; accountability; professionalism; reform*

When I began graduate study in 1970, one of the most prominent public administration scholars was Frederick Mosher. In 1968, Mosher published his influential book *Democracy and the Public Service*. Much has changed and a great deal has been written about both American democracy and public service since the first edition of Mosher's book. In this article, I revisit themes from *Democracy and the Public Service* as a way to assess what has changed since the publication of Mosher's book and the implications of the changes.

A few words about Mosher are in order in light of the time elapsed since both his prominence in the 1950s and 1960s and his death in 1990 (Stephenson & Plant, 1991). Fritz Mosher was the son of William E. Mosher, the founding and longest-serving dean of the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs. Thus, by birth, Mosher could claim status as public administration royalty. Mosher's professional career spanned five decades. He authored or coauthored 15 books, edited *Public Administration Review* from 1953 to 1956, and served at four top-ranking universities, including Syracuse and the University of California, Berkeley.

Mosher's career was not bounded by the academy alone. He served in the Army Air Force, the Tennessee Valley Authority, the city of Los Angeles, and the United Nations. His real world perspective deeply influenced his analytic work and frequently produced a marriage of scholarship and findings of practical significance. Max Stephenson and Jeremy Plant (1991),

two former PhD students of Mosher's at the University of Virginia, memorialized him by observing that "Mosher was perhaps the quintessential 'practitioner scholar'" (p. 97).

I organize this article into four parts, which, for simplicity and clarity, I frame around four questions. First, I take up the question, what were Mosher's original arguments in *Democracy and the Public Service*? I summarize very briefly the key arguments in his book. Answering the question provides a baseline against which to compare the present and puts the current scene in some perspective.

My second question is, what is the new public service? As I know from my research on public innovations, "newness" is relative, so it is conceivable the label of *new public service* used by some scholars (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2003; Light, 1999a) could be contested. But given that public service in America has been cut back (Levine, 1978), reformed (March & Olsen, 1983), reinvented (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992), transitioned (Lan & Rosenbloom, 1992), and transformed (Kettl, 2002) since 1968—to say nothing about banished (Osborne & Plastrik, 1997) and broken (Barzelay, 1992)—it is likely we have seen some pronounced changes that are worth articulating as a way to ground my arguments.

This second question gives rise to a logical third question, what does the new public service mean for our democracy? Answering this question is far more difficult than the others, but I suggest several areas in which the new public service has consequences for our democracy. I also comment about how contemporary issues of democracy and public service are aligned with Mosher's earlier concerns.

Finally, I conclude with the question, how can we reconcile democracy and the new public service? If our democracy is to remain vibrant, then we must be attentive to the tensions between it and the new public service, which resides increasingly in nonprofit and private sectors. I offer some ideas for maintaining and strengthening the vibrancy of our democracy.

What Were Mosher's Original Arguments?

In his book, Mosher largely avoids defining democracy. I would have welcomed a formal definition of democracy, which would have provided a more stable point of reference for this analysis. In the first sentence of the book, Mosher (1982) leaves no doubt that definition was not foremost on his mind. He writes: "This book undertakes no very exquisite or precise definition of democracy" (p. 3). He goes on to write:

> My focus here is upon public service, in its relation to democracy both as an idea and as a way of governance. For this purpose it seems unnecessary to dwell upon disputable definitions of "polyarchy" or "consensual elite" or similar intellectual constructs. (p. 3)

His basic premises were straightforward and followed a simple logic:

1. Government decisions and behavior are tremendously influential in our society;
2. These decisions and behaviors are heavily influenced by non-elected administrative officials;
3. The kinds of decisions and behaviors taken depend upon the officials' capabilities, orientations, and values;
4. These attributes depend upon their backgrounds, training and education, and their current associations. (p. 3)

Given the simple premises with which Mosher started, what were his central concerns? At the risk of oversimplifying, I believe Mosher had four primary concerns.

The Centrality and Dominance of the Professions

Probably the most influential aspect of Mosher's book was his attention to the professions, which infused his analysis but was also accorded a separate chapter, aptly entitled "The Professional State." It is hard to imagine today, but Mosher's attention to the importance of professionals was novel at the time. There had been little recognition given to the significance of professionalism in public service. Mosher wrote early in the book:

> Our dependence upon professionals is now so great that the orientations, value systems, and ethics which they bring to their work and which they enforce on one another are a matter of prime concern to those who would strengthen the democratic system. (p. 12)

Beyond the issue of the incidence of professionals in public service was the issue of who controlled them and to whom they were accountable.

