Administering Americana:
Governance Amidst Ironies, Inconsistencies, and Illogic

MARY E. GUY
Three points

Our national narrative complicates the pursuit of social equity

Our teaching obscures the “humanness” in the citizen – state encounter

Our research improves rigor at the expense of relevance
#1. Our national narrative complicates the pursuit of social equity
Ironies, Inconsistencies, Illogic

CAPITALISM

Inequality
Merit
Competition
Profit-making
Government as referee

DEMOCRACY

Equality
Fairness
Sharing
Distribution based on need
Government as equalizer
From Equality to Equity
Achieving Social Equity: From Problems to Solutions
Glocalization

From Local to Global
Hindsight is Clearer Than Foresight
#2. Our teaching obscures “humanness” in the citizen – state encounter
From Silos to Networks
Innovation Sustainability

- Civil society
- Trust
- Social capital
- Citizen engagement
- Collaboration
From Outputs to Outcomes

**OUTPUT Measures**

- 50 miles of road paved
- 50 bridges repaired
- 50 bus route expansion

**Outcome Measures**

- 50 accidents reduced
- 50 min. of travel time reduced
- 50% mode split for transit

**Outputs lead to Outcomes**

The quantity of goods or services produced

The impact or progress toward the ultimate goal or purpose
From Print to Digital
It is time to embrace the affective component of public service

For governing to be effective, citizens must feel good about those who govern
Language already trends in this direction

- Representativeness
- Governance
- Collaboration
- Coproduction
- Citizen engagement
- Relational contracting
Citizen-State Encounter

--receives too little attention despite the focus on citizen engagement and coproduction
Citizen-State Encounter

The connective tissue of public administration

It is purposive

It is commonplace (Charles Goodsell, 1981)

Each person affects the other and the outcome is greater than the inputs that either brought to the encounter

It creates a circular response (Mary Parker Follett, 1919)
The emotive component of public service is hiding in plain sight

Leadership requires “unwarranted optimism” (Harlan Cleveland, 1972)

Engagement of workers and citizens requires comprehending needs and desires. This involves empathy (Edlin, 2018)
Everyday work experience of public servants
Emotional Labor

Management of one’s own emotions as well as the other person’s *in order to get the job done.*
- Verbal and nonverbal communication

Requires rapid execution of:
- Emotive sensing
- Analyzing
- Judging and deciding
- Behaving
Why does it matter?

The stuff of revolutions comes not from spreadsheets with columns of numbers but from feelings that one is unsafe, insecure and cannot trust authority.
#3. Our research improves rigor at the expense of relevance
To comprehend the wholeness of governance we must put the affective alongside the cognitive in our theories, research designs, and teaching.
Measuring the Citizen – State Encounter

QUALITATIVE CAPTURES

Meaning
Nuances
Explanations
Unique experiences
Voice of those studied
Textured understandings

QUANTITATIVE CAPTURES

Averages and variances
Trends
Probabilities
Hints of what is meaningful
Aggregate data
Relationships among variables
Focal Point: Citizen-State Relationship

how citizens feel about government is the beginning point and the end point
Administering Americana

It is not straightforward
Cultural myths shape priorities
The citizen – state encounter is about people
Our research should be as relevant as it is rigorous
Governance amidst ironies is like blind curves in the road
Public Integrity

1. Advance the public interest
2. Uphold the Constitution and the law
3. Promote democratic participation
4. Strengthen social equity
5. Fully inform and advise
6. Demonstrate personal integrity
7. Promote ethical organizations
8. Advance professional excellence

(ASPA Code Of Ethics)
THANK YOU!