Collaborative Public Administration
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Introduction

This essay provides an overview of what is known about collaborative public management. It draws extensively, though not exclusively, from articles published in Public Administration Review since the journal’s creation in 1940. Two of the authors of this essay first defined collaborative public management as a “concept that describes the process of facilitating and operating in multiorganizational arrangements for solving problems that cannot be achieved, or achieved, or achieved easily, by single organizations” (Agranoff and McGuire 2003). Managing collaborative arrangements involves more than just the requisite “getting together” across multiple organizations; institutions are created and specific actions are taken to solve problems through collaborative mechanisms. As public management has increasingly externalized through grants, contracts, partnerships, regulatory activity, and the like, collaboration among governments and non-governmental organizations has moved to the core of practice.

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The essay is presented in four sections. First, we address the “traditions” of interorganizational relationships. These traditions include vertical intergovernmental relationships, coordination, and local level horizontal relationships. The second section examines the development of the concept of collaborative public management by looking at four basic elements of such management, including organizational interdependence, structural forms, managerial process, and actor roles. The third section addresses what the literature tells us about the practices that work best in collaborative situations. The final section offers concluding comments about the future direction of collaborative public management research.

One must not begin the quest for solving the riddles of collaborative public management without understanding some basics about the American administrative system. A way to start is with Kettl’s (2006) brilliant article on “Managing Boundaries in American Administration.” He underscores the importance of ever changing boundaries related to mission, resources, capacity, responsibility, and accountability, that, when subjected to today’s interorganizational service networks, vastly complicate administration. The U.S. system of federalism and political culture manifest such boundaries, and as such define what organizations are responsible for doing and what powers and functions lay elsewhere. The author argues that “the basic dilemma of American public administration for the 21st century… [is] devising new strategies to bring public administration in sync with the multiorganizational, multisector operating realities of today’s government. It requires a ‘collaborative, network-based approach’” (17). However, these realities conflict with the imperatives of American politics (symbolism, reorganization, restructuring of systems). The “boundaries that served us so well in the past can no longer solve either our administrative or political needs” (17, emphasis added).

**Interorganizational Traditions**

Although the conscious study of collaborative public management is characteristic of recent decades, the practice goes back to the U.S. federal system’s earliest days. In Daniel Elazar’s *The American Partnership* (1962), he found evidence of federal-state cooperation at the management stage in several programs, ranging from informal contacts to formal program agreements. He asserts that, “A substantial share of American government has been the search for such methods to provide for the necessary collaboration among the various units in the system” (305). And the system does engender great need for cooperation for two reasons. First, as Stephen Skowronek’s (1982, 21) study of the emergence of bureaucracy American style indicates, “sovereignty was to be shared between the new central government and the old regional units of government, which retained their revolutionary designation as ‘states,’” ensuring their integrity and legal codes. For most of the nineteenth century, he concludes, the national government was passive and left substantive governing to states and through them loyalties, leading to a “distinctive sense of statelessness in the political culture” (23).
Second, in a United States with subnational governments, as Frank Goodnow (1900) noted early on, administrative officials had inherited from England that allegiance is owed to the law, not the hierarchy represented by the crown and later some distant executive of another organization. “The result was to make impossible any state administrative supervision over the main body of officers entrusted with the execution of the law...control which could be exercised in the interest in producing coordination between the functions of expressing and executing the will of the state had to be found in the power of the legislature to regulate in detail the duties of officers entrusted with the execution of the law” (101). Enforcement was largely by the courts as statutes were interpreted.

Coordinating federal-state, federal-local, and state-local programs has provided a venerable stream of findings on intergovernmental, collaborative program management. One stream that emanates from the federal setup is that of the kind of cooperative federalism Elazar (1962) identified as existing in the 19th century. Similarly, Jane Perry Clark (1938) recognized the federal opportunities for “political and economic” experimentation. Her study included the many modes of intergovernmental administration—informal cooperation, intergovernmental agreements and contracts, exchange of personnel, interdependent legal action, grants-in-aid, and tax policy. Clark described such cooperation as distinctly experimental and routine:

Much of the cooperation between the federal and state governments has been found in the sea of governmental activity without any chart, compass, or guiding star, for cooperation has been unplanned and uncorrelated with other activities of government even in the same field. Nevertheless, a certain number of patterns may be traced in the confusion. Cooperation has frequently been a means of coordinating the use of federal and state resources, of eliminating duplications in activity, of cutting down expenses, of accomplishing work which could not otherwise be carried out, and in the federal system of the United States move more smoothly than would be otherwise possible (7).

Clark’s view of collaborative federalism was highly optimistic regarding officials’ problem-resolution ability.

Closer examination of collaboration arose because of the federal-state grants programs of the Depression era. Although they were supportive of cooperative federalism in principle, studies were not always sanguine about their success. V. O. Key, Jr., (1937) identified a “gap between policy determination and the task of administration” because the expenditure of money and performance of function have been under the supervision of state agencies “operating in a sphere of and tradition of freedom from central control,” (228). Another well-known study by John Gaus and Leon Walcott (1940) of the programs of the U.S. Department of Agriculture examined the role of cooperating governments. The Department of Agriculture recognized the need to have strong functioning units outside of Washington that could participate in federal programs, but questioned the operating capacity of many (particularly small) governments to be cooperative partners. Regulations and administrative supervision as a whole tend to be greatly modified in practice by the ideas and prejudices of local officials. The result of state supervision of local governments is largely determined by a meeting of the minds of state and local officials (Weidner 1944, 233).
Not all collaborative management across levels of government in the first part of the twentieth century was recognized as being problematic. For example, William Anderson (1955) found relatively harmonious relations in the day-to-day administration of federal programs among administrative officials, many of whom were from similar professional backgrounds. “They usually worked together in trying to get changes in standards, rules, budgets and personnel requirements to advance the service” (201). He reported an absence of “crack-down” orders from federal to state agencies; indeed, state and local officials welcomed the presence, advice, and help of federal field officials. Durisch points to many “new federal-local relationships” (1941, 326) due to the Tennessee Valley Authority’s “program integrated on the basis of place or territory.” These authorities included dozens of signed memoranda of understanding, legal contracts, special municipal ordinances, multiple conferences regarding the impact of the influx of construction workers on local services, liaisons with local law enforcement agencies, state-local consultations regarding highway relocations and access roads, land acquisition issues, water supply-sewage disposal—other public facility readjustments, property tax loss adjustments, and several administrative improvements in local governments. These changes emanated from a recognition of the need for sound local governments and the “cooperative nature” of the undertaking, as well as the “grassroots approach to which the Authority is committed” (334).

Such a non-centralized approach was fundamental to the Tennessee Valley Authority managerial experience of David Lilienthal (1939). The essence of coordination in the field involved:

1) The greatest number of decisions by operatives made in the field.
2) The active participation of the effected citizens, working with state and local agencies.
3) Coordination of the work of state and local governments, aiming toward common objectives.

As Waldo (1948, 149) observes, Lilienthal saw this decentralized collaborative strategy as essential for the preservation of democracy in a large bureaucratic state in order to overcome the drawbacks of centralization. A cooperative approach was also observed at the state level. Vieg (1941) analyzed federal, state, local, and private organization cooperation in Iowa's agricultural programs in four areas: research, education, planning, and programming. He suggests that different interests work “physically side by side” forging out “a rational division of labor and clear understanding of authority and responsibility all the way around; there must be close agreement on all questions…” (142).

