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The Attractions and Challenges of Collaborative
Public Management

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COLLABORATIVE PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

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Abstract

Solutions to problems confronting public officials increasingly require the creation of collaborative arrangements not only among public agencies, horizontally and vertically, but also with nonprofit organizations and/or for-profit enterprises. This shift to collaborative public management is propelled by claims it will remedy the pathologies associated with hierarchical bureaucracies, inter-jurisdictional conflicts, increased problem complexity, resource deficiencies, and lack of citizen participation in policy decisions. This paper reviews the emergence of the movement toward collaborative public management, the efforts to conceptualize and model collaboration, and the analytic challenges faced in understanding and utilizing this new approach to public administration. Two brief case studies – one from China and one from the United States of America – are presented, and current models of collaborative public management are used to analyze the cases.

Key Words: collaborative public management; models of collaboration; China; United States of America.

The Attractions and Challenges of Collaborative Public Management

Dale Krane and Zhikui Lu

Twenty years ago Jan-Erik Lane declared the traditional academic approach to public administration had crumbled and "several of the notions of public administration have been more or less abandoned" (1993, 1). Numerous new concepts and approaches have been proposed as replacements, including *new public administration, privatization, performance-based management, new public management* (NPM), *governance, new public service,* and *collaborative public management* (CPM). Each of these ideas has attracted a loyal following who believe their particular approach offers the best replacement, and each idea has influenced theory and practice somewhat differently. For example, Kettl (1997, 446) claimed NPM sparked a "global revolution in public management..[and]..has swept around the world." While many focused on performance and results, others during the last two decades turned their attention to the public sector's increasing use of interorganizational networks (IONs) populated not just by government agencies but also by nonprofit and for-profit organizations (Bryson and Einsweiler 1991; Alter & Hage 1993). The movement away from Weberian public bureaux has been prompted by two simple facts (1) many problems confronting citizens in any country do not stay put in a given locale (village, province, or nation), and (2) many problems exceed the scope and capacity of any one public agency. With the realization that the provision of goods and services increasingly requires multiple organizations, it has become clear the nature of management is also changing because command-and-control forms are ineffective in multi-organizational arrangements (Gray 1989). Consequently, collaborative forms of administration are supplementing "top-down" forms, and in many cases supplanting them.

The Emergence Of Collaboration

Scholars assert that public administration is "repositioning" itself around "models built on the assumptions of institution building, cooperation, productivity, structure, and leadership" (Frederickson 1999, 710), and thus public managers now function in "an age of collaboration" (Agranoff and McGuire

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2003, 20). How did this apparently rapid transformation in theory and practice occur? Neither administrative practices nor theoretical approaches typically change in less than a generation. Simply put, dissatisfaction with existing administrative practices, a search for solutions to the problems of practice, significant changes in society, and new theoretical understandings about organizations all contributed to the shift from hierarchical to collaborative management.

Perhaps the most direct line of action leading to CPM is found in the efforts to overcome the pathologies besetting the delivery of human services. The litany of ills identified as negatively affecting human service program administration include fragmentation of services, inaccessibility of services, lack of coordination, lack of accountability, discontinuities in services, waste of resources, ineffectiveness of services, and short-term commitments (Aiken et al. 1975). The prescription to remedy these ailments became known as Service Integration (SI). Essential to SI was "the ability to plan and delineate operations – a joint effort..." which "unfolds at the delivery level through creation of various systemic linkages" into a network of public-private partnerships that agree to "an overall human services policy" (Agranoff 1991). Aiken and associates (1975) proposed an "ideal service delivery system" composed of three elements: (1) a unit to do case coordination, (2) a coalition of organizations [that provide the services], and (3) a community board to protect the public interest. Their "ideal system" depended on collaborative arrangements, and as will be seen, contained key components associated with CPM.

