Counternarratives as Critical Perspectives in Public Administration Curricula

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This article argues for the inclusion of critical perspectives in public administration curricula to explore the historical and contemporary processes that contribute to disparity and injustice. The counternarratives examined in the article include social construction, inclusive feminism, critical urban planning, and democratic cultural pluralism. Critical perspectives or counternarratives are presented as challenges to hegemonic scripts that will aid in creating a workforce that is not only equipped to operate within a global society but understands the economic and social context that operationalize "others" in society.

Public administrators often navigate complex issues related to the social and cultural context of their respective environments. In an increasingly global society, cultural competency is more important than ever before, particularly in professions that require interactions with diverse constituents (Lopez-Littleton & Blessett, 2015). Cultural competency is defined as "a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency or those professions to work effectively in a cross-cultural situation" (cited in Bailey, 2005, p. 184). In this regard, it is important for public affairs and administration programs to adequately prepare students to be acutely aware of the ways in which intersectional identities inform interactions and decision-making, public policy development and implementation, and the management of public institutions and programs. The introduction of alternative and critical perspectives into the classroom specifically, but across public administration curricula broadly, is fundamental for understanding issues related to inequity, disparity, and injustice within society. Therefore, public administration programs must be intentional in their efforts to

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incorporate diverse perspectives to promote an awareness of, and offer exposure to, issues relevant to marginalized groups in society.

In 2009, the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA) revised its accreditation standards for programs of public affairs and administration to include a focus on the recruitment and retention of diverse students and faculty. The current standards also include, as one of their core competencies, that graduating students be able to "communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry" (COPRA, 2009, p. 7). Additionally, programs are mandated to provide evidence that students have the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities to serve as both professional and ethical actors of public institutions and programs. This type of accountability is important, as previous standards allowed programs to fully operate without concern or commitment to diversity, cultural competence, and inclusion. Such additions to the accreditation standards recognize the role public administration programs have in preparing future administrators to engage with heterogeneous constituents.

Public administration educators can aide in preparing students to be cognizant of the complex and multifaceted issues that sustain the status quo. For example, classroom discussions can examine who consistently benefits from or is burdened by policy decisions, explore the rationale for resource allocation in communities of color, or examine the differentiated due process and accountability structures of administrators working exclusively in low-income versus affluent neighborhoods. The incorporation of alternative scholarship situates knowledge and experiences outside of the dominant hegemonic discourse and can serve as an opportunity to rethink unquestioned assumptions about people, place, worth, and deservingness. Through innovative and interactive experiences, such as service learning or civic engagement projects, students are able to deconstruct theoretical principles and apply them in real-world scenarios. Under the guiding expertise of their professor, students can begin to reflect on any and all discrepancies regarding "the one best way" or explore other pragmatic strategies that may be advantageous to the context or population being served. Ultimately, the classroom should be an ideal place to intellectually interrogate ideas of difference, thus providing a safe space to explore varied perspectives and experiences.

Cultural competence is fostered through sustained engagement with people, contexts, and research that offer a critical or alternative perspective to hegemonic discourse. Undergraduate and graduate public administration programs that expose students to diverse scholarship, provide access to cultural training workshops, and utilize experiential learning opportunities support the development of culturally competent administrators. Therefore, within the confines of public administration programs, the integration of critical perspectives is key. For example, the #BlackLivesMatter movements in Ferguson, Baltimore, Chicago, and New York highlight the need for public administrators to be conscious of social, political, and economic factors that contribute to unrest. Culturally competent administrators are developed through exposure to critical perspectives and engagement with diverse constituents. Critical pedagogy can help public administrators be more sympathetic to the frustrations of residents who have experienced institutional racism and systemic injustice within public organizations.

This article presents four counternarratives as supplements to traditional hegemonic discourse within public administration curricula: social construction, inclusive feminism, critical urban planning, and democratic cultural pluralism. Each of these counternarratives represents contestations to normative public administration discussions of technical rationality,

objectivity, and neutrality. In this case, the four counternarratives recognize that history, context, language, and experience are relevant factors when training the next generation of public administrators. Furthermore, counternarratives also offer alternative ways to understand the outcomes of public policy decisions based on the lived experiences of persons directly impacted—a perspective often missing in traditional public administration scholarship and practice. Ultimately, it is argued that the presentation of counternarratives as a supplement to traditional hegemonic narratives aids in creating a workforce that is not only equipped to operate in a global society, but that also understands the systemic and social contexts that operationalize marginalized groups throughout society.

