From Galaxies to Universe: A Cross-Disciplinary Review and Analysis of Public Values Publications From 1969 to 2012

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Abstract

The study of public values (PVs) is generating growing interest in public administration and public management, yet many challenges and unanswered questions remain. For the study of PVs to progress, we need to go beyond the traditional boundaries of public administration and management, to explore how and why scholars in different disciplines use the concept, and how and where approaches to the concept differ and overlap. This article represents the first step in that effort. Specifically, the article uses a meta-analysis of 397 PVs publications from across 18 disciplines to generate a preliminary map of the PVs research terrain. Our findings show an increasing number of PVs publications over the decades, but with particular growth since 2000. Moreover, although PVs research is flourishing in public administration, it appears to be subsiding in other disciplines. Implications of these and other findings are discussed.

Keywords

public values, meta-analysis, values universe

Introduction

The study of public values (PVs) is generating growing interest in public administration and management. The popularity of the topic is evidenced by the vast and rapidly increasing number of scholarly publications with PVs as the central focus. Similarly, the theme of PVs is appearing more frequently at academic conferences. For example, the Public Values Consortium, founded in 2008, hosted its third biennial workshop in 2012, bringing together a group of public administration scholars from around the world. PVs panels are also appearing on the agendas of prominent conferences, such as the Public Management Research Conference in 2011 and the International Research Society for Public Management 2012, where the two PVs tracks had among the most paper submissions and drew large audiences.

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Despite the popularity of PVs research, however, studies that have PVs as a central concept often examine very different phenomena. There is little (perhaps no) agreement about how PVs should be defined, which values are "public" and why, and how PVs should be classified and measured. Thus, both the types and the number of PVs mentioned in the literature vary widely. For example, Beck Jørgensen and Bozeman's (2007) widely cited content analysis of the public administration literature identifies 72 fundamental PVs, whereas another content analysis identifies 538 different PVs (Van der Wal, Huberts, van den Heuvel, & Kolthoff, 2006). Moreover, scholars embark on their research from many diverse conceptual and theoretical starting points, and there is no agreement about how the many perspectives, approaches, and angles to the study of PVs should be weighted, reconciled, and integrated (cf. Rutgers, 2008). In part, this is due to the inherent breadth of "PVs" and its contents (i.e., the particular values contained in the concept), as well as the many and varied interpretations and uses of both parts of the concept— "public" and "values" (cf. Beck Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007; Bozeman, 2007). This conceptual and theoretical diversity has certainly created a rich and robust body of literature; however, it has also limited our ability to generate clarity and concilliance, and led to what some have described as a "dialogue of the deaf" among scholars. In short, and to quote Gallie's (1955) famous phrase, PVs are essentially "contested concepts," and like all concepts, they "are not waiting for us ready-made, like heavenly bodies. There is no heaven for concepts. They must be invented, fabricated, or rather created and would be nothing without their creator's signature" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, p. 5).

Nevertheless, many scholars seem to agree that "if researchers can advance, even incrementally, the study of PVs beyond its current ambiguous and unbounded status, then those advances could serve many different theory developments and even practical purposes" (Beck Jørgensen & Bozeman 2007, p. 355). In the pursuit of greater clarity and to address these and other challenges, some scholars have attempted to clarify and classify PVs using a number of different criteria (e.g., Kernaghan, 2003; Rutgers, 2008; Steenhuisen, Dicke, & de Bruijn, 2009; Van der Wal & Huberts, 2008; Van Wart, 1998). Others have even claimed to lay out the universe of PVs (e.g., Beck Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007). However, the existing literature reviews, classification systems, and conceptual maps are based on rather narrow assessments of the topic; thus, it is perhaps more accurate to say that scholars have touched upon various *galaxies* of PVs rather than the entire *universe*.

For example, Beck Jørgensen and Bozeman's (2007) construction of the "public values universe" contains 72 PVs classified among seven "constellations" based on the aspects of public administration the value affects.[1] However, their study relies on a relatively narrow review of the literature, using only articles in the United States, United Kingdom, and Scandinavian public administration journals from 1990 to 2003. Moreover, they simply inventory the *specific* values considered to be PVs in these articles, and then inductively devise and name the different constellations of heavenly bodies to which these specific PVs belong. Their study does not look at the meaning and usage of the concept in the studies they inventory. The authors explain that taking PVs out of context allows for easier contemplation: "values are set free from partial understandings and from deadlocked, polarized debate, making it possible to construct new perceptions and judgments" (Beck Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007, pp. 357-358). However, they also acknowledge a disadvantage in doing so, namely that values are "robbed of their specific meaning" and "historical background is lost" (2007, p. 257).