Research on policy implementation and intergovernmental relations demonstrated that hierarchical, "top-down" implementation does not necessarily result in the attainment of public objectives. Administering public programs vertically through tiers of government and horizontally across jurisdictions greatly compounds the challenges, both technical and political, faced by public managers. As governments expanded the scope of public action into policy areas such as environmental protection and strengthened their efforts in more traditional areas such as economic development, the administration of programs became "shared" not just among public agencies and jurisdictions (Sundquist and Davis 1969), but also with nonprofit organizations and for-profit enterprises (Williams 1980; Mosher 1980). "The task of public

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administration became much more than the smooth operation of a traditional government agency. It became the coordination and orchestration of the discordant organizations that made up a program's implementation network" (Mandell 1990). Program administration put an increased emphasis on "the integration of services provided by several separate organizations....[and]..required the development of joint action and shared responsibility, not just at the local service delivery level, but also at higher management levels." This sea change in policy implementation became known as *intergovernmental management* (Wright and Krane 1998, 1167).

The growing use of non-governmental entities as participants in the production and delivery of public goods and services produced a blurring of the lines between public and private sectors (Musolf and Sideman 1980). At the same time, campaigns to privatize many public activities and demands to decentralize and devolve public policy contributed to a trend away from large vertical bureaucratic organizations and towards the use of networks composed of smaller organizations. Alter and Hage (1993, 2) opened their book *Organizations Working Together* by describing how for-profit corporations which had previously been organized as large centralized hierarchies were rapidly altering their operations by adopting "structures that are smaller, decentralized, and based on strategies of cooperation and horizontal relationships...[which create]..flexible production systems." Alter and Hage noted that this trend was not limited to U.S. companies but could be found in corporations headquartered in Europe, Latin America, and Japan. Surprisingly, they went on to observe "what is becoming true in manufacturing has been true in the public sector for some time" (10). The consequences of this societal transformation, as detailed by Bryson and Einsweiler (1991, 6-10), were several: (1) an increased complexity and turbulence in how public and private decisions are made, (2) further deconcentration and fragmentation not just of activities but also of authority, (3) heightened tension between an individual and societal interests, (4) debates over the effectiveness of competition versus cooperation, and (5) a decline in the capacity to manage and govern. Bryson and Einsweiler (1) bluntly stated that "the plain fact of the matter is that the most important public issues of the day typically arise in settings in which no one is in charge, and in which organizations or

institutions must share power in order to address these issues effectively." Put differently, the principal challenge to public policy decision-making and implementation is the creation of joint action by multiple organizations. So the key theoretical and practical question became: "why should firms or agencies cooperate?" (Alter and Hage 12).

Like the study of public policy, the study of collaborative public management is characterized by a surfeit of theories – that is, no one generally accepted theory of collaboration exists. For example, theoretical answers to the question "why collaborate?" range from authors who propose a single explanation (e.g., resource dependency or population-ecology) to authors who list as many as fourteen different ones (e.g., see Gazley 2008). While identifying these diverse theoretical foundations helps us understand CPM's multiple dimensions, it is especially important for our purpose here to suggest that a growing convergence of core concepts about collaborative activity can be found in the CPM literature. Pfeffer and Salanick (1978) hold that organizations exist interdependently in an environment of other organizations, thus this lack of autonomy leaves organizations dependent on obtaining resources from other organizations. Alter and Hage (1993) propose four factors that account for collaboration: (1) willingness to cooperate, (2) need for expertise, (3) need for financial resources and sharing of risks, and (4) need for adaptive efficiency. McCaffrey, Faerman, and Hart (1995) hypothesize that collaboration was a function of (1) disposition to collaborate, (2) purposes, issues, and values, (3) social and political organization, and (4) leadership capacity and style. More recent works exhibit a significant commonality of factors reputed to answer the question "why collaborate?" For example, Bryson, Crosby, and Stone (2006) identify the initial conditions for collaboration as (1) environmental factors such as complexity, turbulence, competition, and uncertainty, (2) sector failure by which they mean the degree to which a single effort has failed to solve a public problem, and (3) the presence of direct antecedents of collaboration which are general agreement on the problem, a powerful sponsor or convener, and existing networks. Thompson and Perry's (2006) conceptualization lists six antecedent conditions necessary for collaboration: (1) high levels of interdependence, (2) need for resources and risk sharing, (3) resource scarcity, (4) previous history of