CRITICAL THEORY AS A PEDAGOGICAL IMPERATIVE

Shulman (2003) argued that excellent teaching is not a matter of knowing the latest techniques and technologies, but entails an ethical and moral commitment to students and the profession. This "pedagogical imperative" requires that teachers be concerned with the consequences of their work with students and take professional responsibility when deficiencies are identified (Shulman, 2003, para. 4). Deficiencies, in this case, refer to the missing voices and perspectives within program curricula across all levels of education—pre-kindergarten to graduate school. For students of color, Eurocentric curricula constitute an effective hegemonic

> "propaganda system" that works through the media to manufacture consent for socioeconomic, political, cultural *and* schooling practices that are unwarranted and inequitable, that meets the interests of those in positions of power, and that leads to outcomes that do not serve the interest of all citizens. (Lea & Sims, 2008, p. 188)

Therefore, the integration of critical perspectives in the classroom requires a pedagogical imperative—an intentional effort to rethink language, discourse, race, racism, and power dynamics.

Martin (2008) argues that "teachers must become aware of their ideological beliefs around race, as well as their expectations and personal beliefs—especially those that can have a negative impact on the academic achievement of Black and other minority children" (p. 162). Therefore, recognizing the ways hegemonic scripts underscore perceptions, interactions, and assumptions about Blackness and Whiteness are relevant issues to consider in the classroom. Colleges and universities are microcosms of the broader society and therefore should offer a suitable context to confront such issues as discrimination, police brutality, educational inequity, and environmental degradation in less threatening ways. While this is an ideal supposition, the reality is that the classroom has been a place where hegemony reinforces systems of oppression by viewing Eurocentrism as benign and normal, and students (or faculty) who question or disrupt the traditional classroom environment as problematic or deficient (Lea & Sims, 2008). This intransigence to change has resulted in students of color advocating for increased numbers of faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds, the creation of racial and ethnic studies departments, sensitivity training for faculty and staff, and better relations with campus police, among other things (Libresco, 2015; McCormick, 1990).

Diverse course offerings and the integration of alternative perspectives afford students and professors alike an opportunity to interrogate long-standing assumptions in order to "analyze,

TABLE 1
Examples of Mainstream Hegemonic Scripts

Hegemonic script	
Colorblindness	Neoliberalism
Corporatization/privatization of schools	Othering/dualistic thinking
Cultural deficit theory tracking	Rationalism
High-stakes testing	Scarcity model
Linearity	Standardization
Mainstream	Surveillance
Meritocracy	White privilege

Source: Adapted from Lea & Sims, 2008.

critique, and change the systems of inequality that disempowered" communities of color (Collins, 2013, p. 119). Lea and Sims (2008) introduce cultural scripts that function to reproduce the dominant socioeconomic and cultural hierarchy and juxtapose them against counterhegemonic narratives designed to interrupt Whiteness (see Tables 1 and 2). Within public administration, scripts such as colorblindness, neoliberalism, and rationalism are part of the traditional lexicon of research and discourse. The normative use of such terms stipulates specific parameters to understand people, policies, economics, and interactions with and among groups. The counterhegemonic scripts, on the other hand, represent critical perspectives, thus enabling challenges to the status quo with respect to thinking about, understanding, and developing solutions to address social ills, thus making public administration more accountable to all constituents.

Hegemony represents the hammer, and therefore all solutions are explained as if they were nails. However, the real world is more complex and nuanced than its typical presentation in classrooms, particularly with respect to discussions about disparity, inequity, or injustice. This reality requires alternative theory, methodologies, and perspectives to understand life in nontraditional ways. The use of counternarratives in the classroom represents a way to foster safer, supportive, and productive classroom environments for all students, not just those who hold a dominant perspective.

TABLE 2
Examples of Counterhegemonic Scripts

Counterhegemonic script	
Alternative family structures	Educulturalism
Anti-racism/sexism/classism/homophobia/ableism	Equity & caring pedagogy
Black feminism	Funds of knowledge/strength– based research
Counterhegemony	Pedagogy of empowerment
Critical multiculturalism	Postcolonialism
Education for social justice	Social construction
	tributaries

Source: Adapted from Lea & Sims, 2008.

COUNTERNARRATIVES AS CRITICAL THEORY

Social construction, inclusive feminism, critical urban planning, and democratic cultural pluralism represent counterhegemonic scripts that aid in creating a workforce that is not only equipped to operate within a global society, but that also understands the systemic and social contexts that operationalize "others" in American society. The identified counternarratives stress the intersectionality of race, gender, class, sexuality, and ability, among other personal characteristics, in public administration and management. Kimberle Crenshaw, a lawyer and legal scholar, coined the term "intersectionality" to contextualize the multiple oppressions faced by Black women in particular, but women of color broadly. Crenshaw (1989) argues:

> This focus on the most privileged group members marginalizes those who are multiply-burdened and obscures claims that cannot be understood as resulting from discrete sources of discrimination. I suggest further that this focus on otherwise privileged group members creates a distorted analysis of racism and sexism because the operative conceptions of race and sex become grounded in experiences that actually represent only a subset of a much more complex phenomenon. (p. 140)

Therefore, an ability to construct or deconstruct social ills beyond traditional hegemony may help facilitate better engagement with groups that have been marginalized by policy decisions. The inclusion of counternarratives as critical perspectives in public administration curricula offers students the opportunity to evaluate both traditional public administration scripts and current social issues through a critical lens.

