Dichotomy and Duality
Reconceptualizing the Relationship between Policy and Administration in Council-Manager Cities

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For almost 100 years, those interested in public affairs have grappled with the perplexities of the relationship between policy and administration. Woodrow Wilson's formulation, simplified over time as the dichotomy of policy and administration, defined the terms for discussing the relative roles and proper contributions of elected officials and appointed staff in policy making for half a century.

Since 1945, the model of separate spheres of authority has been attacked, rejected, and seemingly destroyed. The challenge has been three-pronged: conceptual, with redefinition of the key terms accompanying the behavioral movement in political science; empirical, as the evidence mounted of extensive contributions of administrators to policy; and normative, expressed most dramatically in the New Public Administration, which proclaimed that administrators should make policy to promote values rarely advanced by elected officials.

Yet, despite the challenges, the dichotomy model has persisted for two reasons. First, it is partially accurate in describing the relationship between elected officials and administrators. Second, the model provides a normative base, rooted in democratic theory, for assessing the appropriateness of behavior. Alternative formulations either have not provided such prescriptions or contradict democratic theory. It is necessary to recast the policy-administration dichotomy in a form that is normatively and empirically tenable.

The purpose of this chapter is to reconceptualize the relationship between policy and administration in council-manager cities. References will be made to research on other levels of government and other institutional forms in cities, but the primary data source is interviews with elected and administrative officials and citizen leaders in the five cities in North Carolina with population over 100,000—Charlotte, Durham, Greensboro, Raleigh, and Winston-Salem.¹

In the interviews, mayors, councilors, and administrators described their roles in traditional terms which presumed a dichotomy of functions. A majority perceived separation and asserted its value to the operation of the system, yet they frequently referred to instances that deviated from that division, and 41 percent of the respondents indicated that there was some form of "mixture," either staff in policy or councilors in administration.² Several explanations for these findings are possible. Perhaps the majority
ignored the deviations of practice from their preferred conceptual model. Perhaps the theory and meaning of key concepts is so unclear that observers interpret the same phenomenon differently. Finally, perhaps there is separation and mixture at the same time. The discussion that follows suggests that each of these explanations is partially correct, and seeks to develop an alternative model that will clarify the conceptualization of council-manager relationships. The concepts “policy” and “administration” are each broken down into two component functions, and data are presented to show how councilors and managers are both involved in some functions and largely excluded from others. The new model simultaneously accommodates division and sharing of responsibility in the governmental process.

The next two sections of the paper will trace the paths that led to the new model. The first was ultimately a dead end, although much was learned along the way by reviewing the “existing” models in the literature for understanding the relationship of policy and administration. These models have the problems of either poor fit with empirical research or normative blind spots, but each contributed to the new model. The second path was the trail of evidence from the interviews that meandered over the landscape of policy and administration, ignoring any boundary lines. The new model suggests where a boundary can typically and ideally be drawn, and notes some common deviations. The concluding section will consider the implications of the model for administrative ethics, council activities, and future research.

**Review of Other Models**

Discerning the alternative models which guide our thinking about the activity of elected officials and administrators in policy and administration is not easy to do. Among the alternatives to “dichotomy,” the activity of administrators in policy has received much more attention in the literature than that of elected officials in administration, even though both are forms of “mixture.” Further complicating differentiation is the uneven emphasis on prescription and description. Prescriptive formulations stand out with greater clarity as models, because it is neater to specify how things should be than to describe how they are. Finally, only the “dichotomy” model is explicitly developed in the literature. The reader is certainly aware of the excessive license that can be exercised in specifying the implicit.

Putting these difficulties aside, four models have been delineated. To magnify the distinctions, even at the risk of distortion, each model is given a descriptive title and translated into a graphic representation showing how that model divides responsibility for policy and administration between elected officials and administrators.⁴

**Policy-Administration Dichotomy**
The *Policy-Administration Dichotomy Model* represented the mainstream of thought through the 1930s as reflected, for example, by Wilson and Goodnow, and was reinforced by Simon’s value-fact dichotomy in the 1950s and Redford’s concept of “overhead democracy” in the following decade. It continues to dominate thinking, if not practice, about the division of roles in local government with reformed institutions. The major elements of this primarily normative model are emphasis on democratic control of government
and the rule of law. Policy is made by elected officials and implemented by administrators. Under these conditions, administrative discretion is permissible and expected—Doig has noted that Wilson stressed the need for administrators to exercise "great powers"—but cannot extend to the formulation of policy. Insulation of administrative staff from elected officials is important both to eliminate corruption and also to avoid the inefficiency that results when elected officials interfere with the "details of administration." The basis for division of responsibility between elected officials and administrators, illustrated in Figure 1a, is essentially separation.