During World War II, extensive program coordination was required for heavily congested production areas. The President’s Committee for congested areas facilitated all types of public services in these local areas, after consultation with all levels of government and non-governmental officials. The Committee, according to Gill, provided common meeting ground for “across the table discussion of common problems” (1945, 32).

How does one manage through the maze of multiple interacting governments? Noncentralization and a sort
of federal matrix is the established order in the federal system. Daniel Elazar (1984) observes the U.S. noncentralized nature, owing to *de jure* and *de facto* jurisdictional constitutional diffusion and sharing of powers. As a result, units have a propensity to operate independently. “The model for federalism is the matrix, a network of arenas within arenas” (3). These arenas are distinguished by being larger or smaller rather than higher or lower. This phenomenon of achieving federal goals through state and local action involves coordination with both the federal government and state and local governments. Pressman and Wildavsky’s landmark study, *Implementation* (1973), indicated the myriad steps, negotiations, and tradeoffs in a single federal program. “We have learned one important lesson from the [Economic Development Administration] experience in Oakland: implementation should not be divorced from policy” (12-13). Initial design and reaching agreements were easy, but the later so-called “technical questions” did not resolve themselves as the program went along and proved to be “the rocks on which the program eventually foundered” (13).

Mosher (1980) paints a rather complete picture of the extension of the federal government beyond its own operations into how the “the nooks and crannies of our economic, social, cultural and even personal lives seems almost unlimited” (543). He documents that “the problems that the federal government is now called upon to address and try to resolve are more numerous, more complex, more interrelated than ever before in history” (545). Operationally, this means a greater reliance upon indirect administration through third parties; more reliance upon negotiations, collaboration inducements, persuasion, and less on immediate direction and control; and greater concern and involvement on the roles of organizations outside immediate federal government control. He uses a tools (he calls these “devices”) approach to demonstrate the rise of federal external programming through income support, grants, contracts, regulations, tax expenditures, loans and loan guarantees, and quasi-federal agencies. He concludes by stating the importance of top public executives, which includes personnel who are paid by the U.S. government but work for organizations outside of federal control, bringing to their work “an understanding of the relations and interdependence of the public sector and the private, and of one level of government with others, both above and below” (547).

This need to coordinate throughout comes about, Sundquist and Davis explain (1969, 2), because in the U.S. federal system programs are based on “goals or objectives that are established by the national government, through the actions of other governments, state and local, that are legally independent and may be even hostile” (12). Thus, coordination becomes almost “any change in organization, relationships, policies, practices, projects or programs that will resolve whatever conflict or hiatus in the federal-state-local chain of relationships…” (19). It is, he concludes, a matter of mutual adjustment rather than that of central coordination. Similarly, successful federal government supervision of state enforcement activity amounts to the use of communication, financing authority, and organization tools, rather than top-down authority (Crotty 1988). Agranoff
and McGuire (2001a) identified four extant models for facing these multiple transactions and multiple instruments of management:

1) Top-down legally based control and interaction over law.
2) Donor-recipient, that is, interjurisdictional bargaining.
3) Jurisdiction-based strategic adjustments that support various managers’ strategies.
4) Networking for adjustment and joint-action among interdependent governments and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

Although the first two models are long-standing, as demonstrated in the aforementioned studies, and the latter two are emergent, all four reflect the managerial realities of collaborative public management.

Complicating the governmental mix is the movement since the 1960s to engage non-governmental organizations and local off-budget authorities to deal with federal and state programs, which Kettl (1981) identifies as the “Fourth Face of Federalism.” These bring on new ties and the need for coordinative administration and new partnerships with federal, state, and local governments in the pursuit of national policy goals. Lovell’s (1979) study of “Coordinating Federal Grants from Below” depicts effective local government linkages among various federal grants with state grant programs and with local governments’ own programs and private endeavors. Three principal methods were used: orchestration by jurisdiction leaders, self-linking among functional specialists, and meshing by community-based organizations. Agranoff and McGuire’s (2003) study of intergovernmental management revealed a variety of activities that ranged far beyond those of grant-seeking and regulation supervision:

Collaboration is more than seeking and managing grants or complying with regulations. Financial assistance in economic development also includes arranging loans, negotiating interest-rate adjustments, attempting to forge sale-leaseback arrangements, and a host of other financial transactions. It involves seeking relevant operating information, asking about interpretations related to running a program, seeking guidance regarding a proposed course of action on a program, as well as applying for technical assistance. Dealing with intergovernmental regulation does indeed include those activities related to compliance, but not every regulated government complies in every case. Some manage by seeking discretion. They do this by one of several means of “tweaking the system,” learning how to ask for, negotiate, and perhaps bargain for greater measures of discretion. These managers have attempted some basic regulatory or statutory adjustments, sought a policy change, or tried another way to “loosen up” the compliance game. Many local managers are actually out there “working the system” to adapt federal and/or state programs to jurisdictional needs (154).

One mechanism for linking federal and state programs that serve similar clients at the operating level is services integration. Hagebak (1979) describes the problems of non-integrated human services and argues for integration that is accomplished at the local level, is voluntary, and which recognizes the autonomy of each participating agency. In the debate over connecting disparate grant-induced categorical services at the local level, Terrell (1980) found that in six different program areas—welfare, health, mental health, community actions, model cities, and community mental health centers—local agency executives generally supported federal efforts to consolidate programs through block grants, and increased local discretion was supported by revenue sharing as alternatives. Those areas that depended directly on federal programs, for example,
model cities and community mental health, wanted less grant consolidation and more decentralization. Such decentralization, where administration and service delivery were consolidated in Florida, facilitated discretionary action by service workers at the delivery level (Immershein and Polivka 1986). In a systems look at community-based care for the elderly, Myrtle and Wilbur (1994) discuss the elusiveness of comprehensive systems. They argue that unless policy makers and advocates begin to focus on the dynamics of relationships among organizations, interorganizational fields, and service delivery networks, integrating services will remain elusive.

The long-standing and emerging challenges of services integration are delineated by Agranoff (1991), who overviews the historical integration movement in public administration, along with four key dimensions: consolidating departments, improving policy, linking agencies, and adapting direct services. He observed that the “grand designs” around these issues in the 1960s-1980s have given way to more focused, problem-oriented designs, for example in youth employment, welfare-to-work, or adapting disabled persons in their communities. “These challenges require a new form of transorganizational management, that places operational emphasis on where the managerial task bridges the structural components of the single organization authority structure” (540). The federal system and its multiple arrangements have definitely challenged integration management activities at the local level.

Coordinated management across boundaries is, of course, a product of administrative complexity. But such complexity is explained not by commonly assumed public choice, interest group liberalism, or social control theories. To James Q. Wilson (1992), it is a response to the proliferation of interest groups who see that activity is increasingly focused on the executive branch. “They obtain that recognition by seeing to it that agencies are organized in such a way that interest group demands are institutionally preserved” (213). American bureaucracies differ from Western European bureaucracies, which are in greater control; group pressure and court judgments lead to rules and regulations that constrain them and make them work across lines.

Program coordination is one of the cornerstones of classical public management. In Gullick and Urwick’s (1937) classic papers on administration, James Mooney defined coordination as the determining principle of organization. He defines it as “...concerted action, animated by common purpose, responding to recognized signals and utilizing practical skills...both a process and a goal” (93). Cross-program coordination thus occurs both by informal contacts to break “the long time frames for messages to reach counterparts across lines, because they are on the formal record, they preclude exploration of new ideas, and working staff may want to expose their ideas to superiors initially” (Downs 1967, 116). Thus, mechanisms are needed to overcome interbureau communication and operation. Colin Campbell (1988, 63) suggests three remedies to overcome these problems: merging units so similar activities come under unified direction, reliance on collective
cross-department decision bodies, and devising coordinating secretariats. The problem arises because of the “complex and bewildering array of institutions administering an almost bewildering array of programs” (55). Of course, Campbell’s observation relates to a single set of government agencies that may have multiple tiers but are not independent in the sense that U.S. state and local governments are in the federal system.

