

MAGNUS LINNARSSON AND MATS HALLENBERG

The Shifting Politics of Public Services: Discourses, Arguments, and Institutional Change in Sweden, c. 1620–2000

Abstract: This article analyses the inherent conflict between public and private interest from a long time-perspective, using the example of Sweden from 1620 to 2000. The main argument is that there have been two equally decisive historical shifts in the political discourse on how to organize public services in the past: First, a shift from an early modern patriarchal discourse to a more expansive articulation of publicness during the nineteenth century. Second, a shift toward privatization and deregulation in the late twentieth century. Both these shifts must be considered to fully explain the changing forms of public organization up to the present day. Theoretically, the concept of “publicness” is used to explain the political discourses on the organization of public services. Drawing on three discursive chains, the argument is that the political development was affected by the politicians’ conception of the political community, the form of organization, and by perceptions of values such as equal access and modernity. Our results demonstrate how and why political arguments for or against private service providers have motivated profound changes in the way public services are perceived of and organized.

Keywords: Public services, institutional change, political discourse, private entrepreneurs, freedom of choice, Sweden

The problem of private versus public organization of welfare services has been one of the most contested issues in contemporary politics over the last forty years. Since the heyday of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan, the call for privatization has been raised by conservative as well as liberal representatives. Labor and Social Democratic politicians have been divided on the issue; some

rejecting the idea of private entrepreneurs in public service altogether, while some have accepted or even supported arguments for competitive spur and freedom of choice.¹

The aim of this article is to make an argument for a long-time perspective on the conflict between public and private, by focusing on public services in Sweden from c. 1620 to 2000. Conflicts on how to organize tasks identified as belonging to the public have a long history. We identify two equally decisive historical shifts in the political discourse: First, a shift from an early modern patriarchal discourse to a more expansive articulation of publicness during the nineteenth century. Second, a shift toward privatization and deregulation in the late twentieth century. Both these shifts must be considered to fully explain the continuity and changes of public organization up to the present day.

There is of course a considerable amount of research addressing the shift from state or municipal monopolies toward competition and variety.² However, most historians and social scientists have focused narrowly on the late 1900s, overlooking the fact that the execution of public services has been a major bone of contention in Western politics from the Roman republic right up to the age of industrialization. One exception to this abstraction is research on the school system, a field that has been drawing interest from scholars studying political conflicts in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.³

Economic historical research on public-private relations tends to focus on industrialization and the creation of large infrastructure systems—or on administrative solutions.⁴ Swedish economic historians Lena Andersson-Skog and Jan Ottosson have studied state regulation of transport and communication systems. They recognize the preoccupation with system analysis that has characterized much of the previous literature and call for a political perspective on organizational development.⁵ However, scholars of political history have been concerned with the changes of the late twentieth century, missing important developments in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and thus they provide only a limited interpretation, usually of a specific context.⁶ Therefore, the main contribution of this article will be to explain the long-term impact of political discourse on economic organization, more precisely on the management of public services.

The Swedish example holds special relevance for the changing relationship between public service and private interest. In the early modern period, Sweden was an expansionist military state that eventually transformed into a parliamentary regime, while other parts of Europe still lingered under absolutist rule.⁷ In modern times, research on the welfare state often refer to a

Swedish (or Nordic) model for promoting social security and citizen rights for the great majority of the population.⁸ Nonetheless, Swedish governments have in recent years pushed the politics of privatization further than many other states, for example, by allowing private corporations to run for-profit schools funded by the taxpayers.⁹ Sweden thus provides a case of extremes as well as a valuable corrective to the hitherto dominant Anglo-Saxon perspective.

The following analysis focuses on argumentation. We consider political conflicts for a period of four hundred years, and our main interest is to identify lines of arguments that have motivated changes in how public services were organized. We argue that concepts and ideas from the past still play a role in today's debates about the organization and operation of public services. Our study will demonstrate how similar arguments have been raised by politicians at different periods in time, but also how they have been combined in various ways to advocate change. We seek to answer the following questions:

1. What concepts and arguments did political agents use to advocate or criticize public or private organization?
2. What were the main lines of argument, and how do they relate to the construction of publicness?
3. How can the decisive shifts in the political discourse on public services be explained from a longtime perspective?

Our case studies are political debates in the Swedish *Riksdag* (the national diet/parliament) and among municipal authorities in the capital city of Stockholm. Each case addresses a central political conflict on public services representative of the period in question. The source material comprises minutes and documents from the city council and the parliament. The analysis focuses on the management of public services, rather than on financing or regulatory measures. The actual service-providers are the ones responsible for meeting the demands of the ordinary citizen. Therefore, it is important to recognize such conflicts. While we focus on the arguments, we also discuss the impact of real economic conditions on what arguments turned out to be persuasive in the debates.

PUBLICNESS AND THE COMMON GOOD

This study draws on the work of Janet Newman and John Clarke, who have analyzed the construction of “publicness” as a major issue in contemporary

politics. According to Newman and Clarke, publicness is the combination of ideas, people, and practices that have been made public, comprising a process in which matters of collective concern have been made visible. They argue that the organization as well as the performance of public services affects the perception of common interest in any given society, and this consciousness makes up a notion of publicness. Over time, changing forms of organization have caused political conflicts about the purpose and goals of public service.¹⁰

Newman and Clarke have singled out three discursive chains that constitute the notion of publicness. The first chain defines the idea of the political community: the citizens, the people, and the nation, who together form the public. The second chain constructs the notion of the public, based on the organization responsible for public service: the state and the public sector. The third discursive chain links public awareness to values of political rights and freedom. This reinforces the notion of independent public actors, ready to defend the public against corruption and other forms of self-interest.¹¹

Taken together, these discursive chains help us understand and explain what defines and constitutes publicness, why some services were regarded as vital to the public and who had a say in discussions concerning their organization. However, we need to adjust the model somewhat for the historical analysis; that is, to compare political conflicts at both the national and the local level. Most important, the public sector does not have to be identified with the state, since local and regional bodies have always played a major part in organizing welfare services. Consequently, notions of community might refer to the urban municipality as well as to the political nation.

We will use this qualified version of Newman and Clarke's model to demonstrate how conflicts over public services propelled historical change. In the nineteenth century, the political debates articulated notions of a broader political community as well as notions of modernity and progress. This in turn led to a stronger understanding of public services as an object of intervention for municipal and national bodies. However, we will also show how these chains were loosened by the end of the twentieth century, when freedom of choice and antibureaucratic sentiments served to promote administration by private entrepreneurs and a different notion of publicness.

