The new public management:
a bibliographical essay for Latin American (and other) scholars *

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The New Public Management is a subject of strong interest to Latin American scholars, as demonstrated by their participation in CLAD-UNESCO’s distance learning course on the subject, conducted through the Internet from September 1999 to June 2000. I was given the responsibility to direct the course from my “virtual professorial chair” (Catedra Virtual). This experience, occurring alongside my ordinary teaching duties at the LSE, confirmed that the literature on the New Public Management does not teach itself. Indeed, the literature as a whole borders on being inaccessible to anyone new to the subject, including trained scholars. This paper responds to this problem, as well as to an invitation to speak on “The New Public Management in Latin America” at the annual CLAD (Latin American Center for Administration and Development) Congress, to be held in Santo Domingo in October 2000.

Experience shows that definitional matters are a sensible point of entry into discussions about New Public Management (NPM). While the term “Latin America” is relatively unproblematic, NPM’s meaning is difficult to pin down. I define NPM abstractly as a field of professional and policy discussion - conducted internationally - about subjects concerning public management, including public management policy, executive leadership, design of programmatic organizations, and government operations (Barzelay 2000b). One of the media through which this discussion takes place is published works. In speaking to the assigned topic, I will analyze and comment upon two, high-quality publications written about the subjects of public management policy and the design of programmatic organizations in Latin America (about Mexico and Brazil, respectively).

The term “public management policy” roughly corresponds to the conventional, but ambiguous, term “administrative reform.” Public management policy is concerned with guiding, motivating, and controlling the core public sector as a whole. The instruments of public management policy are institutional rules and organizational routines in the areas of expenditure planning and financial management, civil service and labor relations, procurement, organization and methods, and audit and evaluation. (Administrative reform generally involves changes in public management policies.) One of the works discussed later in this paper is concerned with public management policy, specifically budget reform (Arellano et al. 2000).

The design of programmatic organizations, the second subject, is concerned with public service delivery. “Public service” refers to the performance of governmental functions, including public service provision in the normal sense, as well as in the extended senses of regulation, taxation, and defense. The term “delivery” includes the performance of administrative functions, including operations, management, and oversight. This subject, unlike that of executive leadership, is primarily concerned with “organization design.” The term, “organization” is used in both the normal sense of a single bureaucratic or other entity, and in the extended sense of a network of entities involved in providing a

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1 By public management is meant the performance of the executive function in government (Lynn 1996).

2 I have yet to come across studies on government operations or executive leadership in Latin America. My impression is that one of the few studies in the Spanish language on these topics is based on a case situated in Spain’s Autonomous Community of Andalusia (Barzelay and O’Kean 1989).
public service. The term “design” indicates that the subject is primarily concerned with formal administrative choices rather than with informal, emergent properties of organizations or with organizational interventions conducted by institutional power centers or individuals. The specific work on this subject discussed here is a study of the network of organizations that provided preventive health care services to target client groups in the northeastern Brazilian state of Ceará through the Health Agent Program (Tendler and Freedheim 1994).

I regard the studies on Latin America discussed in this paper as meaningful - and potentially highly significant - within the field of discussion called New Public Management. For this reason, it makes sense to analyze and comment upon these works from the standpoint of a scholar knowledgeable about the NPM literature. Bringing this perspective to bear in commenting upon the Latin American studies is intended to expand the range and depth of the NPM field of discussion, which remains centered in the English-speaking “family of nations” (Castles 1993). The prospective benefits of doing so are of two kinds: to allow researchers concerned with public management in Latin America to tap into the intellectual resources of the NPM discussion, first, and to enrich this same field by incorporating studies about public management in Latin America, second.

It would be easier to carry out this task if I could refer the reader to a satisfactory literature review on the New Public Management. However, I am unaware of any such work. To be satisfactory, such a review would have to draw, at least, on the North American literature as well as on that rooted in the experiences of the UK, Australia, and New Zealand. The former needs to be discussed because North America is a major reference point for discussions of public management in Latin America, while the latter represents the “heartland” of NPM. As no satisfactory review already exists, this paper begins with one. Indeed, the paper devotes more space to this exercise than to commenting on the selected studies about Latin America - a fact that might make this bibliographic essay of use even to scholars who have no particular interest in that region.

Origins of the NPM Discussion

The New Public Management (NPM), as a concept, originates in scholarly analysis of ideas that set the agenda for organizational change in a number of countries, including UK and Australia, during the 1980s. The most cited original reference is Hood (1991); however, an equally important work covering much of the same ground - and more - is Hood and Jackson (1991), Administrative Argument. In this work, NPM was conceived as both an “administrative argument” and as an “administrative philosophy.” I will discuss how Hood and Jackson conceptualized NPM as an administrative argument before indicating how they conceptualized it as an administrative philosophy.

Administrative arguments are “nested systems” (Simon 1969) of ideas concerned with organizational design. According to Hood and Jackson, an administrative argument (AA) can be disaggregated into a set of sub-arguments, \{aa1, aa2, aa3, ..., aa_n\}. Whereas each AA is typically concerned with a broad spectrum of organization design issues, each aa_i is concerned with a single issue of organizational design. Hood and Jackson enumerated such issues in their model of administrative argument.

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3 As indicated earlier, I became acutely aware of these prospective benefits in working with Susana Berruecos and Francisco Gaetani, doctoral candidates at the LSE, in delivering the CLAD-UNESCO distance learning course focusing on NPM.

4 Chapter 2 of Barzelay (2000b) provides a literature review of country case studies on public management policy change in the UK, Australia, Canada, US, Sweden, and Germany. Because it focuses on research about public management policy change, that chapter is too specialized for the purpose undertaken here. The present bibliographical essay is more concerned with methodological and theoretical issues than with substantive findings, as well.

5 I draw this inference, in part, from a workshop of the International Public Management Network devoted to issues of methodology in public management research and held at the University of Sienna in July 1999.

6 In what follows, I put my own spin on Hood and Jackson (1991), consistent with Barzelay (2000a)
Just as an AA can be analyzed in terms of its component subarguments (aa_i), the subarguments, in turn, can be disaggregated into their own respective components, namely doctrines and justifications. An administrative “doctrine” is a claim as to how a single organization design issue should be resolved. A “justification” is a rationale for that doctrinal claim. In Hood and Jackson’s frame of reference, then, “justifications support doctrines” much as “warrants support claims” in a standard frame of reference on practical reasoning and argumentation (Toulmin 1958, Dunn 1994).

The next round of analysis of administrative arguments focuses on justifications. In analyzing justifications, Hood and Jackson did not describe “part-whole” relations, as they had for the relation between aa_i, on one hand, and doctrines and justifications, on the other. Instead, justifications of administrative doctrines were analyzed in terms of their “essences.” These essences were referred to as administrative values. Hood and Jackson suggested that administrative values fall into three affinity groups or clusters. These clusters are sigma-type (σ) values, theta-type (θ) values, and lambda-type (λ) values. The sigma cluster gives priority to the efficient performance of tasks, the theta cluster gives priority to honesty and fairness, and the lambda cluster gives priority to robustness and adaptability of systems.

Hood and Jackson’s conception of administrative argument can be stated more formally, as follows:

\[ AA = \{aa_1, aa_2, aa_3, \ldots, aa_n\}, \]

where, as earlier, AA refers to an administrative argument, and where \{aa_1, aa_2, aa_3, \ldots, aa_n\} refers to the set of subarguments within a given AA. The numerical subscripts refer to the particular organization design issue with which the given subargument deals.\(^8\)

It is useful to translate Hood and Jackson’s concept of justification into the more standard terms of Toulmin’s *Uses of Argument* (1958).\(^9\) In the latter frame of reference, a justification includes warrants, which are reasons for a claim. Warrants typically apply to a broader set of subjects than the particular one at hand.\(^10\) From this standpoint, a claim’s justification is an inference drawn from warrants. The action of “drawing an inference” can be described as “argumentation” (Walton 1992). With the qualification that argumentation, so defined, involves judgment as well as logic (Toulmin and Jonsen 1988), we can say that a claim, in a sense, is a “function” of its warrants. Symbolically,

\[ C = A (\ast), \]

where Expression (2) refers to a unit of argument, C refers to this argument’s claim, (\ast) refers to the argument’s warrants, and A refers to the operation called “argumentation” through which an argument’s claims are drawn from its warrants (see Barzelay 2000a). Expression (2) is not a functional

\(^7\) Hood and Jackson’s methodology invokes structural metaphors associated with Plato (Lakoff and Johnson 1999), namely that ideas (such as doctrines) are the essence of things (such as practices), and ideals (such as values) are the essence of ideas.

\(^8\) I have noticed that British political scientists younger than me typically associate the formalization of arguments exclusively with public choice. By contrast, I tend to associate formalization of arguments with Robert Dahl (1956), Charles Lindblom (1965), and Herbert Simon (1976), reflecting my graduate education in political science at Yale University in the early 1980s. My dissertation reflected the Yale tradition (Barzelay 1986).


\(^10\) An excellent exposition of this frame of reference can be found in Walton (1992). In putting forward his own frame of reference about argumentation, Walton translates the concept of “warrants” into “assumptions” and “presumptions.” Another useful source is Schauer (1991), who translates the concept of “warrants” into “entrenched generalizations.” This latter concept has much in common with Walton’s concepts of “assumptions” and “presumptions” and with Hood and Jackson’s concept of “justification.”
equation, since claims are not logically derived from warrants; claims are instead drawn from warrants via “informal logic” (Walton 1992). The structure of a generic unit of practical argumentation is thus described by Expression (2).

The doctrinal arguments concerning organization design (aa_i), discussed by Hood and Jackson, appear to display this same structure. Accordingly, we can substitute the specific term “doctrine” for the generic term “claim.” This specification allows Expression (2) to be rewritten as follows:

\[ d_i = A (\bullet) \]

where \( d_i \) signifies a doctrine about how to resolve any given organizational design issue \( i \), and where \( (\bullet) \) refers to the warrants from which doctrines are drawn. As \( d_i \) is a claim in Toulmin’s frame of reference, it might be best to say that the left-hand side of Expression (3) refers to “doctrinal claims.”

Hood and Jackson’s model of administrative argument provides a way to specify the right hand side of Expression (3), as well. The term \( (\bullet) \) is specified by identifying the available warrants. We can interpret Hood and Jackson to say that such warrants are administrative values. Accordingly, Expression (3) can be rewritten as follows:

\[ d_i = A (\sigma, \theta, \lambda) \]

where the Greek symbols represent the three clusters of administrative values identified by Hood and Jackson.

We are now in a position to describe NPM within the frame of reference of “administrative argument.” NPM is an administrative argument (AA) comprised of subarguments (aa_i) dealing with issues of organization design (see Expression 1). A partial yet informative way to describe NPM is to list its doctrinal claims. This representation is partial because it downplays Expression (4)’s right hand side, i.e. the argumentation in favor of NPM’s claims. This partial representation of NPM is nonetheless informative, because it describes NPM precisely and in some detail (see Appendix 1 for Hood and Jackson’s list of NPM doctrines).

Hood and Jackson provided a second handle on NPM, while still conceptualizing it as an administrative argument. This second representation focused on the right hand side of Expression (4), thereby downplaying the notion that NPM was a large set of doctrines about organization design. Specifically, they described NPM as a type of administrative argument that gives priority to sigma values.