**Mixture in Policy**
The *Mixture in Policy Model*, which emerged from the post-war behavioral revolution in political science, depends heavily on the redefinition of key terms and the shift in research on policy making that accompanied the transformation of the discipline. One cannot be certain how "The Study of Administration" would have been changed if Wilson had read Easton, Dahl, and Sayre, but certainly it makes a difference to define politics as a distributional process in which administrators, among others, make value choices and allocate resources. With this reconceptualization, the scope of what constituted policy behavior was broadened considerably at the same time that the scale of governmental activity and the size of the bureaucracy were also expanding greatly. This model emphasizes "policy mixture" because insulation of administration is carried over from the "dichotomy" model, but policy is viewed as the mixture of efforts by elected officials and administrators with the latter sometimes dominant. Administrators have extensive opportunity to set policy—initiating proposals, exercising discretion, manipulating expertise, writing budgets, and determining the delivery of services—and through implementation they shape policy formulated by elected officials. Administrators have considerable resources which give them power in dealings with elected officials, and, indeed, it is a common theme that neither the legislature nor executive is capable of controlling the bureaucracy. Thus, there is a complete intermixture of roles in policy but virtual autonomy of administrators within their sphere is presumed, as illustrated in Figure 1b. In contrast to the first model, this one largely ignores normative issues, although, as Schick notes, legislative meddling has been proscribed in the quest for "administrative purity."

**Mixture in Administration**
The *Mixture in Administration Model* is the logical antithesis to the former as another alternative to the "dichotomy" model. It emphasizes activity by legislators in administrative affairs. The relationship is portrayed in Figure 1c, which shows legislative probes into the depths of administration, such as influence over hiring or the award of contracts. The logic of the model, but not the extreme interference, is reflected in the reassertion of legislative prerogatives and increased activity in administration through measures such as oversight and legislative vetoes designed to curb the presumed excesses of an "uncontrolled bureaucracy." Although the model does not address normative issues, it is conceivable that one could make the case for limited, positive involvement by legislators in administration.
In each figure, the heavy line marks the boundary between the spheres of elected and appointed officials. All of the space
- above the line is responsibility of elected officials.
- below the line is responsibility of administrators.
Elected Official-Administrator As Co-Equals
The Elected Official-Administrator As Co-Equals in Policy Model shares many of the characteristics of the “policy mixture” model, but adds a normative dimension. As formulated by the New Public Administration movement, this model asserts the ethical obligation of administrators to promote the values of equity and participation and to oppose actions by elected officials which would be adverse to the interests of the politically powerless. The movement sought to address the deficiencies in the policy process that result from unrepresentative legislative bodies and the uneven level of political organization and participation among citizens by expanding the role of professional administrators. The presumed legitimacy of administrators as political actors was a “radical break” from traditional democratic theory, and thus stands in stark contrast to the dichotomy model with respect to responsibility for policy. Not only is administrative insulation expected, but also administrators are urged to construct mechanisms for policy making and administration which by-pass elected officials and establish direct linkages between governmental staff and the public. The illustration of this model in Figure 1d, therefore, features administrative intrusion in policy but no reciprocal control by elected officials. Although support for this model has waned with the decline in political activism and shrinking budgets, the underlying logic of administrators as the driving force in government persists. Furthermore, the ethical commitment of administrators to protect the public interest even without the prodding of elected officials has endured.