Social construction, the dominant discourse that shapes perceptions of social groups, is discussed first.

Social Construction

Public administrators can engage, intentionally or unintentionally, in manufacturing realities about the "other" (Alkadry & Blessett, 2010). Schneider and Ingram's (1993) social construction of target populations theory recognizes that hegemonic scripts have been used to marginalize populations through (a) cultural and popular images of individuals and groups burdened by public policy, (b) the policy design and agenda-setting process, and (c) the maintenance of the status quo by politicians. Blessett (2015) argues,

> Traditional methodologies in policy analysis ignored the influence of history and politics in the development of public policies and diminished the influence and authority of discourse, rhetoric, and narratives in informing decisions. However, the SCTP [social construction of target populations] recognizes the significance of context and the importance of developing counter-narratives to challenge the dominant discourse that informs which groups are deserving or unworthy of public resources and assistance. (p. 6)

Language, discourse, and the development of knowledge are, therefore, contingent upon the experiences, concepts, ideologies, and images of all groups of people, not just professional public administrators or those deemed experts. Farmbry (2009) recognizes the juxtaposition of positionality and the production of knowledge, whereby the experts and intellectuals are

involved with the shaping of constructed realities. In this regard, "the expert frequently has a monopoly upon what is perceived as Truth within a society" (Farmbry, 2009, p. 5).

Additionally, Gaynor (2014) argues, "the concepts and groupings developed by the powerful often serve as the dominant narratives that shape normative understandings of the social world" (p. 350). Where hegemonic scripts typically distance public administrators from the public with respect to governing, administrative processes, and productions of knowledge, social construction recognizes the importance of context, perspectives, and experience in the development of authentic and relevant sources of knowledge production. Western scholars and artists in the study of the East best exemplify the use of hegemonic scripts as unsupported sources of knowledge and Truth. For example, Said (1979) argues that the West made up "the Orient" by using anecdotes and statements drawn primarily from Western colonial functionaries (administrators) in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries about their experiences in colonized areas that existed within the fictional boundaries of this Orient. Therefore, "Orientalism" is a field of study of, and an attitude about, the Orient. However, the major problem about the study of the Orient, or Orientalism, is that there is no geographic, ethnic, racial, national, ideological, religious, or linguistic identity associated with this Orient. While the creation of knowledge or the development of a field of study is not new, how is it that schools and faculty are dedicated to the study of an Orient that does not exist?

Orientalism is not about the Orient or how imaginary it was. It is, rather, about the West, and its ability to imagine, produce, reproduce, and reduce the realities of the "other." Reduce, because these constructions are often about reducing the multiple realities to one reality—often a stereotype that has nothing to do with the lived experiences of the (perceived) weaker subjects. Orientalizing is a methodology used by the West to define the reality of the East from the perspective of the West, or of the characteristics that the West does not wish to be associated with. Therefore, to effectively combat pejorative connotations about "others" in society, social construction enables the lived experiences of nondominant groups to be at the forefront of public debate. Social construction is built upon the thesis of ontological relativity, which recognizes that existence depends on a worldview, and no worldview is uniquely determined by empirical or sense data about the world (Patton, 2002). Jun (2006) advocates social construction as "a framework for transforming reality, rather than explaining how bureaucracy works in a historical, legal, or political context or promoting new management strategies in order to improve organizational efficiency" (p. 10). As a counternarrative, social construction places value on the lived experiences, voices, and perspectives of the marginalized other. Social construction accepts that knowledge is situational, context-specific, informed by history, race, gender, sexuality, and a host of other factors. The authors advocate that the use of social construction as a method of inquiry and interrogation may help public administrators become responsive to broader factions of society.

Next, inclusive feminism is discussed to illustrate the application of intersectionality within public administration instruction.

Inclusive Feminism

Although feminist literature has been around for at least a century, public administration has not fully embraced its theories and ideologies. Feminism's roots began at the Seneca Falls

Convention in 1848, when men and women gathered to fight for suffrage rights for women. Subsequently, the civil rights and social movements of the 1960s defined the second wave of feminism, as the focus was typically to raise the consciousness of women by questioning patriarchy, heteronormativity, and "traditional" gender roles. During this time, concepts like diversity, affirmative action, and social equity became part of the language of public administration. Finally, the third wave of feminism began to incorporate the analytical components of postmodernism, postcolonialism, and critical perspectives to deconstruct assumptions about womanhood, the human body, and sexuality. Collectively, each era sought to extend the conversation about the worth and role of women at home, in the workplace, and in society. Despite these efforts, feminism, postmodernism, and critical theory remain sparsely integrated into public affairs and administration curricula. Therefore, the authors propose the use of inclusive feminism as a way to fully understand and contextualize the nuanced diversity that exists among all women, but specifically women of color.