> For better or worse—or better *and* worse—much of our government is now in the hands of professionals (including scientists). The choice of these professionals, the determination of their skills, and the content of their work are now principally determined, not by general governmental agencies, but by their own professional elites, professional organizations, and the institutions and faculties of higher education. (p. 142)

Marginalization of the General Interest

In the immediate aftermath of World War II, which represents formative years in Mosher's career, scholars were highly attentive to the concept of the public or general interest. By the time of the second edition of Mosher's book, published in 1982, we were in the midst of a profound sea change. Mosher was concerned about what he called the "marginalization of the general interest." He wrote:

> The danger is that developments in the public service may be subtly, gradually, but profoundly moving the weight toward the partial, the corporate, the professional perspective and away from that of the general interest. (p. 230)

Mosher attributed the marginalization of the general interest, directly and indirectly, to the professions. The dominance of professional elites in governing organizational units and their career systems were perceived by Mosher as direct threats to realizing the general interest because of the prospect that professions could substitute their narrower interests for the general interest. He was also concerned about the indirect effects of the professions on undermining an administrative morality built on the institutional mechanisms of hierarchy and open politics, two means for maintaining administrative morality he credited to Paul Appleby (Mosher, 1982, pp. 231-236).

Excesses and Dysfunctions of Merit Systems

Another focus of Mosher's concern was the relationships among the three "systems of merit," that is, political appointees, general civil service, and career systems (such as the Public Health Service, Corps of Engineers, and Senior Executive Service). One excess about which Mosher was concerned was one system crowding out another. Mosher writes:

> Where political appointees invade too far the province of the respective career services, there is a threat to substantive effectiveness, an invitation to inefficiency and even scandal. Where the political appointees are driven out, there is a threat to the general interest in favor of special interests, to "the public" in favor of a self-directed or entrenched bureaucracy. (p. 185)

Mosher saw "dangers" in either form of imbalance across the systems. He perceived the services functioning best when each system performed to its strengths and worked together effectively.

Although Mosher saw threats to democracy in imbalances among the three permanent services, he was most concerned about the wholesale turnover of political officials during electoral transitions between political parties. He called such transitions sources of "almost unbelievable extravagance, disorder, and inefficiency" (p. 186). His critique of electoral transitions was two pronged. First, he saw wholesale turnover of political appointees as costing "the government its effectiveness half of every four-year term" (p. 186). Second, Mosher believed the transition process brought with it substantive uncertainty and mutual distrust, fed in part by political aspirants running against the established administration during elections and then being highly dependent on these same people in civil and career systems once elected. In concluding his discussion of the turnover of political appointees, Mosher (p. 187) sounded an especially pessimistic note: "How long can the United States and its state and local units tolerate such a system? Or survive with it?"

Encroachments of the Collective Services on Public Prerogatives

Finally, Mosher saw collective bargaining in the public sector as a potential threat to civil service agencies and to political democracy. He concluded that the threat to political democracy was slight but still a source of concern. In light of the small threat he perceived collective bargaining represented, he argued that denying employee organization and collective bargaining seemed contradictory to effective democracy because of the promise of greater personal democracy in terms of individual dignity and participation (p. 216).

As I noted at the outset, Mosher's concerns stand as a baseline but may be passé given that we now have a "new public service." I will return later to Mosher's concerns circa 1982, but first I turn to my second question, what is the new public service?

What is the New Public Service?

It is worth noting that these terms have identifiable uses in the literature about public affairs—but they are not used uniformly. I turn to two sources that have been widely cited in public administration for help in characterizing what I mean by the new public service.

My first source is Paul Light. Light (1999a) associates four characteristics with the new public service. The first is diversity. Light contends, "The new public service is much more diverse than the government-centered public service of old" (p. 127). The diversity extends to race, gender, and intellectual and professional histories.

