

Management Matters

The Public Management Research Association Newsletter

From the PMRA President

Dear PMRA Members:

This is a year of firsts for the Public Management Research Association.

From May 25th to the 28th we will have the first jointly sponsored Public Management Research Conference, by the venerable institutions Arizona State University and the University of Arizona. These conference hosts have received over 560 proposals, a record number of submissions. These numbers are particularly striking since this will be the first in-person conference since 2019, when University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill hosted.

Another first comes from our new independent membership system, GrowthZone, which is up and running, thanks to the PMRA Secretariat at the University of Kansas. This change is going to make membership renewals and verification of membership rates for conference registrations much easier. Eventually, GrowthZone will also allow PMRA to host a membership directory and conference registration.

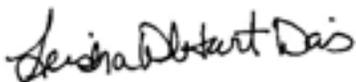
This spring, PMRA will offer inaugural professional development programming in [Promoting Your Research on Social Media](#). Sponsored by Texas Tech, this members-only workshop will provide pre-recorded content and a live interactive session on April 29th at 10 am EDT designed to help you create your academic online presence. The instructor, Jennifer Van Alstyne, is a social media expert who specializes in academia.

These firsts reflect PMRA's commitment to provide you with value-added service for your membership. If you have any thoughts about how PMRA can better serve the community of public management scholars, please email me at ldd@unc.edu or text or call me at 785-766-1554.

Finally, we hope you can attend PMRC-Arizona. If you plan to do so, please join us at the PMRA Business Meeting, Thursday, May 26th, during the lunch hour. There will be the awards ceremony and a review of key PMRA business matters. It will be nice to see you all again!

Sincerely,

Leisha DeHart Davis
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill



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Invited Essay

Editor's Note: In the fall 2021 issue of Management Matters, we published an essay from Don Kettl looking back on the history and evolution of public management. Below you will find an essay from Jennifer Dodge on the broad topic, "What will be (or should be) the big changes in PA/PM in the future?" Many thanks to Professor Dodge for this essay.

Jennifer Dodge is Associate Professor in the Department of Public Administration and Policy, University at Albany, SUNY

Centering Values in the Future of Public Management

The world is in transition. Climate change is already having devastating effects and many governments are attempting to transform their energy and other systems in time to stave off the worst of these. Welfare retrenchment has given rise to economic inequality and an increase in deep poverty, particularly for people who cannot find work. The 2008 economic crisis and the Covid-19 pandemic exposed weaknesses in the social safety net, deep inequalities in society, and society's inability to deal effectively and equitably with large-scale crises. Once stable democracies now face serious authoritarian challenges, including the United States, where we came close to a constitutional crisis during the 2020 presidential election. Highly visible instances of police brutality on the black community in the U.S. created the impetus for the Black Lives Matter movement to organize to demand a new social contract. And now the war in Ukraine raises fears about the possibility of World War III, with implications for the reshuffling of the global social and political order. To complicate all of this, "post-truth" narratives have become mainstream, creating confusion about the facts but also advancing specific political and policy agendas that don't have anything to do with the facts.

All of this has profound implications for the future of public management.

Climate change provides a useful example. There's broad agreement that climate change has already had devastating effects, and more is to come.¹ Yet, governing bodies have failed to coordinate action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) at the levels needed to stem the worst effects or to adequately support vulnerable groups who face a more difficult task to adapt. What has created this inaction? And what are we to do to unblock it?

Furthermore, while there is consensus that the window for moderate action on climate change has already closed, proposals for the necessary dramatic action go in every direction. It's useful to look closely at different proposals. Progressives call for a transformation of our energy system and our political economy to reduce GHGs but also to address economic, political and identity-based inequities by investing in the public sphere (Klein, 2015). Proponents of the Green New Deal argue there is no time to transform the political economy. Instead, we should reallocate societal resources immediately away from military budgets, for example, to pay for climate change efforts, while also creating green jobs with strong benefits, addressing economic inequality within capitalism (Chomsky & Pollin, 2020). Climate capitalists suggest we energize the business sector to create the necessary technological innovation to remove GHGs from the atmosphere, create a world-class energy system and make a lot of money while doing it (Rand, 2020). Inequality hardly comes into it. Finally, Native American groups argue we need to move beyond a colonial system at the root of a dysfunctional relationship between humans and nature and to each other (The Red Nation, 2021).