efforts to collaborate, (5) complex issues, and (6) situations in which each partner has resources that other partners need. Lundin (2007) explains cooperation among Swedish public employment service offices by testing the influence of three factors: (1) resource interdependence, (2) goal congruence, and (3) trust. Ansell and Gash (2008) in their meta-analysis of 137 cases of collaborative governance "narrowed the critical starting conditions down to three broad variables: imbalances between the resources or power of different stakeholders, the incentives stakeholders have to collaborate, and the past history of conflict or cooperation among stakeholders. Obviously, a degree of consensus on the core concepts of CPM is emerging among scholars.

It should be noted that much of the enthusiasm for CPM derives from beliefs and expectations about the positive effects of collaboration, rather than empirically demonstrated results. Numerous benefits are reputed to accrue to organizations that choose to collaborate; for example, Alter and Hage (1993, 36-37) identify eighteen benefits, to which many subsequent authors allude. O'Leary et al. (2009, 7) offer a typical list of

> the potential benefits of interorganizational cooperation include achievements in both organizational effectiveness and efficiency, such as the ability to buffer external uncertainties, share risks, achieve competitive advantages, generate cost savings, improve organizational learning, and produce high-quality services. Intersectoral alliances also have the potential to achieve greater public accountability by better meeting public expectations for results.

Because "most studies in the collaborative governance literature evaluate 'process outcomes' rather than policy or management outcomes" (Ansell and Gash 2008, 549), the various lists of CPM's desirable impacts on public activity are, at this point, lists of hypotheses.

How Collaboration Is Conceptualized

Because concepts are the "building blocks of theory," progress in understanding a given phenomenon depends on a clear and explicit definition that is generally accepted by scholars. That is, all researchers must "see the same thing," and agree on what it is they are describing (Turner 2003, 5). A valid and useable definition connects the term, in this case collaboration, to observable characteristics or

properties ("the referents") that invariably distinguish it from other often similar phenomenon (Gerring 2001, 45). The rub with collaboration is that different authors "see" different referents, and consequently, no consensus exists on its definition. Any sampling of articles and books on collaboration confirms this definitional dissensus.

Perhaps the most widely accepted view of collaboration considers it a process characterized by certain distinct features, as exemplified by Thomson and Perry (2009). Closely related to conceptualizing collaboration as a process are those scholars whose definition emphasizes the actions entailed by the collaborative process – for example Bryson et al's (2006) focus on "linking or sharing" or Bardach's (1998) referent of "joint activity." Obviously, a process construction hews closely to the original Latin meaning of the term "to work together." A widely held alternative formulation describes collaboration as a purposive relationship (Agranoff and McGuire 2003). Key here is the purpose, but again authors vary citing the creation of public value, problem solving, allocating responsibilities and rewards, or achieving an outcome no partner to the relationship could attain individually. Another accepted approach defines collaboration as a feature of an interorganizational network (Alter and Hage 1993). Authors who adopt this definition usually provide a typology of interorganizational relationships, and one of the types is deemed as collaborative (Cigler 1999; Mandell 2000). Both process and relationship definitions typically list products or outcomes to be expected as a result of collaboration, among these are agreements, rules, and structures. By contrast, Wood and Gray (1991) as well as Linden (2001) portray collaboration as the outcome or result of an interactive process or relationship. They "see" collaboration, not in behavior, but in consequences. Until these differences are reconciled, scholars as well as practitioners will not be in agreement as to what is meant by collaboration. Sowa's (2008) definition of collaboration as both a process and an institutional arrangement illustrates the analytic problems caused by conceptual disagreement.