Rising interest in nongovernmental destinations, particularly the nonprofit sector, is the second characteristic of the new public service. "Government is seen as the sector most likely to represent the public interest, but trails the private and nonprofit sectors on spending money wisely and helping people" (Light, 1999a, p. 127).

Sector switching is the third characteristic of the new public service. Although sector switching is prominent, switching from private or nonprofit jobs to government is much less likely among people who start their careers outside of government, implying barriers both institutional and psychological in switching into government.

The fourth characteristic of the new public service "is its deep commitment to making a difference in the world" (Light, 1999a, p. 128). Light (1999a) observes: "This is the one characteristic in which the new public service is indistinguishable from the old" (p. 128).

It is important to note, however, that Light's lens is highly selective. His research looked at a small sample of 1,000 MPA graduates from 20 of the top schools of public policy and administration. In another book published in the same year, Light (1999b) estimates that the true size of the federal government, defined on a mission basis, was almost 17 million full-time equivalents in 1996. Thus, Light's sample is tiny relative to the size of the public sector.

A second source to which I turn for guidance about the new public service is Janet and Bob Denhardt. Unlike Light, whose study is based primarily on a survey of cohorts of MPA alumni, the Denhardts (2003) provide a normative vision in their book, *The New Public Service: Serving, Not Steering*. As an indication of their agenda and orientation, they assert in the preface to their book: "Public servants do not deliver customer service; they deliver democracy" (p. xi). The Denhardts' motivation is transparent: They want the field of public administration to rely on words such as *democracy* and *citizen* as much as on *market* and *customers*.

The Denhardts provide useful context about the new public service in their comparison between their vision of it and what has come to be known as the new public management. They argue that what they call the old public administration will always come off poorly when contrasted with the new public management. The old public administration is represented by some well-known attributes—public administrators responsible for directly delivering services for which they have little discretion and who are responsible to democratically elected political leaders. The new public management is, in contrast, crystallized by 10 principles popularized by David Osborne and Ted Gaebler (1992). These principles have been widely diffused in the past decade and include:

- Catalytic government, steering rather than rowing
- Customer-driven government, meeting the needs of the customer, not the bureaucracy
- Community-owned government, empowering rather than serving
- Enterprising government, earning rather than spending

The Denhardts suggest we adopt a different frame of reference, however, that they call the new public service. This new public service, they exhort us, should be built on seven mutually reinforcing ideas, among them:

- Serve citizens, not customers.
- Seek the public interest.
- Value citizenship over entrepreneurship.
- Think strategically, act democratically.
- Recognize that accountability is not simple.
- Serve rather than steer.
- Value people, not just productivity.

What Does the New Public Service Mean for Our Democracy?

Light and the Denhardts provide two quite different visions of the new public service. Although they are not incompatible, they are not easily aligned. Light's perspective is empirical and focuses on an elite cadre of members of the new public service, many of them located in nonprofit and private settings. The Denhardts' perspective is largely normative, exhorting us about what the new public service should be but making few connections between what is now and their vision of a new public service. As different as they are, I believe the Light and Denhardt perspectives can be synthesized around three attributes of the new public service.

1. The new public service is simultaneously more heterogeneous and more loosely tied to traditions of public service. Multisectoring—the devolution and networking of governance structures—is a given in both Light's and the Denhardts' descriptions of today's public service. They differ about the desirability of the current situation. The Denhardts propose replacing the ethos of the new public management with a public service ethos that reestablishes the centrality of citizens and the public interest. Although Light (1999a) is more optimistic about the new public service, his research is ambivalent. His optimism in *The New Public Service*, which focuses on the locus, satisfaction, and achievements of a small sample of MPA graduates, is tempered by his characterization of the larger structure of the new public service in *The True Size of Government* as "illusions upon illusions" (Light, 1999b, p. 179). As government has been "hollowed out," the public service has become more loosely tied to its traditions, more shadowy than its predecessors, more an unknown than a known quantity with respect to its role in American democracy.