Assessing the Models
The models can be assessed in terms of their consistency with evidence from other studies and their utility in handling normative questions concerning the proper division between elected officials and administrators. The “dichotomy” model, as noted in the introduction, ignores the accumulation of evidence that administrators do make policy and value choices of great consequence. The “mixture in policy” model, however, suggests greater administrative control than is warranted. Ripley and Franklin argue that bureaus are weak in agenda setting: “Very rarely will they join the debate over what the government should or should not address at the broadest level.” Also, legislators maintain much tighter control over some areas of policy than others, and administrative influence over middle range policy decisions concerning budgeting and service delivery may be misinterpreted as broad policy making authority. Kaufman has dismissed the supposed rising power of the uncontrolled bureaucracy as a “raging pandemic,” and controls over bureaucracy by elected officials have recently become more salient, indicating that the degree of administrative autonomy may be overdrawn. Further, this model as well as the dichotomy model ignore that legislators may take part in “administrative” decisions and have a legitimate role to play in examining how policy is translated into programs. The “mixture in administration” model is, of course, contradicted by the high—if somewhat exaggerated—level of administrative insulation from legislative intrusion resulting from institutional changes in American government and the increased power of administrators. The model also fails to specify the proper limits of legislative activity in the administrative sphere. Finally, the “elected official-administrator
coequal" model shares the shortcomings of the "policy mixture" model with respect to empirical fit. It does provide normative guidance to administrators as policy makers, but its prescriptions do violence to democratic theory and the rule of law. Furthermore, it slight the significance and extent of the formal authority of elected officials.

Beyond these empirical and normative problems, we are burdened with such imprecise definitions of the central concepts that distinctions between office and function are difficult to make. One cannot conclude, as Meier does, that the only distinction between "policy" and "administrative" decisions is who makes them. It is essential to the task at hand to discriminate precisely among functions in the governmental process without presuming who discharges them.

The New Model
The first task in elaborating the new model is to consider the nature of policy and administration. They are intertwined yet can also be viewed as linked to more general elements in the governmental process which are distinct. Deciding what to do entails determining mission and detailed policy, on the one hand, and getting the work done involves administration and management, on the other. Whereas the responsibility for the "extreme" functions of mission and management is largely dichotomized, responsibility for policy and administration is shared and the activities themselves are difficult to separate. These concepts will be defined and operationalized for council-manager city governments, illustrated with findings from the study of cities and occasional references to other forms and levels of government.

Mission
Mission refers to the organization's philosophy, its thrust, the broad goals it sets for itself, and the things it chooses not to do. It is the determination of "what government should or should not address at the broadest level" to use Ripley and Franklin's phrase again. In city government, aspects of mission include the scope of services provided, philosophy of taxation and spending, policy orientation, e.g., growth versus amenities, and constitutional issues, such as charter changes, annexation, and relations with other local governments. Mission may be explicit or implicit, resulting from significant decisions or nondecisions.

It is the responsibility of elected officials to determine mission. This is clearly the normative requirement of democratic theory, and, although exceptions are common, practice usually follows theory. City managers, despite their influence over policy, "find themselves," Loveridge observes, "regardless of personal choice, responsive and accountable to major community demands, interests, and values" translated in large part by the city council.20 The manager's recommendations and advice about what a city can do surely influence councilmanic conclusions about what it should do, but in the cities studied, the council still determines the city's basic purposes. Naturally, it is the elected officials who occupy the public and adversarial roles associated with setting mission goals, because, as Lynn observed in national politics, shaping broad policy and the struggle over ends "is played in the open rather than behind the scenes and entails a willing involvement
in controversy and the power to persuade and dramatize." In this arena, professional administrators are uncomfortable and ineffective actors, unless the council has endorsed the initiative under consideration.

This is not to suggest that administrative staff are either absent from or powerless in setting mission. A great deal of the planning and analysis of trends done by staff is directed toward mission questions, if the government maintains a proactive stance and undertakes comprehensive administrative planning. The manager and staff can also exert a negative force to resist change in mission. An extreme form of this influence—the "bureaucratic veto" described by Lupsha—was not observed in the North Carolina cities. Still, in several cities, some respondents noted that the manager's resistance to program expansion into nontraditional human services represented an obstacle that partially prevented council initiatives in these areas. Thus, the manager is not powerless, but mission is largely the sphere of the council.