The differing conceptualizations of collaboration have not prevented researchers from attempting to operationalize the concept. It is common practice to interview or survey managers and staff in agencies and organizations to determine whether they have engaged in collaborative activities (e.g., Vigoda-Gadot

2003; Leach and Sabatier 2005; Fleishman 2009; Graddy and Chen 2009; Thomson, Perry, and Miller 2009). Questions typically probe the respondent's perceptions of the level of collaboration, motivations for it, its success, its benefits and costs. This strategy depends heavily on the respondents' subjective assessments. Other researchers ask respondents to list the agencies and organizations with which they interact, the number and direction of contacts with other organizations, the forms and frequency of activities, and the types of decisions made and policy instruments used (Agranoff and McGuire 2003; Agranoff 2007; McGuire and Silva (2010). By having respondents provide numerical counts of their activities, researchers can create indicators that are behaviorally grounded. A third strategy utilizes comparative case methods to enumerate activities hypothesized to constitute collaboration (Leach and Pelkey 2001; Imperial 2005; Magerum 2007). Analyses of actual collaborations allow analysts to discover which behaviors characterize collaboration, provided cases of failed collaboration are also examined. It is likely that these different strategies for operationalizing collaboration will yield agreement on the attributes of collaboration sooner than will the efforts to conceptualize the term.

Collaboration should not be confused with "cooperation" or "coordination," as often happens. Gray (1989) observes that collaboration is different from cooperation or coordination "because these latter two terms do not capture the dynamic, evolutionary nature of collaboration." O'Leary et al (2009, 5) note "collaboration suggests something less than authoritative coordination and something more than tacit cooperation." Instead of collaboration, many studies of interorganizational activity often label the relationship as one of cooperation or of coordination (e.g., Mulford and Rogers 1982; Chisholm 1989; Mandell 1990; Ring and Van de Ven 1994; Alexander 1995; Perri 6 2004; Herranz 2010). Efforts have been made to sort out the three concepts. An early example is Thomas (1976, 900) who created a matrix based on levels of cooperativeness and assertiveness, in which collaboration was associated with high levels of both behaviors and was distinguished from accommodation, compromise, competition, and avoidance. Cigler (1999; 2010) constructed a continuum of multicommunity collaboration that places competition at one end, moves through communication, cooperation, coordination, to collaboration at the other end of the

continuum. In a similar fashion, Selden, Sowa, and Sandfort (2002) created a continuum of collaborative service arrangements by differentiating among cooperation, coordination, collaboration, and service integration. Distinguishing among these three concepts has been something of a Gordian knot in the study of interorganizational relationships not just for scholars, but also for professionals working in public and nonprofit organizations. The National Training Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence [www.ntcdsv.org] distributes a handout which defines the three terms in as explicit a manner as any scholarly attempt. The inability to disentangle cooperation, coordination, and collaboration stymies the effort to move forward the study of CPM.

Models Of Collaboration

Previously we noted that theoretical advances in different disciplines contributed to CPM's emergence. Over the past two decades, these diverse lines of theory have been converging into a relatively similar set of core components and relationships that compose CPM. Some formulations only model the causes or antecedent conditions necessary for collaboration (Alter and Hage 1993), while others model only the collaboration process (Ring and Van de Ven 1994). Still others link antecedents to process to explain the outcomes of collaboration (Thomson and Perry 2006). More recent models include not just antecedents, process, and outcomes, they also include factors such as institutional design, leadership, number and variety of groups, issues and incentives, structure and governance, and contingencies and constraints (Bryson, Crosby, and Stone 2006; Connelly, Zhang, and Faerman 2008; Ansell and Gash 2008). These additional factors are hypothesized to affect positively or negatively the emergence and success of the collaborative process. One should be aware different authors label the same factor differently; for example, one may refer to antecedent conditions as "starting conditions," while another prefers "initial dispositions." What is important is the similarity of the core components.