These are admittedly selective and brief sketches of the proposals; they nonetheless reveal key challenges that public managers are facing in this moment of transition and will face in the future. First, governing bodies are not coordinating action at the level needed to address the problems. Second, while each approach suggests ways to reduce GHGs (more or less backed by evidence),

¹ The recent report by the International Panel on Climate Change confirms this (IPCC, 2022) and shows that the effects of climate change over the past decade have been worse than previously predicted.

they also reveal divergent value propositions, for example, about the proper role of government, business and civil society; the relationship between government and its citizens; and whether we should foreground or ignore social, political and economic inequalities, and, indeed, which ones. Public managers in places where aggressive climate policy has been passed, such as my own state of New York, are grappling with these differing views in implementing policy and making decisions about the allocation of public resources. Third, citizens are making demands to address long-standing inequities and revise the social contract in relation to climate change, as with other policy issues.

These challenges – insufficient action, clashing societal values and citizens’ demands – are not unique to climate change but cut across a range of issues in this moment of transition. To respond, public management research and practice could better appreciate the contributions of value-based analysis² next to evidence-based analysis. Many questions open from a values-based perspective, which I illustrate using New York’s climate change efforts.

Scholars might analyze which values are integrated into public policy, and the process by which this happens. For example, a broad coalition of environmental, environmental justice (EJ), civic, religious and labor organizations advocated that climate legislation in New York include ambitious GHG reduction targets and environmental justice (EJ) statutes. The coalition won these goals in the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act. Now, the state must reduce GHGs 100% over 1990 levels by the year 2050 and address environmental injustice by 1) investing 40% of the benefits of overall spending from the bill in “disadvantaged communities” – those exposed to environmental racism in the past and/or vulnerable to climate impacts in the future – and 2) create the Climate Justice Working Group (which it has done) to represent disadvantaged communities and ensure that the state and its advisory panels meet environmental justice goals. These are pathbreaking statutes representing clear value propositions. We need more research to unpack how this happened, what other values were included or excluded, how and why, and, perhaps, how other values thwarted action for so long in the first place. In part, this is a call for more research on responsiveness to citizens’ demands, but my point relates to how we might usefully research this, giving special attention to the role of values in the process.

Scholars might also ask whether the values in such policies actually get implemented and what might constrain or enable this. New York’s Climate Action Council, led by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority and the Department of Environmental Conservation, is now coordinating climate action in New York. This will be a massive collaborative governance undertaking. While much evidence-based analysis is being conducted, values are at the heart of struggles over implementation, as well. Many divergent groups are participating to ensure the implementation of their cherished values. For example, the same coalition that advocated for EJ statutes – now with strong ties to the Climate Justice Working Group – is monitoring implementation to ensure the bill is fully funded and that investments in disadvantaged communities are taken seriously. In another example, scientists are confident about where to locate wind and solar farms to produce renewable energy most efficiently, but other “political” factors such as competing economic interests or local rejection of renewable energy projects will likely influence citing decisions. These examples illustrate that the process will not be purely evidence-based, but public managers will also have to adjudicate values in the process (see also Skinner, 2016). We need better tools to understand how public managers implement ambitious goals efficiently and effectively, and how they address the competing values at stake, such as equity, scientific rationality and local control or are challenged in doing so.³

2 Space constraints limit my ability to cite available approaches to value-based analysis, and the many public management scholars who already apply them. For some examples see references in Blessett, et. al., 2019.

3 In an essay I submitted to the 2018 Minnowbrook Conference (see https://www.maxwell.syr.edu/docs/default-source/research/minnowbrook/jennifer-dodge-rethinking-equity-and-democracy-in-public-administration.pdf?sfvrsn=da805adf_3), I addressed this point more directly in a call to consider the difficulty agencies have incorporating alternative rationalities or values into administrative ones, including environmental justice values that center racial and economic equity. I argued that competing rationalities should be a focus of analysis, for similar reasons outlined in this essay.

To fully embrace value-based analysis, the field will need to more fully embrace multiple research paradigms, particularly those offering tools to develop knowledge about values so critical to understanding moments of transition. Yet, value-based approaches to analysis are discouraged in the field based on a set of principles tied to the hypothetical-deductive form of science (e.g., see Coule et. al., 2020), which draws sharp boundaries between science and nonscience. This stems back to early writings on the philosophy of science, for instance, when Auguste Comte asserted that values (and similarly beliefs, feelings and emotions) are outside the realm of science because they cannot be counted or measured in ways similar to phenomena studied in the natural sciences (Crotty, 1998). However, interpretive, critical and pragmatic forms of social science developed in parallel with Comte's positivist science with different logics, precisely to account for human meaning (values, beliefs, feelings) and their impact on human action (Yanow, 2006). Value-based analysis does not necessarily mean that researchers adopt a normative stance, although they might. More to my point, they center values as the unit of analysis so their effects on public management, good or ill, can be traced.