In sum, NPM was described within the frame of reference of “administrative argument” in two complementary ways. One description enumerated NPM’s doctrines, focusing on the left-hand side of Expression (4). The other revealed the essence of NPM’s doctrinal justifications, focusing on the expression’s right hand side. Both representational devices provided a partial view of NPM as an administrative argument. In emphasizing the left-hand side, NPM was portrayed as a system of doctrinal claims; in emphasizing the right hand side, NPM was portrayed as an approach to organizational design that proceeds from familiar, if debatable, value premises.

This model of administrative arguments allowed Hood and Jackson to make three key points about New Public Management, directed mainly to colleagues in academic public administration in the UK and Australia, many of whom at the time dismissed ascendant approaches to public management in their countries. First, they characterized NPM as a point of view about organizational design in government - or more precisely as a particular administrative argument comprised of doctrines backed by justifications. As a point of view, NPM was described neither as a “theory” of administration nor as an ad hoc collection of thoughts about public management. Second, and relatedly, Hood and Jackson

(and especially Hood 1991) argued that NPM was not utterly lacking in substance, since sigma-type values are plausible warrants for administrative doctrines (d_i) and thus administrative arguments (AA).

Third, Hood and Jackson pointed out that a reasonable person might reject NPM on the grounds, for instance, that theta-type values of honesty and fairness should be given priority over the sigma-type values of efficient task performance. In this way, the authors sought to enlarge the space for “critical discussion” (Walton 1992) of the New Public Management.

As mentioned earlier, Hood and Jackson characterized NPM not only as an “administrative argument,” but also as an “administrative philosophy.” Generically, an administrative philosophy is a body of doctrinal teachings that enjoys widespread acceptance in a given place and time. Other such administrative philosophies have been 18th century German Cameralism and 19th century British Utilitarianism, and 20th century American Progressive Public Administration. The concept of an administrative philosophy belongs to a different frame of reference than that of administrative argument. This frame of reference includes the following concepts:

administrative philosophy
climate of opinion
doctrines
persuasive rhetoric
acceptance
acceptance factors
government agenda
history

The frame of reference surrounding “administrative philosophy” can be described in terms of the following statements.

Administrative philosophies are doctrines that have been accepted.

Administrative philosophies affect the governmental agenda regarding organizational design questions by establishing the climate of opinion on these matters.

As a matter of history, administrative philosophies that enjoy acceptance at one time are typically rejected or forgotten at another.

Acceptance of doctrines is a process that includes persuasive rhetoric.

Effective persuasive rhetoric typically involves the use of rhetorical techniques, referred to as acceptance factors.

As can be seen, the frame of reference surrounding “administrative philosophy” is intended to explain the governmental agenda regarding organizational design questions in a given place and time. In this sense, the concept of administrative philosophy is a tool of political analysis. In using this tool, the analyst isolates (and emphasizes) the role of ideas in shaping the governmental agenda. The burden of argumentation is to explain why beliefs have changed over time.

Within this second frame of reference, NPM is an administrative philosophy concerning

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11 This point is elaborated in Hood (1991).
12 I was taught this way to model frames of reference by Professor George Lakoff of Berkeley’s Department of Linguistics in the course of a collaborative project. This technique is evident in Lakoff (1996).
organization design in government that emerged in the 1980s. NPM became an administrative philosophy through an acceptance process, which Hood and Jackson modeled by drawing on theories of persuasion codified in the literature on rhetoric. Hood and Jackson asserted that NPM influenced governments’ agendas by establishing a climate of opinion in favor of its doctrines. Thus, to explain decisions that resolve organization design issues in particular circumstances, Hood and Jackson suggested that researchers proceed by first identifying the reigning administrative philosophy and second by explaining how this body of doctrine acquired such an influential status.

Hood and Jackson’s book can serve as a point of reference in reviewing the varied NPM literature. Some works have considered NPM to be an “administrative argument,” while others have considered it as an influence over governmental decision making. Some works have described administrative arguments, others have actually made such arguments. Some works have taken the view that NPM is concerned with “organization design” in government; others have pursued the idea that NPM is a distinctive way for public managers to think and act. Some works have accepted the view that NPM exerted a decisive influence on governmental agenda-setting, while others have scrutinized this conjecture by conducting comparative, case-oriented research.

Due to this wide variety in approaches, the NPM literature presents as a disordered field, even within the public administration/political science literature. This disorderliness makes the subject difficult to teach. In my experience, running a course centering on NPM is like asking the fabled blind men to describe the proverbial elephant (and then subjecting them to a two-hour unseen exam at year’s end!). Hood and Jackson’s framework, if nothing else, provides a clear picture of the NPM beast at an early stage of its evolution. For this reason, the works reviewed here will be situated within the NPM literature by comparing them to Hood and Jackson (hereafter H&J). Doing so provides a coherent picture of the scholarly contribution to the NPM field of discussion by specialists in public administration and political science.

As we proceed, I will refer to a simplified conceptual map of Hood and Jackson’s framework (see Figure 1). In this map, the major concepts are represented as “nodes,” while relationships among these concepts are represented as “links.” Administrative argumentation is introduced as the covering term for “administrative argument” and “administrative philosophy.” Both frames of reference include the concepts of administrative “doctrines” and “organization design issues.” However, “administrative argument” is linked to the concept of “justification.” These concepts can be seen as drawing their meaning not only from one another, but also from the wider frame of reference variously referred to as practical argumentation and deliberative rationality. By contrast, “administrative philosophy” is linked to the concept of “agenda-setting.” The link between administrative philosophy and agenda-setting is described by “climate of opinion.” With this conceptual map at our disposal, let us now proceed to review several works that appeared at roughly the same time as Hood and Jackson’s book.

Aucoin’s Governance Article

A seminal article in the literature on the New Public Management is Aucoin (1990). This text

13 As anyone who has taken the LSE graduate courses in Public Management Theory and Doctrine and Contested Issues in Public Management will readily attest.

14 NPM is not the only topic in management where it takes some effort to formulate a coherent picture of the field. Another is corporate strategy. For a roughly parallel effort to make sense of literature on corporate strategy, with special attention to the so-called resource based view, see Kay (1997) and Barzelay (2000c).

15 This specification of the administrative philosophy/agenda-setting link can be translated into social scientific terms. In theoretical sociology, for instance, this link involves “belief-formation mechanisms” (Hedström and Swedberg 1998). The social mechanism of belief-formation also operates to provide a link between doctrines and administrative philosophy. The specific type of belief-formation mechanism discussed by Hood and Jackson involves using tools of rhetoric to package and sell administrative doctrines to relevant audiences.
was similar to H&J in suggesting that changes in accepted ideas about organization design in government help to account for administrative reform in the UK, Australia, and New Zealand in the 1980s. A significant difference, however, was that Aucoin analyzed this philosophy in terms of its two major, if incongruous, component paradigms - public choice and managerialism - whereas H&J listed NPM’s numerous doctrines. Aucoin identified public choice with the literature on budget-maximizing bureaucrats (Niskanen 1969), while managerialism was identified with Peters and Waterman’s best-seller, *In Search of Excellence* (1982).

Aucoin translated public choice and managerialism into a common frame of reference drawn from the professional-academic literature on organization structure. This frame of reference was characterized by a half-dozen concepts including “centralization” and “decentralization.” H&J, by contrast, translated NPM into numerous doctrines, expressed as word phrases including verbs. By specifying public choice and managerialism as paradigms, and by translating each paradigm into the language of organizational structure, Aucoin was able to infer that the ascendant administrative philosophy incorporated a *centralizing* paradigm (public choice) and a *decentralizing* one (managerialism). Aucoin argued that this aspect of the ascendant administrative philosophy was “paradoxical.”

The claim that (what Aucoin would later call) NPM is “paradoxical” was markedly different from H&J’s assessment that NPM displays a sort of coherence, reflecting the priority consistently accorded to sigma-type values. Nonetheless, Aucoin (1990) and Hood (1991) were widely seen as making the same broad points: first, that a change in administrative philosophy had occurred during the 1980s; second, that this new philosophy was integral to an international trend in public management; and third, that NPM should be taken seriously, discussed analytically, and assessed.

**Boston et al.’s Book on New Zealand**

In 1991, Jonathan Boston, John Martin, June Pallot, and Pat Walsh published *Restructuring the State: New Zealand’s Bureaucratic Revolution*. This volume included Boston’s influential chapter on the “theoretical underpinnings” of the New Zealand reforms. This piece discussed the fields of discourse that shaped the Treasury’s policy recommendations in the area of public management. The identified fields of discourse were public choice, the economic theory of principal-agent relations, and transactions-cost economics; these distinct fields are typically grouped under the header, New Institutional Economics (NIE). Boston indicated how the Treasury staff’s reasoning proceeded from these fields of discourse through administrative doctrines - such as separate purchasing from providing - and ultimately to policy proposals, such as reorganizing the machinery of government.

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16 It is worth noting that Aucoin did not refer to the classic work on organization structure written by his compatriot, Henry Mintzberg (1983). Accordingly, Aucoin’s discussion of organization structure omitted such useful distinctions as horizontal vs. vertical decentralization and parallel v. selective decentralization. Aucoin also avoided mention of such “configurations” as the divisional structure. If he had done so, the coincidence of centralizing and decentralizing changes in organization structure might have seemed less paradoxical, since the divisional structure centralizes decisions about goals and resources and decentralizes decisions about how to achieve the goals.

17 Whereas H&J were mainly addressing public administrationists urging them to take NPM seriously, Aucoin, I think, was mainly addressing practitioners experiencing difficulties in making sense of the spectrum of ideas guiding administrative reform at the time.

18 Bringing Aucoin (1990) back into our discussion might be helpful at this stage. First, the concept of “public choice” in Aucoin, where it is a paradigm, is not the same as in Boston, where it is a field of academic discourse. Second, Aucoin does not analyze his identified paradigms in the same way as Boston analyzes the Treasury’s doctrinal arguments. Aucoin translates the diverse paradigms into a common language of organization structure; Boston describes NIE’s three fields of discourse and suggests how the Treasury drew inferences about organization design in government from them. Third, Aucoin aimed to identify common elements of three experiences, while Boston was solely concerned with the New Zealand experience.
Boston’s chapter included two distinct discussions (Boston 1991). The first was as a narrative explanation of policy decisions, such as those embodied in the State Sector Act and the Public Finance Act. This explanation highlighted the role of ideas, specifically administrative doctrines and their “theoretically underpinnings.” In this respect, the chapter was congruent with the right side of Figure 1. The mechanisms of belief-formation were seen as operating in a straightforward way: economics graduate programs had educated Treasury staff; these individuals employed NIE theories in formulating a point of view about organization design in the public sector; these ideas were packaged in the Treasury’s 1987 post-election briefing entitled, Government Management; the Labor government was impressed with the document’s argumentation; and the agenda for New Zealand’s bureaucratic revolution was set.