We argue that for the study of PVs to progress, we need to go beyond the traditional boundaries of public administration and management. This is important because we need to understand how and why scholars in different disciplines use the concept, and how and where approaches differ and overlap. In short, and keeping with the "heavenly metaphor," we need a "Public Values String Theory" that accounts for and can be used to compare, contrast, and integrate different

theories, approaches, and streams of knowledge from across disciplines—we need to move from galaxies to the universe of PVs. This article represents the first step in that effort.

Specifically, through a meta-analysis of the PVs literature, this article addresses basic questions that have not yet been asked, let alone answered. For example, is the concept of PVs a primary focus in research, or is it simply mentioned in relation to other topics and issues? What kinds of publications—journal articles, books, book chapters, and so forth—exist? Are these publications empirical, normative, or theoretical in nature? In what year did the concept of PVs first appear in scholarly literature? How was it used, and in which disciplinary context? What academic fields and disciplines explore the PVs? What has been the interest in PVs research over time—is it in fact a flourishing industry or rather a sunset subject? Do scholars tend to use self-created definitions of PVs or do they rely on others' definitions?

To answer these questions, we conducted an extensive and rigorous search of the scholarly literature, identifying 397 academic publications that focus on or mention PVs. We then coded these publications and conducted a meta-analysis. This meta-analysis will not only advance and broaden the field of PVs studies, but may also help position public administration scholars to interact more meaningfully with scholars in law, economics, political science, business, and other disciplines. As Perry and Kraemer (1986, pp. 223-224) note: "An ancillary benefit of greater use of meta-analysis is that it can also be valuable for integrating results across different academic fields, which is a particularly important objective for an interdisciplinary enterprise such as public administration."

We begin by discussing our methods for conducting the literature search, constructing our database, and coding the publications. We then present our findings, concentrating on general descriptions of the publications in the database. We conclude with a discussion and present our research agenda for the future.

Method

Our first task was to generate a comprehensive, multidisciplinary list of publications that address PVs. We began by conducting a broad web search using Google Scholar, which scans content in peer-reviewed and open access journals, books, dissertations, preprint repositories, academic society papers, technical reports, and other materials. We used the keywords "public values"[2] in conjunction (i.e., we put the term in quotation marks to find materials where the two words were used concurrently), included citations (i.e., not only materials with links), and limited the dates from 1945 to 2012. This initial search led to 320 publications.

Although Google Scholar ranks documents based on citations, hits are not listed hierarchically, that is, with the most frequently cited documents appearing first. Rather, "Google Scholar aims to rank documents the way researchers do, weighing the full text of each document, where it was published, who it was written by, as well as how often and how recently it has been cited in other scholarly literature" (see: http://scholar.google.nl/intl/en/scholar/about.html). As Burright (2006) states, however:

> Its lack of authority control for basic data elements such as author names and publication titles greatly limits its ability to sustain a serious scientific and technical research audience as an exclusive source of literature. Its speedy search engine and voluminous output are tradeoffs that a researcher must consider weighing against accuracy and thoroughness in a literature search.

For this reason, we executed additional searches using the ISI Web of Knowledge (with "public values" in the topic category), and ProQuest (with "public values" in the abstract category). The initial Google Scholar database was then cross-referenced and missing publications were entered. Together, these three search engines identified 379 scholarly publications.

Next, we sent the list of publications to the listserv of the PVs Consortium, a research network with about 50 scholars (see www.publicvalues.blogspot.com; www.publicvaluesconference. weebly.com). We asked the network members to review the list and inform us of any missing publications. About a dozen colleagues responded, suggesting numerous additional publications for the database, including pieces that were forthcoming and/or accepted for publication in academic journals.

We then closely reviewed the complete list of publications, deleting teaching materials, op-ed pieces, and other nonacademic work, as well as publications where PVs was not mentioned in the main text. This left us with a list of 397 academic publications, including journal articles, books, book chapters, conference papers, and the occasional book review or editorial introduction. We were able to download or obtain from libraries all but 14 publications.

All publications were entered into an excel database, with individual fields for authors, title, publication year, abstract or summary, and other relevant publication data. We then began the process of coding for 12 different categories, including:

1. Document type (e.g., journal article, book, book chapter, etc.)
2. Literature type (e.g., empirical research, normative applications, theoretical development/debate, etc.)
3. PVs focus or mention
4. Academic discipline/field
5. Topic area (i.e., the specific topic(s) addressed in the study)
6. Distinction between public value and public values (yes/no)
7. Explicit definition of PVs (yes/no)
8. External definition (i.e., does definition cite other research?)
9. Self-definition (i.e., is definition created by the author(s) of the publication?)
10. Context in which PVs is used
11. Conceptualization of PVs
12. Number of Google Scholar citations

The coding for these categories is described when necessary in the relevant results section.[3] To enhance intercoder reliability (Lombard, Snyder-Duch, & Bracken, 2006) we used a cross-coding exercise for all publications where there was concern about coding in any of the categories. Specifically, each member of the research team autonomously coded the publication category according to her/his perception of best fit. We then compared our coding decisions. In most cases, there was agreement on the coding. Where there was disagreement, we discussed the issue and came to a consensus decision. Finally, we began the process of analysis, with the goal of illustrating the breadth of PVs research and providing some initial descriptions of the literature.