2. The rules embedded in new governance structures, which are tied to market forces, are likely the most compelling influences on behavior in the new public service because of their scope and power. Although Light (1999a) views the continuity epitomized by the ethos of "making a difference in the world" favorably, the institutional rules embedded in new governance structures are widespread and may be more powerful than the public service ethos. The Denhardts are clearly uncomfortable with the trends and orientations of the new public management for our democracy. An analogy helps to illustrate and make this point. Robert Bellah and his collaborators wrote two books that directly reflected their ambivalence about the adequacy of "habits of the heart" for producing "a good society." In their first book, *Habits of the Heart*, Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swindler, and Tipton (1985) showed the enduring importance of community within our society. One of the criticisms of their book, however, was that habits of the heart were not sufficient, particularly in the face of institutions that produced contrary outcomes. Thus, in their second collaborative effort, *The Good Society* (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swindler, & Tipton, 1991), they focused on institutions and how institutions needed to change. The issue to which we need to attend is the implications of the institutional rules of the new public service for our democracy (Box, Marshall,

Reed, & Reed, 2001). These rules most assuredly exist and have consequences, and, there-fore, knowing them is critical for assessing the health of our democracy.

3. The flexibility built into the new public service creates a work world in which our attach-ments are temporary and their temporariness may have far reaching consequences for public service as we know it. In his book *The Corrosion of Character: The Personal Consequences of Work in the New Capitalism,* Richard Sennett (1998) calls attention to one implication of this flexibility and temporariness. Nicholas G. Carr, who reviewed Sennett's book in the *Harvard Business Review*, writes:

> In the aggregate, it erodes the foundation of society. We don't bond with others; we "team" with them. We don't have friends, we have contacts. We're not members of enduring, nurturing communities; we're nodes in ever-shifting, coldly utilitarian networks. . . . But every time we reinvent ourselves, we erase the meaning that our past experience granted us. In place of an ethical sense of ourselves as people with clear attachments, we are left with an ironic sense of ourselves as fabrications. We become unreal, virtual. (cited in Friedman, 2000, pp. 424-425)

A new public service built on the consequences of temporariness that Carr describes is a far cry from the community of shared interests that Light and the Denhardts' envision. The ideals of citizenship, public interest, and administrative responsibility to which the Denhardts refer will wither where attachments are temporary. Our history of civic repub-licanism, where we learn common interests and develop civic habits collectively, is likely to be undermined by erosion of community and the ascent of networks built primarily on calculative commitments (Adams & Balfour, 2004, p. 155; O'Toole, 1997).

In pondering Mosher's concerns about democracy and the public service, it is quite obvi-ous that some parts of the landscape have changed radically and others have not.

1. The involvement of professionals in public service work may have increased by the stan-dards Mosher applied in his second edition. At the same time that professionals are more pervasive, it is not clear they are as influential as they once were. It is conceivable that pri-vatization has shifted influence from professionals to others, among them political appointees, ministers, many who are not classically trained as clergy, and ideologues.
2. The general interest appears to have been further marginalized. One example is our declin-ing ability to guarantee accountability in the procurement process, where "one does not have to go too far down the accountability chain to find mixed motives, diffused responsibilities, and general confusion about who is accountable to whom" (Light, 1999b, p. 185).
3. Concerns about merit systems have evolved radically from Mosher's articulation. Outcries about the costs of postelection political transitions are now a distant echo. States such as Georgia have eliminated their civil service systems altogether (Kellough & Nigro, 2005). Two Volcker Commissions, the first in 1989 and a second convened in 2002, called for reduc-ing the penetration of political appointments in the federal bureaucracy. These calls were answered by legislative inaction, further penetration of political appointments, and a collec-tive yawn from the general public. Despite highly visible failures by political appointees in situations such as the Hurricane Katrina disaster, public indignation and pressure for reform have been muted. The grouping of people outside the civil service, the "shadow" in Light's terms, is now larger than the three types of civil services that Mosher (p. 143) referred to in his book.
4. Mosher generally had it right when he dismissed collective bargaining's threat to political democracy. Mosher's second edition had no doubt gone to press by the time President

> Reagan fired more than 11,000 air traffic controllers on August 5, 1981. Reagan's action effectively ended talk by scholars and practitioners about unionization and collective bargaining's threat to political democracy. At the same time, it may also have ended any pretense that collective bargaining was a pathway to effective democracy because of the promise of greater personal democracy in terms of individual dignity and participation.

How Can We Reconcile Democracy and the New Public Service?