Structure of the Article

Following this introduction, the article is divided into three sections. First, we discuss various explanations for the historical shifts from private to public

organization and vice versa. We pay attention to both ideological and economic explanations.

Second, we provide an outline of the empirical research, drawing on our previous results to present an analysis on how the trajectory of public service in Sweden has been transformed since the early modern period. In this section, we also account for and analyze the predominant lines of argument in the political arenas. This article, however, does not provide extensive empirical support for our argument; for that, we refer the reader to the articles that the empirical sections are based on.¹²

Third, we analyze how these conflicts and debates have affected the general idea of publicness, the notion of what constitutes the common good. We argue that the debates on public services have triggered the articulation of new forms of publicness, ideas on how society should be ordered to guarantee the well-being of the citizens.

The article concludes with an analysis on institutional change over time and some implications for the question of the common good. We also reconnect to the previous discussion of various explanations for the shifts from private to public organization and vice versa.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE IN HISTORY

The relationship between the private and the public is one of the great dichotomies of human history.¹³ American economist Albert Hirschman has argued that there are private-public cycles in the history of how to organize public affairs. The industrialized world seems to alternate between periods when private material values are emphasized, i.e., individual consumption and periods that promote involvement in public affairs.¹⁴ When political mobilization does not succeed in bringing about important change, disappointed citizens may consider private consumption a more viable alternative.¹⁵ Drawing on his work, we regard politics and ideologies as important factors, thus emphasizing political arguments as an important explanation for the shifts from private to public organization and vice versa.

Economic historian Avner Offer presents a similar argument, focusing on the contradictions between private and public consumption. According to Offer, there is constant tension between the consumption of what he calls visceral goods and prudential goods. The first category represents consumer goods aimed at satisfying the immediate needs of the individual. The second category represents long-term investments such as health care, social security, and public education.¹⁶ While Hirschman highlights ideological motivation

for the recurrent shifts between private and public consumption, Offer points to economic factors. Large investments in public services became the norm already in the late Victorian period, when politicians responded to electoral demands for addressing the social problems caused by industrialization.

However, the rise of material living standards in Western Europe from the 1970s onward prompted a shift in favor of the privatization of public services. With the benefits of the welfare state already at hand, taxpayers now wanted to cut government administration in order to increase the scope for private consumption. Since the late twentieth century, parts of the welfare systems previously managed according to the prudential model have instead been left to the market.¹⁷ Offer concludes that the relationship between public and private shifted in favor of the private (market) as people focused on visceral consumption with fast rewards.

Hirschman and Offer have identified different motivating forces to explain why society at a given time put greater confidence in either the private or the public to solve certain tasks. Importantly, they both recognize ideology and politics as key factors for the changing relationship over time. Political scientists Johannes Lindvall and Ben Alsell, who have compared educational systems on a global scale from 1870 to 1939, have likewise pointed to the pivotal role of partisan politics in the establishment of new education regimes.¹⁸ Consequently, we must examine the discursive patterns that have propelled the shifts from private to public and vice versa in order to explain the historical trajectories.

THE EMPIRICAL STUDIES

Based on the above, we argue that the organization and management of public services is primarily a political problem. The following analysis therefore relies on two premises. The first is that politics matters; decisions on nationalization and privatization are made by political assemblies and have generally been widely contested and debated before the outcome. We have therefore chosen to focus on the debate: What concepts and arguments were used by political agents to promote or criticize public and private organization, respectively?

Our second premise is that the debates on public services have one thing in common: they have raised issues well beyond the limited scope of the operation in question. Discussions on how to manage tax collection, public transport, childcare, and so forth, have related to the very core of politics—how to define the common good as well as the political community that is supposed to benefit from it.

To investigate this problem, we have concentrated on the political arenas: the Swedish Riksdag and municipal bodies in Stockholm. Our investigation thus encompasses both the national and the local level, which is crucial, while municipal bodies—especially in Sweden—have shouldered large responsibilities regarding the welfare of their citizens.¹⁹ The analysis focuses on fundamental debates from periods when the dominant interpretation of publicness was challenged by contesting notions. In order to account for different types of contestation, we study conflicts over different types of public services: technical infrastructure as well as welfare services like childcare and care for senior citizens.

We have identified five time periods when the organization of public services was a central matter of political conflict. (1) In the seventeenth century, the farming out of taxes and customs caused widespread contention both at the national and the local level. (2) By the mid-eighteenth century, the management of the customs service was a recurring point of conflict at the national level. At the same time, the introduction of public street lightning in Stockholm caused lengthy discussions between communal bodies and government agencies. (3) In the mid-nineteenth century, the construction of a national main-line railway network became a hotly disputed subject in the Riksdag. In Stockholm, the debate focused on public sanitation and the call for a municipal organization for disposal of latrine waste. (4) In the early 1900s, political conflicts centered chiefly on new forms of infrastructure: the coordination of telephone networks on the national level and the organizing of tramways in the city of Stockholm. (5) Toward the end of the twentieth century, politicians on both levels became engaged in the issue on whether to privatize welfare services like preschools and care for the elderly.

Taken together, these case-studies portray a general trajectory of the organization of public services over four hundred years: from public authorities concentrating on the core functions of collecting taxes and excise duties, via the incorporation of new forms of infrastructure from the mid-seventeenth century onward, to the expansion of publicly financed welfare services in the twentieth century. We have identified a clear trend toward increasing public management of important services from c. 1850 up to the late twentieth century. However, this development was reversed after 1980, when the politics of privatization has benefited private business entrepreneurs over state or municipal bodies. In the following, we will investigate the arguments propelling these shifts.