While some approaches to qualitative analysis are becoming more accepted, those especially suited to analyze values are still not well understood, embraced or evaluated appropriately (Coule, et. al., 2020). Positivist science, whether qualitative or quantitative, usefully produces findings in relation to the challenges I mention above. For example, Blomgren & Vieilledent (2021) discuss important state-level factors that impede local collaborative governance efforts on climate change. We also need interpretive and critical approaches to build knowledge of the (normative) dimensions of administrative action that may block productive responses and to suggest ways they may be overcome. Given the features of a transitioning society, setting values aside as outside the realm of social science is no longer a viable position.

This is not simply a call to say, "yes, pluralism!" but to change a set of practices in the academic field to better support it. This includes rethinking what we teach in masters and doctoral programs and examining the quality standards applied in the peer-review process and to promotion and tenure decisions. Students I met at conferences have been discouraged from doing interpretive and critical/normative research in their programs because it may negatively affect their careers. This suggests outdated views still exist about what is and is not useful or risky research in the field. What we need instead are programs that, at a minimum, ensure students understand different research paradigms and their logics, and, as my mentor, Sonia Ospina and her colleagues have called for, encourage more bravery in designing innovative research to address pressing problems in public management (Ospina, et. al., 2018).

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PMRC 2022 in Arizona

Registration is now open for PMRC 2022!

PMRC 2022 is being hosted in-person in downtown Phoenix, Arizona by Arizona State University School of Public Affairs and the University of Arizona School of Government and Public Policy. Register today to sign up for pre-conference workshops (Wednesday, May 25). The opening reception will be Wednesday night. Research presentations and other activities will be May 26 through noon, May 28.

We are happy to announce the PMRC 2022 Plenary Panel titled, “Bureaucracy at the Border” which will center on administration and management issues on the US-Mexico border and feature Dr. Angie Bautista-Chavez (Arizona State University), Dr. Eladio B. Bobadilla (University of Kentucky), Estefania Castañeda Pérez (University of California – Los Angeles), and Dr. David Cortez (University of Notre Dame).

For more information, visit the conference website: www.pmrc2022.com

Follow us on Twitter: [@pmrcaz](https://twitter.com/pmrcaz)

Updates from PPMG

Kirk Emerson, Editor
University of Arizona

PPMG Webinar on Theory Building

PPMG held its second webinar on February 23rd entitled, “Theory and Theory Building in Public Administration Research.” The panelists included Patrick Kenis (Tilburg University), Gregg Van Ryzin (Rutgers University), Joris van der Voet (Leiden University), and Kirk Emerson (University of Arizona and PPMG Editor). [You can find a recording of the theory webinar here](#) and PPMG’s previous webinar on “Digital Transformation of Public Management” on the [PPMG YouTube channel linked here](#).

PPMG Sponsored Roundtable at PMRC

The annual PMRC conference is being held the last week of May in Phoenix, co-sponsored by the Arizona State University and the University of Arizona. PPMG will be hosting a roundtable on “Theory in PA” at the conference and will address some of the questions raised at our webinar. [Find out more about the conference here](#).

New PPMG Editors

The Board of Directors of the Public Management Research Association recently announced the next editors of Perspectives on Public Management and Governance, Professors Kimberly R. Isett and Jessica Sowa, both with the University of Delaware.

The search committee was chaired by Professor Tina Nabatchi and included Professors Fran Berry, Lene Holm Pedersen, Meghna Sabharwal and Xufeng Zhu. In their report to the PMRA Board, the committee noted that “both members of the incoming editorial team are senior scholars with significant editorial experience. Both have produced theoretical scholarship, and together they have a breadth of scholarly expertise. These qualities make them a solid fit for the editor position at PPMG.”

We would like to echo the committee’s assessment and congratulate Professors Isett and Sowa on their new assignment. The transition is currently under way and the new co-editors will formally take the helm on June 1. Please welcome them to PPMG!

Stay in Touch

If you would like to stay abreast of new PPMG articles, symposium issues, and future events, [please sign up here](#).

Professional News

Awards & Achievements

Domonic Bearfield, Associate Professor in the School of Public Affairs and Administration at Rutgers University–Newark, **Nicole Humphrey**, Assistant Professor in the Political Science Department, University of Miami, and **Shannon Portillo**, Professor at the School of Public Affairs and Administration at the University of Kansas won the 2021 Hobby Prize for Best Article on Ethics, Leadership, and Public Policy for their article “The Disenfranchisement of Voters of Color: Redux” *Public Integrity*, 23 (2): 111-128

Thomas Bryer, Professor in School of Public Administration at the University of Central Florida, was honored by the government of Lithuania with the Global Lithuanian Award in December 2021 for his contributions to scientific progress in the country, most notably through the creation of an innovative dual-degree program between UCF and Kaunas University of Technology.