Also crucial to advancing our understanding of CPM are the specific elements authors include in each core component. Antecedents encompass "power-resource-knowledge asymmetries, incentives for and constraints on participation, and prehistory of cooperation or conflict (Ansell and Gash 2008); the

general environment as indicated by level of turbulence and competition, the failure of a sector to solve a problem, the presence of conveners and existing networks, and general agreement on the problem (Bryson, Crosby, and Stone 2006); and high levels of interdependence, need for resources and risk sharing, resource scarcity, previous history of efforts to collaborate, complexity of issues, and a situation where each partner possesses resources the other partners need (Thomson and Perry 2006). Leadership as a factor emphasizes the facilitation of the process. Institutional design and structure and governance point to the "basic protocols and ground rules for collaboration" (Ansell and Gash 2008, 555), the degree of "system stability and resource munificence" and the type of governance structure (Bryson, Crosby, and Stone 2006, 49). The number and variety of groups, the degree to which an issue is "wicked" or "tame," and the presence of constraints such as power imbalances and institutional logics all can make collaboration more or less difficult. For some authors, the outcome of collaboration is its continuance or success, while other authors hold that CPM should increase public value, achieve goals not attainable by one agency or organization, and become self-governing.

The heart of any model of collaboration is how the actual process is constructed. Thomson and Perry (2006, 21) articulate a multidimensional model of the collaboration process; the dimensions are governance, administration, organizational autonomy, mutuality, and norms of trust and reciprocity. Bryson, Crosby, and Stone (2006, 46) offer six features of the process: forging initial agreements, building leadership, building legitimacy, building trust, managing conflict, and planning. Ansell and Gash (2008, 550-561) suggest collaboration is an iterative process beginning with face-to-face dialogue, moving to trust-building, commitment to the process, then to shared understandings, and finally to intermediate, or "small win," outcomes which reinforce the virtuous cycle of collaboration.

Of course, empirical research will be necessary to discover which components and which elements of a component contribute positively to CPM. Research is underway, but considerable time will be required before results can be organized into a systematic explanation of collaboration. Space in this essay is limited, but it is useful to mention a few preliminary research findings. Given the contentious debates over

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epistemology in public affairs, an important finding demonstrates "collaboration exists as an independent phenomenon and not just as a subjective interpretation of reality" (Thomson, Perry, and Miller 2009, 47); that is, collaboration is a distinct form of human activity. Much current empirical work concentrates on determining which hypothesized antecedents induce collaboration. Findings suggest collaboration is more likely to occur when: problems are more severe and the capacity of agency and managers is higher (McGuire and Silva 2010); agency and organizational environment is stable (Amirkhanyan 2009: Krueathep et al. 2010); number of partners is smaller and agencies reward individuals for collaborative activity (Daley 2009), and higher level government mandates collaboration (Smith 2009). Research on the collaborative process has also drawn much interest; results show that collaboration is fostered by the use of lateral coordination, increased trust in other parties, and increased identification with other parties (Willem and Buelens 2007); trust in partner and perceived legitimacy of [nonprofit] partner (Van Slyke 2009); and public managers emphasize shared interests and common ground (Fleishman 2009). Some studies examine whether collaboration makes a difference, for example, Lindencrona, Ekblad, and Axelson (2009, 207) found that the use of a steering group within a network led to higher performance and better client outcomes. Similarly, Graddy and Chen (2009) found collaborative structures improved client outcomes.

It should be noted that contradictory findings exist. Daley (2009, 487) reports trust and problem agreement show little relation with partnership activity; McGuire (2009) learned that formal university education has little bearing on collaborative activity; and Smith (2009) discovered county government revenues made no difference for collaboration. Waugh (2009) observed emergency managers "had more difficulty engaging in collaborative behavior with larger events," but Hicklin et al.(2009) found education managers "engaged in higher levels of collaboration when faced with larger organizational shocks" (O'Leary and Bingham 2009, 257). The studies cited are a very small sampling of the empirical work on CPM. What is needed for progress is twofold (1) continued research testing models and (2) meta-analysis to reformulate models based on empirical findings.