The First Shift: The Rise of Public Organization

Throughout the period from c. 1620 to 2000, the main argument against private management of public services has been the critical notion of personal

gain. This line of reasoning is most evident in the conflicts over tax farming in the seventeenth century. The system of leasing out revenue to private merchants was introduced in Sweden c. 1620, without much debate. It seems that the government was motivated by economical concern: tax farming offered a means to cut administrative expenses while at the same time securing a steady flow of revenue. However, the system was fiercely contested by the commoner estates. Peasants and burghers accused the tax farmers of ruthlessly pursuing their own private gain. The commoners demanded the right to pay their duties directly to the king, without any profit-seeking intermediates. After the death of king Gustav II Adolph in 1632, the government reluctantly agreed to abandon the lease system and revert to state-administered tax collection.²⁰

The arguments against the lease system focused on personal greed of the tax farmers. The protesters were careful to observe the limits of traditional political culture, claiming to restore the direct relationship between the king and his loyal subjects. Nevertheless, the protests challenged the prerogative of the king to dispose of royal revenue in the way that he saw fit. The result was a recognition of tax collection as a public matter and a strengthening of the discursive chain linking state administration with public interest.²¹

This conflict between private gain and public administration recurred in the debates concerning the customs service in the eighteenth century. The government had decided to lease out the customs in 1726 without consulting the Riksdag. In the following years, voices were raised, arguing that the lease only benefitted the private investors and deprived the crown of important revenue. A typical example comes from the debate in the Riksdag in 1765, when the estates decided to dissolve the General Customs Lease Company—the private consortium responsible for the operation of the Swedish customs service.²² The priest Anders Chydenius, later a well-known economist and political thinker in Sweden, accused the partakers in the Customs Company of enriching themselves at the expense of the taxpayers. “When it has become known that some private individuals have come to enrich themselves on what has been contributed to the Crown, it is not peculiar if the willingness of the subjects to further contributions are declining.”²³ Chydenius thus questioned the legitimacy of the customs company. According to him, the lease contract meant promoting private profit at the expense of the taxpayers. Instead, he advocated that the government itself would run the customs service more effectively. While the opponents to the General Customs Lease Company clearly identified publicness with state administration, the proponents of the system argued that government bureaucracy was prone to corruption and mismanagement. The Riksdag was thus divided between members who

distrusted government bureaucracy and advocated private management, and those who denounced the very idea of profit-seeking entrepreneurs representing the public interest. The antagonism was finally settled in 1809, when the new constitution prohibited all farming out of government revenue.

Distrust of the profit motive was also evident when the city leadership in Stockholm discussed the operation of public street lighting in the mid-eighteenth century. Different factions favored various solutions: a private entrepreneur, a public organization, or a third model, based on the house owner's civic duty. In the debate, allegations of private gain were directed against the private entrepreneur, the captain of the fire guard, Christopher Groth, who previously had signed a contract on the street lighting. Although Groth was portrayed as a reliable civil servant, several burghers opposed the idea of contracting out the operation while the entrepreneur might forward his own interest by raising the levies on the house owners. The property-owning citizens demanded the right to choose for themselves, whether to tend to their lights themselves or to hire someone else to do it for them. The burghers eventually prevailed and the management of street lighting remained a civic duty until the introduction of street gas in the mid-nineteenth century.²⁴

In Stockholm, accusations of private gain surfaced once again in the debate about the emptying of latrines in the nineteenth century. Until the 1850s, this public service was organized by contracting private entrepreneurs. However, the entrepreneurs were criticized for disregarding sanitary restrictions and demanding large compensations to perform the task. Johan Fredrik Eklund and Frans Schartau on the City Finance Committee accused the entrepreneurs of intentionally exaggerating their expenses in order to increase their own profit. Eklund and Schartau arrived at the conclusion that the city council must take full responsibility for the disposal of latrine waste, hence terminating the contract with the private entrepreneurs.²⁵ For Schartau, public administration was a superior alternative to the malpractice of the private contractors: "Nothing can be worse than the public dismay of not getting rid of the filth. It is therefore an imperative concern, immediately releasing the entrepreneurs from their commission."²⁶ By contrast, agents promoting private enterprise insisted that the accumulation of profit might be a useful instrument for providing better services to the public. Such arguments were strongly wielded in the debates on national railways in the 1850s. The Riksdag debated whether the Swedish main-line railway network should be constructed by the state or by private companies. One of the most influential proponents for privately built railways in Sweden was the businessman Adolf Eugene von Rosen. In a parliamentary debate in 1854, von Rosen claimed that

“I do believe that a property [in this case railways], managed by its owners, with very few exceptions, is better managed than if it is led by the administration of the state.[...] It would be unfair if the individual was not permitted to participate in the management, and I am convinced that the administration would gain a great deal from this.”²⁷

The point was that competition between private operators would secure a better service for the public. Similar arguments were put forward when the Riksdag was discussing the Swedish telephone network in the early 1900s. At this time, the telephone market in Sweden was divided between the state and one large private company. This division was positive for the consumers, according to some of the parliamentarians. John Olsson from Stockholm claimed in 1904 that it was “fortunate that there [were] two different telephone systems, the national and [the private company].”²⁸ According to Olsson, it was not necessary for the state to acquire the private company, because “the competition between the state and the company, on the contrary, give the public cheaper telephones ... so the public is well served in such a way.”²⁹

In Stockholm, public tramways were introduced by private companies operating by municipal concession. In 1902, the Stockholm City council debated the electrification of the northern part of the tramway system. Several members of the city council then declared that the time was right for a municipal takeover. Knut A. Wallenberg, director of the city’s most important investment bank and a prominent shareholder in the private company, refuted this suggestion. Wallenberg stated that he did not consider the city competent at handling such an industrial enterprise. He also rallied against the wave of “municipalization,” which he meant would drive private industrialists away, turning the city into a preserve for “civil servants and pensioners” in the process.³⁰ Dissenting voices were raised, among them by Gustav Harald Lundbergh, who claimed that the city council must have full control over the tramways so that the city could prosper and grow in the future. Lundbergh referred to the situation of the working population—the city must ensure that public transport was available for everyone.³¹

The argument for municipalization was supported by references to modernity, rational planning, and to public opinion, the latter demanding equal access for all citizens to the tramway system. There was also a widespread notion that the company had made a huge profit on running the tramways—connecting to the line of argument about private profits at the taxpayer’s expense. Council member Johan Östberg argued that the company must be willing to share their profit with the city council if they wanted to keep their concession: “The tramway company must feel and recognize that they

are benefiting from a monopoly on public transport, and that all traffic services must be operated for the good of the city of Stockholm.”³²

Arguments for public intervention eventually prevailed after the turn of the twentieth century. The effects of industrialization, economic growth, and the social situation of the working poor further strengthened this line of argument. These real conditions helped promote a new notion of publicness and a historical shift in political discourse. From now on public services should be organized by national or municipal bodies in order to secure equal access for all citizens, not only for the wealthy.

