

that have high prospects for continued interaction. This is the most common pattern of intercommittee politics, in which committees exchange influence over pieces of legislation in a manner consistent with the distributive (log-rolling) model of legislative organization. Turf wars are most likely when new and unfamiliar issues arise involving committees that have little history of interaction. Turf wars are won by effectively staking claims to policy expertise in a manner consistent with the informational model. When the issue involved is on the majority party agenda, the Speaker and other party leaders intervene in the outcome, consistent with the partisan model.

There is an institutional and historical component to the story as well. Faced with an increasingly complex policy environment, the House in 1974 introduced the practice of multiple referral. Before this reform, the “weight of the bill” was the only applicable rule for referring complex legislation; committee interaction was infrequent. With multiple referral, the points of contact between House committees multiplied, and thus intercommittee bargaining became more common. By giving more discretion to the Speaker, the multiple referral rule, along with other reforms, also gave the majority party leadership more leverage for shaping and guiding legislation.

Baughman does an excellent job employing historical data, case studies, and interviews with committee staff in developing the theory in Chapters 1–3. Case studies and interviews are also crucial sources of evidence for the book’s exploration of the parameters of committee cooperation and bargaining in Chapters 4–7, which also see the derivation of hypotheses and reporting of statistical tests. Baughman bases several statistical tests on member preferences and legislative outcomes for some strategically selected bills from recent Congresses and on data drawn from joint referrals and waiver letters in the 105th Congress.

In chapter 4, the data on joint referrals and waivers provide the basis for what should be the critical test of the transaction cost theory. Waiver letters are instances of cooperation on multiple referred bills, in which one committee indicates it will not act on a given bill in deference to another committee’s work but retains jurisdiction over the underlying issue. Baughman uses a Poisson regression model to estimate the number of waivers between committee pairs as a function of the number of each pair’s jointly referred bills that were acted upon and of the jurisdictional proximity between the two committees. Consistent with the transaction cost theory, the number of waivers increases with greater jurisdictional proximity, a measure derived from multidimensional scaling (MDS) of the number of joint referrals between committee pairs. This reader wonders, however, if the MDS measure is sufficiently removed from the underlying pairwise data, that we have not simply found that the number of waivers increases with the number of joint referrals—something one should expect by chance. One would like to have seen the *likeli-*

hood of committee waivers modeled, rather than simply the number of waivers, inasmuch as the central insight of the transaction cost theory is that committees are *more likely* to cooperate with greater past experience and future prospect of interaction.

The remaining chapters examine the use of committees as building blocks for floor coalitions outside of the joint-referral scenario, the impact of overlapping memberships and staff contacts on intercommittee cooperation, and the manner in which the Speaker can use multiple referrals, task forces, and other means to overcome jurisdictional problems. Chapter 6 reveals the most important finding for advancing the transaction cost theory. The number of shared members in a given pair of committees, particularly by committee or subcommittee chairs, has a positive relationship with the number of waivers granted in the pair when controlling for the other variables in the Poisson regression from Chapter 4.

Common Ground is a convincing presentation of a new theory of legislative committee jurisdiction, one that can account for a greater range of behavior than previous theories and that extends our understanding of the conditional nature of the three predominant models of legislative organization. It effectively deploys abstract theorizing, statistical analysis, interview reports, and case studies and brings to bear insights from outside the congressional studies literature. It deserves careful attention from all congressional scholars.

Madison’s Managers: Public Administration and the Constitution. By Anthony M. Bertelli and Laurence E. Lynn, Jr. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. 240p. \$60.00 cloth, \$25.00 paper.

The Politics of Crisis Management: Public Leadership Under Pressure. By Arjen Boin, Paul 't Hart, Eric Stern, and Bengt Sundelius. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005. 182p. \$70.00 cloth, \$27.99 paper.
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— Dennis Hale, *Boston College*

No undergraduate public administration course would be complete without at least a perfunctory attempt to summarize the never-ending debate about what public administration is. From Woodrow Wilson to “scientific management” to the Brownlow Committee to the Willowbrook Conference and beyond, the position papers and studies pile up; yet the debate (which often seems more like a monologue) continues. Students find this debate unsatisfying, and it is easy to see why. For a craft that prides itself above all on its relevance to practical affairs (as Woodrow Wilson put it, administration is “government in action”), the arguments that students are most often exposed to have the arid scholasticism of medieval disputes about angels dancing on pins. If public administration is so practical, students must be thinking, why cannot

its theorists just cut to the chase and tell us how to do it? Or even what it is?