My intent has been to paint a realistic, rather than a bleak, picture about the challenges facing our democracy and the new public service. Framing the challenges we face leads naturally to my next question: How do we reconcile democracy with the new public service?

At the outset, I bemoaned Fritz Mosher's failure to provide clear benchmarks for what he meant by democracy. Mosher did observe, perhaps recognizing the limits of the discipline of political science, that Lincoln found the idea that democracy is "of the people, by the people, and for the people" quite adequate, so Mosher was content to accept it. But let me be more explicit about four criteria I associate with a working definition of democracy. They are:

- Accountability: How accountable to citizens are agents of the state in the new public service?
- Representativeness: How representative (passive and active) is the new public service, that is, how likely is it that the attitudes and behavioral orientations of the new public service will mirror the general public?
- Citizen protection: What does the new public service do to citizens as either clients or stakeholders?
- Citizen agency: What can citizens do to change structures or outcomes of the new public service with which they are dissatisfied?

I discuss four reforms below that could make a difference in our ability to achieve the promise implied by the four criteria associated with our democracy. I believe that *professional changes* are needed to enhance accountability and citizen protection. *Institutional reforms to enhance popular participation* could improve citizen agency. *Reforming public service wage structures* would strengthen representativeness and further support accountability. Finally, *renewing civic education* is needed to address threats to citizen protection and citizen agency.

Professional Change

First, we need to find ways to recapture what Steven Brint (1994), a sociologist, refers to as "social trustee professionalism," where professionals are aware of and attentive to their social contract with the larger society. Brint concludes that a key historical change in professions has been a transition from what he calls social trustee professionalism to expert professionalism. William Sullivan (2004), coauthor of both *Habits of the Heart* and *The Good Society*, draws on Brint's analysis, concluding that the key transformation associated with the transition in professionalism is the loss of "the ethical-social values of professional identity" (p. 28). In both Sullivan's and Brint's analyses, bonds between professionals and

communities of stakeholders have grown more complex, and their civic content has been diminished. In Sullivan's view, professional life "needs to be restructured in ways that suffuse technical competence with civic awareness and purpose" (p. 32).

How might professions be reinvigorated with a new spirit of civic awareness and purpose? A starting point is what Sullivan (2004) refers to as the three apprenticeships of professional education. Sullivan intentionally uses the concept of apprenticeship to analyze professional education because apprenticeship was the means by which professionals traditionally developed mastery of their profession. In the 20th century, professional education moved from apprenticeship to the university. The change created a profound shift. The university is well suited to deliver the first apprenticeship, which involves cognitive learning. The second apprenticeship is "the often tacit body of skills shared by competent practitioners" (p. 208). Although universities may not be as well prepared to deliver this type of learning, they are able to deliver it, often using pedagogies and faculty quite different from those who deliver the first apprenticeship. It is the third apprenticeship, which involves students' exposure to the values and attitudes of the professional community, that professional programs in universities have the greatest difficulty delivering.

Reforming professional education, especially how future professionals learn about a profession's social roles and responsibilities that are part of the third apprenticeship, offers a potential remedy for inadequacies of professional learning in modern America. Adams (1999) reminds us that effecting reforms in public administration education may be especially difficult in an age of modernity where moral reasoning—linking professional roles to a larger social context—is problematic. Reform may be extraordinarily difficult, but it is a worthy aspiration. It is an aspiration around which policy makers, professional associations, professionals, and educators may be able to find common ground.

Institutional Reforms to Enhance Popular Participation

Another step we can take is suggested by James Morone (1990) in *The Democratic Wish*, winner of the 1991 Gladys Kammerer Award from the American Political Science Association. At the core of Morone's historical analysis is the following observation: "At the heart of American politics lies a dread and a yearning. . . . Americans fear public power as a threat to liberty. The yearning is an alternative faith in direct, communal democracy" (p. 1). Our efforts to reconcile our liberal traditions with civic republicanism often opt for the liberal solutions and choose private sector initiatives, market-like behavior, and consumer sovereignty.