The Second Shift: The Rise of Individual Freedom of Choice

During the twentieth century, the expansion of public services administered by political bodies became something of a norm, a cornerstone of the Swedish welfare state. This development was most evident in the postwar years, but the economic crisis of the 1970s heralded a shift in political preferences. Toward the end of the century, many politicians came to promote private enterprise as a superior alternative to public operations run by communal bodies, particularly when it came to welfare services like childcare and provisions for the elderly. The initiative to start private preschools in Sweden in 1983, supported by the multinational company Electrolux, sparked a fierce debate in the Riksdag. The proponents, chiefly the conservative and liberal representatives, argued that private preschools would be both more efficient and cheaper for the taxpayers. Center Party parliamentarian Ulla Tillander argued that the resistance to private preschools was due to “a fear that the private alternative would prove better than [the public ones].”³³ The advocates of private preschools gathered around two main arguments: one about effective management and lower cost, and another about freedom of choice. The latter was the dominant line of argument in the debate in 1984.³⁴

The opposition against private preschools was primarily represented by the ruling Social Democratic party. Minister for Social affairs (sw: *socialminister*) Sten Andersson claimed that “it must not be the wallet that decides the care of the children. Companies with profit as a driving force, establish themselves only where there is opportunity for profit.”³⁵ The government feared the private profits and Andersson's party fellow, Maj-Lis Lööv, summarized the argument when she claimed that “if market forces and profit interests were to be in charge, one would always have to live with the threat that the business could be closed, if it not proves to be profitable. Healthcare

and education cannot be organized in that way. And how would parents feel safe with such childcare?"³⁶

At the national level, the Social Democratic government succeeded in blocking private alternatives in state-sponsored services by passing the so-called *Lex Pysslingen* legislation in 1984. However, the bill was annulled in 1992, after the accession of conservative leader Carl Bildt as prime minister for a conservative-liberal government. Bildt described the shift in government as a "flying start" for entrepreneurs in all sectors of public service. The new policy was dedicated at opening up state, regional, and municipal services for private competition.

In Stockholm, the shift toward private entrepreneurs operating welfare services started in the mid-1980s. In 1986, the new conservative-liberal majority announced that from now on private alternatives would be promoted to create viable opportunity for individual citizens to choose the service operator they preferred. Conservative leader Sture Palmgren insisted that the reform would provide better public services for everyone concerned: "We [the new majority] are presenting a series of plans to empower ordinary people to choose from a number of alternatives, amongst publicly administered services as well as between public and private operators. That is the main point. We want ordinary people to choose for themselves, and this cannot be done if all services are provided by municipal bodies."³⁷

According to Palmgren and his supporters, private competition would provide citizens with a freedom of choice, while at the same time lowering costs for the taxpayers. The policy of privatization was at first attacked by members from the Social Democrats and the left, who insisted that important services such as childcare should not be operated by profit-seeking enterprises. The arguments were similar to the ones raised in the Riksdag against private preschools: socialist members of the city council flatly stated that children had every right not to be objects for the profit motives of large business companies.³⁸

In the face of economic crisis in the 1990s, however, both Social Democrats and members of the left party gradually came to accept the conservative claim that freedom of choice constituted the essential basis of publicness. The conservatives and liberals of the Stockholm city council successfully aligned arguments about cutting costs with claims of promoting individual choice.³⁹ Their opponents countered by protesting that the privatization policy was too extensive and too fast. Mats Hulth, the leader of the Social Democrats in Stockholm, insisted that plurality also meant developing services organized by public bodies. When services for old people were handed over to private

entrepreneurs, there was no true freedom of choice, Hulth stated: “Freedom of choice in municipal service means that every senior citizen must have a say in who will be their provider of health care. [...] Lennart Rydberg [leader of the liberals], however, seeks the large-scale solutions: every senior citizen who happens to live in this particular home for old people must have a private entrepreneur. I think this is the wrong way to turn.”⁴⁰

While criticizing the nonsocialist parties for disrespecting the individual’s freedom of choice, Mats Hulth and his party colleagues generally agreed that all public services must be subject to competition and plurality. As a consequence, all criticism against the impact of profit motives were effectively downplayed. This discursive reorientation of the Social Democratic Party corresponds with the party’s gradual acceptance of neoliberal economic arguments that has been observed by scholars.⁴¹ The conservatives and liberals, for their part, envisioned a rebirth of a civil society where families, cooperatives, and nonprofit organizations would be the main providers of care services.⁴²

In the Stockholm city council, the arguments favoring private alternatives seem to have reached full circle: from the expression of civic pride and bourgeois ideals in the mid-eighteenth century to the promotion of civil society and freedom of choice in the 1990s. The effect of the privatization policy, however, would turn out to be a far cry from this vision of small-scale plurality. By the beginning of the third millennium, services like preschools, care for the elderly, and public education were to a large degree dominated by business corporations operating on the stock market.⁴³ This development was the catalyst behind the Social Democratic proposal to limit profit allocations within the welfare sector, which was rejected by the Riksdag in May 2018.⁴⁴

Our analysis demonstrates how arguments for diversity and freedom of choice propelled a shift in political discourse in the late 1990s. The impact of economic crisis and growing critique of government spending gave further weight to these arguments. Consequently, the notion of publicness was radically altered, promoting individual preferences over collective needs. In consequence, the notion that public services should be managed by national or municipal bodies was abandoned in favor of extensive privatization and deregulation.

The Lines of Argument

While all the arguments above centered on the relation between public administration and private enterprise, there were also those directed more

generally at the function of the service in question. The problems of how to establish effective service, at low cost and with equal access for all citizens, were prominent in the discussions throughout the period, but perhaps even more so at the municipal level. The object of achieving good order dominated the debates about public street lighting in Stockholm in the eighteenth century. However, elaborate plans for a communal administration were repeatedly thwarted by claims that such an operation would be too expensive for the citizen-taxpayers. At the same time, discussions in the Riksdag focused on the various deficiencies of government bodies and concluded that farming out the customs service was the best way to secure a steady flow of revenue.

In the nineteenth century, the need to address the social question by public intervention was more marked in the Stockholm debates, and the calls for more high-quality services were frequently tied to an explicit distrust of private entrepreneurs. In the cases of sanitation and public transport in Stockholm, the argument of effective service by municipal organization gradually surpassed more cautious references to the degree of public spending. The same might be said for the debates on railways and telephones in the Riksdag, where public intervention was realized in spite of excess costs. Significantly, this process was reversed in the late twentieth century, when public expenditure came increasingly under fire and privatization was launched as a means to cut costs on behalf of the taxpayers.