Results

Document Type and PVs Focus or Mention

Of the 397 publications, the overwhelming majority (322 or just over 81%) are journal articles. Together, books (27), book chapters (22), and book reviews (11) represent just more than 15% of the publications. Conference papers, research reports, academic editorials, and other documents account for less than 4% of the publications. Table 1 shows the distribution of the publications by document type.

We also coded publications as either focusing on or mentioning PVs. Publications that "focus" on PVs use the concept as the central topic of discussion or analysis (and typically reference the concept in titles and/or abstracts). Publications that "mention" PVs use the concept somewhere

Table 1. Classification of Document Type.

Document type	Number of publications	Percentage of publications
Journal article	322	81.1%
Book	27	6.8%
Book chapter	22	5.5%
Book review	11	2.8%
Other	15	3.8%
Total	397	100%

Table 2. Classification of Literature Type.

Type	Number of publications	Percentage of publications
Normative application (domain specific)	79	19.9%
Normative application (generic)	40	10.1%
Research/empirical	146	36.8%
Research/legal	26	6.5%
Theoretical development/debate	91	22.9%
Other	15	3.8%
Total	397	100%

in the text (at least once), but center on other topics and issues. Of the publications in the database, about 73% (288 publications) focus on PVs, while about 27% (109 publications) simply mention PVs in the text.

Literature Type

We use the six categories defined below to code for "literature type." Five of these categories were taken from Williams and Shearer's (2011) literature classification scheme. We added "Research/Legal" to capture the publications that are "empirical" (in the sense that they compare and contrast law), but do not employ methodologies such as surveys or case studies.

- Normative Application (domain specific): A publication that focuses on what should be within a specific and particular discipline or context.
- Normative Application (generic): A publication that focuses on what should be within a very general context.
- Research/Empirical: A publication that analyzes a particular question or issue using quantitative, qualitative, case study, historical, and/or other data.
- Research/Legal: A publication that analyzes a particular question or issue using case law, jurisprudence, and/or other legal materials.
- Theoretical Development/Debate: A publication that makes a theoretical or conceptual argument about an issue or set of issues, or presents a framework or model for analysis.
- Other: A publication that does not fit into the categories above, for example, book reviews or academic commentaries.

As shown in Table 2, most of the publications in the database are research oriented, with almost 37% (146 publications) using an empirical approach and almost 7% (26 publications) using a legal approach. Normative applications are also common, with almost 20% (79

publications) focusing on a specific domain, and just over 10% (40 publications) being more generic in nature. About 23% (91 publications) focus on theoretical development and debate. Less than 4% (15 publications) fall into the "other" category.

Genesis and Growth of PVs Publications

The earliest publication in our database is a 1969 book chapter titled, "The Public Values of the Private Association" (McConnell, 1969). This publication (best situated within the scholarly domain of political science) is also the first to distinguish between PVs and private values, a division that remains at the core of many debates. In the chapter, the author writes, "What I wish to do in this paper . . . is to look at the list of virtues attributed to the private association and then to ask what are the PVs that ought reasonably to be expected from it" (p. 148). Further in his analysis, McConnell (1969, p. 160) asserts,

> The preeminent public values of the private associations . . . are order and stability. Perhaps to some degree the values of community, human warmth, and fellowship are also present in the private association. In the sense that order, stability, and mutual respect at a very minimal level are preconditions for liberty, this also is a value of the private association. . . . At the same time, however, the contribution to order and stability has come at a large cost. This cost has been paid, and is continuing to be paid in limitations on liberty, equality, and numerous other public values. The private association serves private as well as public values and it is proper that the right of men to associate should be protected. This is an aspect of individual liberty, and it is accordingly unnecessary to credit the association with virtues that are not its own. It has virtues that are real and some of these are public, but it is important to recall that these involve the payment of a price, and a large one.

Since this 1969 publication, the term PVs has increasingly appeared in the academic literature. Interestingly, however, it does not seem that this 1969 publication spurred more PVs research. According to Google Scholar, it has been cited only eight times, with the first citation appearing 11 years later in 1980. Similarly, the next two publications in the database are Pearce, Cunningham, and Miller (1971) and Christenson and Dillman (1973), and neither of these publications cite the other.