Currently, feminist perspectives in public administration offer insight into the juxtaposition and contradiction of public (men) versus private (women) lives, and of masculine (leadership, objectivity, and hierarchy) versus feminine (subordination, responsiveness, and deference) qualities within the context of leading and managing public institutions (DeHart-Davis, Marlow, & Pandey, 2006; Hutchinson & Mann, 2004; Stivers, 2002). Additionally, public administration literature has focused on women's role and representation in the workplace (Alkadry & Tower, 2013; Connell, 2006), their images and value orientations (DeHart-Davis, Marlow, & Pandey, 2006; Stivers, 2002), and their intellectual contributions to the field (Condit & Hutchinson, 1997). However, the hegemony that embodies public administration (e.g., rational, White, male, heterosexual, affluent perspectives) ignores the intersectionality that exists within society. As a result, public administration maintains a narrowed outlook on the world that proves to be inadequate within an increasingly diverse society.

Stivers (2002) argues that "feminist theory offered new ideas about power, about the nature of organizations, and about leadership and professionalism; it brought to light fundamental ways in which women have shaped society" (p. 2). While this broad definition is instructive, it assumes "women" as White women, excluding issues at the intersection of race and gender. Further recognition is needed to adequately address the needs of women of color within the public and private spheres, particularly as their realities are oftentimes diametrically opposed to what is articulated in mainstream feminist scholarship, discourse, and practice (hooks, 1981, 1989). McGinn and Patterson (2005) acknowledge the diversity of feminist perspectives (liberal feminism, radical feminism, Marxist feminism, socialist feminism, psychoanalytic feminism, cultural feminism lesbian feminism, womanism, multicultural global feminism, postmodern feminism, and so forth) and the contributions of each to an enlightened discussion of where and how women "fit" or navigate a predominantly male-oriented society.

Such inclusivity responds to the critique at the root of the mainstream feminist movement by women of color who argued that "sexism and racism have so informed the perspective of American historiographers that they have tended to overlook and exclude the effort of black women in discussions of the American women's rights movement" (hooks, 1981, p. 160). Transgendered women of color represent another group of women that is often invisible in mainstream and even periphery discussions about women's rights and feminism. Therefore, an appreciation for the experiences of women positioned at the intersection of race, class,

culture, gender, and sexuality should be purposefully and explicitly considered when reconstructing and reimagining power structures, relationship dynamics, and ultimately policy decisions. Thus, the term "inclusive feminism" is reflective of the multiple oppressions experienced by women of color who live within, what bell hooks describes as the "imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy" culture of U.S. society (hooks, 2013, p. 4). Scholars like Crenshaw (1989, 1995), Davis (1983, 1990) and hooks (1981, 1989) have argued for decades that a feminism that is inclusive of all women has the potential to alter the trajectory of the feminist movement, because to be familiar with multiple forms of repression informs holistic solutions about injustice based on experience and empathy.

The inclusion of hooks's "imperialist supremacist capitalist patriarchy" framework into public affairs and administration curricula can help to explicitly illuminate the influence of power, money, and the consolidation of resources on a global scale, but, more specifically, on the experiences of women of color in the United States. hooks (2013) argues:

> White supremacist thinking continues to be the invisible and visible glue that keeps White folks connected irrespective of many other differences. Politically, White supremacist thinking was created to serve this purpose. Imprinted on the consciousness of every White child at birth, reinforced by the culture, White supremacist thinking tends to function unconsciously. This is the primary reason it is so difficult to challenge and change. (p. 3)

Within this context, the mindset of superior and inferior races has penetrated colonized lands across the globe, leading to cultural imperialism, economic exploitation, and political repression of native persons by the country's invaders.

Inclusive feminism can be used in public administration to pose the difficult questions about, for instance, how disparity emerges, the role of institutions in perpetuating inequality, why and how communities of color are adversely represented by the most disparaging quality-of-life statistics, the individual and societal consequences of being multiply burdened by administrative actions and public policy, and defining the responsibility of public administrators to become problem solvers to society's most complex and pressing issues. It seems appropriate that public administrators within democratic institutions should not only be concerned about these issues, but also be prepared to address them. For example, inclusive feminism can be used to contextualize the vast disparities faced by women of color in response to a host of quality-of-life indicators, such as decreased quality of life, declining health outcomes, inadequate educational and employment opportunities, and political and economic isolation. Davis (1983, 1990) challenged that "the feminization of poverty," which has been socially constructed as a problem disproportionate to low-income Black women, has resulted in punitive domestic policies that have systematically contributed to widespread inequality and disparity.