Interest in administrative cross agency collaboration goes back as far as the 1930s in the public administration texts. Leonard White’s (1939; first edition 1926) introductory text called for co-located administrative districts, whose functions were interrelated and interdependent. “The coordination of districts by joint use of the same district, by building larger units from smaller, by consolidating the number of separate boundary lines, and by relating administrative districts to units of government would tend toward simplicity, the convenience of citizens, and better coordination of different phases of administration itself” (193-94). Administrative procedures regulations also generate collaborative interactions. Charles Hyneman (1950) points out in his *Bureaucracy in a Democracy* that the Administrative Procedures Act of 1946 required that, “Interested parties must be given an opportunity to say what they think about the specific changes which he (executives) proposes, and what they say must be given consideration” (465). This means that the agency head must engage in “coordinating administrative policies” (466).

Coordination between agencies and with the public, however, is not an easy task. Through several editions, Harold Seidman and later with Robert Gilmour (1986), equated the search for coordination as equivalent to the search for the philosopher’s stone. “If we can only find the right formula for coordination, we can reconcile the irreconcilable, harmonize competing and wholly divergent interest, overcome irrationalities in our government structures, and make hard policy choices to which no one will dissent” (219). However, they also caution that because so much criticism and emphasis is put on improvement of coordination we create the false impression that it rarely occurs:

*This is by no means the case. Without informal or so-called lateral coordination, which takes place at almost every stage in the development and execution of national programs and at every level within the federal structure, the government probably would grind to a halt. Skilled bureaucrats develop their own informational networks. Managers who are motivated by a desire to get something done find ways and means of bridging the jurisdictional gaps. Informal coordination is greatly facilitated when people share the same goals, operate from a common set of legal authorities and information assumptions, agree on standards, have compatible professional outlooks, and can help each other. Where these conditions exist, there is no need for the intervention of third parties to secure harmonious action* (225).

Thus, informal and less visible means of collaboration are often overlooked as efficacious.

Informal modes of bridging departmental and jurisdictional gaps have thus been recognized for some time. In a compilation of lectures on British public administration, S. E. Finer (1950) recognized the presence of functionally aligned programs in ministries, interdepartmental committees and conferences, and policy
review committees. The key unifying element in British administrative structure, however, is the habit of mind of civil servants, their tradition of “civility.” The administrative corps is small but is the most homogenous corporation in the Isles. “The long term cumulative effect of informal collaboration—ringing up, chatting at lunch, ‘dropping in to see’—is prodigious. Least visible publicly, it is the most powerful cement in the whole executive structure” (68).

Along a similar line, Herbert Kaufman’s (1967) The Forest Ranger, concludes that while rangers have considerable field discretion, including the propensity to coordinate while out in the field in the woods, they are held together by a common understanding of programs and core values held commonly. Thus, rangers have the flexibility in the field to engage in collaborative management but are effectively “controlled,” that is, core premises are maintained “without extensive use of close supervisory and enforcement procedures…which gives every indication of decentralization…” (23). Holding such common value premises open up the possibility for staff in a hierarchical organization to operate collaboratively in the field.

A series of three articles on coordinating welfare and employment and training programs involving Jennings (1994), Jennings and Krane (1994), and Jennings and Ewalt (1998) looks at the impact of policy goals and design on enhancing linkages. Jennings (1994) examines efforts by the states to engender coordination without concentrated authority and clear lines of command and control. His findings suggest that leadership, acceptance of the legitimacy and worth of multiple programs, and the degree of effort put into coordination are critical. In a study of welfare reform, Jennings and Krane (1994) find that the “Quest for the Philosopher’s Stone” in coordination means to look at how systems were created to link welfare and work. Although several barriers exist, effective managers, expert leadership, and interpersonal contacts, combined with a vision of client service and agreement over the functional division of service responsibility, leads to success coordination. The link between coordination and policy performance is examined in Jennings and Ewalt (1998), using job training placement rates and wages. It is one of the first assessments of coordination employing objective as well as subjective measures of performance. Their evidence indicated that both coordination and administrative consolidation lead to higher levels of performance along these dimensions.

In a profound and early study, Coordination without Hierarchy, Donald Chisholm (1989) asserts that in situations where components of an organizational system are functionally interdependent, the resulting uncertainty creates pressures for coordination. Linkage becomes the alternative to consolidation and integration into a new whole, and as informal adaptations meet that need, “…informal organization permits the continued existence of formally autonomous organizations in the face of mutual interdependence, it can achieve other values, such as reliability, flexibility, and representativeness, that would otherwise be precluded or substantially diminished under formal consolidation” (17-18). Chisholm’s study of coordination in public transit led to the working decentralized system of an independent
organization, the Bay Area Rapid Transit System in Northern California.

Interlocal cooperation or horizontal relations has been part of the collaborative agenda for some years (Martin 1965; Walker 2000), but empirical testing is more recent. Befuddling interlocal cooperation is the growth and proliferation of special units of government, as Stephens and Wikstrom (1998) document. Most important, they find district growth to be in those states where general purpose governments are less centralized in services delivery, which increases the issues of coordination and accountability. Thurmaier and Wood (2002) researched interlocal agreements in one metropolitan area, looking at their value in connecting actors and how they broker through exchange relationships. They find that a culture based in a “norm of reciprocity” predominates an economizing value as the rationale for service-oriented policy connections. But interlocal agreements are not simply managerial concerns; city council also views such agreements as politically important (Zeemering 2008). Collaborative connections increase when managers participate in a regional association or council of governments, and when they are united by common professional norms, but it does not necessarily increase formalized cooperation (LeRoux et al. 2010). Interlocal collaboration, however, can be increased by taking advantage of face-to-face interaction. Examining interlocal cooperative agreements in economic development, Feiock et al. (2009) draw on a theory of “institutional collective action” that focuses on transaction problems, including bargaining, information, agency, enforcement, and division problems.

Predictive evidence to support this model is presented that increase the prospects for cooperation, particularly through informal connections. In a survey of Florida local officials, Caruson and McManus (2006) found such connections to have strengthened the intergovernmental system through mandated interlocal collaboration.

Some research emphasizes the informal aspects of intersectoral relationships, as opposed to the all-too-frequent formal agreements in typical contracting research. For example, Gazley completed an empirical study of government-nonprofit partnerships in Georgia and finds that these more relational forms of relationships are based on trust, shared control, and reputation where “the strength of a handshake is enough and social pressure cements relationships” (149). One of the primary findings is that among the most active intersectoral partnerships reported by public and nonprofit executives in the state of Georgia, only half involve contractual arrangements.