Boston’s second discussion was a descriptive analysis of the Treasury’s point of view, conceived as an “administrative argument.” Boston outlined the structure of key doctrinal arguments, including the one claiming that the functions of purchasing and provision should be separated organizationally. Following H&J, we can represent Boston’s description of the Treasury’s argumentation in the 1980s by re-specifying Expression (3):

\[ d_i = A (\text{NIE [Public Choice, Agency Theory, TCE]}) \]

where NIE refers to the New Institutional Economics or, more specifically, to three loosely coupled academic fields of discourse: public choice, agency theory, and transactions-cost economics. Unlike H&J’s clusters of administrative values, the right hand side of Expression (5) does not refer to a class of warrants, but rather to members of an extended family of ideas and arguments concerned with organization design and government.19

Insofar as Expression (5) is cogent, the theoretical underpinnings of New Zealand’s bureaucratic revolution are best conceived as doctrinal arguments. These arguments included inferences running from NIE discourses to administrative doctrines, such as “separate purchasing from provision,” and inferences from such doctrines to proposals, such as reorganizing the machinery of government. Importantly, Boston described the flow of reasoning involved in the Treasury’s argumentation.20 In terms of Expression (5), Boston’s discussion was not limited to specifying \( \bullet \), since he was equally concerned, with specifying the (metaphorical) “functional form” of A.21 Reading Boston carefully is important, in my view. If the flow of reasoning in administrative argumentation is given its due, the spotlight would no longer focus narrowly on \( \bullet \). If the spotlight focused instead on the flow of reasoning during various rounds of argumentation, the claim that the New Institutional Economics is the theoretical underpinning of the New Public Management (Aucoin 1995, Kettl 1997, Moctezuma and Roemer 1999) might only be put forward with due qualification.

The other chapters of Restructuring the State typically focused on a particular reform initiative or piece of legislation. Each incorporated more than one type of discussion. The typical chapter offered a narrative account of how, in Kingdon’s (1984) terms, policy alternatives were specified in the pre-decision phase of policymaking, and it reported on what policies emerged in the decision phase. The typical narrative account described the process of alternative-specification in some detail. This process was described in terms of a flow of reasoning from doctrines to policy alternatives.

19 The elements of A (\( \bullet \)) in this expression might be analyzed into their “entrenched generalizations” (Schauer 1991). This is one way of stating what Boston’s analysis did.

20 Hood and Jackson discuss the flow of reasoning, including the role of imagination and metaphor, in chapter 7. As the links between this highly stimulating chapter and either “administrative argument” or “administrative philosophy” are tenuous, I have not taken account of it in this paper generally and in Figure 1, specifically.

21 I say “metaphorical” because claims are drawn, rather than derived, from warrants through so-called informal logic.
In the second type of discussion, the authors of *Reshaping the State* also commented, sometimes critically, on official justifications of policy choices. In this sense, Boston, Martin, Pallot, and Walsh were making *their own* administrative arguments. Their argumentation mainly concerned the “policy level of argumentation,” as represented below:

(6) Policy Alternatives = A (Doctrines, Circumstances)

These arguments typically did not reject the doctrines associated with the left-hand side of Expression (5), for the authors were generally prepared to grant the Treasury’s doctrinal point of view for purposes of discussion. In this fashion, Boston, Martin, Pallot, and Walsh (1991) enriched the public management policy dialogue in New Zealand, as well as contributed to the increasingly international discussion of what came to be known as NPM.

**The Big Wave of 1992**

Written by two non-academics in the United States, *Reinventing Government* (Osborne and Gaebler 1992) became a best-seller in 1992. This work played a major role in the process by which NPM doctrines came to influence agenda-setting in the US Federal government during the first Clinton Administration (Kettl 1995). Its doctrines were expressed as slogans, such as “steer, don’t row.” Several of the slogans were meant to apply to broader questions of government than “organization design” as defined by H&J. Accordingly, this book broadened the subject of NPM to include fundamental changes in public service delivery, such as using tax-financed voucher schemes to fund education.\(^{22}\)

The year 1992 also saw publication in the US of *Breaking Through Bureaucracy: A New Vision for Managing in Government* (Barzelay 1992), which grew out of the Ford Foundation/Harvard University Program on Innovations in State and Local Government.\(^{23}\) The research site for this study was Minnesota state government in the period 1983-1990. This work, like Boston et al. (1991), wove together different types of discussion. One was a narrative account of organizational change in three staff agencies of the executive branch, primarily the Department of Administration and the Department of Employee Relations. The other discussion was the formulation of an administrative argument, mainly on the subject of the organizational strategy in staff agencies.

The first of these two discussions was similar to H&J in stressing the mechanism of belief-formation as an explanation for changes in the organization design of government. This similarity was evident in the author’s detailed treatment of how the initiators of an eight year-long “organizational intervention” in Minnesota formulated their initial doctrinal views, as well as of how they sought to persuade others - including middle managers, executive colleagues, and legislators - to accept changes in institutional rules and routines. Barzelay (1992) was, however, different from H&J in three main respects. One, the book was based on the study of a “natural case,” rather than on the analysis of an abstract or stylized “case” defined in terms of the acceptance of an administrative philosophy. Two, Barzelay was not only concerned with agenda-setting, but also with the reworking of organizational routines and cultures in the “implementation phase” of the policy-making process (Kingdon 1984).

\(^{22}\) Another book that influenced the Clinton Administration’s policy agenda was Kelman’s (1990) *Procurement and Public Management*. This book, authored by a professor at the Kennedy School of Government, used a creative research design to reach empirical conclusions about the effects of established procurement policies in the US Federal Government. These conclusions helped to support Kelman’s “administrative argument.” This argument included a doctrinal viewpoint, at one level, and a policy viewpoint, at another. The process by which this research influenced the Clinton administration’s public management policy agenda (and other aspects of the policy-making process) included Kelman’s appointment and three-year service as Administrator of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy within the Office of Management and Budget.

\(^{23}\) Published in Spanish as Barzelay (1998).
Three, *Breaking Through Bureaucracy* explained change in Minnesota using narrative methods linked to an implicit theory, whereas H&J applied a theoretically-based explanatory framework - i.e., the acceptance factors - to selected facts in its stylized “case.”

In effect, Barzelay (1992) added two dimensions to the scholarly literature on NPM. First, he introduced an additional node to the lower right corner of Figure 1. This node might be labeled “implementation” or “organizational change.” The links between this new node and “agenda-setting” were described in terms of organizational interventions from positions of executive authority. Second, the author expanded the range of “genres” (Czarniawska 1999) on NPM by providing an extended narrative about a particular experience.

As indicated earlier, the second major discussion in Barzelay (1992) was an administrative argument. The subject of this argument was public management policy, as defined at the outset of this paper. This subject was narrower than organization design in government. Within public management policy, the author gave more attention to organizational routines than to institutional rules, reflecting the empirical fact that institutional rules - for instance, those governing civil service appointments - remained broadly stable during the period of his study.

Barzelay’s administrative argument was presented as a body of principles and supporting arguments about the organizational strategies of administrative functions and staff agencies. An illustrative principle was “separate service from control.” This principle was much like a doctrine in H&J’s sense: it framed and resolved an issue about organization design in government, and it was presented as a doctrinal teaching. In *Breaking Through Bureaucracy*, the doctrines’ justifications made scant reference to the professional-academic literature on management and government. Instead, the justificatory argumentation was mainly taken from the book’s own narrative treatment of the Minnesota experience.

An attempt was made, as in H&J, to reveal the common essence of the various components of the author’s administrative argument. At this stage of his discussion, Barzelay focused upon the right hand side of Expression (3), above. However, the analytic strategy was different. Whereas H&J conceived the essence of a unit of administrative argument in terms of its value premises, Barzelay sought to identify the “entrenched generalizations” (Schauer 1991) that served as “assumptions” or “presumptions” (Walton 1992) for particular lines of administrative argument. These entrenched generalizations were revealed through comparing justificatory arguments that were prevalent in Minnesota’s staff agencies in the early 1990s with justificatory arguments that had been commonplace in Minnesota state government before the “intervention.” The previously entrenched generalizations were labeled the “bureaucratic paradigm”; the later ones were called the “post-bureaucratic paradigm.” The book, as a whole, argued in favor of the post-bureaucratic paradigm, so defined, as well as in favor of such doctrinal claims as “separate service from control” and “identify customers with care.”

The spate of works published in 1992 included Colin Campbell and John Halligan’s study of

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24 For an interesting account of the relationship between narrative methods and theory, see Kiser (1996).
25 Some of the same experiences were discussed by Osborne and Gaebler (1992), but the genre they employed was the vignette (often referred to critically as “anecdotes”) rather than the extended narrative.
26 The subjects of the administrative arguments in Boston et al. (1991) were mainly public management policy, as well. The difference was that Boston et al. focused on institutional rules, whereas Barzelay (1992) focused on organizational routines.
27 The main difference in this case is that the “scope of the claim” (Barzelay 2000a) was limited to administrative functions and staff agencies.
28 Barzelay (2000b), chapter 5, discusses how references could have been made to professional-academic literatures on government and management.
29 In terms of this paper’s representation of the generic doctrinal argument, the chapter stating principles or doctrinal claims in *Breaking Through Bureaucracy* highlighted the left-hand side of Expression (3), whereas the subsequent chapter that discussed the post-bureaucratic paradigm highlighted the right hand side.
executive leadership and public management policy-making in Australia during eight years of Labor rule in Australia (1982-1990). This work, Political Leadership in an Age of Constraint (1992), emerged from the political science wing of the public administration field. As such, its principal task was to describe and explain governmental decisions and their effects on both public bureaucracies and public policy. Decisions in this context included public management policies, especially in the areas of expenditure planning and financial management. Such decisions included use of a ministerial Expenditure Review Committee, as part of the expenditure planning process, and the initiation of a Financial Management Improvement Program, as part of financial management. While Campbell and Halligan (1992) also included some evaluative commentary on the Australia experience, to say that their book set forth an administrative argument would be an exaggeration.

The significance of Campbell and Halligan’s book for the present discussion derives from the fact it was a descriptive/explanatory study of public management policy change in Australia. The authors’ case evidence related to changes in the two key dimensions of public management policy: institutional rules and organizational routines. Their method of explanation was to provide a narrative account. The theory used to explain changes in institutional rules and routines was largely implicit. The major constructs implicitly employed by Campbell and Halligan came from literature on public policy-making (mainly to account for major decisions changing institutional rules), on one hand, and from literature on the conduct of organizational interventions from positions of executive authority (mainly to explaining changes in routines), on the other.30

Campbell and Halligan’s book can usefully be contrasted with H&J in several respects. First, the authors’ conceptual scheme was centered on the lower right hand corner of Figure (1), as amended in the course of this paper. In other words, their study was centrally concerned with the nodes of agenda-setting, decision-making, and implementation as well as the links among them. Second, each of these nodes was analyzed in detail as part of explaining the events making up the Australia case. Third, the authors’ implicit use of the public policy process construct meant that social mechanisms other than belief-formation were incorporated into their explanatory approach. Specifically, they gave accounts of “opportunity emergence” (Kingdon 1984, Elster 1998), or moments when the potential for policy or organizational change was significant. For instance, the budgetary effects of macroeconomic policy reversals in the early 1980s were analyzed in terms of how they helped to create an opportunity to change institutional rules and organizational routines in financial management. The combined structural effect of these public management policy changes was to selectively decentralize decisions about how to spend budgeted resources.31 Fourth, and relatedly, Campbell and Halligan discussed how specific actors within the government capitalized on these opportunities. For instance, the authors explained how Malcolm Holmes, a career official in the Finance Department, collaborated with this central agency’s top officials and minister in devising and operating the Financial Management Improvement Program. In sum, Campbell and Halligan provided a very different theory and method for studying NPM than H&J.