Reagan's rhetoric of the "welfare queen" was effective in shaping public opinion and policy decisions about the poor (Gustafson, 2009). Such discourse and imagery resulted in "racial stigma [that] was pivotal to the junction of hyperghetto and prison, the taint of 'blackness' was epicentral to the restrictive and punitive overhaul of social welfare at century's end" (Wacquant, 2010, p. 83). Therefore, an interpretive examination of language, policy actions, and their subsequent consequences may help shed light on the gross inequities experienced by women of color. Currently available data for the United States and U.S. territories confirm the harsh reality that women of color face in today's society. According to the Office of Minority Health (n.d.)

- in 2009, Puerto Rican infants were twice as likely to die from causes related to low birth weight when compared to White infants;
- although breast cancer was diagnosed less frequently in African American women in 2010, they were 40 percent more likely to die than White women;
- as of 2011, African American women had twenty times the HIV rate of White women, while Latino females and American Native women had four and three times the AIDS rate of White females respectively; and
- in 2011, suicide attempts for Latino girls in grades 9–12 were 70 percent higher than for White girls in the same age group.

Such evidence ought to spark outrage and concern about why certain factions of society are overly represented in some of the most disparaging quality-of-life indicators monitored.

Even within movements of equality (e.g., feminist, LGBT, civil rights), women of color have been a disregarded voice, despite their significant contributions in and across movements. As a result, the needs of women of color often go unrecognized and unaddressed. An awareness and validation of their invisibility will enable a more comprehensive understanding of the issues that are unique to communities of color. Inclusive feminism is not designed to produce guilt or defensiveness by White persons in society, but can be used as a foundation to create a space for the reconciliation of past actions, so that the same mistakes are not repeated moving forward. Inclusive feminism represents an opportunity to hold in high esteem the voices and experiences of women of color, including transgender women of color, as scholars, practitioners, and decision-makers for the occurrences of their daily lives. Juxtaposing the voices of underrepresented women against dominant narratives is an important way to begin to repair damaged relationships across stakeholder groups.

Critical urban planning serves as the third counternarrative and explores the use of critical theory in teaching issues related to community development and the built environment.

Critical Urban Planning

Public administrators are at the forefront of policy development, implementation, evaluation, citizen engagement, and shaping the built environment. Hegemonic scripts focused on neoliberal and rationalist doctrines contributed to the lopsided urban redevelopment policies of the twentieth century that were responsible for disparate development, residential dispossession, neighborhood destruction, and the dissolution of social and cultural institutions (Alkadry & Blessett, 2010; Blessett, 2012; Dunn, 1997; Fullilove, 2004; Hirsch, 1983). The result was harmful for low-income communities of color, while beneficial to affluent Whites and their communities by way of land accumulation, commercial investment, and business expansion (Mohl, 2001; Wilson, 2007). Ultimately, these actions were unjust and discriminated against marginalized populations.

Racism, both hidden and revealed, is rooted in the very social institutions and structures that were created to ensure justice and opportunity for all. Therefore, within the confines of an institution, policies and outcomes will consistently work against the interests of powerless groups. For example, tools like zoning and eminent domain were initially developed to protect and promote the public interest (Levy, 2009). However, Ross and Leigh (2000) identify these

same devices in the hands of planners as a misappropriation of power, especially given the consequences of their use for Black communities. These contradictions substantiate the racialized histories of academic disciplines that give legitimate authority to the discriminatory and intolerant actions of practitioners. In conjunction with the practices of administrators, the depth and extensiveness of inequity are maintained and perpetuated by institutional structures of society.

Taylor and Cole (2001) define structural racism as

> a distributive system that determines the possibilities and constraints within which people of color are forced to act. The system involves the operation of racialized structural relationships that produce the unequal distribution of material resources, such as jobs, income, housing, neighborhood conditions, and access to opportunities. (p. 5)

With respect to cities, Jacobs (1969) recognized that neoclassical economic theory resulted in complex and iterative processes governing how rudimentary economic processes develop and under what conditions they prosper. Accordingly, land, labor, capital, and advanced technology are not sufficient for development to occur: innovation keyed to the replacement of costly imports is the primary driver of regional economic wealth. Therefore, technological innovation occurs best (and most sustainably) under conditions where local ingenuity matches available resources with incipient demand for goods and services.

Klein (2007), like Jacobs (1969, 1984), offered critiques about modernist planning principles, economic shibboleths, and the dark consequences of neoclassical economics, while advocating for localism and the decentralization of decision-making. Subsequently, Brenman and Sanchez (2012) presented a new framework that recognizes that while there are significant challenges to the ensuring of equitable interactions and outcomes within governance structures, recognition of diversity and meaningful social equity interventions will help move the United States toward a fully inclusive society. Brenman and Sanchez (2012) recommend that planners and policymakers must be educated to:

- Better inform planning and policy students and citizens about equity issues,
- Help to strengthen the message of advocates,
- Respect the strength of the community,
- Make equity a requirement for being "green,"
- Increase educational opportunities for all,
- Learn from successes and mistakes,
- Create more equitable policies,
- Take stronger action to counter discrimination,
- Enhance community cohesion, and
- Increase accessibility.