Collaborative horizontal connections can also be formal. Government by contract involves collaboration that is legally bound but remains as an interactive process among parties. This concern is laid out well by Van Slyke (2007), where he contrasts principal agent and stewardship models of contracting. Heyman’s concern with contracting predates the concern for the “hollow state” by more than 30 years (1961). He refers to the large number of federal employees that are becoming “invisible” as a result of the use of contracts, grants, and other “instruments” (59). After looking at
the benefits and problems of contracting, he concludes that the presumed government/non-government dichotomy no longer exists. Providing additional evidence of the prevalence and relevance of contracting, Brown (2008) examined a large scale survey of government-to-government contracting in the low-risk policy area of public works and transportation, and high-risk health and human services. Governments, seeking to deal with the complexity of such services, are more likely to use other governments for high-risk services. Brown et al. (2006) offer operational advice for practitioners of contracting, including important values to maintain, tools-resources-constraints, and service maintenance of markets. They usefully put this framework into action, as they cover “make-or-buy” decisions, contract specifications, and contract management. Public-private competition, what the British call compulsory competitive tendering (CCT), is examined by Martin (1997). He looks at anti-competitive practices, as well as impacts on organization structure, services costs and quality, management and organization, among others, as potential lessons for U.S. governments.

Developing the Concept of Collaborative Public Management

The development of the concept of collaborative public management can be traced back, in general, to the interorganizational traditions elucidated in the previous section. However, the research suggests four elements of the collaborative concept that provide a cause for its inclusion in the field of public management: (1) interdependence, (2) structural types, (3) process, and (4) roles. Each of these is addressed in the following sections.
Organizational Interdependence

In a very basic sense, collaborative public management involves establishing and facilitating interorganizational connections. The need for collaboration emanates from the inability of single organizations to deal with society’s most difficult problems, giving rise to states of interdependence. Parties then explore their concerns through collaboration. In a groundbreaking work on the process, a veritable manual of how to collaborate, Barbara Gray (1989, 5) explains that “Collaboration is a process through which parties who see different aspects of problem can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible.” Beverly Cigler (2001, 78-81) identified nine preconditions for collaboration:

1) Approaching a serious problem.
2) Conditions of fiscal dependence.
3) Availability of external capacity/technical assistance.
4) Internal collaborative skill-building expertise.
5) The existence of locally based policy leaders/entrepreneurs.
6) Engaging in building a political constituency for cooperation.
7) Securing early elected official support.
8) Promotion of the advantages of coordination.
9) Focusing on reachable strategies.

Her empirical research demonstrates how these conditions helped move along multisector cross-community projects in small towns and rural areas. In the era of contracting, government and its interlocutors are highly interactive and interdependent. As Romzek (2006) concludes, public manager intervention is necessary “in contracts involving complex networks of contractors and subcontractors. For their internal workings, people in public agencies tend to operate hierarchically; in building and maintaining relationships with contractors, those people are obliged to work through complex horizontal interdependencies” (167).

Early examinations of interdependence placed the locus for such study in American metropolitan areas. In the middle of the twentieth century, Grant (1954) bemoaned the fact that studies of federal-city relations exist “side by side” with studies that describe the governing of metropolitan areas. He looks at the areas and devices for federal influence upon metropolitan integration, including consultation, federal spending, contracts, and promotion of interstate compacts, among others. This is one of the early attempts at arguing for the theoretical and empirical study of the intersection of vertical and horizontal relationships. There is no mention of collaboration per se, but it emphasizes the coordination of metropolitan aspects of city-federal relationships. Like Grant (1954) before him, Beckman (1966) discusses federal and state actions that can affect metropolitan government. However, he takes a more critical tone toward the fragmentation of local governments in metropolitan areas, citing “uneven allocation of fiscal resources among the local governments in a metropolitan area, disparities in levels of service among central city and suburban jurisdictions, economically inefficient scale of operations, excessive spillover of costs and benefits, and unresolved areawide
problems” (96). His remedy is to look more carefully at how the vertical dimension of intergovernmental relations can strategically meet the needs of metropolitan governance and create “a unity” between federal-state activities and commonly accepted objectives for local government (106).

In “A Lesson in Cooperation,” Berger (1956) describes the multi-jurisdictional Bay Area Salary Survey, which started in 1948 as a means to involve “federal, state, and local agencies in a unified effort toward a common goal”: providing a uniform personnel classification and pay structure for the metropolitan area (188). He notes graphically that an air traveler arriving over San Francisco would not see the “crazy quilt of cities, counties, special districts, with an overlay of federal and state activities covering everything” (187). Berger describes essentially what Frederickson (1999) would much later refer to as “administrative conjunction,” or the fact that the provision of governmental services has little relation to the jurisdictional boundaries in a metropolitan area. Similarly, Beaumont Hagebak (1979), a practitioner with what was then the U.S. Public Health Service, opens his article with a story about how, in the 1970s, the Texas Governor’s Interagency Health and Human Resources Council attempted to cross-index 196 state programs that addressed human services. He notes that “the resulting matrix…revealed an unmanageable 1,100 overlapping areas of joint agency participation in program implementation. At the local level, federal human service funds eventually reach[ed] some 28,000 local units of government and an estimated 140,000 local non-governmental agencies directly involved in service delivery” (575).

Emergency management is one program area where the interdependence of various organizations is par for the course. For example, there are several obstacles to overcome in coordinating medical responses: resistance of physicians, autonomy and turf protection by health care organizations, planning difficulties posed by involving multiple local government jurisdictions, lack of attention to prior planning, and isolation of plans from other community emergency planning efforts (Tierney 1985). Rubin and Barbee’s (1985) look at disaster recovery and hazard mitigation cases found there to be four critical concerns of interconnectedness:

1) Government’s ability to act strategically and technically, coupled with organizational flexibility and adaptiveness.
2) Establishing a community direction with regard to its values and protecting and expanding its economic base.
3) Knowing what tasks to undertake;
4) Understanding and using political support.

Looking at emergency management in the Hurricane Katrina context, Comfort (2007) looks at the process as a complex adaptive system that includes, among other forces, self-organization and mobilization of a collective, community response system that is based on cognition, communication, coordination and control.

Using several case reports from the U.S. Government Accountability Office, O’Toole and Montjoy (1984) found that as interorganizational interdependence in-
creased with regard to the number of units involved in program implementation, chances of success increased, contrary to conventional wisdom. Crossing boundaries in public administration is now prevalent, bringing on a need for “indirect management,” which is based on four major conditions: partial accountability, differing objectives by implementers, program continuity, and exchanges across organizational boundaries. Evaluating and managing programs under such conditions creates an environment in which administrative difficulties abound.

**Collaborative Structures**

How does one organize for collaboration? The structures through which collaborative public management is practiced have evolved over time. Charles R. Wise (1990) argues that interorganizational analysis “can provide a framework for policy makers to understand what they are trying to do and what is and is not possible” (145). He raises four “design” standards to determine what type of organization structure is appropriate in a given situation:

1. Where the existing public organization(s) fits within the interorganizational field.
2. What the policy maker wants the interorganizational field to produce.
3. What configuration of the organization network is most likely to produce the outputs.
4. What configuration of public organizations within the jurisdiction is more likely to facilitate the desired change in the relevant organizational field.

Management is thus both institutional (single organization) and transorganizational (across organizational boundaries). He notes that the interorganizational field of any activity of the public sector consists of a wide variety of different types of organizations, public and private. Wise accurately predicted that “public service configurations” will be more rather than less complex in the future, portending the recent increase in the significance of collaborative public management.