Morone (1990) argues that we need to redirect our search for democracy from "the streets" where it is exercised directly by the people—that is, as a direct, communal form of democracy—and look instead to infuse the institutions that govern our political economy with "broad, workable forms of popular participation" (p. 336). Morone's conclusions are based on his analysis of great democratic movements in American history, among them the Jacksonian, Progressive, and New Deal eras. He is clear that it will probably take another great democratic movement to create the wherewithal for us to infuse institutions with forms of popular participation. Although he is not explicit about what institutional changes need to occur at the center of our political economy, recent headlines provide some options, among them spending on elections, disclosure of lobbying activities, and the partisan gerrymandering of congressional districts.

Reform Public Service Wage Structures

A third step we can take to reconcile democracy and the new public service involves a much more subtle dynamic and set of adjustments. Although the new public service may be more diverse, it has fallen behind the private sector in recent years in its capacity to attract the best and the brightest and retain high-skill workers. George Borjas (2003), a labor economist at Harvard University, recently reported a compelling study about wage structures and the sorting of workers. Borjas's analysis

> suggests that as wage structures evolved, the relative skills of the "marginal" persons who moved across sectors also changed significantly. As the wage structure in the public sector became relatively more compressed, the public sector found it harder to attract and retain high-skill workers. In short, the substantial widening of wage inequality in the private sector and the relatively more stable wage distribution in the public sector created magnetic effects that altered the sorting of workers across sectors, with high-skill workers becoming more likely to end up in the private sector. (p. 52)

The implication of Borjas's research is that we need to pay more attention to dispersion in wages between the public and private sectors. One target for action might be tighter controls on corporate pay and stock options, which has garnered attention from Congress, the Conference Board, and the Securities and Exchange Commission, among others (Doran, 2004). Another avenue for redressing the imbalance is to explore performance and skill-based changes in public sector wage structures. These changes could be pursued in lieu of individual pay-for-performance schemes (Perry, Mesch, & Paarlberg, 2006) that have shown little capacity to improve results in the public sector. Remedying the compression of public wage structures creates the prospect that the new public service will be diverse on a dimension of importance to Mosher and many others, and that dimension is workforce quality.

Renewal of Civic Education

Finally, we need to reintegrate citizenship and democracy into our culture, particularly our educational systems. The implications of this suggestion extend far beyond rethinking professional education. The public service has historically been seen as a bulwark against threats to democracy by virtue of its stewardship of democratic institutions. Our society did not need to rely on the public service alone, but public service was viewed as protection for excesses from other sources. It strikes me that this philosophic orientation is no longer sufficient in the new public service, characterized as it is by diffusion of public service across sectors in our society and increasingly reliant on new norms and institutions such as the market. Thus, we need to look more to the capacity of *citizens* to understand and pursue a moral imagination appropriate to the realities of a new public service.

If we are to look to citizens as *stewards* for our democracy and public service, then we face a real problem. In 1998, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Civics Report Card (Lutkus, Weiss, Campbell, Mazzeo, & Lazer, 1999) found that about 70% of 4th, 8th, and 12th graders performed at a basic level of achievement, but only about 25% were proficient. A survey of high school students conducted in 2004 found that nearly

three fourths express little appreciation for the First Amendment and that they are less likely than adults to think that people should be allowed to express unpopular opinions or that newspapers should be allowed to publish freely without government approval of stories (John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, 2004).

To be sure, the evidence above and other trends in civic education during the past 50 years can be interpreted in several ways. Based on a recent review of the research, William Galston (2001) concludes that political knowledge today is no greater than it was 50 years ago, despite the general increase in education. Citing a major longitudinal study by Delli Carpini and Keeter (1996), Galston notes that the political knowledge of "today's high school graduates are roughly equivalent to the high school dropouts of the late 1940s, and today's college graduates are roughly equivalent to the high school graduates of that earlier epoch" (p. 222). More than three decades of surveys of matriculating freshman at American colleges by the Higher Education Research Institute at the University of California, Los Angeles, shows similarly disconcerting trends in political engagement, perceived importance of political knowledge, and acquisition of political information (Galston, 2001).