Equal access to public services, often combined with a sharp plea for a fair distribution of costs, was an argument frequently wielded in most of the debates studied here. This line of argument was also most conspicuous at the local level, where the discussions on street lighting, sanitation, and public transport all focused on the benefit of the many rather than of the few. But similar views were voiced in the Riksdag when debating the construction of main-line railway networks and a national telephone network, respectively. This shift was initiated from the traditional political elites and was well underway before the democratic breakthrough, a fact that has often been underplayed by previous research. At the beginning of the twentieth century, public management was frequently posed as the foremost alternative for securing equal access and a fair distribution of costs.

Once again, this line of reasoning had been turned upside down by the late twentieth century, when calls for freedom of choice and market competition placed the enlightened individual as the main beneficiary of public services. Conservatives and liberals advocated extensive privatization of public services as a means to provide the citizen with a variety of services to access according to his or her preference. The standard of equity was thus surpassed by a

determined call for multiple choices. In the 1990s, this line of reasoning was generally accepted also by Social Democrats.⁴⁵

Taken together, our research demonstrates a general trajectory from the seventeenth century and onward: a successive politicization of the discussions on public services, as well as a successive shift from private to public operators and then back again. The patriarchal governments of the old regime regarded the organization of government administration as their own prerogative, but political contestation forced them to recognize public consent as a crucial part of maintaining good order and effective service. In the eighteenth century, both national and municipal bodies were quite pragmatic on these issues: a customs lease may be preferred to government operation, plagued by venality and corruption, while a public service like street lighting could be leased out to a private entrepreneur or operated by the major male citizens themselves.

During the course of the nineteenth century, these pragmatic solutions generally came under fire from political leaders advocating national and/or municipal intervention. From the mid-1800s, the preferred solution was most often the creation of new government or municipal bodies. However, the late 1900s witnessed a radical shift in this development as politicians began to promote an extensive privatization of public services. In the following years, both welfare and infrastructural services in Sweden were opened up for private entrepreneurs to a degree that is still at the heart of political conflict by 2020.

Our results demonstrate a clear continuity: similar arguments have been raised by a number of politicians at different periods. Attitudes on private gain, effective service, and a fair distribution of costs and benefits have frequently been evoked in all the debates studied here. But they have been combined in different ways to produce radically different results. Most important, a line of reasoning that once supported government operation might later be transformed into an argument for privatization. To make more sense of this uneven process, we must return to the discursive chains of publicness proposed by Newman and Clarke.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF PUBLICNESS

According to Janet Newman and John Clarke, new visions of publicness began to form at the turn of the third millennium as the old chains that had supported an increasingly large public sector had been disassembled by the late-twentieth century drive for privatization.⁴⁶ We argue that a similar situation occurred in Sweden at the end of the early modern period. Until the eighteenth century, political ideology had stated that all authority

ultimately belonged to the sovereign monarch as he performed his duties as ruler by the grace of God. The king's bureaucracy might intervene in every aspect of his subjects' life.⁴⁷ The public of the old regime was a community of subjects with different privileges and public service was the prerogative of the king to organize as he thought best. Stability, hierarchy, and difference were the prescribed values upon which the good society rested.⁴⁸

In practice, however, European rulers seldom had the economic resources to back up their claims for supremacy. Early modern monarchs frequently resorted to leasing out revenue and the sale of offices in order to make ends meet. In Sweden, political contestation during the so-called Age of Liberty (1719–1772) transformed this traditional view of the public into something new and vibrant. What had previously been regarded as an administrative problem left to the king to act upon, now became a political issue open to contestation from various interest groups. Bourgeois elite groups in particular demanded the right to define the common good as a civic duty performed by the propertied groups.

As the discursive chains promoting royal supremacy were dismantled, new forms for organizing public services were launched. The customs administration, a core instrument for securing royal revenue, was handed over to a consortium of private financiers, who ran the operation for most of the 1700s. In the capital city of Stockholm, street lightning and sanitation services were sometimes delegated to private entrepreneurs and sometimes performed by the citizen-burgers collectively. The eighteenth century might be characterized as a period of experimentation, when the essence of public services had to be refigured to correspond with a changing political context.

A first important shift in political discourse occurred from the mid-nineteenth century. Strong discursive chains were then forged to align calls for effective operation and notions of a broader political community, with public management by state or municipal bodies. Previous research has argued that these changes were propelled by international competition and the social problem of marginalized groups.⁴⁹ Our results demonstrate the discursive mechanisms that underpinned this development. In the political debates, arguments were raised to link an extended political community with claims for equal access to, and political control of, public goods. While the debates of the eighteenth century had focused on the propertied elites, the discussions by 1900 explicitly addressed the rights of workers, women, and children to have equal access to public services. The notion of publicness became firmly linked to public management by administrative bodies.⁵⁰

Our study has also highlighted a second important shift that took place in the late 1900s. A growing distrust of state monopoly was transformed into political demands for freedom of choice and the privatization of public services. Political discourse shifted from promoting equal rights to courting the self-interest of the individual citizen. In the beginning of the century, publicness had been constructed as a collective of wanting citizens, a public administration capable of rational planning adhering to the notion of equal access for all individuals, whether old or young, rich or poor. By the turn of the century, publicness was instead envisioned as a community of infrangible individuals, steering decidedly among a multitude of profit-oriented enterprises. Social justice was now portrayed as a matter of satisfying individual preferences rather than upholding collective rights.

Our results indicate that the trajectory of publicness has turned full circle. Starting from the early modern ideal, where the common good always trumped personal rights; past the modernist position of a fair distribution of common goods; to the present condition where individual freedom is the number-one priority and the common good of the public is regarded as a secondary matter. At the turn of the twenty-first century, individual preferences seem to be trumping collective needs: freedom of choice is now regarded as the foundation of public services. Yet, the continuing conflict on what constitutes the common good may still lead to new definitions of what publicness should stand for in terms of community, organization, and democratic values.

INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

In line with Newman and Clarke's theory, our results may warrant a pessimistic view of the historical development. Since the late twentieth century, publicness has become progressively more restricted. It has been relegated to a backward position, where the public—just like in the early modern period—was made up of a small group of privileged individuals. As a consequence, public services will no longer be posed as a matter for the many. Rather, it will be defined as a narrow concern of the chosen few. However, a more optimistic view holds that the discursive chains of publicness may yet be twisted in opposite directions.