Internal maximum flexibility allows for facilitating work externally. Quinn’s *Beyond Rational Management* (1988) calls for flexible models or the principle of “adhocracy,” where the emphasis is on innovation and creativity. “Here people are not controlled but are inspired” (40). Saint-Onge and Armstrong (2004) similarly define *Conductive Organization*, where each organization is positioned internally to also work across boundaries in order to enhance its internal performance. As such, *ad hoc* structures evolve. Agranoff (2007) found that Quinn’s adhocracies slowly shift into some combination of democratically organized structures that change and adapt with challenges and circumstances that he calls self-managed “collaborarchies,” or counterpart structures that are continuously readjusted to facilitate cross-organization process (123). Thus, in some cases, collaborative public management involves informal linkages and *ad hoc* adjustments to meet some agreed upon need. In other cases, structures emerge out of the deliberative process. For example, Agranoff’s (2007) study of 14 networks found that each evolved toward some form of self-organized, adapted entity that fell somewhere between the nonprofit organization voluntary elected
board and bureaucratic task force or committee. Each had some form of communication system (electronic and face-to-face), internal power structure, along with internal arrangements, for reaching agreements. Drawing on their ongoing experiences in their agencies and in nonprofit organizations, with internal teams, task forces and workgroups, plus models provided by nonprofit organizations with boards and committees, collaborarchies are organized to facilitate the kind of knowledge-based, multi-interest, multidisciplinary problems that are so vexing that they require cross-organization action. Thus, they are non-hierarchically structured.

Short of organized collaborarchies are less formal structures that are often used to promote collaborative public management, namely communities of practice and the epistemic communities that they often lead to. The former are self-organizing systems that share the capacity to create and use knowledge through informal learning and mutual engagement (Wenger, 2000). Most communities are self-organized and bring in new knowledge bearers when needed, from wherever they can be found. Maintenance of communities of practice requires efforts to keep different types of knowledge bearers in, by challenging busy people with solving important public problems, and by calling on their experience and know how in an interdisciplinary manner.

Epistemic community can be facilitated by mobilizing a multiagency group of professionals from different disciplines because they often share common outlooks and similar solution orientations. Hass (1992, 3) suggests that these persons can represent a variety of disciplines and share normative and principled beliefs which provide a value-based rationale for action. They also tend to share causal beliefs, notions of validity, and a common policy enterprise. An epistemic community normally produces consensual knowledge. Even in the face of anomalous data the community may suspend judgment in order to maintain their scientific legitimacy, maintaining for the moment its consensus as a power resource (Haas 1990, 55). Epistemic communities can be important knowledge sustainers, as they can have a disproportionate effect on organized learning and behavior, and even though epistemic community members may not constitute the most powerful agency decision makers, they “are well situated to provide a driving logic for cooperation” (Thomas 2003, 41). Bringing together these communities for enhanced deliberation is among the emergent collaborative tasks of public management. Both communities of practice and epistemic communities in such areas as environmental management, mental disabilities programming, community and economic development, and development in third world countries regularly emerge as structures between more ad hoc commissions and task forces, on the one hand, and on the other hand, more organized situations.

Perhaps the most visible collaborative structure (and the most studied recently) is the network. The development of the collaborative public management concept is based in part on the emergent relevance of public management networks. O'Toole's (1997) now seminal article on networks is viewed as the beginning of
a serious discussion in the U.S. about how to address the increasing importance of public management networks and their management through collaborative means. O'Toole suggests numerous reasons why networks are likely to be more relevant in the future. He then sets out four research agendas for the public management field: the practical agenda, the conceptual and descriptive agenda, the agenda for empirical theory, and the normative agenda. Quoted and cited extensively, the article calls on researchers to study public management networks as a normal and salient part of administrative conduct.

However, usage of the term “network” in the public administration context preceded O'Toole's treatment by several years. Kettl (1981) was among the first scholars to use the term, arguing that there were network-like changes to American federalism brought on by two block grants from the Nixon era: the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) and the Community Development Block Grant [CDBG]. Although there are many implications of these programs for local administration, Kettl's study of Richmond, Virginia, highlights the degree of contracting out of the direct administration of dozens of projects to non-city agencies. He notes that the “complicated administrative networks that manage CETA and [CDBG] have simultaneously streamlined and muddied the problem of accountability” (371, emphasis added). The use of the term networks predates its common usage in the 21st century.

Gage (1984) offers a prescient look at the role of networks in administering federal programs. While presented as a critical analysis of the creation and demise of Federal Regional Councils (FRC), he observes that the positions of actors/organizational units can be represented pictorially as nodes, or “junctions when there are multiple interconnections” (137). He emphasizes the role of politics in networking, and the necessity of formulating strategies, bargaining, and negotiating in administration across governmental levels. His in-depth depictions of national and local FRCs offer some of the first such representations of network structures in the public administration literature.

Rhodes (2003) cautions us that the term network holds different meanings for each respondent who participates in empirical research. So while theorists sort out the meaning of the term, so too do practitioners have various conceptions of a network. Furthermore, not all networks are alike. Agranoff's (2007) typology of networks indicates that some networks have no authority, even to jointly program; they merely exchange information. Other types of networks also undertake education that enhances the ability of the member organizations to implement solutions, again at the individual organization rather than network level. Another network type is involved in problem solving approaches, albeit indirectly, as they blueprint strategies that are used by network members as these members directly approach client agencies. The most extensive type of network is known as an action network. Unlike the other three network types, action networks engage in collective ac-
tion by formally adopting network-level courses of action and often delivering services.

Myrtle and Wilber (1994) offer strategies for improving service coordination by examining interorganizational networks. They argue against vertical integration and “rationalization” of the delivery of services through interorganizational networks, but acknowledge that one plausible solution is the creation of an organizational structure to facilitate cross-network activities. This is consistent with the findings of Provan and Milward’s research on mental health networks (1995) and later work on “hierarchical networks” for emergency management (Moynihan 2008). Interorganizational complexity must be increased and an appropriate strategy would be explore methods for creating collaborative alliances between organizations within these networks (251).

Managerial Processes

The “black box” of collaboration and management is addressed in a great deal of scholarship, emphasizing that the process of management is just as important, if not more so, than the structure. Although framed within the context of managing intergovernmental programs, Agranoff and Lindsay (1983) provide the empirical foundation for the concept of collaborative public management by examining the process of such management. Their study of six intergovernmental bodies showed that the private sector must be considered partners with government agencies, that joint actions by managers—a “mutually carrying out of agreements”—are necessary, and that, fundamentally, intergovernmental administrative activities involve developing solutions to intergovernmental problems “instead of contrived means of cooperation” (236). In a later paper, Agranoff (1991) argues that mere program coordination is no longer the answer for overcoming managerial barriers. Instead, a type of “transorganizational management” is needed that places emphasis on the development and integration of services. He concludes that “a new paradigm must be invoked, where the managerial task bridges the traditional structural components of the single organization authority structure” (540) and involves forging directions by “joint decisionmaking, engaging in goal-directed planning and programming, and in developing operating agreements executed by the mutual actions of disparate parties” (541).

According to Thomson and Perry (2006), the black box of collaboration can be thought of as involving five dimensions: governance, administration, organizational autonomy, mutuality, and norms. The concept of collaboration is defined in terms of formal and informal negotiation, joint creation of rules and structures and relationships, shared norms, and mutually beneficial interactions. The authors discuss the antecedents to these dimensions and show that positive outcomes will result for managers who understand these dimensions and “manage them intentionally” (20). As Thomson and Perry imply, the outcomes of collaborative public management are closely related to process, but the evaluation of interorganizational networks has largely been neglected in the public administration literature. Provan
and Milward (2001) offer three levels of analysis of effectiveness: community level, network level, and organization/participant level. The three-fold analytical dimensions reflect the fact that so many stakeholders lay claim to the outcomes of a network; customers/clients do not make up the totality of the stakeholders. The needs of constituents groups in the public sector are many, and the number of groups is extensive. Furthermore, “network effectiveness of one level does not ensure effectiveness at the other two levels” (421).