Using education as a mechanism for sustaining a healthy relationship between democracy and public service echoes Mosher's personal view. On the last page of the second edition of *Democracy and the Public Service*, Mosher (1982) wrote: "As in our culture in the past and in a good many other civilizations, the nature and quality of the public service depend principally upon systems of education" (p. 240). In the face of perceived declines in social capital and civic education, colleges and universities are reassessing their roles in preparing future citizens for engagement in civic and political life (Jones & Perry, 2006). The mission of Campus Compact, a coalition of nearly 1,000 college and university presidents, revolves exclusively around promoting civic engagement. Leading associations of colleges and universities, among them the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges (NASULGC), and the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), are pursuing efforts to enhance the attention their member organizations give to civic engagement. Regional and state accrediting bodies have begun to make institutional service and engagement core criteria for accreditation of institutions of higher education, and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching has embarked on a pilot project for classifying community engagement.

Some of our colleagues have thought carefully about these issues, and we should give their ideas serious attention. Harry Boyte, codirector of the Center for Democracy and Citizenship at the University of Minnesota, argues that we reconceive our understanding of politics to realign it with a classic Aristotelian meaning rather than the modern meanings politics has acquired. His 2004 book, *Everyday Politics*, provides a foundation for how we might approach politics in our classrooms and attach politics to a skill set that we can transmit to our students (Boyte, 2004). Scholars at the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, & Stephens, 2003) are studying pedagogies of civic and political engagement for insights to how we can reconnect our students with the civic and political. We need to join these reformers in the search for ways of remedying the disengagement and civic illiteracy of our students.

Conclusion

My solutions to the problems created for our democracy by the new public service are, for the most part, not peculiar to the new public service but extend beyond this arena. The sources of tensions between democracy and new public service are exogenous to the new public service. Thus, any effort to bring democracy into better balance with the new public service will require fundamental transformations in social institutions, not just the public service as we have come to know it.

I would like to sound a cautionary note about the concerns I raise about democracy in the face of the evolution of our public service. I readily characterize the perspective I have provided about democracy and the new public service as "developing" or "emerging." It is not yet tied to penetrating empirical analysis. The field needs to begin looking seriously at the criteria we identify with a healthy democracy and determine whether they have been skewed by the evolution of the public sector and public service. A nascent effort at analysis is manifest in a recent symposium in this journal (Bogason & Musso, 2006). As a next step, we might look at domains of public action where civil service has been displaced by new forms of public service. A prelude to such evaluative efforts would be to classify the new forms of public service so that we better understand how it is now different and the forms the new public service takes.

After we have better schema of the varieties of public service, then we can ask and investigate some pointed questions about consequences for democracy. The four democracy dimensions I identified above would be useful for evaluating consequences. We ought to inquire how the new public service affects accountability, representativeness, citizen protection, and citizen agency. Koppell's (2003) study of accountability and hybrid government is indicative of the type of illuminating research that I have in mind. Another study that provides some direction for future research is Sorensen's (2006) study of the changing role of politicians in democratic governance. Her study of four Danish municipalities concluded that network governance marginalizes politicians and thereby weakens democracy. In general, the new public service will require us to return to the "who governs" question and inquire about who now is in charge and what it means for our democracy.

As we empirically investigate the interplay between the new public service and democracy, we also need to discern the normative and ideological status of the new public service. In the concluding chapter of his book, Mosher (1982) observed that the American people spent a century building an ideology that related "the public service to their indigenous concepts of democracy" (p. 217). Mosher argued that the *merit* ideology was intertwined with—and essential to—democracy. He also foresaw the changes in the meaning and public acceptance of merit ideology as we entered the last quarter of the 20th century. We would honor Mosher's memory if we would articulate a normative theory for the new public service that guides the future development of our democracy.

References

Adams, G. B. (1999). Administrative ethics and the chimera of professionalism: The historical context of public service ethics. In T. Cooper (Ed.), *Handbook of administrative ethics* (2nd ed., pp. 291-308). New York: Marcel Dekker.

Adams, G. B., & Balfour, D. (2004). *Administrative evil* (rev. ed.). Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe

Barzelay, M. (1992). *Breaking through bureaucracy: A new approach to public management*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Bellah, R. N., Madsen, R., Sullivan, W., Swindler, A., & Tipton, S. M. (1985). *Habits of the heart*: *Individualism and commitment in American life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Bellah, R. N., Madsen, R., Sullivan, W., Swindler, A., & Tipton, S. M. (1991). *The good society.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Bogason, P., & Musso, J. A. (2006). The democratic prospects of network governance. *American Review of Public Administration*, *36*(1), 3-18.