Nevertheless, Figure 1 shows that the number of publications focusing on or mentioning PVs steadily increased between 1969 and 2012, with the term absent from scholarly publications in only 2 years (1970 and 1972). However, it was not until the late 1990s when publications about PVs reached and remained in the double digits. Moreover, just over 60% of the documents in our database were published between 2000 and 2012, and almost 38% were published between 2007 and 2012. These statistics clearly show that on the one hand, PVs scholarship is a rather new "industry," while on the other hand, it has a more than 40-year history.

PVs Research Growth and Decline Across Disciplines

Our analysis also reveals that PVs research is being conducted in at least 18 academic disciplines. As expected, and as shown in Table 3, most publications (156 or just over 39%) are in Public Administration and Public Management (taken together here as one disciplinary category).[4] There are also significant numbers of publications in Law (70) and Environmental Science (69), and double-digit numbers of publications in Education (19), Economics (18), Political Science (17), and Public Health (14). Mathematics and Sociology each have seven publications, and Communications and Business each have four publications. The remaining disciplines, including Medicine, Science, Geography, Ethics, Psychology, Criminology, and Computer Sciences, have three or less publications each, and are combined into the "Other" category in Table 3.
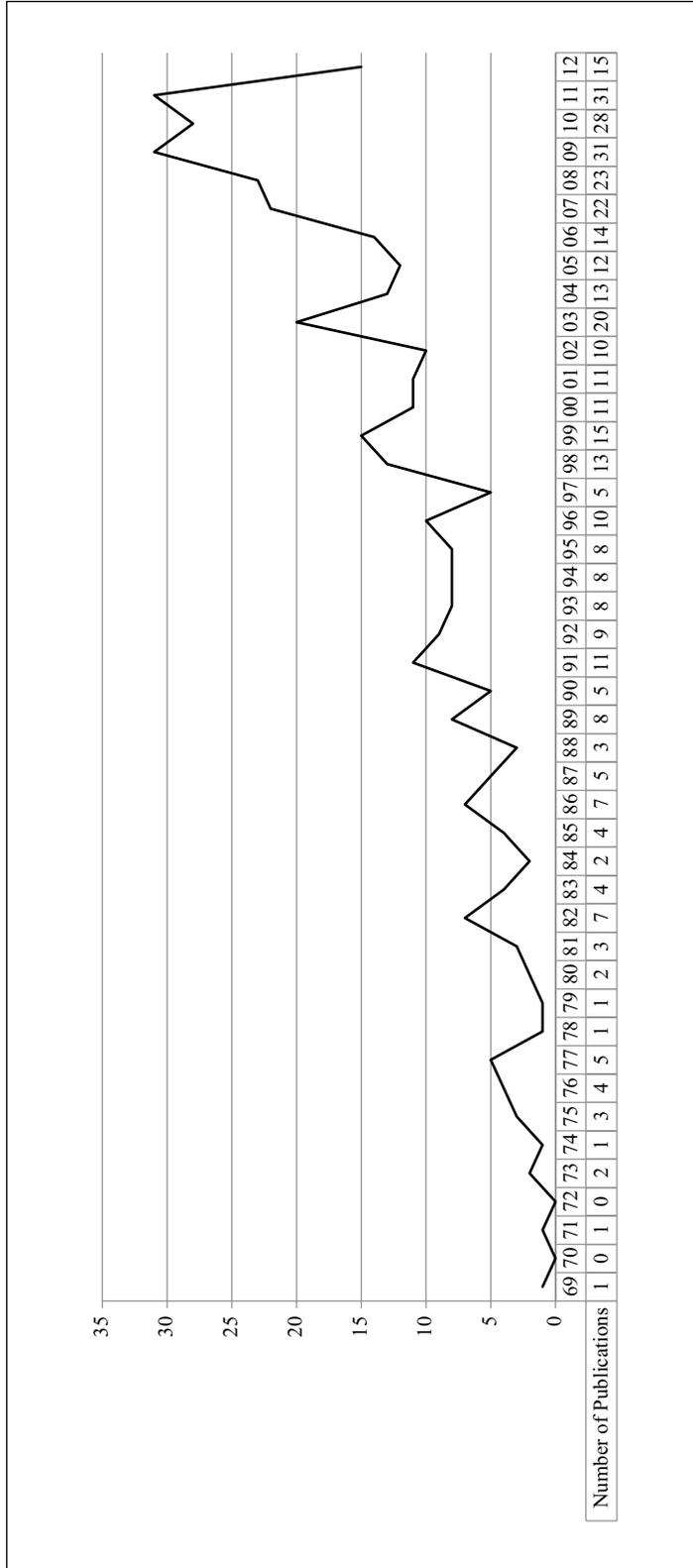
Number of Publications	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12
	1	0	1	0	2	1	3	4	5	1	1	2	3	7	4	2	4	7	5	3	8	5	11	9	8	8	8	10	5	13	15	11	11	10	20	13	12	14	22	23	31	28	31	15

Figure 1. Number of publications that focus on or mention public values, 1969-2012.