Based on the examination of multiple case studies, Eugene Bardach (1998) identifies a set of building blocks in interagency operation that, when combined, build “interagency collaborative capacity.” One pillar of such “craftsmanship” involves creative opportunity, intellectual capital, an implementation network, and supportive advocacy groups. The other platform involves trust, acceptance of leadership, and a communications network. These platforms then combine to lead to improved steering capacity, an operating subsystem and continuous learning (274).

Internal process has similarly been identified by Michael McGuire (2002). He has developed a set of propositions that point to four key dimensions of managing collaboratively: activating, mobilizing, framing, and synthesizing. Activating involves identifying participants for the network and including key stakeholders in the process. The skills, knowledge and resources of these potential participants must be assessed and tapped into. Framing is defined as the behaviors used to arrange and integrate a collaborative structure by facilitating agreement on participants’ roles, operating rules, and network values. It involves facilitating the internal structure and position of the participants, as well as influencing the operating rules and the norms of the collaboration. Collaborative managers also must induce individuals to make and keep a commitment to the network. Mobilizing behaviors are used to develop commitment and support for processes from participants and external stakeholders. The fourth category of collaborative behavior posits that leaders employ synthesizing behaviors intended to create an environment and to enhance the conditions for favorable, productive interactions among participants. Leaders try to create and maintain trust among collaborative participants as a means to build relationships and interactions that result in achieving a purpose. McGuire’s four propositions are based in contingency logic, as a way to test ideas when, why, and how managers undertake these behaviors, as they strategically match behaviors with their governing contexts. Thus, activation, mobilizing, framing, and synthesizing in relation to program objectives, resource allocations, garnering stakeholder support, resource allocation, and system maintenance are important ways to study the manager in collaborative structures such as networks.

Stephen Page (2008) attempts to measure such capacity to collaborate by looking at McGuire’s (2002) four phases. He is concerned with the problems of accounting for the collective action issues of capitalizing work across organizations. The four state human services programs he studied used client “outcomes and indicators to establish standards, rhetoric, incentives and
communication regarding local collaboration” that helped managers build the capacity to manage for results across agencies (158). Page concludes that it is important for collaborating public agencies to provide the resources, guidance, discipline and economies of scale in gathering and analyzing performance data, and of providing cross-site perspectives that worked in practice.

Rethemeyer and Hatmaker (2008) extend the application of these four collaborative management behaviors by showing how public managers must be able to perform these behaviors “across policy, collaborative, and fiscal networks within their home system as well as in adjacent systems” (641). Management is not an explicit function of just one person, and the actors in a specific network may also be actors in other networks simultaneously. Contrary to McGuire (2002), who offers propositions regarding the use of these behaviors by assuming a single manager, the application of such behaviors is more complex. Managers must be “flexible enough to tailor their network management activities” (Rethemeyer and Hatmaker 2008, 641) to the different interests of the manager’s home network and other adjacent network systems.

Project success certainly depends on attention to process during collaboration. Chrislip and Larson (1994) examined 52 collaborative projects with the help of the National Civic League. They explain that managing the process depends on:

1) Good timing and clear need.

2) Strong stakeholder groups.
3) Broad-based involvement.
4) An open and credible process.
5) Commitment of high-level leaders.
6) Political/governmental leadership support.
7) Work at overcoming mistrust and skepticism.
8) Building in small/interim successes.
9) Over time a shift to broader concerns (52-54).

This list from community development collaboration emphasizes the importance of a) leadership and b) carefully orchestrated processes.

Collaboration involves more than reaching agreement; it is also about enhancing trust among stakeholders and generating political and social capital (David Booher 2008, 125). Judith Innes (2004) calls for a process that includes own source ground rules, avoidance of positional bargaining, respectful dialogue, self-organizing, fully shared information, consensus based on when all interests have been explored, explicit and transparent links to implementation, and public and stakeholder review of any draft agreement (20). Similarly, John Forrester (2009) calls for the process to approach the real differences among parties:

Fostering dialogue can promote understanding and mutual recognition between parties, fostering trust and respect, beginning the work of relationship building—even as skeptics may always voice suspicions of this as “just talk.” Moderating debate can sharpen arguments, identify crucial or missing information, and clarify critical differences between parties—even as such sharp argument always risks escalating antagonisms and undermining relationships between the parties. Me-
Collaborative Roles

The roles played by participants in a collaborative endeavor are important to consider. The literature on citizen participation is broad and deep but only some of it actually involves engagement as collaborative processes. One stream is that of coproduction, where citizens are involved in program implementation (Levine and Fisher 1984). In the tradition of Elinor and Vincent Ostrom’s work on service delivery in metropolitan areas, Whitaker (1980) elaborates on the role of citizens in producing—co-producing—and delivering local services to the public. He explains that citizens coproduce public services by requesting assistance from service agents, by cooperating with service providers in carrying out agency programs, and by negotiating with service agents to redirect activities. Promoting participation and related partnerships, along with community building and process orientation to management, are among the changes that have emerged among local managers, as delineated by Nalbandian (1999). In this regard, Kathi and Cooper (2005) develop a model of citizen participation that brings neighborhood councils into partnership with city councils into a collaborative partnership. It is centered on interactive process in building trust and creating mutual understanding and agreement. In terms of city responsiveness to neighborhood organization interaction, five possible determining factors may be at work: organizational culture, organizational leadership, organizational rules and structure, dependence on stakeholder demands, and extent of external control placed on the agency (Bryer and Cooper 2007).
Cooper at al. (2006) emphasize the role of the public in collaborative management processes and advance the argument that “deliberative and collective action strategies of civic engagement hold the promise in achieving a public-involving, citizen-centered collaborative public management” (76). They offer a conceptual model of civic engagement to demonstrate five basic dimensions to civic engagement: who is involved, who initiates the engagement, why citizens are involved, where the engagement takes place, and how citizens are involved. The authors thus make a case that collaborative public management processes and structures must necessarily include citizens in their deliberations. An empirical study of neighborhood councils in Los Angeles (the Collaborative Learning Project) focuses on the responsiveness of government bureaucracy to citizens in the collaborative process (Bryer 2009). Seven propositions for future study derived from three research questions are raised: whether agency officials rely on their expertise for decision making, whether agency official are open to partnerships, and what is the benefits to administrators. The study’s primary finding is that “administrator and citizen perceptions of their own and the other party’s roles may influence the quality of responsive behavior in collaborative activity.”

In a similar vein, Fong (2006) looks at collaborative engagement along three interacting dimensions: who participates, how participants communicate with one another and make decisions together, and how participants are linked with public action. However, one must be aware of the federal regulations that can place barriers before nonprofits working on social action to change program and policy (Berry 2005). A number of citizen-based quasi-legislative and quasi-judicial processes of engagement have been identified, such as deliberative democracy, e-democracy, public conversations, participatory budgeting, citizen juries, study circles, collaborative policy making and alternative dispute resolution (Bingham et al. 2005). These best practices contribute to the processes of collaborative public management.