Borjas, G. J. (2003). Wage structures and the sorting of workers into the public sector. In J. D. Donahue & J. S. Nye, Jr. (Eds.), *For the people: Can we fix public service?* (pp. 29-54). Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.

Boyte, H. C. (2004). *Everyday politics: Reconnecting citizens and public life*. Philadelphia: Penn Press.

Box, R. C., Marshall, G. S., Reed, B. J., & Reed, C. M. (2001). New public management and substantive democracy. *Public Administration Review, 61*(5), 608-619.

Brint, S. (1994). *In an age of experts: The changing role of professionals in politics and public life*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Colby, A., Ehrlich, T., Beaumont, E., & Stephens, J. (2003). *Educating citizens: Preparing American under-graduates for lives of moral and civic responsibility.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Delli Carpini, M. X., & Keeter, S. (1996). *What Americans know about politics and why it matters*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Denhardt, J. V., & Denhardt, R. B. (2003). *The new public service: Serving, not steering*. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe.

Doran, M. (2004). *Executive compensation reform and the limits of tax policy* (Discussion paper 18). Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.

Friedman, T. (2000). *The Lexus and the olive tree.* New York: Anchor.

Galston, W. (2001). Political knowledge, political engagement, and civic education. *Annual Review of Political Science, 4*, 217-234.

John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. (2004). *Future of the First Amendment*. Retrieved August 14, 2005, from http://firstamendment.jideas.org/downloads/future_final.pdf

Jones, S., & Perry, J. L. (2006). Why educating citizens? Why now? In J. L. Perry & S. Jones (Eds.), *Quick hits for educating citizens*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Kellough, J. E., & Nigro, L. G. (2005). *Civil service reform in the states: Personnel policies and politics at the subnational level*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Kettl, D. F. (2002). *The transformation of governance: Public administration for twenty-first century America*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Koppell, J. G. S. (2003). *The politics of quasi-government: Hybrid organizations and the dynamics of bureau-cratic control*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Lan, Z., & Rosenbloom, D. H. (1992). Editorial: Public administration in transition. *Public Administration Review, 53*, 535-537.

Levine, C. H. (1978). Organizational decline and cutback management. *Public Administration Review*, *38*, 316-325.

Light, P. (1999a). *The new public service*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.

Light, P. (1999b). *The true size of government*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.

Lutkus, A. D., Weiss, A. R., Campbell, J. R., Mazzeo, J., & Lazer, S. (1999). *NAEP 1998 civics report card for the nation*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, National Center for Education Statistics.

March, J. G., & Olsen, J. P. (1983). Organizing political life: What administrative reorganization tell us about government. *American Political Science Review*, *77*, 281-296.

Morone, J. (1990). *The democratic wish: Popular participation and the limits of American government*. New York: Basic Books.

Mosher, F. (1982). *Democracy and the public service* (2nd ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.

Osborne, D., & Gaebler, T. (1992). *Reinventing government: How the entrepreneurial spirit is transforming the public sector*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Osborne, D., & Plastrik, P. (1997). *Banishing bureaucracy: The five strategies for reinventing government*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

O'Toole, L. D., Jr. (1997). The implications for democracy in a networked bureaucratic world. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 7*(3), 443-459.

Perry, J. L., Mesch, D., & Paarlberg, L. (2006). Motivating employees in a new governance era: The performance paradigm revisited. *Public Administration Review, 66*, 505-514.

Sennett, R. (1998). *The corrosion of character: The Personal consequences of work in the new capitalism.* New York: W.W. Norton.

Sorensen, E. (2006). Metagovernance: The changing role of politicians in processes of democratic governance. *American Review of Public Administration*, *36*(1), 98-114.

Stephenson, M. O., & Plant, J. F. (1991). The legacy of Frederick Mosher. *Public Administration Review, 51*(2), 97-113.

Sullivan, W. (2004). *Work and integrity* (2nd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

James L. Perry is Chancellor's Professor, School of Public and Environmental Affairs (SPEA) at Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI). His research focuses on motivation, community and national service, and government reform. His most recent books are *Civic Service: What Difference Does It Make?* (2004) and *Quick Hits for Educating Citizens* (2006).