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Table 3. Ranking of PVs Publications Per Discipline.

Discipline	Number of publications	Percentage of publications
Public Administration	156	39.3%
Law	70	17.6%
Environmental Science	69	17.4%
Education	19	4.8%
Economics	18	4.5%
Political Science	17	4.3%
Public Health	14	3.5%
Mathematics	7	1.8%
Sociology	7	1.8%
Business	4	1.0%
Communication	4	1.0%
Other	12	3.0%
Total	397	100%

Table 4. Relative Share of PVs Publications Per Discipline, 1969-2012.

Discipline	1969-1979	1980-1989	1990-1999	2000-2012	Total
Public Administration	2 (11%)	8 (18%)	23 (25%)	123 (51%)	156 (39%)
Law	2 (11%)	18 (40%)	22 (24%)	28 (12%)	70 (18%)
Environmental Science	3 (16%)	4 (9%)	20 (22%)	42 (17%)	69 (17%)
Education	0 (0%)	3 (7%)	4 (4%)	12 (5%)	19 (5%)
Economics	3 (16%)	0 (0%)	5 (5%)	10 (4%)	18 (5%)
Political Science	2 (11%)	4 (9%)	5 (5%)	6 (2%)	17 (4%)
Public Health	0 (0%)	2 (4%)	6 (7%)	6 (2%)	14 (4%)
Mathematics	0 (0%)	2 (4%)	3 (3%)	2 (1%)	7 (2%)
Sociology	3 (16%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	3 (1%)	7 (2%)
Business	3 (16%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	4 (1%)
Communication	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	1 (1%)	2 (1%)	4 (1%)
Other	1 (5%)	2 (4%)	2 (2%)	7 (3%)	12 (3%)
Total	19 (100%)	45 (100%)	92 (100%)	241 (100%)	397 (100%)

Among all of the publications, we were able to distinguish over 40 individual "topic areas" in expected domains such as policy analysis in discrete arenas (e.g., environmental policy, transportation policy, and so forth), organizational management, and privatization, among others, as well as in unexpected domains such as qualitative research methods, risk management, marketing and information studies, innovation, librarianship, and alternative dispute resolution, among others.

We also explored the number of publications in each discipline to look for trends in the study of PVs over time. Specifically, we calculated the number and percentage of publications in each discipline for four times periods, each of which is just about a decade long. The results are displayed in Table 4. There were only 19 PVs publications from 1969 to 1979. Environmental Science, Economics, Sociology, and Business have the most publications during this period, with 3 (16%) in each discipline. Public Administration has only 2 (11%) PVs publications during this time. There were 45 PVs publications from 1980 to 1989, and Law was clearly the dominant discipline, with 18 (40%) of all the publications. Public Administration, which ranks second, has only 8 (18%) of the publications. These distributions begin to shift in the 1990s. There were 92 PVs publications from 1990 to 1999, and an almost equitable distribution of

Table 5. Citations of Publications.

Citation range	Total number of publications	Publications in public administration
Over 300	3	0
200-299	4	3
100-199	11	5
75-99	6	1
50-74	18	4
25-49	36	12
1-24	169	79
0	32	16
Total	279	120

publications among Public Administration (23, 25%), Law (22, 24%), and Environmental Science (20, 22%). From 2000 to 2012, the relative share of PVs publications shifts dramatically. Of the 241 PVs publications during this time period, over half (123, 51%) are within Public Administration; there are only 70 (18%) in Law and 69 (17%) in Environmental Science.

While many of the absolute numbers of publications are small, the relative share or percentage of PVs publications by disciplines reveals some interesting trends. The share of PVs publications in Education has remained fairly stable over the decades, but the shares of publications in Political Science, Sociology, and Business have fallen sharply since the 1970s. The share of publications in Law peaked in the 1980s, and the share of publications in Environmental Science peaked in the 1990s. The shares of publications in both disciplines have since fallen. Finally, Public Administration has seen a steady increase in its relative share publications, to the point that it now dominates the study of PVs. A deeper analysis of this trend, including potential reasons for this dramatic growth, is provided in the conclusion.

Citation Analysis

Finally, we conducted an analysis of Google citation rates to determine which publications are most cited. Here, we limit our analysis to only those publications that focus on PVs; we exclude publications that only mention PVs, as well as book reviews. These criteria limit this analysis to 279 publications.