The importance of learning together in collaborative public management is captured by the work of Koponenjan and Klijn (2004) in their Managing Uncertainties in Networks. Joint action by interaction is seen in part as “searches wherein public and private parties from different organization (levels of) government and networks jointly learn about the nature of the problem, look at the possibility of doing something about it, and look at the characteristics of the strategic and institutional context within which the problem-solving develops” (10). Cooperation, then, presupposes structured learning between actors: “It requires numerous skills, tacit knowledge of the network and negotiation skills since the adopted strategies are implemented in a situation where singular hierarchical relations are lacking. The role of the network manager is one of mediator and stimulator of interaction and not one of central director. This role is not given a priori to one actor. In principle, this role can be fulfilled by several actors, sometimes by even more than one actor at the same time, both public and private” (11). Thus, learning in multi-actor situations is crucial, as diverging and often conflicting perceptions and objections and institutions.
As governments increasingly engage externally with other government entities and with the private sector through vehicles like grants, contracts, loans, and through networks, one must maintain a proper perspective on the role of government *vis-a-vis* nongovernmental entities. Dwight Waldo (1948, 211) reminded public management scholars decades ago that an adequate “theory of organization” must maintain a purposive perspective on how “to solve the problems of human cooperation.” Government agencies maintain their primary authoritative roles, normally including that of participant in collaborating processes and normally the ultimate decision-maker.

Wondolleck and Yaffee (2000) conclude in their study of ecosystem collaboration that the government official must take new and active roles:

> At the same time, government agencies and institutions have a unique role and responsibility in these processes. While they should be capitalizing on opportunities to collaborate, they must recognize that they—and only they—are the final decision makers. Some argue that the role of agency participants in collaborative processes is solely as a facilitator of other participants’ interactions. However, based on our review of successful collaborative processes, it is clear that where a group succeeded and was held in high regard by the broader community, the agency did not step back into a purely facilitative role. Rather, it provided essential leadership that guided the group while simultaneously representing its own interests within the process. It ensured that the side-boards provided by existing law and regulation were in place and understood, and that those individuals present recognized that implementation of decisions could occur only through established administrative processes, including procedures for public review and comment. It took on the responsibility of ensuring the accountability of the process while still promoting collaborative interaction among multiple participants (244).

Despite all of the attention paid to the new collaborative structures like networks, “…each public agency is a bounded jurisdiction: it maintains day-to-day operational control over any potential network moves that involves its programs” (Agranoff 2007, 219). Moreover, Paul Hirst (2000) reminds us that government remains the agent that pulls the various forces together, distributes power and responsibilities, is the focus of political identity, and is the main instrument of political legitimacy.

### Practice of Collaborative Public Management

It has been argued that in order to be relevant, “management research must inform action” (Agranoff and McGuire 2001b, 322). However, while the literature in the area of collaborative public management is quite robust, not all facets of this governance approach are equally well represented in the literature. Importantly, one of the areas for which there is an overall dearth of research and an area that deserves more scholarly attention is that of the provision of practical guidance for public managers who are either currently working in or who are considering working in a collaborative environment. In essence, while the field has spent considerable effort and made great strides in understanding networks on an organizational level, the field has largely ignored the scholarly inquiry of the internal operations of networks (Agranoff 2006). The result is that there is little scholarly insight into how collaborative networks are managed, and thus little normative guidance on how they should be managed. Of the more than one hundred articles dealing with collaborative management that have appeared in *PAR*, only a handful have either
focused specifically upon providing insights for the practitioner or even included implications for practice in the discussion of the articles impact on the field. This is particularly surprising given that PAR’s intended audience includes both practitioners and academics.

That being said, there are a few PAR articles that have included insights for practice. These articles can be categorized as either focusing on managing the internal environment, such as managing the collaborative process, managing the members of the network, etc., or focusing on managing the external environment, such as managing external stakeholders, balancing network demands with those of the home agency, etc. Carey (1968) was one of the first to lay out the process by which collaborative arrangements are, or perhaps should be, undertaken. The findings in his study indicate that the parties engaged in a collaborative enterprise must begin by defining the concept of the venture and establish norms and ground rules for collaborative behavior. In order to help ensure that they are jointly held, the members of the network should negotiate the vision, norms and rules that will guide the collaborative, abide by what was mutually agreed upon (DelGuidice 1970) and agree on mechanisms to self-monitor their adherence to these jointly agreed upon standards of behavior. However, it has been noted that the rules must be sufficiently flexible in order to allow networks to adapt to the complex problems that they were established to address (Weber and Khademian 2008)

Networks must also be able to effectively manage their membership in order for the collaborative effort itself to be effective. Collaborative managers must understand how best to use the resources, skills and efforts of the members of the collaborative, how to link the activities of the various members of the network, and how to create an output that is seen as being of value by stakeholders. Thomson and Perry (2006) point out that collaboration does not imply the absence of an administrative structure. As such, they suggest that it is critical that collaborative partners clearly define member roles and responsibilities. Further, members of the collaborative effort must see the benefits to working with others, that the time spent collaborating is not wasted time, and that the network adds public value that would not be possible had the members acted individually (Agranoff 2006). When this occurs, individual members will be more willing to share a portion of their individual resources (funds, information, etc.) because they see that the result of the use of those resources by the network provides tangible benefits for themselves. In other words, in order for the network to be successful, members must see it as a win-win situation. As the Thomson and Perry (2006) point out, this is unlikely without a feeling of trust and reciprocity within the network.

Leadership is yet another important facet of effective collaboration. Leadership within networks cannot be coercive, since member participation in the network is generally voluntary (Weber and Khademian 2008). Therefore, the decisions and agreements that are reached in a collaborative setting are forged by the con-
sensus of partners and not via a leader-follower exchange (Agranoff 2006). This certainly does not mean that collaborative arrangements are without a leader or leadership. “Authority, or leadership, in networks is often organic and informal in character, meaning that leadership is not granted automatically because of formal titles” or the position a network member has in their own home agency (Weber and Khademian 2008, 342). Instead, leadership in a network is very much tied to the individual network member’s social capital and ability to facilitate the collaborative efforts of the network. In other words, “collaborative efforts are facilitated by personal familiarity and not just institutional contact” (Waugh and Streib 2006, 136-137). Such interpersonal relationships can be fostered by providing great numbers of coordination activities for the network (Jennings 1994).

There is also a great need for the free exchange of information amongst network members as it has also been found to be critically important for highly effective collaborative endeavors (Agranoff 2006). According to Weber and Khademian (2008), sending, receiving, and integration of knowledge is critical to the functioning of a network and to building its collaborative capacity. Such communication amongst members is often best fostered by the leadership (Jennings 1994). The authority of the governmental agency plays a critical role in soliciting, sharing and integrating knowledge among participants in a network.

In addition to the management of the internal environment of the collaborative enterprise, a network must also consider the environment within which it operates (Petak 1985). Particularly, it must pay attention to and exert time, effort, and thought in, managing stakeholders. These external stakeholders not only include the recipients of the services provided by the collaborative, but also include the home agency that the members of the collaborative enterprise represent and that home agency’s external stakeholders. Often, this results in the fact that the collaborative entity operates in a very complex and complicated external environment. Since network members not only are part of the collaborative effort, but are also part of their home agency, they may be placed in a conundrum as they may have to choose between serving their individual agencies’ mission over the mission of the collaborative (Thomson and Perry 2006). While this can be addressed by ensuring open channels of communication and by emphasizing the need for collaboration to address the intractable problems that likely spawned their collaborative effort, reconciling the members’ dual roles continues to be difficult for many collaborative efforts (Thomson and Perry 2006). As such, the participants of the collaborative endeavor must identify the needs and desires of those that the collaborative serves and strive to understand the political environments within which the collaborative operates (Carey 1968).