Policy

Policy refers to middle-range policy decisions, e.g., how to spend government revenues, whether to initiate new programs or create new offices, and how to distribute services at what levels within the existing range of services provided. Interaction is common in policy, as administrators give advice and make recommendations to elected officials. Staff discretion, influence over the budget, and determination of formulas for distributing services are extensive, and councils are sometimes viewed as mere rubber stamps of managerial decisions about initiation or elimination of programs. Examination of each of these manifestations of staff activity in policy making, however, reveals a pattern of sharing: the council is not alone in making policy but neither is the manager uncontrolled.

The extent of managerial discretion was considered to be appropriate—neither too great nor too limited—by most of the respondents in this study. Only 20 percent felt that the manager had too much discretion overall, and only 10 percent felt that the manager acted with too much independence in program creation or elimination. Program change has clear policy implications, and managers do not take liberties in this area by acting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area/Rank*</th>
<th>How Much Involved (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Budget formulation/5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Budget review and approval/1</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Service delivery/6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Hiring or promotion decisions about staff/7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Determining formula for allocating services/4</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Handling complaints from citizens/2</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Handling complaints from employees/8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Developing policies for internal management/3</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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n=58

*Rank is determined by the proportion responding "very much" involved.
without councilmanic direction.

Opinions concerning the extent of council involvement in a variety of areas, including responsibility for shaping service distribution and the budget, are presented in Table 1. Staff influence over setting the formulas for allocating services, i.e., who and what areas of the city get how much of a service, is extensive in the North Carolina cities, just as has been observed in other cities. Only 21 percent of the respondents viewed the council as being very involved in this activity, and slightly more felt that the council was not very involved. The remainder—57 percent—felt the council was involved to some extent. Councilors argued that they had a hand in service allocation in other ways, at the time of program creation or major change, through budget review, or in their follow-up of citizen complaints. Still, answering the essential political question of "who gets what" is largely a staff endeavor within the parameters set by and under the watchful eyes of the council.

Similarly, subject to review and ratification of the council, the budget is set by administrative staff, although the extent of their latitude should not be overstated. Only 14 percent of the respondents felt that the council was very involved and over half said the council was not very involved in budget formulation, i.e., preparing the budget proposal. This is a significant finding, because once the budget is constructed, the extent of change by the council is very small. Almost all of the respondents considered the council to be very involved in budget review and approval. The size and complexity of the document, however, and the pressure of time to approve it gave whoever prepares the budget considerable influence over the conduct of city affairs for at least the upcoming year.

These considerations support the view that budgeting is a staff function but several forms of control exercised by councils make budgeting more a joint enterprise than is often concluded. First, most councils set budget limits, particularly a mandated tax rate, which served as a powerful constraint for administrators in preparing the budget. Second, approval of new or expanded revenue sources had to come from councils, and staff sought guidance from councils early in the budget process about whether such changes would be acceptable. Third, several of the councils set goals for the year in January which provide the framework for staff in preparing the budget document. In addition to specific directions, the shape of the budget is largely determined by prior programs in particular and the city's mission in general.

Thus, the pattern that emerges is a mixture of responsibility for policy usually involving determination of general form or limits by council and the specific content of policy by staff. Conclusions that stress either council or staff dominance or exclusion are not supportable in these cities.

Administration
Administration refers to the specific decisions, regulations, and practices employed to achieve policy objectives. As one would expect, administration is largely the domain of the bureaucracy. There are, however, four aspects of legislative action in administration: specification of techniques to be employed, implementing decisions by legislators, intervention in service delivery, and legislative oversight.

First, much attention is given to the vagueness of some legislation which
leaves administrators free to set policy, but other legislation spells out in
detail how a program is to be implemented. Lynn observes that congressional
committees are sometimes “as much concerned with how their purpose was
to be achieved as with the purpose itself,” and Schick classes the trend toward
lengthier and more detailed laws as one of the manifestations of a “resurgent”
Congress trying to reestablish control over the bureaucracy.24 In the study
cities, similar practices were used to provide more detailed directions to the
city manager about program content and execution, especially over controver-
sial issues or matters of great interest to councilors.

