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The Role of Professional Norms and Beliefs in the Agency-Client Relations of Natural Resource Bureaucracies

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ABSTRACT

Natural resources agencies react in different ways to population changes. Several political science theories of agency-client relations have evolved to explain these reactions: Capture theory, cooptation theory, and agency resource theory. These three theories are applied to two California natural resource and agricultural agencies to test their utility in explaining the particular actions of bureaucrats. It is found that all three focus on institutional factors alone and thus provide only a partial explanation of bureaucratic action. The analysis advances by considering professional norms and beliefs of agency staff as an additional factor to augment the explanatory power of the existing theories.

INTRODUCTION

Much has been written on public support as an important bureaucratic resource and the ability to mobilize the public as an indicator of agency success. A loyal clientele not only serves as a source of support in legislative and other battles, it also constitutes a degree of control over the agency's external environment. That being the case, one could expect that agencies would respond positively to opportunities for enlarging their clientele as a means of maintaining or enhancing agency power[1]. Such an opportunity might arise when the population pool from which an agency's clientele is drawn undergoes a significant change. When such a population shift occurs, will agencies seek out a new or expanded clientele?

In the process of addressing this question, traditional political science theories of agency-client relations will be supplemented with sociological understandings of norms and values. This approach brings the bureaucrat more to the center of the analysis. It restores to the analysis the understanding that the actions of bureaucrats are the actions of persons and

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1. Holden, Imperialism in Bureaucracy, 60 Am. Pol. Sci. Rev. 943, 951 (1966).

that therefore we must not, in the course of considering institutional factors, neglect the personal factors such as professional norms that shape individual action.

In this article current theories of client relations are applied to explain actions by staff of two California state natural resources agencies in terms of maintaining or extending their relationships with the public after rapid and massive population shifts. The article concludes that the existing theories provide only a partial explanation of why the agency staff either continued to embrace their traditional clientele or instead responded to the concerns of the changing population. An understanding of the professional norms and beliefs of agency staff augments the explanatory power of the existing theories which is important if public policy is to be built upon them. The additional explanatory factor expands the range of the existing theories and should be integrated with them. This argument proceeds in three parts. First the existing theories are discussed. In these theories, the focus is on the institution. Second, the general influence of professional norms and beliefs on agency actions is examined. In this section, we shift our attention to the people in the institution. Finally the influence of professional norms and beliefs on agency action is considered in two case studies. These case studies show not only that professional norms and beliefs affect agency action but also that their source sometimes lies outside the agency itself. Hence, theories which focus only on the institution unduly constrict us in our search for ways to increase agency responsiveness.

Theories of Agency-Client Relations

The existing literature on agency-client relations in natural resource agencies reflects three related perspectives, each focusing on the nature of the agency's manipulation of and by its environment including its clientele: capture theory, cooptation theory, and agency resource theory. The theories are similar in that each considers agency/client relations as a factor that affects bureaucratic action and/or success. They differ from each other in whether they consider the agency or the clientele to be controlling and why.

Capture Theory: Capture theory holds that an agency's clientele may come to control the agency thereby deflecting it from its mandated mission. The organizational environment controls the agency. Capture theory is conventionally applied to regulatory agencies which are linked by their mission to a specific regulated clientele. The Bureau of Land Management (hereinafter BLM) has often been considered to be the classic case of capture among natural resource agencies.[2] This characterization of the

2. *See* P. Foss, Politics and Grass: the Administration of Grazing on the Public Domain (1960); P. Culhane, Public Lands Politics (1981).

BLM stems from the 1930s when the first director of the Grazing Service established local advisory boards elected by local ranchers to which he relinquished considerable authority and which in turn prevented the agency from controlling stocking levels. Culhane[3] describes Grazing Service and BLM field managers as standing in a "vassal relationship to the district advisory board" and notes that early personnel policies emphasized "practical experience, with the result that many early agency staff were former ranchers or ranchers' sons (the Grazing Service and early BLM were not noted for hiring women).