When looking at citations, Public Administration seems to be doing well, representing eight of the top 20 cited publications. Environmental Science has five in the top 20, while Law has three, Mathematics has two, and Economics and Public Health each have one. However, a closer look is revealing. Of the publications that focus on PVs, only three have 300 or more citations, and none of these are from Public Administration. With 412 citations, Eskridge's (1989) Law article, "Public Values in Statutory Interpretation," has the most citations. Following this is a Public Health article with 334 citations (Ryan et al., 2001) and an Economics article with 328 citations (Corneo & Gruner, 2002). That said, four publications have 200 to 299 citations, and three of these are in Public Administration. With 229 citations, the top publication in Public Administration is Beierle and Konisky's (2000) article, "Values, conflict, and trust in participatory environmental planning." Closely following is Barry Bozeman's (2007) book, *Public Values and Public Interest: Counterbalancing Economic Individualism*, and his 2002 article, "Public-Value Failure: When Efficient Markets May Not Do" with 223 and 201 citations respectively. Finally, 11 publications have 100 to199 citations, five of which are in Public Administration (Beck Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007; Beierle, 1999; Gardiner & Edwards, 1975; Keeney, von Winterfeldt, & Eppel, 1990; O'Flynn, 2007). Table 5 shows the number of publications that fall

within various ranges of citation numbers, as well as the number of publications specifically within Public Administration.

Post Hoc, Ergo Propter Hoc? A Discussion of How PVs Scholarship Might Reflect Real-World Events

Two broad sets of findings from our preliminary analysis of the PVs literature are noteworthy. First, according to our search, the term "PVs" first appeared in a 1969 Political Science book chapter, which articulated a distinction between public and private values by organizational sector. However, with only eight citations over 4 decades, this book chapter has had neither an impressive academic lifespan nor a significant impact. On a related note, the concept of PVs is surprisingly not prominent in the domain of political science, especially when compared to some of the other academic disciplines in which PVs are studied. Nevertheless, since its appearance in 1969, the term PVs has received growing attention in academic scholarship, with nearly 400 publications that focus on or mention the concept. Interestingly, of those publications, just over 60% were published between 2000 and 2012, and almost 38% were published between 2007 and 2012.

Second, PVs scholarship can be found in a wide range of disciplines. Although Public Administration is responsible for the largest portion of the PVs research (just over 39% of all publications), we discovered significant numbers of publications in both Law and Environmental Science. We also found PVs publications in 15 other academic disciplines. However, the attention of the disciplines to PVs scholarship has fluctuated over the decades. For example, before the year 2000, Law dominated in terms of the share of PVs publications vis-à-vis other fields of study. Since 2000, however, relative attention to PVs has fallen in most of the disciplines, except in Public Administration where attention has grown dramatically. Since 2000 (and particularly since 2007), there has been an impressive increase in the number of Public Administration publications that address PVs. This provides empirical evidence for the oft-heard claim that the study of PVs is not only gaining importance in our field, but that it might be one of the most important themes.

We suspect that the increase in PVs research in Public Administration since 2000 is in response to the emphasis in the 1980s and 1990s on "running government like a business," New Public Management, Reinventing Government, privatization, and other market-based reform efforts (e.g., Hood, 1995; Osborne & Gaebler, 1992). Indeed, the most widely cited PVs book in Public Administration is *Public Values and Public Interest: Counterbalancing Economic Individualism* (Bozeman, 2007). Moreover, a preliminary review of the PVs publications in Public Administration since 2000 suggests that authors are concerned that PVs will be "lost" or "devaluated" particularly when they "compete" or "conflict" with private or business values. The increased attention to PVs in Public Administration may also be a function of broader developments and events outside academia. For example, concomitant with the rise of PVs publications, we have also witnessed many governments retreating from the claim that the market is better and the private sector more efficient and productive than the public sector. Indeed, Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011) suggest that the era of large-scale privatization and contract-based governance has come to an end. Still, we are left with the question, post hoc, ergo propter hoc?

This same question is raised when contemplating the general lack of PVs research in Business and Economics. We have heard numerous criticisms of financial institutions and large corporations since the start of the global financial crisis in 2008, not the least of which is that they lost sight of their public functions and societal responsibilities. Others blamed the crisis on business schools who failed to properly instill moral and ethical values into their students who went on to become leaders in financial and business organizations (e.g., Canales, Massey, & Wrzesniewski,

2012). With that in mind, one must wonder whether the neglect of PVs research is a function of the former glory of the private sector, or whether it is the other way around, that the neglect of PVs in Business and Economic scholarship was a prelude or a harbinger to the financial crisis. Again, post hoc, ergo propter hoc?