As such, the inclusion in contemporary public administration education of strategies diametrically opposed to normative public administration doctrine and administrative actions may help students to critically examine traditional theories and principles of urban planning and the built environment. A critical urban planning perspective offers students a critique of standard assumptions and procedures that are harmful to vulnerable populations.

The final counternarrative, democratic cultural pluralism, argues for the consideration of context and structures when evaluating traditional democratic principles.

Democratic Cultural Pluralism

Social justice, political philosophy, and democratic theory are key concepts in public administration. Traditional justice theorists like Dahl (2000), Dryzek (2002), and Rawls (2005) serve as a starting point to begin discussions related to social justice. However, they fail to critically explore the existing contextual and social structures that cause the injustices they discuss. Their approach ignores existing context and structures that serve as determinants for disparity and injustice. Rawls (2005), in his theory of justice, claims that power is a redistributable good. He suggests that greater amounts of power can be shared with those who have lesser amounts. Young (1990), however, argues that power is a relational phenomenon, not a good that can simply be redistributed. The ability to hold power is contingent upon others who acquiesce and, therefore, cannot be distributed. In this example, the structures, contexts, policies, and actions that serve as constitutive forces to foster power imbalances are ignored.

Issues related to the democratic ideal of the United States comprise a context in which traditional, hegemonic theorists often discount the lived experiences of marginalized populations. While theoretically (and for White populations), this ideal is grounded within principles of justice, fairness, and equal application for all citizens, indigenous and non-White populations do not experience these proclamations in the same way. The contradictions that exist within and across societal and political structures reinforce second-class status for groups that do not fit into normative conceptions of Whiteness. Lorde (2007) argues:

> Much of Western European history conditions us to see human differences in simplistic opposition to each other: dominant/subordinate, good/bad, up/down, superior/inferior. In a society where the good is defined in terms of profit rather than in terms of human need, there must always be some group of people who, through systematized oppression, can be made to feel surplus, to occupy the place of the dehumanized inferior. Within this society, that group of people is made up of Black and Third World people, working-class people, older people, and women. (p. 114)

Difference justifies the existing oppressive structure of society, which is manifested through exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, forced assimilation, and violence (hooks, 1989; Young, 1990).

Cultural imperialism, or the expression of a dominant culture as normative, ordains that those cultures, experiences, or ideologies that do not fit a predescribed standard are abnormal (Young, 1990). "To experience cultural imperialism means to experience how the dominant meanings of society render the particular perspective of one's own group invisible at the same time as they stereotype a group and mark it 'Other' " (Young 1990, p. 59). Cultural imperialists dictate group values, forcing those who do not fit this perspective to assimilate. Normative perspectives are often used to develop policies, implement social and political structures, and serve as ideological standards. "Those living under cultural imperialism find themselves defined from the outside, positioned, placed, by a network of dominant meanings they experience as arising from elsewhere, from those with whom they do not identify and who do not identify with them" (Young 1990, p. 59). The branding of "other" communicates inferiority, ultimately oppressing those who do not conform to the standards set forth by imperialists.

In practice, the manifestation of cultural imperialism is evident though social and public policies that disproportionately impact communities of color. For example, mass incarceration

has ravaged Black and Latino communities for almost three decades. The Sentencing Project (2016) estimates that more than 60 percent of the people in prison are now racial and ethnic minorities. For Black males in their thirties, one in ten is in prison or jail on any given day. These trends have been intensified by the disproportionate impact of the "war on drugs," in which two thirds of all persons in prison for drug offenses are people of color (The Sentencing Project, 2016). This harsh and striking reality further recognizes the impact of hegemonic scripts in creating and reinforcing injustice.

Academically, cultural imperialism and normative conceptions are perpetuated by traditional public administration theorists, their teachings, and subsequently, public administration curricula. Students are universally taught that effectiveness and efficiency are the foundational pillars of public administration. Yet these pillars assume sameness and ignore the differences between residents and communities. For an organization to be most effective and efficient, considerations of difference are implausible. These pillars, as Frederickson (2010) argues, ignore issues of equity, fairness, and justice. Additionally, the foundational pillars ignore the existence of systemic and institutional oppression that creates inequitable outcomes and propagates the privilege of men and White individuals.

Goodnow (1900) defines politics as the policies or expression of the state's will and administration as the executing authority of said policies. Considering Goodnow wrote this work in the early twentieth century, just 37 years after the Emancipation Proclamation, the question of whose will arises. The needs of Black and Native people, during this time, were not a part of the state's will. The policies executed by administrators offered governance for landowners, not for those recently freed from chattel slavery or pushed to areas of the country that were not their homelands. Oftentimes, such discussions are acontextual and ahistorical with respect to the social, economic, and political realities of the time and are missing from the analyses of students studying public administration. Although the social and historical framework surrounding the development of foundational theories is critical to understanding their role in twenty-first-century administration, the circumstances surrounding such conditions are typically not offered, especially from the perspective and experiences of those burdened by administrative decisions.