Culhane has variously defined capture as the agency coming to identify with a hostile and homogeneous constituency and abandoning its proper mission, as "institutionalize[d] differential client group access to and influence on decisionmaking processes," and as cooptation by the clientele.[4] It follows from this that there are gradations of capture and different degrees to which the staff of captured agencies adopt the viewpoint of their clientele. Common to all of them, however, is the clear influence of the clientele specified by the agency's mission on agency action and some degree of coincidence of the viewpoints of the agency staff and the clientele. In respect to opportunities for expanding clientele, capture theory suggests that captured agencies are unlikely to reach out to new clientele in the face of active opposition from their existing clientele.

Cooptation Theory: Selznick's[5] classic work on the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) described "cooptation," our second theory, as a process by which an agency manipulates the organizational environment to its own advantage. He held that organizations can establish necessary legislative and political support by developing and maintaining a satisfied clientele but that such strategies can lead to loss of agency autonomy. In Selznick's analysis cooptation/capture is actually a two way street: the agency's manipulation of its organizational environment leads to the agency being manipulated. TVA explicitly attempted to prevent opposition from local interests, namely the land grant colleges and cooperative extension, by coopting them into the TVA organization—that is, by establishing constituency relations with and through local institutions rather than directly with local people. Selznick showed that this strategy had the unanticipated effect of shaping and inhibiting TVA policy in accordance with the wishes of the "coopted" organizations rather than with its own charter and mandate. In so doing, TVA modified some of its original objectives, such as serving blacks and poor farmers, because they were unacceptable to the local institutions. Cooptation differs from capture in

3. P. Culhane, *supra* note 2, at 91 (1981).
4. *Id.* at 27, 324, 336.
5. P. Selznick, TVA and the Grass Roots: A Study in the Sociology of Formal Organizations (1966).

that capture carries more of a connotation of takeover whereas cooptation carries the connotation of trade-offs. Holden,[6] for example, suggests that an agency may be unable to expand its clientele because of obligations to the originally coopted constituency, who have what he calls a "first mortgage" on the agency's resources. Thus, agencies relying on cooptive strategies may be constrained from adopting a new clientele.

Agency Resource Theory: The "agency resource" perspective of Rourke[7] and Clarke and McCool[8] considers agency power to be based on two sets of resources—the expertise, knowledge and information available to it and its ability to mobilize support either from a clientele or the general public. Agency actions and policy will reflect the relative strength of these resources. Proponents of the perspective argue that agencies will, therefore, cultivate or try to establish a socially acceptable clientele whose support it can command when necessary. In this case, the external environment is a resource to be mobilized and manipulated by the agency in protecting or expanding its power base. The agency resource perspective would suggest that the likelihood that an agency will embrace a new clientele depends upon the instrumental value of that clientele to the agency.

Constituency Relations in a Changing Environment

Constituency relations are brought into particularly clear focus when there has been a change in the potential client public that would allow or encourage the agency to augment or change its clientele. With the exception of Barton's[9] study of the Department of Agriculture and Mazmanian and Nieneber's[10] study of the Corps of Engineers, relatively little has been written on this topic. The few existing studies show that agencies do turn their backs on opportunities to expand their clientele. Contrary to conventional wisdom and Holden's theories about bureaucratic entrepreneurs, Barton showed that the Department of Agriculture made the conscious decision to continue to serve agricultural producers despite pressure within the department and the obvious political expediency of adopting consumers as a clientele when faced with losses in Congress due to the dwindling political power of its traditional clientele. Mazmanian and Nienaber's research in the early 1970s found that despite the

6. Holden, *supra* note 1, at 945.

7. F. Rourke, Bureaucracy, Politics and Public Policy (1984).

8. J. Clarke & D. McCool, Staking out the Terrain. Power Differentials Among Natural Resource Management Agencies (1985).

9. Barton, *Food, Agriculture, and Administrative Adaptation to Political Change*, Pub. Admin. Rev., March-April 1976, at 148.

10. D. Mazmanian & J. Nienaber, Can Organizations Change? Environmental Protection, Citizen Participation, and the Corps of Engineers (1979).

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirement that federal agencies widen their constituency by involving the public in the decision-making process, only the Army Corps of Engineers had made discernible progress in this regard.

