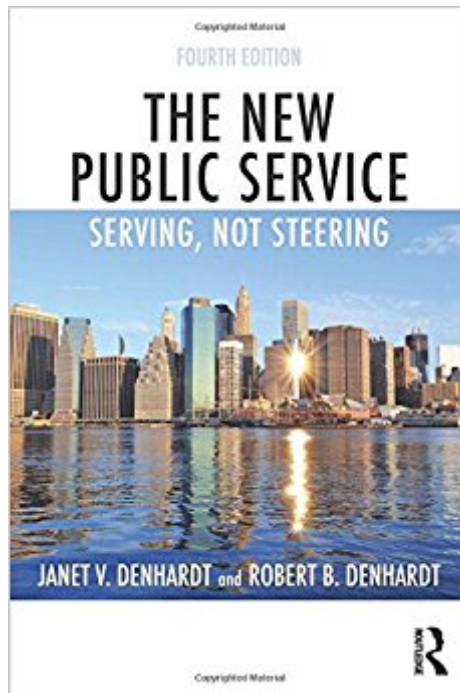


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The New Public Service: Serving, Not Steering



Synopsis

The New Public Service: Serving, not Steering provides a framework for the many voices calling for the reaffirmation of democratic values, citizenship, and service in the public interest. It is organized around a set of seven core principles: (1) serve citizens, not customers; (2) seek the public interest; (3) value citizenship and public service above entrepreneurship; (4) think strategically, act democratically; (5) recognize that accountability isn't simple; (6) serve, rather than steer; and (7) value people, not just productivity. The New Public Service asks us to think carefully and critically about what public service is, why it is important, and what values ought to guide what we do and how we do it. It celebrates what is distinctive, important, and meaningful about public service and considers how we might better live up to those ideals and values. The revised fourth edition includes a new chapter that examines how the role and significance of these New Public Service values have expanded in practice and research over the past 15 years. Although the debate about governance will surely continue for many years, this compact, clearly written volume both provides an important framework for a public service based on citizen discourse and the public interest and demonstrates how these values have been put into practice. It is essential reading for students and serious practitioners in public administration and public policy.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"The first edition of this book was published just after 9/11, a time when renewed attention to public service was exemplified by the firefighters and other volunteers who reminded us all what the true value of public service is. However, with the Great Recession government has been used to prop up

markets and the Denhardt'sTM call for renewed attention to serving the public is sorely needed. New Public Management'sTM failure has been to equate government with market and substitute consumers for citizens. But, the Denhardt'sTM remind us that democracy, not consumer choice, must be the basis for government, and public service, not market service, is its primary function."

-Â Mildred E. Warner, Cornell University, USAÂ "This book is a great read full of insights that challenge our status quo ways of thinking. It is a 'must read' for everyone who cares about building a better public service." - Rosemary O'Leary, Edwin O. Stene Distinguished Professor of Public Administration, University of Kansas, USA

Janet V. Denhardt is Chester A. Newland Professor of Public Administration and Director of the Price School Sacramento Center at the University of Southern California, USA. Robert B. Denhardt is Professor and Director of Leadership Programs in the Price School of Public Policy at the University of Southern California, USA.

Three metaphors guide this excellent little book. The "Old Public Administration" featured the metaphor of "rowing." As the authors put it (page 169): ". . .the purpose of government was simply to deliver services efficiently, and that problems were to be addressed primarily by changing the organization's structure and control systems." The "rowing" refers to the hard work of public administration delivering services. The "New Public Management" uses a different metaphor, "steering." The authors note (page 13): "They are urged to 'steer, not row,' meaning they should not assume the burden of service delivery themselves, but, wherever possible, should define programs that others would then carry out, through contracting or other such relationships. . . .New Public Management [NPM] relies heavily on market mechanisms to guide public programs." And, finally, the preferred metaphor of the Denhardts, "serving." Their "New Public Service" would focus on "listening" to and "serving" the public. They observe that NPM forgets who owns the boat. That is, government belongs to the people, not the "steerers"; ". . .public administrators should focus on their responsibility to serve and empower citizens as they manage public organizations and implement public policy." (page 23). One of the more interesting themes that are addressed in this volume: NPM looks at people as customers and tries to figure out how best to make consumers satisfied; the authors of this volume argue that we are to serve citizens, not create satisfied customers. In a democracy, citizenship means something and the people should be engaged through the New Public Service. With its market-oriented perspective, according to the authors, NPM does not consider citizenship as a critical factor. This is a well written and thought provoking essay, well worth

reading by those interested in contemporary public administration, by the idea of public service, and by those wondering how democracy can thrive in a complex organizational world.

Easy reading and nice flow throughout, but it seems repetitive.

Required reading for my Masters course

As I indicated in the headline, this book is an easy read, which is good as the material is easy to comprehend. However, the authors didn't do so great in the area of making the material interesting to hold one's interest. I had to read this book as part of my MPA program. If I wasn't in this program, I would not have selected this book. I have read better books...sorry.

This is required reading for a graduate level Master in Public Administration course. It appears to provide a framework for current principles of public administration with a historical context culminating in service. The expanded edition provides an even more up-to-date application in the concluding chapter.

Mandatory for class, great as a kindle book. Felt repetitive

Bought this as a course textbook for an MPA program. It doesn't read like a textbook at all and I really enjoyed it!

Well written and provided good insights from respected scholars.

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