Challenges In The Study Of Collaborative Public Management

Because CPM was believed to be a powerful remedy for the ills of "the fragmented and disarticulated state" (Frederickson 1999, 702), it became *the* imperative for contemporary public administration (Kettl 2006). Advocates argued collaborative practices would overcome the pathologies caused by vertically-organized bureaucracies, poorly-fitted jurisdictional boundaries, increasingly complex problems, changes in the nature of public tasks, and lack of citizen input to agency decisions. Equally important, advocates pointed out that public administration had for too long concentrated on conflict situations, while ignoring the cooperation and collaboration that characterized many policy areas (Agranoff 2001). However, this unbridled enthusiasm creates the danger that CPM becomes a "silver bullet" – a panacea applied unthinkingly to societal problems. Research clearly demonstrates efforts to encourage agencies to work together may well provoke conflict rather than cooperation (O'Leary and Bingham 2009, 259-264). Significant barriers to collaboration exist and must be acknowledged in any endeavor to employ CPM (Margerum 2007; Termeer 2009).

Jennings and Krane (1994) described multiple barriers to the multi-agency and multi-level implementation of welfare reform in the United States. Their list included several large categories: organizational, legal/technical, and political. Organizational obstacles are rooted in mission differences, professional orientations, and structures and processes. Laws and regulations associated with a given agency's programs as well as differences in types of technologies used by an agency pose barriers to collaboration. Internal agency politics among units and between management and staff can stymie attempts to work with another agency. Similarly, constituency groups and public officials outside the agency can prevent collaboration. These well-known problems coupled with fiscal issues such as budget cycles, adequacy of funding, and transaction costs can undercut collaboration. Simply put, agency "imperialism," protection of the "status quo," and "turf wars" cannot be eliminated easily. Since collaboration affects the internal operations of agency partners, model construction ought to take advantage of the substantial body of research on the barriers to organizational change and how they can be surmounted.

Current models of collaboration do incorporate some of these barriers. Often, authors pose factors

positively rather than negatively – for example, if the resource imbalance between potential partner organizations is not significant, collaboration is likely to occur. Proposing and testing hypotheses in this fashion, of course, is standard procedure, but inductive research can fall prey to the "too many variables" problem. Leach and Pelkey (2001) reviewed 37 studies of watershed partnerships and discovered the studies contained 210 different variables! Their analysis reduced this number to 4 key factors that collectively accounted for 95% of the total variance in collaboration (382). Closely related is the fundamental challenge of obtaining consensus on the still unfinished task of defining collaboration, and distinguishing it from cooperation and coordination.

Another analytic danger derives from the temptation to study functioning collaborations and associate their characteristics and processes with "successful" collaboration. But this one-sided method neglects cases where agencies failed to work together, and thus researchers omit counterfactual situations. McCaffrey, Faerman, and Hart (1995, 621-622) note "A key task in developing theory is studying how common, important factors play out in different settings...First, *intentionally comparative study would be a valuable way to extend the themes raised in this paper*...Second, *more connections among scholars studying cooperation, collaboration, and participation in their various settings would enhance collective knowledge of participative systems* [italics in original]. The co-authors' work on this paper exemplifies McCaffrey, Faerman, and Hart's prescription for comparative analyses of collaboration.

Comparative Analysis of Collaboration: Two Brief Cases

Pan–Pearl River Delta Region of South China

In the thirty years after the start of the "opening up" policy, thousands of businessmen from Hong Kong and from Macau invested in Guangdong and the surrounding Pan–Pearl River Delta (PPRD), and this investment made Guangdong province an important manufacturing center in China and in the world. These jurisdictions and their neighbors in the region experienced changes in their economic mechanisms which prompted an interest in a regional approach to further development. On July 24, 2003 Zhang Dejiang, secretary of the Guangdong Provincial Committee of the Communist Party (CPC), proposed the adoption

of regional cooperation to advance economic development within the Pearl River region and with neighboring provinces. While some local leaders echoed Dejiang's proposal, other leaders conducted investigations as to the benefits of regional cooperation. The first joint meeting of information officials in the PPRD region met in Guangdong in October 2003 and agreed to regional cooperation in science and technology. A month later negotiations were conducted to promote cross-regional economic cooperation between Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macau. Provincial and municipal leaders agreed to pursue the goal of the PPRD becoming one of the most energetic economic centers in the world in the next 10 to 20 years. The following year on June 3 a PPRD Regional Cooperative Frame Agreement (RCFA) was signed during the first PPRD Regional Cooperation and Development Forum.