30 The affinities between Campbell and Halligan (1992) and Barzelay (1992) are strong, apart from the latter’s inclusion of its own extended administrative argument on public management policy. The major difference with respect to their respective narrative explanations is that Barzelay’s background construct was that of an organizational intervention, while Campbell and Halligan utilized not only this construct but public policy-making as well. This difference reflects the fact that major changes in institutional rules structuring public management policy occurred in Australia, but not in Minnesota.

31 Campbell and Halligan’s explanatory framework also included belief-formation. For instance, a good deal of attention was devoted to explaining the beliefs of elected political leaders as well as of the staffs of the three central-coordination agencies, Treasury, Finance, and Prime Minister & Cabinet. A shared belief was in a policy approach called “economic rationalism.” The concept of “policy approach” is not equivalent to that of an “administrative philosophy,” but the differences are not worth pursuing here.
Mid-1990s Studies from the NPM Heartland

In 1994, Hood published a book, *Explaining Economic Policy Reversals*, which included a chapter on New Public Management. Its principal task was to account for a dramatic shift in the style of organizing public services from Progressive Public Administration (PPA) to NPM. Hood’s account of this shift was meant to be coherent with explanations given for economic policy reversals in other chapters of the same volume. Each chapter critically analyzed a fixed menu of explanations in the context of a single domain of economic policy.

Hood (1994) was different from H&J in several significant respects. First, it focused on the right side of Figure 1. Indeed, the idea that NPM is an “administrative argument” was not mentioned. Second, NPM referred to a pattern of policy and practice described as a “style of organizing public services.” The concept of “style” tended to blur the distinction between policy and practice, on the one hand, and administrative philosophy, on the other. Third, the 1994 book chapter introduced the concept of PPA - also conceived as a style of organizing public services - in order to *describe* a “policy reversal” (emphasis added). Fourth, the chapter critically examined several contrasting explanations of the shift from the PPA style to that of NPM, whereas H&J worked out a single explanation for the acceptance of NPM as an administrative philosophy. All told, Figure 1, based on Hood and Jackson (1991), is ill-equipped to describe the conceptual structure of Hood (1994).32

In the same year, Herman Schwartz (1994) published “Small States in Big Trouble” in *World Politics*. The main task of this article was to account for similarities among Australia, New Zealand, Sweden, and Denmark in the 1980s. Schwartz’s larger goal was to bring changes in public management within the scope of comparative political science research on institutional and policy change.

In this article, NPM was not an *explanatory factor* accounting for change in government, as in H&J; rather, NPM *described* changes in government, as in Hood (1994). In the terminology of case-oriented research (Ragin 1987), NPM was the “case outcome.” NPM was said to have occurred in a case if policies consistent with four major “themes” were present. These themes included “let managers manage” and “inject competition.” Schwartz drew case evidence from such disparate areas as expenditure planning and financial management, central state-local government relations, and organizational design of public service delivery. On this theoretical and empirical basis, Schwartz argued that Australia, New Zealand, Sweden, and Denmark were mostly similar in terms of the defined case outcome. He then proceeded to explain this similarity, using a fairly large proportion of the repertoire of theoretical ideas in the field of comparative politics and policy.

By dispensing with the conventional idea that policy-making is normally a decentralized process structured by policy domains (Weir 1992, Baumgartner and Jones 1993, Knoke et al. 1996) and by using ideas - e.g., NPM’s themes - more to describe than to explain case outcomes, Schwartz’s strategy for defining a case outcome was unusual.33 However, Schwartz’s *explanatory* ideas were broadly conventional for this field. All told, Schwartz conducted an unprecedented and highly stimulating “dialogue among ideas and evidence” (Ragin 1987) about NPM within the comparative politics and public policy field.

Another work appearing in 1994 was Spencer Zifcak’s comparative study of the UK’s Financial Management Initiative and Australia’s Financial Management Improvement Program. Based on a

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32 A main point of similarity between H&J and Hood (1994) is that both analyzed an stylized rather than “natural” case. A secondary point of similarity is that NPM mainly referred to organization design across all policy and program areas in the public sector.

33 What is more usual in comparative politics and public policy is to explain policy change or variety within a focal policy domain and to regard ideas as part of the explanation for policy change (see, e.g., Hall 1992). In playing down distinctions among policy domains, such as health, education, and public management, and in bringing central state-local government relations into the frame, Schwartz accepted an extremely broad definition on NPM, on par with Osborne and Gaebler (1991) and Hood (1994).
dissertation completed at the London School of Economics, this book examined changes in organizational routines within the area of expenditure planning and financial management. Zifcak used narrative methods and theoretical ideas about organizational interventions to conduct research on these two experiences.34

Peter Aucoin’s *New Public Management: Canada in Comparative Perspective* appeared in 1995. This work included a number of discussions, including an administrative argument. This argument was a complex one, which included the formulation of a doctrinal argument on public management policy; an evaluation of public management policies in the UK, Australia, and New Zealand; and an argument in favor of choosing and implementing selected policy alternatives in Canada.35 Aucoin’s extended administrative argument thus encompassed both doctrinal and policy levels of argumentation, as defined earlier in discussing Boston et al. (1991). Aucoin’s administrative argumentation put his book on the left side of Figure 1. Most of the works discussed so far in this paper, by contrast, focused on the right side of this conceptual map.36

Aucoin’s administrative argument is usefully contrasted with Boston’s report on administrative argumentation conducted within the New Zealand Treasury. A model of Boston’s description is as follows:

\[(5) d_i = A (NIE),\]
\[(6) Alt = A (D, Circ),\]

where Alt stands for policy alternatives, D stands for the full array of doctrines \((d_i)\) within an administrative argument \((AA)\), and where Circ stands for circumstances.

The structure of Aucoin’s doctrinal argumentation, analogous to Expression (5), was as follows:

\[(7) d_i = A (NIE, MAN, PPA),\]

where NIE refers to the New Institutional Economics, MAN refers to schools of thought in the professional-academic field of management, and PPA refers to a set of thirteen normative statements about government scattered along Aucoin’s text (see Barzelay 2000a). Aucoin’s *New Public Management* thereby brought three loosely coupled universes of discourses - New Institutional Economics, management, and conventional public administration “theory” - into close contact. He also brought doctrinal argumentation to bear in evaluating public management policies in the UK, Australia, and New Zealand, as well as in justifying policy proposals for Canada.

In sum, Aucoin’s ambitions for achieving breadth and coherence in administrative argumentation about New Public Management were as elevated as Schwartz’s ambitions for explaining similarities among cases of institutional and policy change within the field of comparative politics and public policy. In my view, their reach on these occasions exceeded their grasp (Barzelay 2000a, Barzelay and Hassel 1994). Irrespective of any limitations, however, these works raised the sights for policy argumentation and research on NPM within political science/public administration.37

**NPM as Executive Leadership: The Case of Mark Moore**

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34 For a discussion of the substance of Zifcak’s findings, see Barzelay (2000b), chapter 2.
35 The structure of Aucoin’s argumentation has been described elsewhere (Barzelay 2000a).
36 As noted earlier, the chapters in Boston et al. (1991) typically accepted the Treasury’s doctrinal level argumentation and dealt with the policy level of argumentation.
37 As a matter of intellectual biography, Campbell and Halligan (1992), Schwartz (1994), and Aucoin (1995) provided the point of departure for the two major discussions in my forthcoming book (Barzelay 2000b). Co-teaching with Christopher Hood at the LSE since 1995 has provided another major point of reference, difficult to exaggerate.
Another ambitious work published in 1995 was Mark H. Moore’s *Creating Public Value: Strategic Management in Government*. Long in the making at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government, this volume presented an elaborate doctrinal argument, mainly addressing appointed and career executives in the United States. In terms of Figure 1, the book was situated on the left side, as Moore presented his own administrative argument, which he described as a “structure of practical reason” (p. 1). Unlike H&J, the subject of Moore’s administrative argument was executive leadership. Accordingly, rather than dealing with recurring issues of organizational design, his book set forth a point of view about the role of “public managers.” Moore’s elaborate administrative argument on the subject of executive leadership by public managers has no equivalent, to my knowledge, in the recent public management literature emanating from the NPM heartland of the UK, Australia, and New Zealand.

Moore’s administrative argument incorporated two types of discussions. The first was a “doctrinal argument” in roughly the sense in which this term has been used so far here. His doctrinal teachings included the controversial view that public managers should discern their agencies’ mandates by engaging in political management. This style of argument is easy to model, since codified doctrinal teachings are presented (see below). The second discussion was the analysis of cases depicting how administrative situations had been handled by public managers. To a degree, the case analyses simply “translated” Moore’s doctrinal claims into concrete terms, involving stories featuring actors and institutions with proper names. Yet, Moore’s case analyses typically did more than translate doctrines into stories for presentational purposes. To a significant degree, the case analyses constituted his administrative argument. The fact that Moore backed up his remarks about the analyzed cases with codified doctrinal claims put forward elsewhere in the same text is not inconsistent with the observation that Moore’s administrative argument inhered in the case analyses. Accordingly, it is difficult to resist the conclusion that Moore’s second type of doctrinal argumentation was casuistical.

Casuistry is a method of practical reasoning, whose history has been told by Toulmin and Jonsen (1988). While Aristotle was one of its originators, casuistry reached a high art form in the hands of the Jesuits. The casuistical method is suited to argumentation about what individuals should do in particular circumstances. It operates, in part, through discussion of “paradigm cases.” The issues arising in paradigm cases are not only intrinsically significant for the particular matter at hand, but are also instrumentally significant, as such issues are thought to arise in countless other circumstances. Analyzing paradigm cases is regarded by casuists as the only way to elaborate, refine, and communicate doctrines that take circumstances seriously. By this interpretation, it would be oversimplified, as well as historically uninformed, to say that Moore’s second discussion resembles case discussions at Harvard Business School or the Kennedy School of Government, as it plainly does.

Nonetheless, Moore’s administrative argument can partially and imperfectly be codified as follows. This argument incorporates three main subarguments. The first sub-argument (aa1) concerns the main concept in the book’s title, “public value.” This unit of argument does not, in itself, concern public management; rather, it provides warrants for later rounds of argumentation about public bureaucracies and the role of public managers. The concept “public value” relates to that of a public philosophy of governance that focuses on “government in action” more than on appropriate institutional

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38 The Spanish edition of *Creating Public Value* is Moore (199 ).
39 Earlier versions of Moore’s argument influenced a number of works that appeared before *Creating Public Value* in 1995. In the Spanish language public management literature, one such work was Barzelay and O’Kean (1989).
40 This distinction is stressed in Lynn’s (1996) discussion of differences between the fields of public management and public administration as these have developed in the U.S. Moore also stresses the same distinction in the preface to his book.
41 I am using the terms “intrinsic” and “instrumental” in roughly the sense of Stake (1995).
arrangements.\(^{42}\) Moore’s general position – call it “\(d_1\)” – is that a polity’s collective aspirations, more than any other single consideration, determine where public value lies. Put differently, any actor or observer’s claims about what would constitute an increase or decrease in public value must rest on an accurate assessment of a polity’s collective aspirations. In chapter 2, Moore arrives at this conclusion to \(a\alpha_1\) by drawing inferences about public value from fields of discourse in American social science and public affairs: democratic theory, primarily, and welfare economics, secondarily. This unit of Moore’s argument can be represent symbolically, as follows:

\[
(8) \quad d_1 = A (\text{Dem Theory, Welfare Econ})
\]

Analytically, a second unit of argumentation in Moore (1995) – call it \(a\alpha_2\) – concerns public bureaucracies. This unit, unlike \(a\alpha_1\), takes notice of the circumstances in which public bureaucracies operate. Circumstances shape opportunities to create public value, as conceived in \(a\alpha_1\). Public value, by contrast, is a point of view from which to assess imagined changes in what governments agencies do.