The two books under review will not, I'm afraid, help very much, largely because they reflect, rather than combat, the aridity of the public administration debate. One seeks to understand the constitutional place of administration, and the other offers the promise of practical guidance to leaders managing crises; however, both books have a hard time getting to the point.

Which is too bad, because both books raise important questions. The Bertelli-Lynn collaboration, *Madison's Managers*, looks at the constitutional place of public management. Boin and his collaborators want to know how public leadership bears up under crisis conditions. These are obviously important problems.

The first question—the place of public administration in the constitution—is also a very old one. How bureaucracy can be reconciled with the Constitution has been one of the leitmotifs of the never-ending debate, in part because of Woodrow Wilson's dubious claim that administration was something “new” in American politics and, therefore, something that would have to be accommodated by retrofitting the Constitution. This was decidedly not the Founders' view—or at least, not the view of Alexander Hamilton, and probably not the view of James Madison in 1787. (*Madison's Managers* spends very little time on what James Madison actually said.) Unlike contemporary scholars, Hamilton had no difficulty defining what administration was: “in its most usual and perhaps in its most precise signification, it is limited to executive details, and falls peculiarly within the province of the executive department” (*The Federalist Papers* 72). Administration, so defined, would require energy in the executive branch, and if it were conducted properly, the American people would over time become more attached to the national government than to the states.

The “regime of parties and courts” that extinguished the Federalists took a different view of administration, seeing executive agencies as the servants, at least in part, of the legislative branch, and not even the New Deal and the growth of an “administrative state” has driven this view from the field. (As I write, Congress has just passed a law informing the president of what qualifications he must seek in future appointees to the Federal Emergency Management Agency. President Bush has wisely described this provision in a signing statement as an interference with his constitutional responsibilities as the chief executive, and he has promised to ignore it.) We have been working, therefore, with two competing accounts of where administration fits into the constitutional scheme, which helps to explain why there has been so much ink spilled over the past century.

To be more precise, Bertelli and Lynn are interested in reconciling managerial responsibility with the separation of powers. This is a vexing problem. In his masterful *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They*

Do It ([1991], which is neither discussed nor cited in this book), James Q. Wilson notes that anyone who wonders why management reform is difficult need only read Madison's *The Federalist Papers* 51 for an answer. Though the Founders wanted a strong national government with a vigorous executive, they also wanted a government that would not be pushed into either legislative or executive tyranny; checks and balances was their famous remedy. However, checks and balances invited the very Jeffersonian legislative assertions that undermined the Hamiltonian view of administration as mainly an executive responsibility.

Therefore, while there is clearly a legitimate constitutional place for public management in a regime of separated powers, our peculiar political history means that administrators often serve two masters. This means that they are capable of evading both, and this fear (or for some writers, this hope) inspired much of the wrangling in the academy over what administration really is and how administrators can be held accountable (indoctrinate them? sue them? replace them frequently?) that has taken up so much of the discipline's attention. Bertelli and Lynn take the reader on a long journey through this debate, leading ultimately to their consideration of the rational choice, or political economy, school of public administration, which holds that Congress is the principal and the bureaucracy the agent, and that public management can be seen as the result of a rational bargaining process among interests in the Congress, in society, and in agencies themselves. The authors, endorsing this view, argue that it can easily be reconciled with the “Madisonian” expectation that a regime of separated powers would make administrative authority safe for a republican regime.

The difficulty, as readers of James Q. Wilson know, is that the “principal/agent” template for public agencies is hard to square with the evidence of how agencies actually behave. The great problem of administrative reform is precisely the difficulty of giving administrative agencies a clear enough picture of what it is they are supposed to be doing that they can be held accountable for doing it or not. What is the Defense Department supposed to do when there is no war? How do we know if they are doing it, or if they are doing it well or poorly? If we, the principals, do not know, how can they, the agents, do our bidding? How can agency supervisors, for that matter, control the behavior of operators far down the chain of command?

So while *Madison's Managers* is a promising inquiry into managerial responsibility, it is short-circuited by a strange lack of empirical credibility: There is simply not enough appreciation or apparent awareness of what government agencies are really like to make *Madison's Managers* helpful in the end.