It is in examining the apparently paradoxical behavior of agencies under conditions of opportunity and change that the limitations of existing theories become apparent. The existing theories with their focus on the agency as an institution generate long lists of characteristics that lead to agency responsiveness or the attributes of a desirable clientele. Meier[11] and Rourke,[12] for example, note that agencies are better served by a clientele which is large, geographically dispersed, organized, self-conscious, receiving tangible benefits from the bureau, valued socially (for instance, professionals are more desirable as clients than convicts), intensely committed to the agency, and organized into several groups rather than one group (to avoid the likelihood of capture). While such lists explain agency actions in a stable environment, they do not necessarily help us to understand why an agency, when presented with the opportunity to incorporate a desirable new population into its clientele, goes on doing what it has always done. A closer look at the agency and its personnel in addition to its clientele is required. One key factor to consider is how professional norms and values shape the agency view of the world and the behavior of agency personnel.

PROFESSIONAL NORMS AND BELIEFS AND AGENCY ACTION

Scott[13] defines norms as "generalized rules governing behavior that specify, in particular, appropriate means for pursuing goals." Professional norms may take the form of formal professional codes of ethics or they may emerge in course of the practice of the profession. Similarly, beliefs about the public may be implicit in professional codes or may emerge from professional practice. Existing studies and theories of bureaucracy show the general importance of staff norms and beliefs on agency action. Holden[14] has argued that agency staff comprise an internal constituency as important as external constituencies. Selznick's[15] 1942-43 fieldwork on the TVA led him to comment:

> The human tools of action come to an organization shaped in special but systematic ways . . . This will make staff members resistant to

11. K. Meier, Politics and the Bureaucracy: Policymaking in the Fourth Branch of Government, 59-60 (1979).
12. F. Rourke, *supra* note 7, at 97-103.
13. W. Scott, Organizations: Rational, Natural and Open Systems (1981).
14. Holden, *supra* note 1, at 944.
15. P. Selznick, *supra* note 5, at 256.

> demands which are inconsistent with their accustomed views and habits; the freedom of choice of the employer will be restricted, and he will find it necessary in some measure to conform to the received views and habits of the personnel.

Blau[16] demonstrated that the norms prevailing in an agency affect the way agency staff do their work. Lipsky[17] noted the importance of peer groups in establishing role expectations in the "street-level" bureaucracies he studied. Meier[18] pointed out the importance of professional socialization in affecting bureaucratic behavior and suggested that the pressure to advocate an agency's mission may drive bureaucratic behavior.

Despite these scholarly roots, remarkably little attention is given to professional norms and values in agency/client relations in natural resource agencies although an almost offhand recognition can be found in the natural resource literature. For example, in the introduction to his recent book on environmentalism, Hays[19] observed that caution is required in using the memoirs of decisionmakers:

> After their tours of duty such experts often write about their experiences as public servants. But invariably they merely transfer the way they saw the world as administrators into retrospective reflection. As a historian I have been struck by the degree to which such records, used as historical materials, must be modified drastically in the light of a larger perspective beyond the decisionmaker and divorced from the imperatives of decisionmaking.

Likewise, Sax and Keiter,[20] in discussing the failure of officials of Glacier National Park in Montana to develop a constituency among local environmentalists, note their sense that "Glacier officials are caught up in a complex web of perceptions about what is going on around them."

More formal attention is given the subject in Kaufman's[21] classic work on the U.S. Forest Service which centers on the role of professional socialization in producing conformity to agency procedures and goals and in avoiding capture by local interests. Finally, in explaining why the Army Corps of Engineers opened its decisionmaking process to public involvement, Mazmanian and Nienaber[22] suggest that proponents of change within an agency differed from others in the agency in their "perception of the world around them and of the role of their organization in it."

16. P. Blau, On the Nature of Organizations 79-88 (1973).
17. M. Lipsky, Street-Level Bureaucracy 47 (1980).
18. K. Meier, *supra* note 11, at 166, 171.
19. S. Hays (With B. Hays), Beauty, Health, and Permanence. Environmental Politics in the United States, 1955-1985, at ix (1987).
20. Sax & Keiter, *Glacier National Park and its Neighbors: A Study of Federal Interagency Relations*, 14 Ecology L.Q. 207, at 218, 226 (1987).
21. H. Kaufman, The Forest Ranger: A Study in Administrative Behavior (1967).
22. D. Mazmanian & J. Nienaber, *supra* note 10, at 192.