For example, students today are educated by narratives suggesting that the twenty-first-century United States is postracial. Through democratic cultural pluralism, students can be exposed to theoretical foundations that identify cultural norms as not being universal and neutral. Using this theory, students learn about the potential implications of not seeing or existing beyond race in the United States. This recognition offers students an opportunity to challenge their individual biases and prejudices, and begin to develop and strengthen their cultural competency skills. Such praxis prepares those in the field of public administration to acknowledge, recognize, and embrace the construction of counternarratives in response to long-standing traditions and beliefs. Embracing, not transcending, group difference enables students to make sound judgments based on information from varied perspectives. Democratic cultural pluralism teaches them not to transcend difference but to embrace it in policy development, decision-making, and administration.

TEACHING WITH CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES: FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

This section builds the bridge between theory and practice and illustrates how critical perspectives can be incorporated into core public administration courses. The recommendations below

are not designed to pair traditional public administration scholars with critical theorists in order to simply counterbalance perspectives. Counternarratives are advocated as a way to challenge status quo assumptions, ideologies, and concepts about people, place, worth, and deservingness. Critical perspectives shift the analytical focus from individual deficiencies to broader systemic and institutional failures that result in divergent experiences for affluent and impoverished groups. Such analysis represents a holistic approach to problem-solving, policy development, and citizen engagement.

Although not an exhaustive list of courses, these examples help to clarify how instructors may apply critical perspectives in public affairs and administration courses. The critical perspectives discussed in this article can be integrated into all of the subject areas within the public administration curriculum.

In introductory courses, critical perspectives can be incorporated in conjunction with prominent scholars like Follet, Wilson, Taylor, Gulick, and Waldo. Traditional and critical perspectives, like those previously discussed, can be compared/contrasted, analyzed for their strengths and weaknesses, and discussed alongside one another within the context of real-world applications. This juxtaposition can help students think more broadly about the issues pertinent to administrative action, thus promoting creativity and innovation when considering historical and current issues. Introductory courses can explore issues related to equity, diversity, and cultural competence. For example Johnson's (2013) discussion on the social construction of difference sets the stage to critically explore leadership theories like trait theory, situational leadership, and transformational leadership, among others. Instructors may challenge students to consider how social construction influences their perceptions of (effective) leadership work with and against one another. The inclusion of counternarratives encourages varied ways of seeing and a deeper understanding of the practice of public administration.

In courses on budgeting and financial management, Jacobs (1969, 1984) and Klein (2007) can serve not only as a counternarrative to traditional theories, but their frameworks can be used to contextualize real-world problems. Students think of different ways to address social problems beyond the market-driven principles that dominate practice. Subsequently, critical urban planning and democratic cultural pluralism can be used to examine the economic, social, political, and cultural implications of local, state, and federal budgets and financial decisions for historically marginalized groups. Budgeting decisions are often about priorities. Issues of race, gender, class, and sexuality can be aggregated to examine the consequences of budget decisions, particularly with regard to the delivery of public services.

In courses on human resources, inclusive feminism, social construction, and democratic pluralism can be used to evaluate the power structures and relationship dynamics within public institutions. These theories can be used to explain how leadership images have been recognized as "fundamentally gendered and linked to a sex-based division of social life into public and domestic spheres that disadvantages women and hinders public administration from promoting a politically compelling version of virtue" (Stivers, 1993, p. 8). In the twenty-first-century, U.S. public sector women continue to be heavily segregated in female-dominated lower-paying agencies and occupations, and have to pay a higher social cost for their career success, or higher career cost for their personal life decisions (Alkadry & Tower, 2013; Tower & Alkadry, 2008). Furthermore, democratic cultural pluralism represents a theoretical approach that provides a political and social praxis that affirms difference and reconceptualizes equity. By criticizing

the values of assimilation theory and traditional politics, democratic cultural pluralism abandons the status quo and serves as a counternarrative to cultural imperialism, recognizes equity among socially and culturally differentiated groups, and calls for "new channels for directly presenting moral forms of life which are not in the majority and yet demand acknowledgement" (as cited in Gaynor, 2014, p. 357).

As the core tenet of Young's (1990) politics of difference, democratic cultural pluralism looks not to eliminate or transcend group difference, but to embrace it. A foundational element of this social and political approach is the notion that there is equity among social groups that innately experience social and cultural difference. Most important is the mutual respect and affirmation of group difference. To ignore difference is to ignore historical disparity, injustice, and the social and political structures in place that have marginalized and oppressed. Inclusion of this work in human resource classes serves to counteract traditional narratives deeply embedded within society and validates the experiences of everyone—not a selected few, thus helping to ensure that the classroom and the workplace are indeed safe spaces for all.