Staci Zavattaro, Associate Professor in School of Public Administration at the University of Central, received two distinguished awards for scholarly contributions: *Public Integrity's* 2022 Best Article Award for “Taking the Social Justice Fight to the Cloud: Social Media and Body Positivity” and *Public Administration Review's* 2022 Laverne Burchfield Award for her review of Ijeoma Oluo’s *Mediocre: The Dangerous Legacy of White Male America*.

Awards & Achievements

Beth Bailey, Foundation Distinguished Professor in the Department of History and Director of the Center for Military, War, and Society Studies at the University of Kansas, **Alesha E. Doan**, Professor in the School of Public Affairs and Administration and in the Department of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at the University of Kansas, **Shannon Portillo**, Professor in the School of Public Affairs and Administration at the University of Kansas, and **Kara Dixon Vuic**, LCpl. Benjamin W. Schmidt Professor of War, Conflict, and Society in Twentieth-Century America at Texas Christian University edited *Managing Sex in the Military: Gender, Identity, and Behavior* from the University of Nebraska Press (2022).

Danny Burns and **Jo Howard**, both with the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex and **Sonia Ospina**, New York University, have co-edited *The SAGE Handbook of Participatory Research and Inquiry* (2021), a two volume set.

Angela Evans, Dean Emerita at the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas and Visiting Fellow at the IBM Center for the Business of Government, has published *Agile Government: The Role of Public Affairs Education* with the IBM Center.

Emily Finchum-Mason, PhD student at the Evans School of Public Policy & Governance at the University of Washington along with Evans School faculty **Mary Kay Gugerty** and **Erica Mills Barnhart** published a research report entitled, “[Resilience Amid Uncertainty: The On-going Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Nonprofits in Washington State.](#)”

Charles Goodsell, Professor Emeritus at Virginia Tech, has authored *Outlandish Perspectives on Public Administration* (2021) with Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Norma Riccucci, Board of Governors Distinguished Professor at the School of Public Affairs and Administration at Rutgers University–Newark, has published *Critical Race Theory: Exploring Its Application to Public Administration* (2022) with Cambridge University Press Elements series.

Comings, Goings, New Positions & Promotions

Khaldoun AbouAssi, Associate Professor in the Department of Public Administration & Policy, School of Public Affairs, American University has been named Provost Associate Professor.

Sebawit (Seba) Bishu, Assistant Professor at the Evans School of Public Policy & Governance at the University of Washington has joined the Board of Editors at the *Public Administration Review* and the Journal of *Public Administration Research and Theory*.

Brandi Blessett, Associate Professor and Director of the University of Cincinnati's Master of Public Administration program, will join the Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota in fall 2022.

Ben Brunjes, Assistant Professor at the Evans School of Public Policy & Governance at the University of Washington will serve as a policy fellow for the U.S. Small Business Administration's Office of Policy Planning and Liaison (OPPL) in 2022. Brunjes also recently joined the Board of Editors at the *Public Administration Review* and the *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*.

Tia Gaynor, founding Director of the Center for Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation and Taft Professor of Social Justice at the University of Cincinnati, will join the Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota in fall 2022.

Marilyn Goodyear has been appointed the Interim Director of the School of Public Affairs and Administration at the University of Kansas.

Jiahuan Lu, Associate Professor in the School of Public Affairs and Administration at Rutgers University–Newark, was appointed as an associate editor for the journal *Nonprofit Management & Leadership*. He also joined the Board of Editors at the *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*.

Aroon P. Manoharan has joined Suffolk University's Institute for Public Service as Associate Professor and Director of the National Center for Public Performance.

Rosemary O'Leary, Edwin O. Stene Distinguished Professor, is retiring from the School of Public Affairs and Administration at the University of Kansas. [A student scholarship has been established in her honor.](#)

Stephanie Casey Pierce has been appointed as Assistant Professor of Public Policy and Administration in the University of Tennessee's Department of Political Science.

Shannon Portillo concluded her work as co-Chair of the [State of Kansas Governor's Commission on Racial Equity and Justice](#).

Gregory Porumbescu, Associate Professor in the School of Public Affairs and Administration at Rutgers University–Newark, has joined the Board of Editors at the [Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory](#).

Awards & Achievements

Tom Koontz, Professor at the University of Washington-Tacoma, and **Craig Thomas**, Professor at the Evans School of Public Policy & Governance at the University of Washington, received a 2-year NSF grant to study how science is used for decision making in collaborative partnerships focused on environmental issues.

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The Public Management Research Association thanks the Secretariat at the School of Public Affairs and Administration at the University of Kansas (“World Headquarters of PMRA”) for its exceptional work researching and implementing the new PMRA membership management system. Special thanks to PhD Candidate Kevin Campbell and our new Membership Manager Jennifer Grogg.

Renew your PMRA membership [here](#).

New PMRA members can join [here](#).

For questions about your membership,
please contact us at PMRAMembership@PMRA.ku.edu