The RCFA established a regional framework to strengthen collaboration in basic infrastructure, economic trade, agriculture, culture, education, human resource development, information technology, emergency management, environmental protection and sanitary projects, and tourism. The framework stipulates the parties to the agreement should observe the basic principles of regional cooperation within the national constitution and laws, and encourages voluntary participation, the use of market mechanisms, and an equitable distribution of mutual benefits. The regional governments also established high level collaborative structures such as the Joint Meeting of Governors of the eleven provinces in the region. Administrative offices were created under Development and Reform Commissions of the party provincial governments as well as coordination meetings of secretary-generals from the regional party units to improve inter-sector communication. The result is the largest intergovernmental collaborative public management network in China. It is important to note the RCFA did not come into being without some reconciliation of each partner's economic and political interests; after all, there has been a long history of provincial competition for foreign investment. Also problematic has been the willingness of provinces to lobby the central government for economic and social advantages that come at the expense of neighbors. A critical element to the success of the regional collaboration still absent is a legal framework for intergovernmental relations.

The Platte River Collaborative Watershed Planning Process

The Platte River, beginning on the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains in the States of Colorado and Wyoming, flows through Nebraska where it joins the Missouri River. The Platte is "one of the most heavily developed rivers in the world, with fifteen major dams as well as numerous smaller projects diverting an extraordinary seventy percent of the river's flow" (Echeverria 2001, 562). The river has been engineered to support agriculture, electric power generation, municipalities, industrial facilities, livestock breeding, recreation, wildlife habitats, and flood control, and as a result, "water development on the Platte is continuing to degrade the river's habitat values" (563). Water policy is shaped by national and state government laws, and these are the product of political negotiations among numerous public entities, for-profit enterprises, and nonprofit organizations. These different agencies and organizations all wanted their particular interest served in the future development of the river, and the result has been and continues to be conflict over water allocation and conservation.

One of the most contentious issues involves the reduction of river water diverted to agriculture so that more water can be used to sustain and rebuild critical wildlife habitats. In 1993 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) issued "biological opinions" about how existing industrial and municipal water usage could be modified to reduce impacts on downstream habitats. These opinions affected the permits for projects scheduled to be reviewed under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, and thus each project had to undergo an analysis mandated by the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Immediately intense opposition to the implementation of ESA requirements appeared and resisted any slow down of developmental projects. The U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) found itself trapped between its responsibilities for managing water for economic development and the protection of endangered species. DOI was also trapped between user groups wanting to sustain agriculture and industry versus groups seeking to protect wildlife. DOI managers decided to adopt a collaborative process of negotiation, hoping that by bringing together all of the contending parties an agreement could be forged (569).

In 1994 the Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) and the governors of the three

states signed a memorandum of agreement (MOA) establishing the "Central Platte Basin Endangered Species Recovery Implementation Program." The MOA committed the national and state governments "to attempt to establish a basin-wide program to protect and restore Platte River habitat" (567). Three years later a second "Cooperative Agreement" was signed by DOI and the three governors. This new document restated the previous agreement to attempt to agree! Many of the agricultural and industrial users supported the proposed collaborative process, primarily because they could manipulate the negotiations so as to delay any change in current policy. Environmental groups were displeased about the process, especially since the Program's ten-member Governance Commission was composed of three representatives from each state, three representatives of water users, two from DOI, and only two from environmental organizations in the three states. Established under the 1997 Cooperative Agreement, the Commission set up several subcommittees and technical subgroups, which were managed by an executive director and a small staff who relied on hired consultants for analyses (574). Echeverria (576) noted results have been disappointing and "the parties recently publicly acknowledged their failure to meet the deadline in the Cooperative Agreement for completing development of the program." A decade later the lengthy and unsuccessful efforts at collaboration have left the river in a worse condition as the channel continues to narrow with the consequent destruction of wildlife habitats.