In the same vein, what does it say that the relative share of PVs publications has slowly but gradually declined in Environmental Sciences since the 1980s and 1990s, even though sustainability and renewable energy have become major buzzwords (that reflect important PVs) in recent years? And how about Law, where PVs were a relatively more important topic in the previous century than they are now? What does it mean that this important issue has received comparatively less attention on the agendas of legal scholars? Alternatively, if PVs research is decreasing in importance in other disciplines, what does this mean for Public Administration where it is still on the rise, in absolute as well as relative terms? Are we investing time and energy in a fad or inconsequential topic, or will we make meaningful progress by generating and accumulating high-quality theoretical and empirical research on the concept?

All said, we do not wish to overstate the predictive and explanatory capability of our modest literature review. A similar exercise for "sustainability," "collaboration," and numerous other terms and concepts would undoubtedly show a surge since the beginning of the present century, not only in Public Administration, but also in several other disciplines. Nevertheless, societal developments and academic trends often go hand in hand, and the study of PVs might well be a perfect mirror for such changes.

As a final note in this discussion, we feel compelled to point out that the study of PVs, particularly in Public Administration, might suffer from aspirational bias, which makes researchers "prone to confusion between empirical and normative statements and misunderstanding of their respective logical and evidentiary bases" (Bozeman & Su, 2012, p. 6). In other words, "even though researchers' passions often fuel and improve their research, these same passions also can set traps, sometimes making it difficult to separate aspirations and empirical results" (Bozeman & Su, 2012, p. 1). Aspirational bias implies that we study PVs not necessarily because they are suddenly observed in organizations, or because there is a new need for empirical analysis, but rather because we *think* they are important and *believe* they merit more attention. That said, while Public Administration scholars should certainly be aware of aspirational bias, we suggest neither that they stop researching the topic nor be distrustful of PVs scholarship. Instead, we argue for more careful, systematic, and in-depth analyses of how and why PVs are studied in Public Administration and other disciplines. In the final section of this article, we lay out our plan for such research.

Conclusion: Looking to the Future of PVs Research

Our study is a first, albeit modest step in mapping the universe of PVs. Much work remains. Before we explain our future research agenda, two limitations of our study merit attention. First, our database does not capture, not could it capture, all of the literature about PVs, let alone values in general. Given language limitations, we could only include publications written in English. Moreover, anyone with basic knowledge about the general study of values knows that a well-established body of literature exists within Sociology (e.g., Beyer, 1981; Kluckhohn, 1951), Psychology (e.g., Schwartz, 1992, 1999, 2010), and other social science disciplines. This literature, however, is largely missing from our database. The primary reason for its absence is our search protocol, which looked explicitly for the words "public values" in conjunction. Our database would look very different if we had just searched for the keyword "values." We would likely have unearthed tens of thousands of items, making useful categorization and analysis (even assisted by advanced software programs) impossible. Thus, although our database provides a

comprehensive list of PVs publications over the past 40-plus years, it is missing important scholarship that could contribute to our knowledge.

Second, and related to our first limitation, one can never know if and when a database is complete. We are quite confident that our three complementary searching methods are robust, and that they identified (almost) all PVs publications. However, as search engines and software analysis tools are constantly improving, a new search 1 or 2 years from now might show slightly different—and perhaps better—results. We aim to keep our database up to date, using journal feeds, research networks, and other tools to identify PVs publications in all disciplines. However, despite our best efforts, our database of the PVs literature will never be complete.

With these limitations in mind, we present suggestions for future research. As noted in the introduction, our overall goal is to move from galaxies to universe, that is, to map PVs and PVs scholarship so that we can compare, contrast, and integrate different theories, approaches, and streams of knowledge across disciplines. This requires future attention to several issues.

First, we need to do more coding in our database around PVs definitions and conceptualizations. The results of our initial analysis are shocking: 240 (76%) of the coded publications do *not* provide an explicit definition of PVs. Of the remaining publications, 70 (22%) provide a single explicit definition, and 7 (2%) provide multiple definitions. The distribution of publications with and without explicit definitions does not seem to differ by discipline. Moreover, 26 publications use only "self-definitions", whereas 61 publications use an external definition, citing one or more references. In six cases, authors both cited to external definitions and created self-definitions. Among the most cited definitions are those from classic sociological or anthropological studies (disciplines that are not significant players in the PVs industry), including those by Kluckhohn (1951), Parsons and Shils (1953), and Rokeach (1973); however, these publications are not in our database because they focus on values broadly, not PVs specifically. More recent publications in Public Administration frequently cite definitions from de Bruijn and Dicke (2006), Beck Jørgensen and Bozeman (2007), and Bozeman (2002, 2007). Some authors even cite Moore (1995), whose work centers on the creation of public value, which is related to, but distinct from, PVs (cf. Nabatchi, 2012a, 2012b). Still, each of these definitions is used less than 10 times, suggesting again that the study of PVs is scattered and fragmented.