This article makes a preliminary step in exploring some possible effects of professional norms and beliefs on agency responses to changes in the pool of potential clientele. Natural resource and agricultural agencies are a particularly appropriate subject for such an inquiry because of the self-conscious adherence to readily identifiable professional tenets on the part of resource professionals. In addition, these agencies have tended to serve a very limited clientele. Past studies have repeatedly shown that natural resource and agricultural agencies focus primarily on larger, commercial, Caucasian producers.[23] Other rural constituencies—the poor, ethnic minorities, small, non-commercial and subsistence producers, and non-consumptive resource users—have largely been ignored.

THE CASE STUDIES

California natural resource and agricultural agencies provide an excellent case for study because the rural constituencies served by these agencies are distinctly and rapidly changing. Recent changes in the population of rural areas have created a new pool of potential clientele. Reverse migration between 1970 and 1980 resulted in rapid population growth in rural areas throughout the United States.[24] The new residents were often better educated, wealthier people from urban areas who bought land in smaller parcels, often for non-production uses.[25] Some of these new residents had prior organizing experience or contacts with organizers[26] and hence might be expected to be able to establish themselves as clients

23. *See* G. Baker, The County Agent (1939); P. Selznick, *supra* note 5; W. Calef, Private Grazing and Public Lands (1960); W. Burch, Daydreams and Nightmares. A Sociological Essay on the American Environment (1971); L. Watson, M. Gatehouse, & E. Dorsey, Failing the People: A Second Report on the N.Y.S. College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, and N.Y.S. Cooperative Extension (prepared for Agricultural Policy Accountability Project, Washington D.C., 1972); J. Hightower, Hard Tomatoes and Hard Times: the Failure of the Land Grant Colleges Complex (1972); P. Warner & J. Christenson, The Cooperative Extension Service: A National Assessment (1984); P. West, Natural Resource Bureaucracy and Rural Poverty. A Study in the Political Sociology of Natural Resources (The University of Michigan Natural Resource Sociolgy Research Lab. Monograph No.2, 1982).

24. *See* C. Beale, The Revival of Population Growth in Nonmetropolitan America (1975); Kasarda, *The Implications of Contemporary Redistribution Trends for National Urban Policy*, 61 Soc. Sci. Q. 373 (1980); U.S. Department of Agriculture, Handbook of Agricultural Charts (1982) (Supplement to Agricultural Handbook No. 592).

25. Graber, *Newcomers and Oldtimers: Growth and Change in a Mountain Town*, 29 Rural Soc. 504 (1974); Ploch, *The Reversal in Migration Patterns—Some Rural Development Consequences*, 43 Rural Soc. 292 (1978); Beale, *The Changing Nature of Rural Employment*, in New Directions in Urban Rural Migration: the Population Turnaround in Rural America (D. Brown & J. Wardwell eds. 1980); Healy, *Forests in Urban Civilsation: Land Use, Land Markets, Ownership and Recent Trends*, in Land Use and Forest Resources in a Changing Environment: the Urban Forest Interface (G. Bradley ed. 1984); Healy, *How Much Urban Impact on the South's Farm and Forest Lands?* Rural Dev. Persp. Oct. 1985, at 27; R. Healy & J. Short, The Market for Rural Land: Trends, Issues, Policies (1981).

26. Fortmann & Starrs, *Power Plants and Resource Rights*, in Community and Forestry: Continuities in the Sociology of Natural Resources (R. Lee & D. Fields eds. 1990).

of state agencies serving rural areas. These population changes have been particularly pronounced in California where non-metropolitan growth was 42 percent between 1970 and 1980 in comparison to a growth rate of 15 percent between 1960 and 1970.[27] Hence, California offers a case in which population change has been particularly noticeable and where the new rural population has many of the attributes that analysts such as Meier[28] and Rourke[29] consider desirable in a clientele.