French philosopher and anthropologist François Flahault argues that modern research demonstrates that human beings have social needs that cannot be reduced to individual rights. The current definition of human rights must therefore be supplemented, he argues, with statutes that promote social

justice as well as collective needs.⁵¹ This claim is in fact supported by Janet Newman and John Clarke, who state that the current definition of publicness must be redefined to accommodate calls for social equality, extended public services, and values of tolerance and plurality.⁵²

The motive forces propelling new notions of publicness may be political as well as economic. Our results confirm the general development of state regulations that Lena Andersson-Skog and Jan Ottosson have identified. A mix of corporate interest and state interventions during the first part of the Industrial Revolution was followed by a clearer division of labor during the second phase from the late nineteenth century. State monopolies were established to ensure political control of important infrastructure and public services. A third phase, starting in the 1980s, saw extensive deregulation and privatization as the digital revolution and globalization changed the economic foundations of the welfare states.⁵³ However, our interpretation expounds this argument further in three important ways.

First, our focus on politics demonstrates how political debates served to widen the windows of opportunity that the same authors have described as crucial for changing the regulation regime and thus promoting institutional change.⁵⁴ Second, our longer time perspective places greater emphasis on the historical legacy propelling the discursive shifts from c. 1850. Public control over vital services was discursively framed as a patriarchal concern for the poor and the needy, and was later reformulated into an argument for social inclusion. Third, the radical shift in favor of deregulation and privatization in the late twentieth century was triggered by a reframing of political discourse that identified equal access to public services with individual freedom of choice. Our results, thus, point to the strong interconnections between discursive movements and institutional change, and may serve as an alternative explanation of the historical development, challenging the traditional economic analysis.

We also want to challenge the deterministic interpretations of the public-private relationship as a historical cycle or pendulum movement. Our results give some credit to Albert Hirschman's claim that widespread disappointment over flawed standards has indeed played a major role in the political debates regarding the organization of public services. Nevertheless, we find his explanation of the drift toward privatization too simplistic. When it comes to politics there will always be contestation and there will always be those unappeased with the current form of government. The key problem is why did certain periods in time witness profound shifts in the character of public organization, like the mid-nineteenth century, or the late twentieth century?

Avner Offer's argument that rising material standards from the 1970s have eroded the taxpayers' willingness to provide funds to maintain the quality of public services seems to hold better ground. Offer provides us with an economical motive for the shift toward privatizations: the taxpayers no longer want to pay for prudential common goods; they prefer to invest the means in their own private consumption. However, our research demonstrates that this was also a political process underpinned by a new definition of publicness, and of the political community as a loose federation of enlightened individuals.

We recognize that the changing attitude to public services is part of the general trend toward individualization of the modern society.⁵⁵ A consequence of this is that the debates about public service have become present-oriented rather than future-oriented. Our results demonstrate that while the focus of the discussions in the early twentieth century was firmly set on the problems of the future, the debates of the 1980s and 1990s were instead preoccupied with the immediate concerns of the present. Also, the turn toward private consumption has been accompanied by voters' claims that the quality of welfare services constitutes the most important political issue of today.

From a historical perspective, there are more paradoxes to observe in the current evolution of public services. Privatization of publicly sponsored welfare services has created a situation where public and private interests become increasingly blurred. Political representatives regularly fraternize with business entrepreneurs, and several politicians have found a new career within the private welfare sector.⁵⁶ The limited corporations dominating welfare services in Sweden, for their part, have invested a great deal of their profit in courting public opinion and influencing political decisions, constituting what Stefan Svallfors has labeled "a power bloc" in Swedish politics.⁵⁷

Our results show that the privatization policy of the late twentieth century was promoted by arguments for a more active civil society: state and municipal monopolies were to be replaced by family cooperatives and nonprofit organizations. This notion seems coherent with the traditional civic ideal, where active citizens would organize in charitable associations to meet the social concerns of the urban poor. It might even remind us of the early modern period, when burghers demanded the privilege to perform civic duties themselves in the name of the public. In both cases, financial and administrative support from the state and/or the municipality was an important precondition for civic initiative.

However, the actual effect of the privatization of welfare services after 1990 has rather been the opposite: welfare services in Sweden are now allocated

to large, profit-seeking corporations, albeit still financed by the taxpayers.⁵⁸ The current situation is actually more reminiscent of the early modern lease system. Like the early modern revenue farmers, the welfare corporations of the twentieth century are taking on a more active role in national politics, looking to increase the value of their financial assets by denouncing public regulation.

As historians we cannot, and should not, speak authoritatively about the future. However, we do hold that there is a clear potential for new discursive combinations advocating a stronger sense of publicness even in the heyday of visceral consumption. We might not come to witness a reversed pendulum motion back to a situation where public organization once again holds a clear supremacy over all forms of private/civic alternatives. Nevertheless, there is plenty of evidence to suggest that privatization will not be the obvious answer to the organizational problems of the future. The challenge for tomorrow will be to coordinate corporate interest, private entrepreneurs, civil society, and public organization for the main objective of providing reliable public goods for the larger community, without curbing the freedom of the modern consumer-citizen all too much.

Stockholm University

NOTES

1. Kristina Boréus, “The shift to the right: Neo-liberalism in argumentation and language in the Swedish public debate since 1969,” *European Journal of Political Research* 31:3 (1997): 257–86; David Marquand, *Decline of the public: The hollowing-out of citizenship* (Cambridge, 2004); Jane R. Gingrich, *Making Markets in the Welfare State: The Politics of Varying Market Reforms* (New York, 2011); Gabrielle Meagher and Marta Szebehely, “The politics of profit in Swedish welfare services: Four decades of Social Democratic ambivalence,” *Critical Social Policy* 39:3 (2018): 455–76.

2. For example, Kate Ascher, *The politics of privatization: Contracting out public services* (Basingstoke, 1987); Dominique Lorrain and G. Gerry Stoker, ed., *The privatization of urban services in Europe* (London, 1997); Harvey B. Feigenbaum, Jeffrey R. Henig, and Chris Hamnett, *Shrinking the state: The political underpinnings of privatization* (Cambridge, 1998); Pier Angelo Toninelli, “From private to public to private again: A long-term perspective on nationalization,” *Análise Social* 189 (2008): 675–92; Jonas Pieper, *New Private Sector Providers in the Welfare State* (Cham, 2018).

3. Richard Aldrich, *Public or private education? Lessons from history* (London, 2004); Ben Ansell and Johannes Lindvall, “The Political Origins of Primary Education Systems: Ideology, Institutions, and Interdenominational Conflict in an Era of Nation-Building,” *American Political Science Review* 107:3 (2013): 505–22; Nihad Bunar, “Choosing for quality or inequality: Current perspectives on the implementation of school choice policy in Sweden,” *Journal of Education Policy* 25:1 (2010): 1–18.