Second, some specific implementing actions are carried to legislative
bodies for final decision, such as application of a zoning ordinance to a
particular case or approval of locations for scattered site housing. Council
members choose to take a hand in others. Planning, zoning, housing, and
development activities commonly involved the council in detailed examination
of particular cases. Further, administrative actions may be “appealed” to
legislative bodies. The congressional veto, which permitted legislators to step
into the administrative process, has been prohibited by the Supreme Court,
but city councils have frequent opportunities to participate in implementation
of programs, particularly through their committees. Although these actions are
carried out by legislators, they are essentially “administrative” in character.

Third, there are a variety of acts of intervention by individual councilors
and the council collectively. Less than 10 percent of the respondents saw the
council as being very involved in service delivery, but over half considered
it to be somewhat involved. The most common example of intervention is
handling citizen complaints. Almost half the respondents felt that councilors
were very involved in complaint handling (the second highest rank among the
eight areas covered), and only 10 percent viewed this as an area in which
there was little councilmanic involvement. Councilmanic intervention was
only rarely considered to be necessary to secure an adequate staff response to
inquiries coming directly from citizens. Still, many councilors felt that their
attention to the matter could make a difference especially by influencing
“close calls” by staff in interpreting rules. Whether their help is needed or not,
however, councilors are increasingly adopting an ombudsman role, acting as
a consumer advocate for constituents to assure fair and sensitive treatment for
citizens in dealings with staff. As one manager put it, councilors feel “a strong
sense of responsibility for services and the way they are delivered.”
Complaint handling was viewed as a way to make administrative behavior
more “responsive” and citizen-oriented.

Fourth, legislators in the oversight function examine the conduct of
programs to determine whether implementation is consistent with policy,
whether programs are being administered appropriately, and what results are
being accomplished. Oversight is typically associated with state legislative or
congressional activity, where the amount and depth of oversight is increas-
ing.25 The councils in the study cities, in contrast to their state and national
counterparts, do not undertake much formal oversight activity. Although
councilors typically indicated that they engaged in oversight through their
other responsibilities, a third of the respondents did not consider oversight to
be adequate. Although one manager replied “Lord yes!” when asked whether
there was sufficient oversight, another indicated that the council could not
fulfill this function because they lacked clear standards to use in measuring program performance.

In sum, although program implementation is largely a staff responsibility, the strong policy implications of administration produce a lively interest and wide ranging involvement by elected officials. In some areas, councilors may be too involved, especially when they make implementing decisions and act as ombudsmen, and in another area, i.e., oversight, not active enough. Nonetheless, involved they are in the administrative sphere.

Management
Finally, management refers to the actions taken to support the policy and administrative functions. It includes controlling and utilizing the human, material, and informational resources of the organization to best advantage. It also encompasses the specific techniques used in generating services. Management is largely devoid of policy, even though management systems are not neutral in their effect on internal distribution of resources in the organization. Management is the province of the manager. The council is, however, involved in this sphere to some extent. It ratifies some management changes and occasionally initiates others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Illustrative Tasks For Council</th>
<th>Dimensions of Governmental Process</th>
<th>Illustrative Tasks For Administrators</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Determine “purpose,” scope of services, tax level, constitutional issues.</td>
<td>Mission</td>
<td>Advise (what city “can” do may influence what it “should” do) analyze conditions and trends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass ordinances, approve new projects and programs, ratify budget.</td>
<td>Policy</td>
<td>Make recommendations on all decisions, formulate budget, determine service distribution formulae.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make implementing decisions, e.g., site selection, handle complaints, oversee administration.</td>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>Establish practices and procedures and make decisions for implementing policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggest management changes to manager, review organizational performance in manager’s appraisal.</td>
<td>Management</td>
<td>Control the human, material and informational resources of organization to support policy and administrative functions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The curved line suggests the division between the Council’s and the Manager’s spheres of activity, with the Council to the left and the manager to the right of the line.

The division presented is intended to roughly approximate a “proper” degree of separation and sharing.
Rarely does the council interfere with details of management, in contrast to their interest in the details of administration. Whereas who gets services is a legitimate question for councilors to ask, who gets a job or a contract is not. Almost all agreed that the council keeps out of staff hiring or promotion decisions, and 63 percent indicated little involvement in handling employee complaints. Typically, this activity was limited to passing employee concerns to the manager without taking sides. Staff respondents indicated that councilors also stayed out of purchasing and contract procedures, and when required by state statute to approve large purchases, tended to follow staff recommendations.