The problem with circumstances is that they are so varied. Within \(a\alpha_2\), Moore therefore undertook an important move, namely to discern the “essence” of circumstances. The result of this move was to introduce a trilogy of concepts: substantive value, support, and operational capacity.\(^{43}\) The concept of “substantive value” mainly drew its meaning from theories of policy analysis, as qualified by Moore’s conception of “public value” (\(d_1\)). The concept of “support” mainly drew its meaning from the “domain of experience” (Lakoff and Johnson 1980) called politics, especially the subdomain involving the getting of authority and public money to operate organizations and programs along particular lines. The concept of “capacity” drew its central meaning from the domain of experience involving production and organizational management.\(^{44}\) Obviously, all three concepts were open to detailed and varied specification.

The one-line version of Moore’s discussion of this trilogy is that a good policy idea, to become good public policy, requires authority and public money (hence, support), as well as operational capacity.\(^{45}\) This statement can be translated into one about “organizational success” in government; the translation is appropriate since Moore’s administrative argument is centered on organizations rather than on policies and programs. As I read Moore, a public bureaucracy is successful, by definition, when it takes full advantage of its opportunities.

Apart from this doctrinal axiom, \(a\alpha_2\) is mainly a framework for giving a specific, contingent meaning to “opportunities” and “organizational success.” In this sense, \(a\alpha_2\) is more a guide to argumentation conducted in particular circumstances than a doctrinal teaching plus justification, as in the case of H&J’s default model of the generic administrative argument, \(a\alpha_0\) (see Expression 4). Accordingly, Moore’s “doctrine of organizational opportunities and aspiration levels” might be expressed as follows:

\[
(9) \quad \text{Opp} = A (\text{Circ, } d_1),
\]

\(^{42}\)By contrast, the public philosophy of governance set forth in Aucoin (1995) - namely, the 13 statements I grouped under “progressive public administration (Barzelay 2000a) - are focused on the institutional set up of government (in Westminster systems).

\(^{43}\) This trilogy has been a basis for teaching public management at the Kennedy School. It was first presented in print, to my knowledge, by Lax and Sebenius (1986).

\(^{44}\) The ideas in terms of which this domain of experience has been conceptualized at the Kennedy School are presented in Kelman (1986), in a chapter entitled “production.”

\(^{45}\) Or as Robert Leone was fond of saying when introducing courses on public management we co-taught at the Kennedy School, “a good idea is not good public policy unless and until it is done.”
where Opp refers equally to organizational “opportunities” and “appropriate aspiration levels” for an organization.\(^{46}\) The right hand side of (9) indicates that any judgment about organizational opportunities should take account of the doctrine of “public value”\((d_1)\) as well as the circumstances (Circ) in which that doctrine is applied. Given Moore’s analysis of circumstances, Expression (9) can be rewritten as follows:

\[
(10) \text{Opp} = A (\text{Value, Support, Capacity, } d_1).
\]

The reason why both Value and \(d_1\) appear on the right hand side of (10) is that they are different, if interdependent, concepts. Value refers to the assessed effects of imagined changes operating through channels leading from organizational routines to policy impact. The term \(d_1\) refers to general, possibly timeless, beliefs about “public value” reflecting a larger public philosophy of governance.\(^{47}\) Value and \(d_1\) are interdependent concepts because the latter is a general basis for assessing what a particular public bureaucracy might do differently in its circumstances.

As indicated earlier, a third unit of argumentation in Moore (1995) - call it aa3 - concerns the role of public managers. As I read Moore, his fundamental doctrinal teaching for public managers \((d_3)\) is to discern opportunities, formulate a strategy to achieve organizational success, translate that strategy into a planned organizational intervention, and carry out that intervention skillfully. The concepts of “opportunities” and “organizational success” were defined in discussing aa2. The additional concepts of “strategy” and “organizational intervention” come from the professional-academic literature on management, particularly from strategic management and organizational behavior. Thus, Moore’s subargument on the role of public managers can be expressed as follows:

\[
(11) d_3 = A (aa2, MAN),
\]

where \(d_3\) refers to Moore’s high-level claims about the role of public managers, \(aa2\) refers to his doctrinal argument about organizational opportunities and success, and MAN refers to the management literature.

In his book, Moore specified \(d_3\) in a variety of ways. One type of specification is to construct the role of the public manager as an “entrepreneur” and a “strategist,” reflecting the strong influence of the design school of strategy (Mintzberg 1994; Mintzberg, Ahlstrand, and Lampel 1998). Another type of specification is to identify organizational functions and types of interventions that public managers are supposed to perform, such as political management and reengineering, respectively. A third type of specification is to identify granular, if generic, actions that a public manager should be expected to take, such as formulating a mission statement. The most elaborate discussions in the book concern political management and reengineering. It is these abstract doctrinal discussions that are intertwined with analyses of multiple paradigm cases.

In sum, Moore’s reader-friendly text, *Creating Public Value: Strategic Management in Government*, was an administrative argument about leading public organizations rather than about the design of organizations. As such, it extended H&J’s concept of an administrative argument to include another subject within public management: executive leadership. As Moore’s argumentation was presented very informally, its structure is, however, not easy to discern. Upon analysis, it appears that his book includes two complementary styles of administrative argumentation: codified doctrinal

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\(^{46}\) I am using the term “opportunities” in a sense related to the concept of “opportunity horizon” in Hamel and Prahalad (1995). The idea of “appropriate aspiration levels” refers to James G. March’s relatively recent writings on the logic of appropriateness (March and Olsen 1989) and organizational learning (Levitt and March 1990).

\(^{47}\) This distinction relates to that between “standing volitions” and “action volitions” (Lindblom 1990).
argumentation and casuistical argumentation about paradigm cases. The codified doctrinal argument incorporates three distinct subarguments dealing with public value, opportunities and organizational success, and the roles of public managers. While Moore’s book reflects professional education about NPM, especially in the US, it has not yet had much influence on methods of administrative argumentation in this field.\textsuperscript{48}

New Currents in 1996

The year 1996 included four significant publications related to New Public Management, which I will briefly survey here. One was Ferlie et al.’s \textit{The New Public Management in Action}. The focal institution in this study was the UK National Health Service. It was mainly concerned with how this panoply of state-steered organizations was restructured during the 1980s and early 1990s. Part of the work dealt with major policy decisions made by institutional power centers, while other discussions dealt with organizational interventions from various positions of executive authority within the NHS system. Its subject matter focus was mainly the design of programmatic organizations, rather than executive leadership or public management policies. Its empirical focus places it on the right side of Figure 1, as amended to include, among other nodes, implementation.

A second publication from 1996 was an edited book by Johan P. Olsen and B. Guy Peters, \textit{Lessons from Experience. Experimental Learning in Administrative Reforms in Eight Democracies}. While the reach of this collective effort arguably exceeded its grasp (Barzelay and Fuechtner 2000), the chapter on the United Kingdom by Christopher Hood was both ambitious and highly successful. This chapter sought to explain such policy events in the UK as initiation of the Next Steps Initiative. As such, it belongs on the right side of Figure 1, as amended to include government decisions. The node on which Hood’s piece analytically focused was “agenda-setting,” if this node is taken to include “alternative-specification,” the other analytically-defined process operating in the pre-decision phase of the policy-making process (Kingdon 1984). Unlike H&J, Hood (1994) examined the “natural case” of the UK during the 1980s rather than an abstract case styled on the UK, Australia, and New Zealand, as in H&J and Hood (1994). His method was to provide a narrative account of historically and analytically significant events within this natural case.\textsuperscript{49}

Hood’s narrative account was the product of a particular sort of “dialogue between ideas and evidence” (Ragin 1987). These ideas, developed in the first part of the chapter, were centered on the concept of “political learning.” This concept referred to a type of process involving the social mechanism of belief-formation. The operation of this mechanism involved incumbent ministers drawing inferences about how to govern based on their own experience in office. The range of experience included their losing power in prior elections. In applying this theory to the UK case, Hood revealed the significance, for agenda-setting and decision-making in the Thatcher years, of events that occurred during the Conservative government of Edward Heath in the 1970s. Hood also adduced evidence showing that the Next Steps Initiative was linked to the Thatcher government’s industrial privatization policy via the mechanism of political learning. In this way, Hood, in effect, claimed that Next Steps was a “policy spillover effect” (Walker 1977) of privatization, at least in part. The larger significance of this chapter lay in showing the benefits of a particular style of case analysis, which involved narrative explanations of significant policy events, guided by an explicit theory in which the social mechanism of belief-formation is prominently featured.

\textsuperscript{48} But see Bardach (1998), who styles his “theory of managerial craftsmanship,” in part, on Moore (1995). Colin Campbell and I are taking Moore’s approach further in a forthcoming book on long-range strategic planning in the U.S. Air Force.\textsuperscript{49} The idea that a task for social scientists is to explain events, as well as facts, is presented by, among others, Elster (1989). The idea that events should be historically and analytically significant is discussed, among other works, in Thelen and Steinmo (1992).
A third study published in 1996 was Allen Schick’s “The Spirit of Reform,” a study commissioned jointly by New Zealand’s Treasury and State Services Commission. The first part of this study was a narrative report discussing how New Zealand’s bureaucratic revolution took place. In this respect, Schick’s study should be placed on the right side of Figure 1. The majority of the chapters, however, presented an administrative argument. The subject of this argument was mainly New Zealand’s public management policies, as implemented. These policies covered a wide array of areas, including expenditure planning and financial management and civil service and labor relations. The author’s main task was to evaluate the institutional rules and organizational routines in these areas, viewed as a system.

Schick’s evaluation involved surveying evidence, collected from primary sources, and drawing evaluative conclusions from this information. The evaluative inferences rested not only on survey evidence, but also on ideas about what makes for good public management policy. In very general terms, the structure of Schick’s evaluative argument was as follows:

\[(12) \ E = A (S, T)\]

where \(E\) refers to Schick’s evaluative claims about New Zealand’s public management policies, \(S\) refers to evidence considered in his survey, and \(T\) refers to the theoretical warrants for his claims.