It is also important to note that publications providing one or more definitions do not always explicitly adapt that definition in their analyses, but rather supply those definitions as a minimal form of conceptualization. Only a few dozen publications use language like "we define PVs as follows." In fact, the publications in our database that do use some sort of a definition very often include concrete examples of PVs, such as honesty or responsiveness, rather than providing a carefully crafted perspective.

This means that in addition to definitional analysis, we need more analyses about how authors *conceptualize* PVs in their publications. Such analyses are extremely complex and challenging to conduct. Many different meanings and conceptualizations are used in PVs research. Perhaps the most common conceptualization is the distinction between public and private values (e.g., McLaughlin, 1995; Ozolins, 2010; Rogers & Kingsley, 2004; Strike, 1982; Van Thiel & Van der Wal, 2010), but several others also exist. For example, some scholars think about PVs in terms of core values, chronological ordering, or other bifurcations or dimensional distinctions (see Rutgers, 2008). Others conceptualize PVs in terms of "hard" and "soft" values (Steenhuisen, 2009); individual, professional, organizational, legal, and public-interest values (Van Wart, 1998); ethical, democratic, professional, and people values (Kernaghan, 2003); political, legal, organizational, and market values (Nabatchi, 2012a), or on values related to administrative rationality, democratic morality, and political survival (Buchanan & Millstone, 1979). Moreover, sometimes the concept of PVs is used in reference to concrete goals such as the reliability and safety of public transportation (e.g., de Bruijn & Dicke, 2006; Steenhuisen, 2009). Other times it alludes to procedural- and/or process-related rules such as accountability and transparency (e.g.,

Weihe, 2008), and still other times it is used in reference to moral precepts of right and wrong that (should) guide public action (e.g., Van der Wal, 2008). In Law, PVs are seen as constitutional provisions that reflect a society's public morality (e.g., Eskridge, 1989, Fiss, 1987).

Finally, to further examine existing schools of thought and how they relate to one another, at least two sets of additional analyses are necessary—a citation analysis and a related content and bibliometric analysis. The purpose of the citation analysis is to examine who cites whom, and determine whether there is crossover between and among different disciplines. A quick look at the main publications in each discipline does not give us high hopes for such crossover. Perhaps this should not be surprising. A recent analysis by Wright (2011), for example, suggests that scholars in our field wear "public administration blinders" and typically fail to reference related research in law, management, and political science (cited in Perry, 2012, p. 479). It will be interesting to conduct such a cross-citation analysis for the publications in our database to see whether this observation holds true for the study of PVs. The purpose of the content and bibliometric analysis is slightly different. Specifically, we hope to simultaneously analyze PVs conceptualizations and citations to flesh out the "galaxies" in the PVs universe, that is, to qualitatively and quantitatively distinguish various research clusters based on their theoretical approaches to the study of PVs.

At the very least, these future efforts will help the study of PVs to progress; they will shed light on how scholars in different disciplines use the concept of PVs, and how and where approaches to study PVs differ and overlap. However, such conceptual comparison merits attention in at least one separate paper. While such analyses are not presented here, this article shows that although the study of PVs is still searching for common ground and widely accepted conceptual, theoretical, and empirical approaches, it is diverse and healthy. It crosses both time and disciplines, and has roots older than we often assume. In doing so, this study reinforces the need for public administration scholars to remove their blinders as they continue to explore the PVs universe.

Notes

1. This popular study has been used by quite a number of authors (as of April 9, 2013, Google Scholar reports that it has been cited 173 times) in both empirical studies on public values (e.g., Andersen, Beck Jørgensen, Pedersen, Kjeldsen, & Vrangbæk, 2012) and conceptual exercises (e.g., Nabatchi 2012a).
2. We did not include the term "public value" in our searches for two reasons. First, although many scholars do not explicitly distinguish between *public values* and *public value* (cf. Alford & O'Flynn 2009;

O'Flynn 2009), we believe these are distinct, though related concepts (cf. Nabatchi 2012a, 2012b; for discussions about public value, see Moore 1995; Benington & Moore 2011). Second, Williams and Shearer (2011) recently released a content analysis and categorization of 74 scholarly publications on public value, and we see no merit in (partially) replicating their exercise. Of the publications in our database, sixteen make reference to both concepts.

3. To the extent possible, we coded the 14 publications to which we do not have access for literature type, document type, academic field/discipline, number of citations, and other fields.

4. Doing so is consistent with the Web of Science's ISI index, which we used to designate disciplinary categories for most of the academic journal publications. For the other publications, we coded their disciplinary origin ourselves, based on title, topic, department and school of the authors, and—if needed—content of the publication. We cross coded all these publications within our team of authors and research assistants, and duplicated this process until we reached consensus on all publications in our database.

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