This study examines two agencies, both employing foresters, a profession with an explicit code of professional ethics as well as widely observed tenets of professionalism. The first case involving the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (hereinafter CDF) provides us with a look at foresters in a regulatory, forest management role. This case illustrates how professional norms can lead to distanced relations with a potential clientele and a distortion in the agency perception of the pool of potential clients. The second study focusing on Cooperative Extension compares the extension foresters with farm advisors. We see in this case that the foresters' norms about how their job ought to be done does not prevent them from reaching out to a new clientele in an educative capacity, while the farm advisors' norms about whom they should serve does restrict their contact with new clients.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

The first case study looks at how the agency view of the nature both of a potential constituency and of proper relations with the public affects its reaction to a new and vocal public. It compares the agency view of the nature of the public activism in the form of THP protest with the reality of that activism and considers the effect of this view combined with the tenets of forestry professionalism on agency willingness to establish alliances with the new population.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) is both a service and regulatory agency. It is the largest fire department in the state and it regulates commercial timber harvesting on private land. Anyone who wishes to harvest timber for commercial sale from private land must first have a Timber Harvesting Plan (THP) approved by the CDF. For our purposes, we are concerned only with this regulatory role. Since only a small proportion of the population in California is actively engaged in the timber industry, the arena in which the CDF is most likely

27. J. Hope & E. Blakeley, A Rural Development Agenda for California: Recommendations from the 1985 Regional Conferences on Natural Resources and Rural Economic Development (prepared for California Legislative Senate Office of Research 1986), at 3.

28. K. Meier, *supra* note 11.

29. F. Rourke, *supra* note 7.

to interact with the non-logging part of its constituency is through the process of appeals against THPs.

Methods

The data for this case study were collected as follows. All THPs in each of the four CDF regions filed between January 1977 and May 1985 were classified as protested or unprotested. THPs for which letters expressing negative opinions about the proposed timber harvest had been received were classified as protested THPs. All protested THPs (N = 280) were analyzed using the techniques described in Nie et al. (1983). In addition, a particularly contentious THP protest was studied in depth using local newspaper coverage, CDF files, and interviews with CDF staff, protest participants, and other local property owners.

Agency Beliefs about THP Protestors

The key to understanding the agency stance of the CDF lies in the nature of forestry professionalism. The tenets of forestry professionalism assume that professional judgment is and should be based on technical factors without the influence of political forces.[30] Hence, seeking favor with the general public is seen as abdicating a professional responsibility rather than fulfilling a governmental obligation to be responsive to the citizenry. Even if actively seeking alliances with sympathetic publics were acceptable in the light of professional norms, as articulated in interviews with CDF staff, the lens through which CDF staff view the non-logging population, and in particular protesters, depicts them as unsuitable allies.

To begin with, and this is also consistent with the tenets of forestry professionalism, the general public is seen as being uninformed or incorrectly informed about environmental issues in general and the practice of forestry in particular. Second, the bulk of protest is considered to come from a relatively small number of semi-professional environmental activists. As one staff member put it, "They must not have jobs. . . ." It is thought that non-activists have been duped or scared into protesting by misinformation from activists. Most protest, it is thought, concerns aesthetic (such as the preservation of a view) or sentimental environmental (often summed up as "Bambi") issues. To test the validity of these agency views of protestors, nine years of protests against timber harvesting were analyzed.

Actual Characteristics of THP Protests and Protestors

The view of THP protests and protesters held by the CDF proved to be erroneous. First, the role of environmental activists was exaggerated.

30. Fairfax and Fortmann, *American Forestry Professionalism in the Third World. Some Preliminary Observations on Historical Roots*, XXIV (32) Econ. & Pol. Weekly 1839 (1989).

The majority of protest letter writers were neighbors rather than environmental activists. Two criteria were used to classify letter writers as environmental activists. First, local CDF staff identified everyone they considered to be environmental activists. Second, anyone who wrote more than one letter was classified as an environmental activist. Even using this broad if somewhat crude definition, only four percent of the protest letters were written by individuals classified as activists. Non-activist residents wrote 65 percent of the letters. Thirty-one percent were written by community and other organizations. In other words, the CDF was dealing not with activists but with neighbors. This is not to suggest that the neighbors do not hold environmentalist values. Since 60 percent of all Americans say they support or sympathize with the environmental movement,[31] it is likely that some neighbors of timber harvesting also hold such values. But environmental values and environmental activism are far from being synonymous.