Since Schick’s report to New Zealand’s central agencies included both a narrative history and an administrative argument, and as the latter was presented discursively, interpreting the structure of his argumentation involves some guesswork. My reading of Schick (Barzelay 2000b: chapter 5), is that the New Institutional Economics is exclusively discussed as part of the narrative history of New Zealand’s reforms, rather than as part of his own administrative argument. If I am correct, then Schick’s specification of the term \(T\) in Expression (12) did not include NIE. Instead, \(T\) was specified as follows:

\[(13) \ T = A (MAN, PPG)\]

where \(T\) refers to theoretical warrants for his evaluation of public management policies, \(MAN\) to the professional-academic literature on management, and \(PPG\) to a broad public philosophy of governance depicting the state as a public problem solver. The principal literatures in management on which Schick drew were strategic management and management accounting and control. From this standpoint, Schick bestowed praise on a government-wide strategic planning process adopted in the 1990s as a corrective for limitations of public management policies implemented in the 1980s, and he also criticized New Zealand’s rules and routines of expenditure planning and financial management for lacking a proper cost accounting system.

In a related, but distinct discussion, Schick was critical of some aspects of prevalent doctrinal argumentation in New Zealand, which he called the “contractualist model.” One doctrine he criticized was that ministers are “purchasers” of outputs provided by government departments within their portfolios.\(^5\) Schick argued that this idea was unsound, unless qualified by the doctrine that ministers also have an “ownership interest” in these organizations. Schick argued that influential policy-makers had failed to appreciate ministers’ “ownership interest” in departments, which may have contributed to the lack of interest in developing proper cost accounting systems. In discussing the Treasury’s argumentation, which Boston (1991) has described, Schick took aim precisely at the “contractualist model” as a whole, which was assessed unfavorably against an alternative “managerialist model.” The managerialist model would seem to refer to Expression (13), above, when specified in detail. In these two ways - providing an evaluation of public management policies informed by a survey of their actual

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\(^5\) This doctrinal claim is a specification of the left-hand side term in Expression (5).
implementation, first, and critically discussing argumentation based on NIE, second - Schick’s study was viewed as significant in New Zealand. It may also prove significant as part of the wider, international discussion of the New Public Management.

A fourth study published in 1996 worth mentioning is Lawrence Lynn’s *Public Management as Art, Science, and Profession*. Although this book did not discuss NPM, it did speak to matters of theory and method in public management research. A professor at the University of Chicago, Lynn was vociferously critical of a strand of scholarship that had emerged from US public policy schools in the late 1980s and early 1990s. This strand was typified by Robert Behn’s *Leadership Counts* (1990), but was described broadly to encompass *Breaking Through Bureaucracy* (Barzelay 1992) and other works emanating from public policy schools at the time. Moore’s (1995) book was too recent to figure in his discussion. In line with Lynn’s apparent intentions, a cold wind blew through that part of the US academic community most interested in the New Public Management in the mid-1990s.

What Lynn proposed as a way forward is a matter of some interpretation. At the most general level, he urged the field of public management to become more scientific without losing the sense of purpose, jurisdiction, and legitimacy drawn from its professional orientation. Within this context, Lynn suggested that public management scholars reallocate their efforts so as to restore a “proper balance” in their attention to organization design, on one hand, and executive leadership, on the other.

As far as studying executive leadership was concerned, Lynn suggested that scholars take a radically different approach to pursuing the same ends. He illustrated what that approach might look like in practice, offering a prototype of his favored design. The technology embedded in the prototype was case analysis (like Moore 1995), which clearly identified the social mechanisms whose operation provided the link between managerial action and their effects. Influenced by the New Institutional Economics, the social mechanisms emphasized by Lynn did not feature “belief-formation” quite as much as some others have done. It may be that Lynn was proposing that the study of leadership work within the genre that Robert Bates and colleagues (1998) subsequently dubbed, “analytic narratives.” Bates et al. presented a series of historical studies whose theoretical tools were drawn from rational choice studies of politics. I am unaware of any works related to executive leadership and New Public Management to have followed this interesting suggestion.

The Burgeoning Recent Literature

The period from 1998 to 2000 has seen another wave of writings on the New Public Management, too large to survey here. These writings include articles in newly founded journals, such as *The International Public Management Journal* and *Public Management: An International Journal*, as well as in more established journals, including *Governance*, *Public Administration*, *Public Administration Review*, and the *Journal of Public Management Research and Theory*. At the same time, several potentially significant books have appeared.

These books include Eugene Bardach’s, *Getting Agencies to Work Together* (1998). The study focused on the operation of programmatic organizations and, especially, on how to identify and satisfy opportunities to achieve policy goals through inter-agency collaboration. Bardach’s book also proposed “smart practices analysis,” as a theory-intensive way to conduct a scientific and professionally-relevant dialogue between ideas and evidence. A second book, also published in 1998, was Christopher Hood’s *Art of the State: Culture, Rhetoric and Public Management*. This erudite study respecified H&J’s

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51 Alex Matheson, personal communication.
52 The book was based on an article commissioned a few years earlier by Lee Friedman, a professor at Berkeley’s Graduate School of Public Policy, in his capacity as editor of the *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*.
53 Actually, the metaphor Lynn used to describe his self-appointed role, in a session chaired by Don Kettl at the 1997 Association for Public Policy and Management (APPAM) research conference, was that of a “bomb thrower.”
model of agenda-setting, drawing on the strand of culture theory associated primarily with Mary Douglas. The volume also included several chapters that commented on NPM in an analytic and critical vein. In the succeeding year, the Brookings Institution published Donald Kettl’s (1999) study of the “global public management revolution.” This work conveyed a good deal of information on developments in the NPM heartland to a mainly US audience.

In the year 2000, three volumes on NPM have been (or soon will be) published. Oxford University Press has brought out Christopher Pollitt and Geert Boukaert’s Public Management Reform: A Comparative Analysis. Routledge has published Jan-Erik Lane’s New Public Management. Later this year, my own book, The New Public Management: Improving Research and Policy Dialogue, will be published by University of California Press. Commenting on this spate of books lies beyond the scope of this paper.54 I would like to think, however, that cumulative learning is accompanying the flow of publications. Ideally, progress of sorts is being made in both research and doctrinal/policy argumentation, corresponding to the right and left sides of Figure 1. Such cumulation is more easily be appreciated if recent works on NPM are read in light of previous ones.

It is now time to review two publications about public management policy and the design of programmatic organizations in Latin America, considered as scholarly contributions to the NPM discussion.

Public Management Policy in Latin America

A recent article in CLAD’s own journal, Reforma y Democracia, by scholars based at CIDE in Mexico City, provides an interesting discussion of public management policy in the area of expenditure planning and financial management (Arellano, Gil, Ramírez, and Rojano 2000). This text contains two distinct, though interrelated, discussions. One discussion is addressed specifically to participants in the process of reforming budgeting systems in Mexico. A second discussion – somewhat implicit - is about how to study and argue about the New Public Management.

The main argument addressed to participants in Mexico’s budget reform process appears to be as follows. If the broad idea of using the budget system as an instrument for achieving the aspiration of results-oriented government is accepted, the discussion should turn to several linked issues. The main issue is what should be the role-relationship between the department responsible for budgeting, the Secretaría de Gasto y Hacienda Pública (SGHP), and spending departments. As this role-relationship is shaped by institutional rules (a concept that relates to marco normativo y legal) and organizational routines, an issue is: how should such rules and routines evolve?

The authors argue that discussions about such rules and routines should be informed by a proper view about NPM. Furthermore, a key topic of discussion ought to concern how changes in rules and routines would affect government’s organizational structure, which the authors (much like Aucoin 1990) describe in terms of centralization/decentralization. The authors acknowledge the force of arguments for centralization (mainly on accountability grounds) as well as decentralization (mainly on technical efficiency grounds). The authors suggest (much like Aucoin 1995) that unqualified arguments in favor of decentralization are implausible in a governmental context, as are unqualified arguments in favor of centralization. The authors call for rigorous and vigorous discussion of this topic in Mexico.

In the second, analytically distinct discussion, the authors primarily conceptualize NPM as concrete experiences rather than as an “administrative argument.” The cases of the UK, Australia, and New Zealand are specifically considered. The authors focus on budget reform, setting aside other

54 However, Appendix 2 provides a synopsis of Barzelay (2000b).
aspects of the benchmark cases of NPM (Barzelay 2000b). Budget reform is described as a learning process. A question is, what can Mexicans (or for that matter, anyone else) learn about budget reform from the UK, Australia, and New Zealand?

Their answer is: a fair amount, for a couple reasons. First, the aspirations and arguments guiding Mexico’s budget reform are similar to those that have guided public management policymakers in the NPM benchmark cases. Second, the process of budget reform in Mexico has been, and will necessarily be, similar to that of the NPM benchmark cases in key respects, such as in the fact that budget reform requires change in routines and supporting beliefs of all participants in the system: central agencies, spending departments, and politicians.

The specific way in which the authors pursue this line of argumentation takes some effort to discern. With the usual caveats, here is an attempt to model their discussion. One type of claim is doctrinal. To illustrate: “El papel ideal de las agencias controladoras tiende a ser el de generar reglas generales, simples, transparentes y precisas...” In English, the institutional rules of a budgeting system should be general, transparent, and precise. This claim - call it d1 - is doctrinal in that it does not refer to specific circumstances (Hood and Jackson 1991, Barzelay 2000a). Its scope appears to be universal rather than limited to, say, Mexico. While the ideas of transparency and precision of agreements are frequently expressed within doctrinal arguments about public management policy (Aucoin 1995), and while the transparent application of general rules is a common doctrine of “bureaucratic justice” practiced by programmatic organizations (Mashaw 1983), d1 sounds slightly unusual to the foreign ear.

What is the justification for d1? The preceding paragraph contains a clue: “Para que los gobiernos funcionen deben ser vigilados y para esto deben existir responsables visibles y específicos.” This statement - translated as “the effective functioning of governments requires that specific individuals be made responsible and visible” - suggests that d1 is part of an argument that might have the following structure:

(14) d1 = A (PPG, MAN, KG),

where the terms within A (•) refer to three broad universes of discourse: public philosophies of governance (PPG), management (MAN), and knowledge of the governmental process (KG). The reference to PPG is implicit in the concept of “para que los gobiernos funcionen.” The idea that control of government requires visible and identifiable individuals is presumably based on both KG and doctrines of management control within MAN. The argument might be similar to Dennis Thompson’s (1987) analysis of “the problem of many hands,” which shows how difficult it is to ascribe blame to individuals when things go wrong in government, and which argues for taking steps to increase officials’ sense of personal responsibility. Whether that sort of argument applies with equal force to budget systems deserves to be examined. In any event, the argumentation on this point appears to be based more on “theory” than any specific observations about the NPM benchmark cases. The paper’s emphasis on these cases does not, however, prepare the reader for arguments relying so heavily on theory.

Based on their survey of the NPM benchmark cases (and some theory), the authors identify what might be characterized as a “critical success factor” for achieving the aspirations of budget reform. The critical success factor lies in the role-relationship between central agencies and spending departments. This success factor, according to the authors, is not satisfied by the role-relationship that typically obtains prior to NPM-style budget reforms. Change is required. Although they do not use the term, the

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55 The authors’ justification for focusing on budgeting is as follows: “Los procesos de presupuestación han venido apareciendo como un elemento indispensable de las reformas administrativas cuando se quiere dirigir a los gobiernos a actuar con base en la obtención de resultados y no sólo o principalmente en el control de recursos y gastos.”
authors can be taken to suggest that change requires an “organizational intervention” - presumably, one led by the most senior people in the situation. Hence, a critical success factor for budgeting reform is an effective organizational intervention that changes the role-relationship between central agencies and spending agencies.\footnote{56 This is a major point, as I take it, of Campbell and Halligan’s (1992) study of political leadership and management reform in Australia in the 1980s.}

The paper contains a few loose ends, as the authors readily acknowledge. One loose end is the observation that the structure of the Mexican governmental system is different from that of the benchmark cases. It appears that Mexico’s governmental system includes a “transformative legislature” (a concept Colin Campbell retrieves from Polsby [1975] to discuss this subject). The benchmark cases are dissimilar in this respect. This fact raises questions about whether Mexico might have more to learn from the USA or Germany. Since lessons from experience are highly theory-based, this same point also raises a question as to which theoretical frameworks (situated within KG) are usefully employed by analysts in the dialogue with case evidence. The chief merit of the paper is to clarify these issues, which provide a basis for further discussion.