The council is quite interested, however, in questions of management “policy” and in the performance of the manager and the organization. Over a third of the respondents indicated that the council was very involved in developing policies for internal management, such as affirmative action and salary programs, and three quarters felt that the council was at least somewhat involved. Thus, management policy was the third highest ranking area of council involvement. Councils were also quite active in initiating study or prompting the manager to make changes in management areas, such as merit pay plans, staff reorganizations, grievance procedures, zero base budgeting, and minority hiring and purchasing procedures in city contracts. The council respects managerial prerogatives, and they rely on the manager’s proposal as the basis for action, tending to withhold approval and seek revisions rather than substitute their own version if the manager’s proposal is not acceptable. Although they do it, councilors are hesitant to enter the area of management. Making suggestions is common, but some councilors view the need to propose management changes as an indication that the manager is not doing his job and is failing to innovate. The council is most comfortable acting on its interest in management style, organizational structure, and operations in its appraisal of the manager’s performance, usually in closed sessions held annually.

With some variations, all the study cities have strong management and smoothly functioning, efficient operations. For the most part, the boundary between elected officials and administrators in handling management is clear. Councils do act in the management area in the ways described. There could be wider recognition, however, that the city council can play a legitimate role in reviewing management, supporting improvements, making suggestions, and acknowledging organizational accomplishment, while still leaving the manager free to manage.

The Model
Mission, policy, administration, and management are the four functions of the governmental process. Although each blends into the other to form a continuum from “pure” policy to “pure” management, each function has been distinguished conceptually. The division of responsibility between elected and administrative officials can be represented graphically by marking a line through a diagram similar to those used earlier but with the addition of zones for mission and management. The patterns observed in the study cities are summarized in Figure 2. The legislative body dominates mission formulation although the manager plays an advisory role in developing
proposals and analyzing conditions and trends. In policy, the manager has a slightly larger space than the council because of the large amount of policy advice and policy setting by administrators, but the larger "quantity" of managerial policy making does not alter the council's ultimate responsibility for all policy. Staff has the much larger role in administration, although the council makes a substantial contribution to this sphere. Management is the sphere of the manager with council contributions limited to suggestions and assessment through appraisal of the manager. Thus, conceptually and in these cities empirically, there is a dichotomy of mission and management, but policy and administration are intermixed to the extent they are a duality, distinct but inseparable aspects of developing and delivering government programs.

The diagram suggests the "average" division among the five cities, which can be regarded as "typical," and, for reasons to be discussed below, represents a hypothetically "ideal" division of authority. The size of the spheres is not based on absolute values at this stage in the development of the model, but rather is intended to be suggestive of tendencies in council-manager relations. One can make relative distinctions and compare different jurisdictions or note shifts of responsibility in a single city over time.

The variations among the five study cities are marked, although the differences fall within a narrow range that does not fundamentally shift authority for any function. Four patterns can be abstracted from the research. The "Strong Manager" pattern is suggested by Figure 3a, in which the boundary line is shifted to the left, and the manager's space for action is larger in all functions. The council becomes a "board of directors" which relies on the manager's advice concerning mission and grants him extensive discretion in all other areas. The opposite is the "Council Dominant" pattern in Figure 3b, in which the line is shifted to the right. The "Council Incursion" pattern, illustrated in Figure 3c, results from a council that probes more deeply in all areas than in the typical model, yet is not consistently assertive in all areas. The incursive council makes administrators wary of offering any proposals concerning mission and is unpredictable in its reactions to policy recommendations from staff. It accepts many recommendations but in some cases undercuts extensive staff preparations and seizes off to make its own policy decision. The council probes persistently but somewhat haphazardly into administrative matters, and dabbles in management. Thus, the boundary line is "ragged" in this situation. The "Council-Manager Standoff" pattern, illustrated in Figure 3d, is produced by a strong manager and assertive council who check and contain each other with neither the council establishing clear control nor the manager securing the discretion he feels he deserves. The manager may play a larger role in mission—particularly in a veto capacity—and in policy where his recommendations are presented in such a way that the council has difficulty not accepting them, even though they feel uncomfortable doing so. The council, on the other hand, imposes administrative constraints on the manager in order to gain some control and probes into management.