The CDF staff's analysis of what people were agitated about was also erroneous. As can be seen in Table 1, where the distribution of issues mentioned in protest letters is presented, the major concern was neither Bambi nor the view. Perceived problems with property damage in the form of erosion, dangers to water supplies or the watershed, and dangers or damage due to the presence of logging trucks on local roads accounted for 53 percent of the complaints. Concerns about recreation, aesthetics, wildlife, old growth and rare and endangered species accounted for only 27 percent of the complaints.

In order to explore the nature of the protesting constituents further, one particularly contentious protested THP was analyzed in depth. The qualitative data obtained also show the agency belief that people had been misled to be erroneous in this case. The protested THP was filed in 1984. Of the 202 individuals who wrote protest letters 92 percent lived in the general vicinity of the THP, an area which in January 1982 was hit by record rainfall resulting in mudslides that destroyed homes and killed ten people in the general area. The road on which the protesters lived (and the site of the proposed timber harvest) was blocked for six weeks, forcing them to hike in over the ridge from the next canyon. The emotional impact of these events was reflected in the hearing on the protested THP where several people wept as they recounted these events. At the time of the slides, residents organized to shovel their way out through the mud and remained organized to deal with subsequent emergencies. The proposed THP was perceived as just such an emergency. They believed (probably as would many people who have learned in school that trees

31. Mitchell, *Silent Spring/ Silent Majorities*, Pub. Opinion, Aug./Sept. 1979, at 16.

TABLE 1.
Distribution of Issues Mentioned in Protest Letters

Issue	Number[a]	Percent[b]
Erosion/Incorrect Erosion Hazard Rating	1108	22
Danger to Water Supply/ Watershed	978	20
Danger or Damage from Logging Trucks	566	11
Inaccuracy/Other Problems in THP Review	557	11
Recreation and/or Aesthetic Values	510	10
Fisheries and Wildlife Habitat	481	10
Oldgrowth/Rare and Endangered Species	351	7
Special Treatment Areas	150	3
Harvesting Practices (Tractor Logging)	137	3
Archeological Site	69	1
Silvicultural System (Clearcuts)	22	*

a. The number of issues in this table exceeds the number of letters since some letters included multiple issues.
b. Sums to less than 100 percent due to rounding.
*Percent is less than 0.1

and forests help prevent erosion) that logging had contributed to the instability of the land that resulted in the recent slides. In addition, local residents knew that the timber operator for the proposed THP had already been sued for property damage incurred during other logging and development activities. They organized because, as one put it, they "did not want to shovel mud" again. Rather than being environmental dupes, it could be argued that they were acting in a predictable fashion on the basis of their own knowledge and recent experience. Further, rather than being totally opposed to logging, a number of respondents were constructive in their suggestion that timber harvesting could proceed if timber operators were bonded or required to provide compensation to neighbors whose property they damaged.

In short, protesters were in general people with whom the CDF might have found common ground had they sought it.

The Worldview Reflected in Agency Actions

Rourke[32] notes that regulatory agencies seldom have a loyal clientele. CDF is no exception. It is criticized roundly by the timber industry for too much regulation and for capitulating to environmentalists. It is criticized equally roundly by environmentalists for being a captive of industry.

Even if it wanted to develop a supportive clientele, the agency is not in an easy position to do so. The industry is organized and desirous of

32. F. Rourke, *supra* note 7.

capturing the CDF, but the agency is anxious for professional and political reasons to avoid this. Environmental activists are also organized and equally desirous on their part not to be coopted by the bureaucracy. They do not view themselves as the agency's clientele, but rather as its monitor. Finally the general public on whose behalf the agency is acting is not organized and hence not of much use to CDF in its effort to control its environment.

In such a situation, the agency might find it advantageous to reach out to the public with the hopes of developing a clientele among local people concerned about the effects of timber harvesting. The CDF has not done so. Rather they have maintained an aloof professionalism which often leads the new potential clientele to view them as adversaries. In this they are similar to the resource professionals in the Park Service studied by Sax and Keiter.[33]

Applying the Theories

Cooptation theory does not illuminate much in this case because the agency does not work through other institutions hence there is no organization to be coopted.