Comparative Analysis

The events associated with these two cases offer confirmation of some factors found in the models of collaboration discussed earlier. The Pan–Pearl River Delta case exhibits the five dimensions of collaboration identified by Thomson and Perry, and provides evidence that several factors included in the Ansell and Gash model contributed to the PPRD's success. For example, facilitative leadership clearly played a pivotal role in the process as did the high level of commitment to a collaborative process, the resources and time available to engage in collaboration, and the shared understanding of what was to be achieved through collaboration. The single apparent negative factor that may have affected the process was the previous history of provincial conflict. But the broad participation of leaders from eleven provinces

created the possibilities for deliberation among the relevant officials.

The Platte River case is almost the opposite of the PPRD case in that most of the factors hypothesized to engender successful collaboration were absent or the negative aspects of the case trumped the positive ones. Instead of facilitative leadership by the national government's DOI, its chief executive chose to delegate decision-making to the three states in the river's basin. That the federal agencies found themselves trying to balance competing claims for water usage meant that there was no single clear goal around which to focus the collaboration. In fact, the process was burdened by multiple and overlapping statutes that imposed confused and contradictory rules on the cooperative program. The parties to the process varied significantly in the degree to which they were included in the formal organization governing the collaboration and in the political resources they possessed. Most importantly, different parties defined the problem differently and sought different outcomes which were perceived by each party as zero-sum. Consequently, little mutuality and trust existed as did any shared ownership of the process. In fact, none of the antecedent conditions listed by Ansell and Gash were present. Similarly, Thomson and Perry's five dimensions of collaborative processes were absent.

Both cases illustrate the importance of the administrative framework within which policy is formulated and implemented. The Chinese central government exercises absolute power over provincial governments, and thus relationships between the central and provincial governments affects the extent and form of interprovincial collaboration. The lack of legal architecture negatively affects the sustainable development of interprovincial collaborative processes. By contrast, the American national government cannot command American state governments, so its ability to coordinate multi-state collaboration depends on its use of fiscal and legal resources. On the other hand, the American constitutional-legal framework allows state governments to work together with or without the national government.

Both cases also illustrate the value of institutional design for collaboration. The CPM models emphasize the necessity of institutional arrangements that facilitate and sustain collaboration. It is no surprise that in both cases the partners to the collaborative effort sought to establish an intergovernmental

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cooperative agreement. A collaborative agreement moves the previous relationships among the partners to a new status where disputes are resolved and conflict managed so that shared governance emerges and joint pursuit of shared goals occurs (Bryson, Crosby, and Stone 2006; Ansell and Gash 2008). Consequently, collaboration can be thought of as a form of institutional innovation.

Some Final Thoughts

The challenge of fostering cooperative behavior among public agencies and jurisdictions as well among public and private entities transcends the reconciliation of preference differences. Efforts to induce organizations to work together must surmount behavioral and institutional barriers. Traditional remedies of coordination and leadership often fail because they are incomplete solutions that remain at the mercy of contending interests (Krane 2007). Current scholarship views CPM as an attractive solution to "turf wars" because it may reduce the costs of conflict in policy making and implementation, improve the technical capacity of administration, and even enhance citizen participation in public activities.

Research and theory-building underway in public administration has developed several empirical models which propose similar elements that contribute to the emergence, maintenance and operation, and effects of CPM. Progress is evident, but there is still much to learn. It is particularly crucial to examine collaborative public management outside the United States and Europe to determine which factors are general and which are context-specific. As theoretical understanding of CPM grows, so will the ability of scholars and practitioners to guide new efforts at interorganizational collaboration. Similarly, as research results in well-confirmed generalizations, prescriptions to reverse conflict situations should become more precise and successful.

Advances in the practice of and the research on CPM will not come easily. The management of interorganizational arrangements requires very different skills and strategies from those associated with the management of conventional hierarchical organizations. Donahue (as quoted by Goldsmith & Eggers 2004, 22) explains that "Governing by network is hard, really hard. There are countless ways it can go wrong." The same can be said about academic research on CPM. But scholars cannot and should not shrink from the

challenge of understanding collaborative public management because it would open the door to a more

systematic approach to deciding when collaborative institutions and processes are the most appropriate

arrangements to achieve public goals.

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