4. For example, Robert Millward, *Private and Public Enterprise in Europe: Energy, Telecommunications, and Transport, 1830–1990* (Cambridge, 2005); Gingrich, *Making Markets in the Welfare State*; Arne Kaijser, Erik van der Vleuten, and Per Högselius, *Europe's Infrastructure Transition: Economy, War, Nature* (Houndmills, 2016).
5. Lena Andersson-Skog and Jan Ottosson, *Stat och marknad i historiskt perspektiv: Från 1850 till i dag* (Stockholm, 2018).
6. For example, Deborah Brennan, Bettina Cass, Susan Himmelweit, and Marta Szebehely “The marketization of care: Rationales and consequences in Nordic and liberal care regimes,” *Journal of European Social Policy* 22:4 (2012): 377–391; Alexandru Panican and Torbjörn Hjort, “Navigating the market of welfare services: The choice of upper secondary school in Sweden,” *Nordic Journal of Social Research* 5 (2014): 55–79; Meagher and Szebehely, “The politics of profit in Swedish welfare services.”
7. Michael Roberts, *The Age of Liberty: Sweden 1719–1772* (Cambridge, 1986); Joakim Scherp, *De ofrälse och makten: En institutionell studie av riksdagen och de ofrälse ståndens politik i maktodelningsfrågor 1660–1682* (Stockholm, 2013); Martin Almbjär, *The voice of the people? Supplications submitted to the Swedish Diet in the Age of Liberty, 1719–1772* (Umeå, 2016).
8. Gösta Esping-Andersen, *The three worlds of welfare capitalism* (Cambridge, 1990); Klas Åmark and Joakim Palme, *Historia, samhällsvetenskap och välfärdsstat i brytningstid* (Stockholm, 1999); Niels Finn Christiansen, ed., *The Nordic model of welfare: A historical reappraisal* (Copenhagen, 2006).
9. Paula Blomqvist, “The Choice Revolution: Privatization of Swedish Welfare Services in the 1990s,” *Social Policy and Administration* 38:2 (2004): 139–155; Panican and Hjort, “Navigating the market of welfare services”; Mats Hallenberg, *Kampen om det allmänna bästa: Konflikter om privat och offentlig drift i Stockholms stad under 400 år* (Lund, 2018).
10. Janet Newman and John Clarke, *Publics, politics, and power: Remaking the public in public services* (Los Angeles, 2009); Mats Hallenberg and Magnus Linnarsson, “The quest for publicness: Political conflict about the organisation of tramways and telecommunication in Sweden, c. 1900–1920,” *Scandinavian Economic History Review* 65:1 (2017): 70–87.
11. Newman and Clarke, *Publics, politics, and power*, 11–15.
12. Mats Hallenberg and Magnus Linnarsson, “Vem tar bäst hand om det allmänna? Politiska konflikter om privata och offentliga utförare 1720–1860,” *Historisk tidskrift* 136:1 (2016): 32–63; Hallenberg and Linnarsson, “The quest for publicness”; Magnus Linnarsson, *Problemet med vinster: Riksdagsdebatter om privat och offentlig drift under 400 år* (Lund, 2017); Hallenberg, *Kampen om det allmänna bästa*.
13. Jeff A. Weintraub, “The theory and politics of the public/private distinction,” in *Public and private in thought and practice: Perspectives on a grand dichotomy*, edited by Jeff A. Weintraub and Krishan Kumar (Chicago, 1997), 7.
14. Albert O. Hirschman, *Shifting involvement: Private interest and public action* [1982] (Princeton, 2002), 3–8.
15. Hirschman, *Shifting involvements*, 10.
16. Avner Offer, *Why has the public sector grown so large in market societies? The political economy of prudence in the UK, c. 1870–2000* (Oxford, 2003), 2.
17. *Ibid.*, 3.

18. Ansell and Lindvall, "The Political Origins of Primary Education Systems."
19. Lars Nilsson and Håkan Forsell, *150 år av självstyrelse. Kommuner och landsting i förändring* (Stockholm, 2013).
20. Mats Hallenberg, "Peasants and Tax-Farmers in Seventeenth-Century Sweden: Local Conflict and Institutional Change," in *Empowering Interactions: Political Cultures and the Emergence of the State in Europe, 1300–1900*, edited by Wim Blockmans, Andre Holenstein, and Jon Mathieu (Aldershot, 2009).
21. Hallenberg, "Peasants and Tax-Farmers in Seventeenth-Century Sweden."
22. Magnus Linnarsson, "Farming out state revenue: The debate about the General Customs Lease Company in Sweden, 1723–65," *Parliaments, Estates, and Representation* 38:2 (2018): 175–91.
23. RA (Swedish National Archives), minutes from the clergy, September 21, 1765, Ständernas plena och kanslier, prästeståndet, protokoll vid riksdagar, lantdaggar och möten, riksdagen 1765–1766, vol. A26, R0700, pp. 435–36, "Men då det öfver alt hunnit blifva bekant, att några privati kommit, att göria sig mäktiga af hvad till Cronan sammanskjutas, är icke underligt, om beredvilligheten hos undersåtarna aftager att contribuera."
24. Publication from the county governor of Stockholm, August 1, 1766, printed in Gustaf Reinhold Modée, Hedvig Eleonora Lindhielm, and Elsa Foug, eds. (1742–1829), *Utdrag utur alle ifrån den 7. decemb. 1718. utkomne publique handlingar*, 15 vols. Stockholm: Grefing/Foug: vol. 8, p. 7185.
25. SSA (City archives of Stockholm), appendix to Drätselkommissionens arkiv (DKP), December 17, 1856.
26. PM by Frans Schartau, DKP, January 1, 1859, p. 18f., supplement C, p. 2 (our pagination), "Ingen förmår ersätta den allmänna ofärden av, att icke bliva kvitt smutsen. Tvånget står således oavvisligen för dörren, att utan dröjsmål avskilja nuvarande entreprenörer från sin befattning."
27. Sources from the Swedish parliament are published in printed series (sw: *Riksdagstrycket*). References are given to the standardized volume and collection numbers; minutes from the nobility, September 22, 1854, 1853/54, vol. 1, p. 153, "Jag kan icke tro annat, än att det ligger i sakens natur, att en egendom, som förvaltas af sina egna egare, med mycket få undantag, förvaltas bättre, än om den lemnas till förvaltning af de regerande... [D]et vore en orättvisa att de enskilde i sådant fall icke äfven skulle få deltaga i administrationen, och min fullkomliga öfvertygelse är, att dervid skulle administrationen vinna ganska mycket."
28. Minutes second chamber (AK), March 28, 1904, III:34, p. 5, "Enligt min mening är det tvärtom lyckligt att det finnes två olika representanter för telefonanläggningar, nämligen riks och allmänna."
29. Minutes AK, March 28, 1904, III:34, p. 5, "såsom det nu är ställdt med konkurrens mellan staten och bolagen, är det tvärtom uppenbart, att allmänheten får sina telefoner billigare [...] Med ett ord, allmänheten blir väl betjänad på sådant sätt."
30. Sources from the city council in Stockholm are published in printed series (sw: *Stockholms stadsfullmäktiges handlingar*). References are given to the standardized volume and collection numbers: SSF minutes, November 26, 1902, Wallenberg's statement, p. Y483.
31. SSF minutes, November 26, 1902, Lundbergh's statement, pp. Y470–71.