Capture theory suggests that such an aloof professionalism can be, as it was by the protesters, read as a sign that the agency is aligned with the timber industry against the public. There is no question that the agency has better relations with the timber industry than with other groups. Agency staff are professional foresters who have been socialized to believe that the best use of trees is for production as long as environmentally sound practices are observed. They may differ from the industry in what is considered environmentally sound but not on the basic practice of logging. On the other hand, foresters are also trained to serve the public and if industry practices were, in the professional judgment of CDF staff, to run counter to the public good they probably would (and they have) try to prevent those practices. The obvious point of contention is who defines "public good" or "environmentally sound." Thus, although it is not without merit, capture theory is too blunt a theory to explain all of what is going on here.

The agency resource perspective suggests that the agency has little to gain from wooing the non-logging population. The unorganized population mobilizes only when it is directly affected and the organized population prefers to keep its distance to prevent attempts at cooptation. On the other hand, the agency resource perspective does suggest that the non-logging population could be very valuable allies since the balance

33. Sax and Keiter, *supra* note 20.

of power in the state legislature is clearly held by urban interests with which the new residents may be linked.

Our understanding of the actions of CDF is increased by realizing that the staff are self-consciously upholding professional conduct in accordance with the tenets of forestry professionalism. CDF staff feel they should be allowed to pursue their profession without interference in order to do what's "right" for the public and the environment. But the data presented here demonstrate that their view of the public and what's right for the public are at odds with the reality of the public and what the public thinks is right for it. It is clear that CDF staff could use social science data on the nature and concerns of its constituency. Possibly more important is the need to incorporate values of accountability and responsiveness into the tenets of forestry professionalism.

The California Cooperative Extension

The second case study examines how norms about whom the agency should serve affect staff response to a new public. Cooperative Extension is a service agency which originally provided farm families with agricultural and other practical advice. Its mandate has since grown to include such subjects as forestry and nutrition and to include nonfarm rural families and even urban residents as clientele. In 1985 Cooperative Extension entered into an education and applied research program on oak management as a result of statewide concerns that long-term sustainability of oaks might be threatened. Environmentalists, having noticed a decline in the number of oaks, particularly among riverine species, argued that the state needed to take action to protect the remaining stock. While considerable pressure was applied to the State Board of Forestry to regulate oaks, those opposing regulation forced a decision to try an educational route instead. Since most oaks occur in areas traditionally used for cattle production, official efforts to encourage oak management, protection and restoration were channeled through the Cooperative Extension which already had a mandate for educational outreach.

Large numbers of urban residents have moved into the oak woodland area since 1970,[34] hence, the pool of potential clientele for Cooperative Extension, particularly for oak management advice has changed dramatically in the last decade. This case study compares the extent to which two distinct professional groups within the agency—agriculturalists (farm advisors) and foresters (extension foresters)—began serving this new population through the oak program. In addition, the two case studies allow a comparison of the effect of forestry professionalism under the condition of regulatory and educative agency missions.

34. J. Hope & E. Blakeley, *supra* note 27.

Methods

Data for this study were collected from a random sample of oak woodland owners using a standard four-wave mailed survey.[35] The sampling frame was a pre-existing set of Forest Inventory Assessment Plots, used by the Pacific Northwest Research Station of the United States Forest Service to assess hardwood volume in the state.[36] Usable questionnaires were received from 126 of 166 eligible respondents for a response rate of 76 percent. Data were analyzed using the techniques described in Nie et al.[37]

Characteristics of Extension's Traditional (and Ideal) Clientele

The key to understanding the action of farm advisors lies in their attitudes about whom they should serve, an attitude which can be traced to Cooperative Extension's long (and many would argue, willingly captured) relationship with traditional agricultural organizations, particularly the Farm Bureau. Cooperative Extension has traditionally defined its clientele narrowly.[38] The Department of Agriculture in general and the Cooperative Extension Service in particular have long been known for serving primarily large, prosperous Caucasian farmers, particularly members of the Farm Bureau, rather than all agricultural producers, all rural people or the U.S. population in general.[39] Indeed, for some time Cooperative Extension was considered the captive of the Farm Bureau which in some states was involved in employee selection.[40] One could argue that capture of Cooperative Extension by traditional agricultural organizations has led extension staff not only to identify with their traditional clientele but also to develop norms that they ought to be serving exactly such a clientele.