Design of Programmatic Organizations

Tendler and Freedheim’s (1994) article, “Trust in a Rent-Seeking World: Health and Government Transformed in Northeast Brazil,” can be viewed as a contribution to the literature on NPM in Latin America. The article analyzes the Health Agent Program (PAS) in the Brazilian state of Ceará during its initial period (1987-1993). The perspective taken by the authors is that of public management researchers, rather than as specialists in public health.

Tendler and Freedheim’s article is a seamless weave of four analytically distinct sub-discussions. The first sub-discussion is an evaluative argument about the PAS. The conclusion to this argument is that the program was a success by any reasonable standard - thereby providing a reason for researchers to study this experience in detail. The second sub-discussion is an explanatory argument. The authors identify a number of analytically significant facts about the program and then provide an explanatory account of them. These facts include the huge scale and wide geographic reach of the state-directed program; the intense loyalty to the programmatic enterprise exhibited by the front-line health agents and supervising nurses; and the creative ways in which many health agents won the confidence of skeptical and even suspicious clients belonging to the program’s main target groups. The authors’ explanation drew upon knowledge and frameworks rooted in political science, sociology, and organizational behavior.

The third sub-discussion is a doctrinal argument about the design of programmatic organizations. The specific doctrinal teaching with which the authors take issue is that program structures should be decentralized. Tendler and Freedheim argue that if Ceará state officials had followed this doctrinal teaching, the PAS would not have been nearly as successful as it turned out to be. On this basis, they express severe doubts about standard - and simplistic - versions of doctrines favoring the decentralization of programmatic organizations. Tendler and Freedheim go on to suggest how doctrinal argumentation about the design of programmatic organizations would be improved.

The fourth sub-discussion is a critique of the climate of opinion in international development institutions regarding the possibilities of what Tendler elsewhere has called “good government in the tropics” (Tendler 1995). The basic argument is that pessimism about public sector performance is partly attributable to researchers’ selective attention to program failures. This sub-discussion both justifies the authors’ attention to a successful experience and casts doubt on the validity of advice premised on studies that dwell on experiences whose outcomes have been unsatisfactory.

The sub-argument that definitively places Tendler and Freedheim’s article within the literature
on NPM is their doctrinal argument on the design of programmatic organizations. This sub-argument is intimately linked to their explanatory one. Tendler and Freedheim argue that the success of the PAS is due, in part, to the state government’s decision to row alongside Ceará’s municipal governments (e.g., by selecting the front-level health agents), rather than to confine its activities to steering (e.g., designing program guidelines and funding municipal-level positions). This programmatic design, they argue, enabled the program to avoid a common failure mode involving “patrimonial” practices by mayors. The fact that success depended on the center’s rowing supports the authors’ contention that decentralization is a questionable doctrine for designing programmatic organizations in circumstances like those of Ceará, where local politicians typically give “extended use to their authority” (Lindblom 1977) to reward political supporters and to provide disproportionate benefits to family and friends.

It is important to examine the structure of Tendler and Freedheim’s explanatory argument, since the plausibility of the authors’ critique of conventional doctrinal teachings rests on this sub-argument. As mentioned earlier, the analytically significant facts within this case include the scale and geographic reach of the state-directed program; the loyalty of the front-line health agents and supervising nurses to the programmatic enterprise; and the ways health agents won the confidence of clients within the program’s main target groups. These facts are analytically significant for two distinct reasons. First, the PAS would presumably have risked failure if the events generating these facts had not occurred. In this sense, these facts were “critical success factors” for PAS. Second, these same sorts of factors are critical to the success of other programs. For instance, gaining the confidence of program clients was a critical success factor in a government-led scheme to promote industrial development in southern Spain in the mid-1980s (Barzelay and O’Kean 1989, Barzelay 1991). A plausible explanation for how such success factors as these were satisfied in the case of the PAS would, therefore, enrich professional discussion about designing organizations to operate large-scale programs involving client co-production in circumstances where client trust in government representatives is initially low.

The authors’ explanation for why these critical success factors were satisfied in the PAS case is rooted in political science, sociology, and organizational behavior. Political science is used mainly to account for the numerical scale and geographical scope of the Health Agents Program. In order for the PAS to operate in any given municipality, the local government had to provide funds for nurse supervisors and mayors had to tolerate rules stipulating that the program organization would not be used as a support structure for partisan political activity. Tendler and Freedheim seek to account for municipal choices. The explanation varies according to the timing of the decision to join the program, with later decisions induced by the “bandwagon effects” (Schelling 1978) triggered by the apparent success of the program in neighboring communities.

Sociology is the basis of explaining the high degree of loyalty displayed by front-line health agents and their nurse supervisors. The authors draw on literature that considers roles and the socialization process. The principal events in the socialization process included the prospective health agent’s first encounter with information about the program (through word of mouth and publicity campaigns), information sessions held in municipal venues to describe how to apply for positions, the completing of an application form, the receipt of a notification from the state health department that an interview would take place, the interview session with a nurse and social worker from the state-level coordinating team, notification from the state health department that a contract to be an employee of their municipality’s health agent program was being offered to them, and participation in three months of full-time training delivered by the state health department. These events, which occurred against the background of limited alternatives for employment, income, and training available to health agents, created strong bonds of loyalty between health workers and the Health Agents Program as an abstract entity. They also help to account for the relative absence of patrimonial ties between health agents and

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57 For significant recent discussions of roles and socialization processes, see Montgomery (1998) and Montgomery (2000).
the mayor of the municipality that employed them.

The literature on organizational behavior - which is rooted in sociology and psychology - is the principal basis of explaining why health agents found creative ways to gain the confidence of program clients. The design of a health worker’s job was one where outputs were largely unobservable, while outcomes were substantially observable. Outputs were unobservable because a health agent’s routines were not standardized (apart from standardizing their skills) and because most transactions with clients were not observed by nurse-supervisors. Outcomes were observable in the sense that changes in client behaviors and health status could be tracked. Thus, the job design of health agents fit within the broad pattern known as a craft organization (Wilson 1989).

This context provided an ideal habitat for health workers’ developing their own approaches to achieving program goals. As they proceeded along their respective idiosyncratic learning paths, health agents discovered that clients were more inclined to pay attention to advice on how to prevent health problems after they experienced benefit from agents’ curative care interventions. Providing curative care, however, was not part of the official design of the PAS. Nonetheless, many health agents offered some degree curative care as a “calling card” in the process of marketing and promoting preventive health at the “retail level.” Tendler and Freedheim make a similar argument in relation to health agents’ strategy of constructing the role-relationship of “friendship” between themselves and clients, using such tactics as helping women with child care and domestic chores. The broad argument here is that the job design (i.e., the pattern of a craft organization) provided the enabling conditions for health agents to have the motivation and opportunities to invent practical ways to overcome such constraints on achieving programmatic goals as an initially low level of trust between government representatives and clients in a program’s target groups.

This explanatory argumentation feeds into the doctrinal argumentation in three distinct ways. As suggested earlier, the first conduit is a riposte to doctrinal teachings of the “steer, don’t row” (Osborne and Gaebler 1992) variety. This riposte is backed up by the explanation for employee loyalty to PAS as an abstract entity. The events that satisfied the loyalty success factor were choreographed by the state health department. In these events, the state was rowing alongside municipal governments. The authors thus argue that rowing should be done at both central and local levels - thereby providing a critique of what some regard as a core principle of NPM, at least in settings similar to Ceará.

The second conduit is reflected in the effort to reframe doctrinal argumentation about the design of program organizations. I read the authors as saying that doctrinal argumentation might best concern critical success factors, rather than specific teachings as to how to design program organizations. Standard critical success factors might include: achieving employees’ loyalty to the program and enabling co-production by coordinate authorities (such as state and municipal governments) as well as program clients.

A third conduit is by discussing how to satisfy such critical success factors. The wide variety of practice settings and the causal importance of configurations of factors limits the reach of comparative case research. However, “how-to” discussions might include case analyses along casuistical lines, with reliance on interpretations of “paradigm cases.” The PAS serves as such a paradigm case. A common thread of such casuistical case analysis would be the frames of reference employed. The universe of discussion would consistently include doctrinal considerations as well as knowledge of the governmental process, organizational behavior, and management.

Conclusion

59 For a similar argument, see Bardach (1998).
60 The reader should be advised that I am deliberately placing my own spin on Tendler and Freedheim’s effort.
The New Public Management is a field of professional and policy discussion - conducted internationally - about public management policy, executive leadership, design of programmatic organizations, and government operations. Scholars specializing in public administration/political science have contributed to this discussion for a decade. The principal aim of this paper has been to make this literature accessible to scholars outside of the original (English-speaking) precincts of the NPM discussion, so that they may benefit from and contribute to it. This aim has been pursued in three main ways: first, by describing each study’s distinctive methodological and theoretical approach; second, by contrasting each item with a common benchmark (Hood and Jackson 1991); and, third, by including two studies about Latin America within the review.61

The intellectual progress recorded by this bibliographic essay is a basis for envisioning the public administration/political science contribution to the second decade of the NPM discussion. As in the 1990s, that contribution will include research and doctrinal/policy argumentation. More than before, the design of new works will be justified in terms of lessons learned from previous scholarly contributions to this discussion. Efforts will be sufficiently cumulative that writing about “the state of the art” in NPM-related scholarship will come naturally. As in the first decade, fresh insights about perennial issues of public management will emerge from studiously examining experiences, while speaking to ongoing doctrinal controversies and policy arguments. Attempts to argue about policy alternatives on the basis of inferences drawn from past and international experience will exemplify high standards of practical argumentation. An understanding of the dynamics of change in public management policy, design of programmatic organizations, political and bureaucratic roles, and the routine functioning of government agencies will grow. This understanding will reflect research conducted in areas beyond the inner precincts of NPM. Policy-makers’ normal expectations that scholarship is a resource on which they can draw will typically be fulfilled. Scholars’ collective aspirations for research and doctrinal/policy argumentation will continue to increase, reflecting learning from the collective experience of the international scholarly community. Public management, furthermore, will be a strong area of policy and management scholarship, thriving in universities, government, and other institutions around the world.