It has also been noted that, while reliance collaborative arrangements for serving the public good has certainly been increasing, it does not mean that such structures have replaced the traditional, hierarchical organization.
Rather, the majority of a public manager’s time is still spent and work is still most often performed within the hierarchical structure of the manager’s home agency or department (Agranoff 2006). And, the collaborative manager must realize that the collaborative endeavors occur within the context of the authority relationships, accountability mechanisms, and the legal and perceived responsibility that are in place as a result of this external environment (Petak 1985). Given that there is finite time and resources, the individual members of the collaborative must balance the demand of their home agency with the demands of the network as there are costs associated with the collaborative process. Agranoff (2006) identified a number of costs of collaboration, including the opportunity costs to the home agency since the collaborative manager must take time away for the home agency in order to collaborate, the time cost associate with “protracted decision-making process” (62), cost of inaction due to the inability to reach an agreement, and the “gravitation toward consensus-based, risk-aversive decision agendas” (62).

Given these costs, the decision for collaborative managers and those who supervise them is to determine the agency’s interest in the outcomes produced by the network (Campbell and Sacks 1964). Therefore, those within the collaborative must foster the buy-in of key stakeholders, particularly those whose power who will be relied upon to signal support of the collaborative throughout their home agency (Carey 1968). Similarly, Jennings (1994) argues that it is critical that those in leadership roles, particular at the executive level, communicate that coordination is important. While this support may come in the form of the symbolic backing of the collaborative, there are a number of tangible actions that home agency supervisors can take to facilitate the collaborative process. These include the removal of policies, procedures and practices that establish obstacles to collaboration. Hageback (1979) identified a number of barriers to collaborative service delivery, including organization, personal attitude, and vision barriers. Organizational barriers include regulations and laws, funding limitations, differing agency structures, and delivering geographic service areas (576). Barriers of person include evaluations based upon agency effectiveness in delivering its own services and not on the manager’s ability to engage in collaboration. Finally, barriers of vision relate to failure to see the big picture due to “the blinders of current organizational systems and personal attitudes” (577). The removal of these barriers goes both ways. The network must recognize the autonomy of the home agency and its representative to the network and recognize that the collaborative endeavor is often voluntary. As Jennings (1994) noted, the acceptance of the diversity of the member agencies and their goals are very most important factors affecting effective coordination.

Activities that move agencies toward integration include: knowledge base sharing, joint training, integrated board memberships, jointly staffed action groups, engaging in jointly sponsored public awareness activities, joint needs assessment, provide incentives/rewards for joint efforts, establishment of joint outreach sites, joint case management, joint system negotiation (Hagebak 1979) and the utilization of joint funding and program
administration mechanisms (Jennings 1994). Further, individual agencies must ensure that their internal rules and regulations do not confound the collaborative networks ability to function optimally (DelGuidice 1970). However, when home agencies do present barriers to the collaborative manager, he or she needs to have the “energy and commitment to overcome resistance from within their home organizations” (Weber and Khademian 2008, 344).

Effective collaborative managers also recognize that the network’s capacity is contingent upon finding ways to “create and sustain mechanisms for participation for all stakeholders and finding solutions or processes that meet the needs of stakeholders across the board” (Weber and Khademian 2008, 344). In addition to the focus on the stakeholders in the collaborative member’s home organization, the citizenry are also important stakeholders of the network. Networks may in fact work best when citizens are viewed as collaborative partners (Weber and Khademian 2008). Bryer’s (2009) research focused on explaining the responsiveness of the network manager to the citizenry. Findings from this study suggest that a governance approach in which stakeholders are seen as partners and the resulting relationship is expected to be long-term, mutually beneficial, and span problems are more effective than governance structures in which the relationship is based upon a customer or client based approach.

Silvia and McGuire (2010) examined collaborative leadership in networks. Their approach was to compare the leadership behaviors exhibited by public sector leaders in their collaborative networks to the leadership behaviors of those same leaders while leading their home agency. They found that leaders spend more time on people-oriented behaviors, such as motivating personnel, creating trust, treating others as equals, maintaining a close knit group, sharing information freely amongst group members, etc., while leading their network than while leading their agency. Conversely, leaders spent more time focusing on task accomplishment while in the agency context. Finally, they found that behaviors focused on managing the organization environment, such as identifying stakeholders and engendering their support, were important in both contexts. These findings suggest that leadership in networks is different than leadership in the traditional, hierarchical agency. Therefore, public managers who find themselves in collaborative networks must use different leadership approaches and skills to lead their collaborative partners.

There has also been some research connecting leadership behaviors to network effectiveness. Using the activation, framing, mobilization, and synthesizing framework from McGuire (2002), McGuire and Silvia (2009) found that activation behaviors, while very common and presumably important, did not have a significant impact on network effectiveness. It was posited that this may be the case because such behaviors, which are aimed at identifying the resources the network needs, set the groundwork for success, but do not directly lead to effective networks. Time spent engaging in framing behaviors, such as creating member buy-in and establishing roles, rules and norms, were found to take away
from the network’s ability to be effective. Finally, both mobilizing and synthesizing behaviors were found to positively impact network effectiveness. This indicates that leaders of effective networks should focus their energy on developing external stakeholder support and creating an environment in which the network members can effectively operate.

Conclusion

It is not always the case, or perhaps rarely is the case, that collaboration can be practiced so easily. Being faced with incentives to collaborate is not enough to spur successful collaboration (Weber 2009). Research into the operations of the Blackfoot Watershed shows that the transformative character of ideas plays a critical role in facilitating the transition to, as well as the design and acceptance of, the formal collaborative institution. These seven ideas include: a commitment to place, a common vision of place, an equity-based holistic mission, a new framework for property rights, the transformation of interpersonal perspectives, a changing perspective on public problems, and the changed shape of useful knowledge. Indeed, the environment in which public managers operate impacts their entry into collaborative relationships (McGuire and Silvia 2010).

As public managers find themselves in situations in which the problems facing their organization are increasingly severe, they commonly reach out to other entities and agencies. These relationships appear to be an effort put forth by public managers to collaborate with other “actors who possess the resources (including legal authority, funding, organization, expertise, information) that local managers need to achieve their goals” (Agranoff and McGuire 2003, 48). Public management today is characterized by interdependence with, interorganizational coordination through, and leadership by collaboration with these very actors.

However, the relatively recent interest in collaborative public management belies the fact that, as shown in this essay, collaboration has existed in the public sector for many decades. The prevalence of such collaboration may have increased recently and the relevance of collaborative management for achieving public outcomes may be growing as well, but we do not claim to have witnessed a new management paradigm for the 21st century. Research on intergovernmental relations and management offers, and will continue to offer, specific propositions concerning operations across levels of government. Governing by network is presented in many cases as just an extension of decades-old ideas about outsourcing and contracting. And public management has not suddenly and abruptly begun to rewrite the principles that have instead slowly emerged over time. New theoretical developments on collaborative public management will no doubt emerge, but we cannot successfully make the case that the field of public administration still knows so little about collaboration; there is much to gain from an in-depth examination of past collaboration research and practice.

Future research on collaborative public management will no doubt continue to address many of the conceptual issues identified in this essay. There are more ques-
tions than answers, and, as shown, the literature published in *Public Administration Review* and other venues provides many propositions left to be examined empirically. Far from being episodic or occurring in just a few programs, collaboration in public management is as common as managing bureaucracies, and perhaps even more so in such areas as economic and community development, the environment, emergency management, and the entire gamut of social and human services (McGuire 2006). Government bureaucracy is not going away; collaboration still complements rather than supplants single organization management. However, the research reveals that it is common enough to begin extending the knowledge base that can assist practitioners in their efforts to plan and deliver public goods and services.
References