These alternative patterns illustrate the variability of relationships, and the usefulness of the model in charting them. A task for future research is to devise measures that will delineate more precisely the division of responsibility in each function for council-manager and other forms of government.
Figure 3
Deviations from Typical Division

3a. Strong Manager
Council's Sphere

Mission
Policy
Administration
Management
Manager's Sphere

3b. Council Dominant
Council's Sphere

Mission
Policy
Administration
Management
Manager's Sphere

3c. Council Incursion
Council's Sphere

Mission
Policy
Administration
Management
Manager's Sphere

3d. Council-Manager
Standoff
Council's Sphere

Mission
Policy
Administration
Management
Manager's Sphere
Conclusion: Implications of the Model

The dichotomy-duality model in which there is a separation of responsibility for mission and management, with sharing of policy and administration, has implications for administrative ethics, council roles, and future research. Each will be briefly explored.

Administrative Ethics

The ethical precepts suggested by the model could be called the Neo-Traditional Public Administration, because they combine elements of the long-standing as well as the new emphases in the field. Administrators should recognize the authority of elected officials to determine mission and are obligated to advance the mission of the organization through actions taken in policy, administration, and management. Within the framework of controls provided by mission goals, the manager should exercise discretion and can do so without becoming an autonomous actor. The manager seeks to promote openness and fairness and assures that existing services are allocated equitably. The manager should administer programs in a way that is consistent with mission and policy, seeking to prevent administrative actions which subvert policy intent, and should provide sufficient information on performance to permit the council to assess the administration of policies and programs. Finally, the manager is committed to efficiency and improved productivity, and, as essential conditions for effective administration and efficient management, asserts the right to control the internal management of the organization and to resist interference from outside. These guidelines at once set high standards for managerial attainment, promote the integrity and discretion of the manager, and safeguard democratic principles. This is an advance over the dichotomy model which prescribed behavior for a pure but powerless manager, on the one hand, or the mixture in policy and coequal models which gave manager license to be powerful but at the cost of political purity and democratic control.

Council Roles

Second, councils should define their purpose and spend their time somewhat differently than they typically do. Council members feel overworked yet unable to fulfill all their responsibilities. The model suggests that they should do more of some things and less of others. In the former category is attention to mission and broad policy and to oversight to insure that the goals of the organization are being advanced, both citywide and in particular neighborhoods. They should add to their strong interest in holding down tax rates a broader concern for the quality of management and look to the manager for ways to enhance efficient and effective organizational performance. Their burden is lightened by recognizing and encouraging full managerial participation in policy making and extensive discretion in decision making and implementation. On the other hand, they should do less detailed policy making, discourage the referral of implementing decisions and administrative appeals to the council, avoid picking over isolated details of administrative performance, and dispense with unnecessary errand running for constituents, while promoting a high level of staff accessibility and responsiveness to citizen inquiries and complaints. By shifting allocation of time and attention
in these ways, councilors can free time for the more substantial tasks without worrying that the bureaucracy is being let off the leash.

**Future Research**

Third, research should be directed into a number of areas highlighted by the model. The content of mission, how it is developed and changed, and the relationship between general goals and specific policy should be examined more fully. The forms and impact of administrative involvement by councils through specification of methods, implementing decisions, complaint handling, and oversight require much more attention. Between council and manager, the role of the mayor is largely unknown, and the distinct contributions of this official to each of the functions deserves more study.²⁰

Further, patterns of interaction among official actors should be reexamined. The model indicates that conflict is not inevitably the underlying condition of city government. Although the view is widespread that contentious promotion of self-interest by all participants dominates the urban political process,²⁰ it is possible for officials to interact positively within a framework that balances discretion and control for both councilor and administrator. When the ideal division of responsibility is found, the situation more closely approximates a cooperative model of urban governance than the conflict model which has dominated the conceptualization of city politics. It is possible for city governments to develop policies that anticipate problems instead of merely generating “political resultants” in reaction to crisis. Administration and management can make the policy making process “work” in the sense that the political will of elected officials is faithfully translated into programs and services that are provided equitably and efficiently to citizens. Thus, the “manageable” city is as much a possibility in theory and practice as the “ungovernable” city, and we should carefully examine the conditions associated with each.