Figure 1
Administrative Argumentation:
A Conceptual Map

61The resulting commentary extends my recent contribution to the International Public Management Journal by applying that article’s method of analyzing and presenting “administrative arguments” to a wider array of texts. It also complements my forthcoming New Public Management: Improving Research and Policy Argumentation in two respects: first, by discussing works on NPM subjects other than public management policy (specifically, executive leadership and the design of programmatic organizations); and second, by highlighting the methodological and theoretical approaches to research on public management policy. These works are designed to be directly useful to scholars and, through them, indirectly useful to practitioners.
Appendix 1

Doctrines of New Public Management

Use independent public bureaucracy
Use private/independent organization
Use differentiated ranks / one boss/delegation
Separate ‘policy’ and ‘admin’ specialism
Decide by discretion
Multi-source supply / between organizations
Multi-source supply / within organizations
Prefer admin/managerial skills
Contract out / for the field
Promote on merit / bosses’ judgement
Prefer paid work / variable/pay by outcome
Limit tenure / by recall/hirer fires
Have a pluriform structure
Control through business methods
Control by output measures


Appendix 2

Synopsis of The New Public Management:

Improving Research and Policy Dialogue (Barzelay 2000b)

Chapter 1 provides a broad overview of New Public Management, mainly to impose some structure on what otherwise presents as an amorphous “literature.” The utility of this exercise in
categorization is to provide a map of the terrain in which this book is situated. At the top level of this category scheme are two ideal-types of scholarly works: research and doctrinal/policy argumentation. Roughly speaking, “research” corresponds to the right side of Figure 1, while “doctrinal/policy argumentation” corresponds to the left side. Research subdivides into two categories according to subject matter. One subject is the study of substantive policy and program areas, such as health, education, criminal justice, environment, and defense. The other identified subject is public management policy.

As the body of the study deals exclusively with public management policy, this second category is further disaggregated. One subdivision is empirical work that describes countries’ public management policies. The other subdivision focuses on the process of making public management policy. The work populating this category is typically explanatory research on public management policy, which is closely related to the right side of Figure 1 as it has been amended in the present paper. As for doctrinal/policy argumentation, this other top-level category can be divided according to whether the focal subject is systems for guidance, control, and evaluation, on the one hand, or political and bureaucratic roles, on the other. The topic of guidance, control, and evaluation is related to organization design; the topic of the role of political and bureaucratic roles is related to executive leadership.

Within this frame of reference, the book can be described as follows. This book attempts to contribute to both research and doctrinal/policy argumentation about public management policy. Therefore, public management in substantive policy and program areas is not discussed. The research component of the book is primarily concerned with public management policy-making instead of specific policies and practices. The historically and analytically significant facts it seeks to explain relate to change in public management policy during the 1980s and 1990s. The doctrinal/policy argumentation is primarily concerned with systems for guidance, control, and evaluation. Therefore, the subject of political and bureaucratic roles lies outside the main discussion.

Chapter 2 provides a review of the case study literature on public management policy change in the 1980s and 1990s. The cases include Australia, UK, Canada, USA, Sweden, and Germany. The chapter is organized by country and, within each country section, by work. In reviewing each work, emphasis is placed on the public management policy-making process. More emphasis is placed on authors’ descriptive and explanatory claims than on the theories and methods employed.

Chapter 3 is a contribution to the explanatory research literature on public management policy change. The overall aim is to launch a research program on this subject. As a case-oriented research program, it seeks to improve understanding of an historically-defined phenomenon (Ragin 1987), specifically, recent public management policy change. The scientific objective is to arrive at coherent accounts of similarities and differences among cases of public management policy change.

In its present state of maturity, this research program defines its cases in terms of public management policy-making in central governments during the 1980s and 1990s. The method employed, stated most abstractly, is to conduct a “dialogue between ideas and evidence” (Ragin 1987). The ideas participating in this dialogue include social scientific research traditions, especially empirically-oriented theories of the policy-making process. Other ideas are drawn from professional and policy discussion of the New Public Management. As far as case evidence is concerned, the aim is to include non-English speaking countries, such as Sweden and Germany, as well as the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the US.

As a point of departure, attention is focused exclusively on the UK, Australia, and New Zealand, referred to collectively as the “NPM benchmark cases.” These cases are considered similar here in a specific sense, namely that they all exhibited across-the-board changes in public management policies in the 1980s and 1990s. The concept of across-the-board changes in public management policy resonates with less precise characterizations, such as a “bureaucratic revolution” (Boston et al. 1991).
Such an outcome is defined as the occurrence of changes in each of several areas of public management policy: expenditure planning and financial management, civil service and labor relations, procurement, organization and methods, and audit and evaluation. This definition of the case outcome is coherent with professional and policy discussions of NPM, but its main advantage lies in specifying researchable questions, such as “why did across-the-board changes in public management policy occur in the UK, Australia, and New Zealand in the 1980s and 1990s?” This “case outcome” and related ones are presumed to be historically and analytically significant.

The selection of cases, for the first exercise involving the UK, Australia, and New Zealand, is not ad hoc insofar as these experiences are conventionally grouped together in professional and policy discussion of the New Public Management. The three have been conceived as initiators of an international trend (Aucoin 1990, Hood 1991). In analyzing these cases, priority is given to understanding them as a group. Reflecting the early NPM literature, the “case” that is analyzed is, for the most part, an artificial, abstract, composite one, rather than a “natural case” involving a single country.

The method of explanation is the narrative (Kiser 1996). An account is provided of a flow of events from initial conditions to a situation where across-the-board change in public management policy had occurred. This account, like the choice of a case outcome, is the result of a particular dialogue between theoretical ideas and case evidence. Indeed, the theoretical ideas play such an influential role in the account that the genre is that of an “analytic narrative” (Bates et al. 1998). The proximate sources of the theoretical ideas are three models of organizational decision-making and policy-making: Kingdon (1984), Baumgartner and Jones (1993), and Levitt and March (1990). These models reflect larger intellectual traditions in organization studies and political science. Within organization studies, the major tradition is associated with Simon and March. Within political science, the traditions reflected are policy studies (Nelson 1996) and the particular strand of historical institutionalism concerned with analyzing policy change in stable institutional environments (Thelen and Steinmo 1992; Hall 1992). In sum, the dialogue between ideas and evidence, at this stage, results in an analytic narrative of the NPM benchmark cases.

At a later stage, the same theory and method is employed to examine the cases of Sweden, the US, and Germany in the same time frame. These discussions are brief and rely, as before, on already published English language accounts of public management policy making. Sweden and the US are viewed as substantially similar to the benchmark cases in terms of the case outcome of full spectrum public management policy change. Germany is viewed as different in this respect. In the Germany case, an attempt is made to explain the differences in case outcomes compared to the NPM benchmark cases. The result is a series of three analytic narratives about these cases. These analytic narratives are prototypes rather than as definitive studies.62

The analysis provided in Chapter 3 bears some resemblance to works discussed in the present essay. For instance, Campbell and Halligan (1992) used narrative methods to account for change in public management policies in Australia. The broad strategy of complementing a narrative approach to explanation with an explicit explanatory theory was evident in Hood’s (1996) study of political learning in the UK. The idea of grouping the UK, Australia, and New Zealand together as an abstract or artificial “case” has precedents in Aucoin (1990), Hood (1991), Hood and Jackson (1991), and Hood (1994). The idea of analyzing Sweden as another instance of NPM appeared in Schwartz (1994). The (unfulfilled) aspiration of comparing cases of administrative reform, as a comparativist in political science would, was set forth in March and Olsen (1989) and Olsen and Peters (1996), and it was exemplified by Schwartz (1994). However, the configuration of case selection, defined case outcome, and choice of theory and method has not appeared beforehand. The research program that the book intends to launch

62 The analysis of the case of Germany has subsequently been taken further (Barzelay and Fuechtner 2000).
is characterized, at its present state of maturity, by this particular configuration. The specific analyses are intended to illustrate the benefits of pursuing this research program.

The rest of the book is concerned with “administrative argument.” I do not put forward my own point of view about public management policy, as I did in Barzelay (1992). In Chapter 4, I propose and illustrate the application of standards of doctrinal and policy argumentation about public management policy. The need for standards stems from a number of sources, including the fact that academic public administration has yet to find a way to argue about NPM that is both intellectually satisfying and highly germane to policy and professional discussions within this field.

The chosen device for discussing standards of argumentation about NPM is to critically assess Aucoin (1995). This text was and remains the most ambitious attempt so far to formulate doctrinal and policy arguments on the basis of the UK, Australia, and New Zealand experiences in the field of public management policy. Aucoin’s New Public Management also sought to demonstrate its superiority over another attempt at doctrinal formulation in this field, namely Barzelay (1992). In each of these respects, Aucoin (1995) was a limited success. The book’s administrative argumentation would have been more satisfying if it had followed broadly applicable standards for practical argumentation. Chapter 4, entitled “How to Argue about the New Public Management,” reconstructs Aucoin’s argumentation so that it would be clearer and more intellectually satisfying. It concludes with guidelines incorporating “lessons learned” from Aucoin’s foray into administrative argumentation about public management policy.

Chapter 5 pursues two related objectives. The first is to provide an account of controversy surrounding doctrinal-level argumentation about public management policy. The second is to demonstrate that it is possible to gain insight about these controversial issues through the argumentation process. This process - if its participants employ appropriate tools of conceptual analysis - allows for cumulating insights and reframing issues. The chapter undertakes two exercises to pursue these objectives. One is to conduct a critical discussion of both Aucoin’s sympathetic evaluation of NPM experiences and Gregory’s (1995) critique of the New Zealand experience, specifically. As Gregory relies heavily on Wilson’s (1989) classic distinctions among production, procedural, craft, and coping organizations, this exercise also involves translating Aucoin and Wilson’s conceptual frameworks into one another’s terms. A result is to reveal ways to improve dialogue on this subject. Aucoin’s argumentation can be expanded to include the distinction between “outputs” and “outcomes” and to allow for organization-specific contingencies, while the Gregory/Wilson argumentation can incorporate the concept of “output” as Aucoin, drawing on agency theory, conceives it.

The second exercise involves policy argumentation (in addition to doctrinal argumentation). The central question is why the praise bestowed on the New Zealand experience by Schick (1996) is heavily qualified, as discussed briefly in the body of this essay, whereas Aucoin’s (1995) favorable evaluation of public management policies in the UK, Australia, and New Zealand is not so hedged. Unless such differences in professional opinion can be accounted for, a policy dialogue cannot be said to exist.

Chapter 5 traces the controversy to the realm of doctrinal argumentation - especially in how the authors specify ideas in the professional-academic literature on management. Schick implicitly draws on two schools of thought: strategic management and management accounting and control. Aucoin’s specification of management in terms of a home-grown Canadian doctrine of “well-performing organizations” (sharing ideas with Peters and Waterman [1982]) is different. Schick’s reliance on ideas from strategic management and management accounting and control provided him with a basis to evaluate the New Zealand experience in a critical vein. This discussion is intended to establish the presumption that ideas drawn from strategic management and management accounting and control

63 A version of this chapter appeared as Barzelay (2000a).
should ordinarily be included in argumentation about public management policies. This point is reiterated in taking a fresh look at *Breaking Through Bureaucracy* as well as in the concluding chapter.

The fundamental point conveyed by the conclusion is that public management can and should become a mature field of policy research, at least when the subject is public management policy. Such a mature field would incorporate both “positive” research on public management policy change and “normative” argumentation at both doctrinal and policy levels. While high aspirations for both types of contributions have been in evidence for a few years, the literature has generally been unsatisfying in both respects. This book tries to identify and eliminate constraints limiting the pace of progress in the direction of these aspirations.

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