The second book—the volume by Boin et al.—seems at first glance more promising. Featuring a cover photograph of Mayor Guiliani, President Bush, and Governor

Pataki at the ruins of the World Trade Center on September 14, 2001, the book offers at least a glimpse of the “action” part of government—something practical at last. Unfortunately, *The Politics of Crisis Management* is more devoted to a summary of what we know about why crisis management is difficult and to an effort to categorize or model the crises modern societies experience. Much of what the authors tell us is somewhat obvious. We learn that leaders “generally fail to see crises coming,” for example (p. 19). Crises are virtually impossible to predict, they remind us—though it is often possible to “grasp the dynamics of a crisis once it is underway” (p. 19). Crises are also “rare” (p. 25), so there are few leaders experienced at handling them at any given moment. (This latter observation is not even a truism: If a hurricane can be considered a crisis, Gulf Coast public officials get yearly seminars—although some are better learners than others, as Katrina made clear.) We learn also that some leaders are naturally decisive, while others are not, and that leaders are not always in control of events (p. 51).

Chapter 4 presents an interesting discussion of how contentious “meaning making” has become in the midst of crises. The media now competes with public officials to define the meaning of crises even as they are happening, which may undermine the “permissive consensus” necessary to take effective action (p. 70). Much of this chapter is devoted to the difficult business of “framing” a crisis in one way or another, and we are reminded, once again, of how damaging the polarization of the media has become, and how difficult it is to govern when every event, from a terrorist attack to a storm, is “spun” on a daily basis. The authors wonder what the consequences for crisis control will be if “impression management really becomes the most important game in town” (p. 100). Whatever its shortcomings, this book is a timely warning about what happens when citizens believe that everything bad can be prevented, and that every misfortune is therefore the result of “deficient political choices” (p. 138) or grist for political scandal.

Scandal mongering flourishes in an atmosphere of public misunderstanding of what governments do, what they are capable of, and why they fail. In particular, the public is often deeply confused about the separation of powers and federalism, political realities unique to the United States, and the source of both strengths and weaknesses in the American regime—as 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina demonstrated very effectively. Therefore, no approach to public administration will prove helpful that does not take seriously the challenges posed by these two aspects of American politics. Students hunger for books that can help them make sense of their own government, leading them to a prudential understanding of what the government does well and what it does badly and why. Unfortunately, neither of these books is up to the challenge of this particular kind of political education.

Mayors and Schools: Minority Voices and Democratic Tensions in Urban Education. By Stefanie Chambers. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006. 240p. \$64.50 cloth, \$21.95 paper.

Schools In: Federalism and the National Education Agenda. By Paul Manna. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2006. 222p. \$26.95.
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— Scott E. Robinson, *University of Texas at Dallas*

Interest in the politics of American cities and states has been steadily increasing in recent years, as scholars have rediscovered the importance of studying issues of governance at subnational levels. Recent research has illustrated that the American federal system is both more interconnected than many Washington-centric accounts would lead one to believe and more complicated insofar as the politics of states and local governments do not perfectly reflect national political processes. These two books represent efforts by emerging scholars to leverage the advantages of studying state and local politics in order to address major questions about political institutions in the United States and to make the case for greater incorporation of state and local elements into mainstream accounts of political change.

In *Mayors and Schools*, Stefanie Chambers addresses issues of minority empowerment and political conflict within the context of urban school reform. Using a comparative case study design, Chambers recounts the tumultuous politics of school reform in Chicago and Cleveland, with particular attention to the role of racial politics and centralization of authority in mayors’ offices. She argues that predominant accounts of school reform underemphasize the role of race, class, and state dynamics in the historical development of local education systems (p. 9). The book is an attempt to establish the importance of these three factors in understanding urban school reform.

Chambers finds contrasting reactions to the centralization of education policymaking in the mayors’ offices in Chicago and Cleveland. She argues that the different history of education reform in the two cities, as well as the different political strategies of the mayors’ centralizing authority, produced these different reactions. Chicago experimented with decentralization, site-based management, and community control in 1988, creating public expectations of broad participation in education policy. The reversal of this reform in the mid-1990s left many community members feeling alienated and abandoned, particularly the minority citizens of Chicago. The author focuses attention on the use of race as an organizing force in Chicago’s local elections, from the machine politics of Mayor Richard J. Daley (pp. 47–51) through the recent administration of Richard M. Daley (pp. 56–59). She presents convincing evidence that race played a significant role in the politics of education reform in Chicago.