**Conclusion**

There is not a complete separation of policy and administration as the discredited but tenaciously surviving traditional model had held. Nor is there a complete intermingling of the two which precludes the division of responsibilities between elected officials and administrative staff and obviates the possibility of maintaining democratic control over the governmental process. There is a clear division between the formulation of mission and broad policy for the organization by elected officials, which creates a framework of goals within which all other activities take place, and the management of the organization by administrative staff. The manager must be free to create and maintain a system of rational management practices that direct staff and resources toward the accomplishment of the city’s goals to insure both efficient and effective operation. Between mission and management, detailed policy making must be a joint concern and councilors should recognize and encourage the full contribution of staff to policy making. The execution of policies requires the experience and expertise of administrative staff and should be primarily their concern, but councilors must direct attention to the way policies are being translated into action through general oversight. The dichotomy of mission and management with shared responsi-
bility for policy and administration provides, therefore, not only for the
division of responsibility that makes best use of the distinctive talents and
resources of councilors and administrators but also insures that the conditions
for democratic government are preserved.

Notes

1. In each of the cities, interviews were conducted with the mayor and a sample of councilors chosen
to balance at-large and district members and socio-economic and racial characteristics of constituents;
the manager and assistant manager for operations, and the directors of budgeting and plannings; and
leaders who would have an opportunity to observe council-manager relations—the presidents of the
League of Women Voters and the NAACP, the staff director of the Chamber of Commerce, and the
local government reporter from the major daily newspaper. The total number of respondents was 65.

2. Respondents were asked, "Considering experience in [city], would you say that the council is
responsible for policy and the manager is responsible for administration, or is there some mixture of
responsibility?"

3. The boundary between spheres in the alternatives to the dichotomy model is indicated with a curving
line intended to suggest a pattern of division in the absence of more precise measurements.

M. Shafritz and Albert C. Hyde, Eds., *Classics of Public Administration* (Oak Park, Ill.: Moore Publishing
Co., 1978), pp. 3-17; Frank J. Goodnow, *Politics and Administration* (New York: MacMillan, 1900);
the work of scholars before 1950.

5. Jameson W. Doig, "If I See a Murderous Fellow Sharpening a Knife Cleverly..." The Wilsonian

of Public Administration," *Public Administration Review*, 7 (1947), pp. 1-11; Wallace S. Sayre, "Premises of

7. For examples of administrative influence through budgeting, service delivery, and professional
expertise in local government, see John P. Crescine, *Governmental Problem-Solving* (Chicago: Rand
McNally, 1969); Kenneth P. Mladenka, "The Urban Bureaucracy and the Chicago Political Machine: Who
991-998; Robert S. Lineberry, *Equality and Urban Policy* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1977); and

8. For a review of the literature of bureaucratic control, see Kenneth J. Meier, *Politics and the Bureaucracy*

p. 517.


11. Frank Marini, Ed., *Toward a New Public Administration: The Minnewbrook Perspective* (New York:
Chandler Publishing Co., 1971); H. George Frederickson, *New Public Administration* (University, Alap.*
University of Alabama Press, 1980).


13. B. Guy Peters has attempted to determine whether "the bureaucracy was capable of providing a viable
government—meaning both policy direction and routine management—for a society" in "The Problem of

14. Rayburn Barton, "Roles Advocated for Administrators by the New Public Administration," *Southern
Affairs and Administration in its guidelines for masters programs and the American Society for Public
Administration have shown strong interest in elevating professional ethics.

16. Meier, Ch. 4.


18. Meier, p. 49.


21. Lynn, p. 147.


24. Lynn, p. 18; Schick, pp. 525-526.


27. The model should be applicable to mayor-council systems as well. Political executives would play a much larger role in the formulation of mission and policy, and would be extensively involved in administration and management, although in the latter two areas, the boundaries between the executive and administrative staff are difficult to establish. A second boundary line could be added to mark off the sphere of the mayor, who would take responsibility from both councilors and staff. As a consequence, the scope of responsibility for legislators would be substantially smaller than in the council-manager form.