32. SSF minutes February 2, 1903, Johan Östberg's statement, pp. Y80–81, "Bolaget bör känna och erkänna, att det utnyttjar ett monopol på den allmänna trafikens område och att denna trafik bör handhåvas äfven till Stockholms stads bästa."

33. Minutes from the parliament, January 30, 1984, 1983/84:68, p. 98, "Att vara rädd för en tävlan av det här slaget mellan olika former kan bero på att man är rädd för att de alternativa barnomsorgsformerna visar sig vara bättre och därmed vinner mark."

34. For example, Göte Jonsson, Minutes from the parliament, December 7, 1983, 1983/84:41, p. 67, "vi först måste skapa alternativ, innan familjerna kan välja. Ni gör precis tvärtom."

35. Minutes from the parliament, January 30, 1984, 1983/84:68, p. 88, "Det får inte bli så att plånboken skall avgöra vilken omsorg barnen skall få. Företag med profiten som drivfjäder etablerar sig självfallet endast där man kan göra vinster."

36. Minutes from the parliament, January 30, 1984, 1983/84:68, p. 102, "Om marknadskrafter och vinstintressen skulle styra fick man alltid leva med det hotet att verksamheten lades ned, om den inte visade sig vara lönsam. Så kan vi inte bedriva sjukvård och utbildning. Och hur skulle föräldrar kunna känna trygghet med en sådan barnomsorg?"

37. SSF minutes 1986, Sture Palmgren's statement, protocol no. 17, pp. 30–31, "På område efter område presenterar vi förslag där vanliga människor skall ges fler valmöjligheter såväl mellan alternativ inom den offentliga sektorn som mellan alternativ i den offentliga sektorn och den enskilda sektorn. Det är just det som är poängen. Vi vill låta de vanliga människorna välja själva, och det gör man inte genom att ha all verksamhet bara i kommunal regi."

38. For example, SSF minutes 1986: statements from Inger Båvner (Social Democrats) and Brit Rundberg (Left party), protocol no. 17, pp. 168–72, 179–82, 188.

39. For example, SSF minutes 1991: statements from Carl Cederschiöld (Conservatives) and Lennart Rydberg (Liberals), protocol no. 17, pp. 32–36, 40–44.

40. SSF minutes 1993, Mats Hulth's statement, protocol no. 2, p. 81. Similar arguments were expressed by Ewa Törngren from the Left Party, SSF Minutes 1993, protocol no. 7, p. 64, "Valfrihet beträffande kommunal service handlar om att varje pensionär på ett servicehus skall få säga vilken vårdgivare som man vill anlita... . Men Lennart Rydberg tar det stora greppet: alla pensionärer som råkar bo på det här servicehuset skall ha privat entreprenör. Jag tycker det är fel linje."

41. Jenny Andersson, *Mellan tillväxt och trygghet: Idéer om produktiv socialpolitik i socialdemokratisk socialpolitisk ideologi under efterkrigstiden* (Uppsala, 2003); Meagher and Szebehely, "The politics of profit in Swedish welfare services."

42. For example, Hardy Hedman, SSF minutes 1992, Hardy Hedman's statement, protocol no. 17, p. 95, "Tänk, om vi kunde frigöra människors resurser så att de satte i gång och gjorde som de första kooperatorerna gjorde, löste sina egna problem och fick resurser av kommunen för det!"

43. Laura Hartman et al., *Konkurrensens konsekvenser: Vad händer med svensk välfärd?* (Stockholm, 2011); Brennan et al., "The marketisation of care."

44. See Meagher and Szebehely, "The politics of profit in Swedish welfare services."

45. Meagher and Szebehely, "The politics of profit in Swedish welfare services."

46. Newman and Clarke, *Publics, politics and power*, 7–10.

47. Gerhard Oestreich, *Neostoicism and the early modern state* (Cambridge, 1982); Lothar Schilling, Michael Stolleis, and Karl Härter, ed., *Policey in Europa der frühen Neuzeit* (Frankfurt am Main, 1996).

48. Leif Runefelt, *Dygden som välståndets grund: Dygd, nytta och egennyttia i frihetstidens ekonomiska tänkande* (Stockholm, 2005); Karin Sennefelt, “A Discerning Eye: Visual Culture and Social Distinction in Stockholm, c. 1650–1750,” *Cultural and Social History* 12:2 (2015): 179–95.

49. Mikael Hård and Marcus Stippak, “Progressive dreams: The German city in Britain and the U.S.,” in *Urban machinery: Inside modern European cities*, edited by Mikael Hård and Thomas J. Misa (Cambridge, 2008), 121–40; Carol Heim, “Introduction: Public and private provision of urban public goods,” *Social Science History* 39:3 (2015): 361–69.

50. See Hallenberg and Linnarsson, “The quest for publicness.”

51. Francois Flahault, “Conceiving the social bond and the common good through a refinement of human rights,” in *Rethinking progress and ensuring a secure future for all: What we can learn from the crises, Trends in Social Cohesion*, no. 22 (Strasbourg, 2011).

52. Newman and Clarke, *Publics, politics, and power*, 184–86.

53. Andersson-Skog and Ottosson, *Stat och marknad i historiskt perspektiv*, 120–22.

54. *Ibid.*, 119.

55. For example, Adrienne Sörbom, *Vart tar politiken vägen? Om individualisering, reflexivitet och görbarhet i det politiska engagemanget* (Stockholm, 2002).

56. Meagher and Szebehely, “The politics of profit in Swedish welfare services,” 471–72.

57. Stefan Svallfors, “Politics as organized combat: New players and new rules of the game in Sweden,” *New Political Economy* 21:6 (2016): 509.

58. Hartman et al., *Konkurrensens konsekvenser*, 260–61.