In public policy courses, democratic cultural pluralism demonstrates that public administrators must consider difference in drafting and implementing policy. With respect to critical urban planning, understanding the historical, social, and economic contexts of the communities being examined encourages students to foresee the potential negative implications of community development policies. For instance, in discussing community development policies and the placement of sports stadiums/arenas in urban communities, instructors can parallel cultural imperialism with its counternarrative, democratic pluralism, in helping students think through policy options, alternative strategies, and negative/positive consequences. Instruction based on the Brenman and Sanchez (2012) framework prepares students to value, and work to achieve, equity and inclusivity when designing and implementing policy. Instruction based on the inclusion of critical perspectives challenges students to develop well-rounded rather than myopic judgments. The integration of critical urban planning into public administration curricula can be used to help students find comfort in challenging grand narratives, the status quo, or long-standing doctrines that support the privileged few at the expense of many. The existing reality for communities and countries adversely impacted by neoliberal policies demonstrates the need for a critique of traditional schools of thought, particularly as popular discourse "blames the victim" without any association to the intentional policy decisions of politicians and administrators.

Instructors leading research methods and design courses use qualitative and quantitative data to impart the varying methodologies to students. The inclusion of social construction in methods courses, again, situates data within the context students are evaluating. In the field of public administration, statistics are often used to support political and social ideology, policy development, program implementation, and even cuts in funding or service provisions. A critical perspective helps to evaluate data with broader considerations. Additionally, students may, with knowledge stemming from critical perspectives, consider the stories not told by the data. For practitioners, understanding statistical analysis is just one aspect of knowing. Administrators who are able to read between the numbers can make informed decisions that may impact communities and their residents. Additionally, numbers and research findings can be powerful tools in the hand of administrators to "Orientalize" the other. Including Said's (1979) work can aid students in understanding the process and impact of Orientalizing underrepresented groups (e.g., transgender and gender nonconforming persons or people who are differently abled).

TABLE 3
Applications for Counterhegemonic Scripts in Public Administration Curricula

Hegemonic script	Traditional theorist	Counterhegemonic script	Counterhegemonic theorist
Justice	J. Rawls	Democratic Cultural	I. Young
Fairness	R. Dahl	pluralism	b. hooks
Democratic theory			
Effectiveness	W. Wilson	Social construction	A. Schneider and
Efficiency	G. Allison	Orientalism	H. Ingram
Technical rationality	H. Simon		E. Said
Politics vs. administration			
Feminist perspectives in public	C. Stivers	Inclusive feminism	A. Davis
administration	M. Guy	Intersectionality	b. hooks
Gender equity			K. Crenshaw
Community redevelopment	L. Corbusier	Critical urban planning	N. Klein
Planning/built environment	P. Geddes		J. Jacobs
Public policy design	R. Moses		M. Fullilove

Note: The suggestions for application are not designed to simply pair traditional scholars with critical theorists in order to align perspectives. Counternarratives are advocated as a way to challenge overarching status quo assumptions, ideologies, and concepts about people, place, worth, and deservingness.

Instructors can make modern connections to the processes of "othering" in today's society, thereby offering a perspective to which many students have not been exposed.

As Table 3 exhibits, critical theories can be used to supplement discussions related to the intellectual history of public administration. Ultimately, the integration of critical perspectives in the curriculum broadens the skills, knowledge, and abilities of students. In this capacity, students are better prepared to meet the needs of a diverse constituency, while also considering the democratic implications of their actions. History is a powerful teacher and offers numerous examples of what not to do. However, it is important that students be given a solid foundation regarding the conscious and unconscious decisions made by public administrators and their impact on marginalized communities. This article argues for the integration and use of critical perspectives in public administration curricula. The authors recognize that discussions of race and social inequality in the classroom are difficult. If handled improperly, the sensitivity of the subject matter may prevent meaningful dialogues that explicitly challenge the root causes of discrimination, injustice, and oppression.

CONCLUSION

The importance of presenting counternarratives alongside the narratives that have historically dominated education, public policy, and public administration is illuminated through an exploration of social constructions, inclusive feminism, critical urban planning, and democratic cultural pluralism. Ultimately, if the field of public administration as a whole, and its faculty and students more specifically, are not apprised of alternative, critical perspectives, how can Frederickson's (2010) call for social equity truly serve as the third pillar on which the discipline

stands? How will future administrators understand real-world problems and the contexts in which they incubate?

We call upon public administration programs and faculty to incorporate these and other critical perspectives into all coursework and subsequent training, rather than restricting discussions to the week's lesson on racial diversity in human resources or conversations surrounding ethics. In addition to providing an enhanced framework for seeing the administrators' work, the critical perspectives presented will promote critical thinking by managers. History, literature, and classroom discussion that challenges the traditional heteronormative, patriarchal, cultural-imperialist perspectives are vital to developing a workforce that is well equipped to interact with an ever diversifying global society. The inclusion of such scholarship in public administration curricula will develop thoughtful and judicious administrators in both the public and the nonprofit sectors.

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