This view continues to be held by many farm advisors (county-based

35. D. Dillman, Mail and Telephone Surveys: The Total Design Method (1979).

36. United States Forest Service, California P.I. Manual (prepared for the U.S. Forest Service Resources Evaluation Unit, 1981).

37. SPSSX User's Guide (1983).

38. For example, it has been estimated that in 1920 in California, Farm Bureau members who were the nearly exclusive clientele of Extension comprised only 1.58 percent of the total state rural population. *See*, E. Fiske, The College and its Constituency: Rural and Community Development at the University of California 1875-1978 (1979) (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of California at Davis), at 115.

39. G. Baker, *supra* note at 23; W. Block, The Separation of the Farm Bureau and the Extension Service (1960); 3 C. Hardin, Food and Fiber in the Nation's Politics (1967); S. Baldwin, Politics and Poverty 286-290 (1968); L. Watson, M. Gatehouse & E. Dorsey, *supra* note 23; Salamon and Walmsley, *The Federal Bureaucracy—Responsive to Whom?* Paper presented at The Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association , Chicago (May 1-3, 1975) *cited in* K. Meier, *supra* note 11; E. Fiske, *supra* note 38, at 92-117; K. Meier, *supra* note 11, at 58; P. Warner & J. Christenson, The Cooperative Extension Service: A National Assessment (1984).

40. G. Baker, *supra* note 23; W. Block, *supra* note 39; E. Fiske, *supra* note 38, at 92-117; Interview with Richard Standiford, University of California Forestry Extension, Berkeley California (July 16,1988).

agricultural staff) in California. One farm advisor described his preferred clientele as "cattlemen, woolgrowers, farm bureaus, grange, rugged individualists, mavericks and service clubs." California farm advisors have been found to reach out to ranchers and farmers and consider small landowners, absentee owners and environmentalists as falling outside the purview of their legitimate clientele.[41] Indeed, Wright and Priester[42] found the identification with farmers and ranchers to be so strong that in speaking of them, California farm advisors used the pronoun, "we".

That is, California Cooperative Extension is an agency whose agricultural staff define a desirable clientele not just in terms of the instrumental characteristics enumerated by Meier but in normative terms as well. An ideal clientele from the perspective of the farm advisor would be a large-scale farmer or rancher. Since this norm affects behavior, we expect farm advisors to have more contact with this group regardless of how desirable in instrumental terms other groups might be as clientele.

Extension foresters, however, have been less susceptible to these norms. They have, as already noted, their own strongly held professional tenets which are clear about appropriate behavior in regulation and hands-on forest management but which do not restrict the clientele a forester might educate. Indeed, the professional tenets might be construed as imposing an obligation to educate as many people as possible in order to protect and enhance the environment. Further, only in recent years have any extension foresters been assigned to a county office where the operation of farm advisors' norms is particularly strong. Thus, extension foresters would seem more likely than farm advisors to be in contact with nontraditional clientele.

Characteristics of the Potential Oak Management Clientele

As a whole, oak woodland owners differed considerably from the traditional extension clientele. As estimated from a weighted sample,[43] absentee owners comprise an estimated 36 percent of oak woodland owners and together with part-time residents own an estimated 41 percent of the oak woodland acreage in the state. As estimated from the weighted

41. J. Wright & K. Priester, Steaks and Stakes: Extension's Linkages on the Hardwood Range (prepared for the University of California Cooperative Extension, Davis, California, 1986).

42. *Id.*

43. Because larger owners were more likely to be selected in the grid sampling method used, estimates of the statewide population of oak owners were calculated from a weighted sample. The weighted sample is based on the weighting proposed for a systematic selection of grid intersection points. *See* L. Wensel, Estimators for Use in California Forestland Ownership Studies (University of California at Berkeley, Department of Forestry and Natural Resources, Biometrics Note No. 8, 1983). Each case is weighted based on the inverse of its probability of being selected for the sample using the grid system. The weighted sample has been used in this paper only in making generalizations about the statewide population. Unless specified otherwise, all figures refer to the unweighted sample.

sample, 96 percent of the oak ownerships are in parcels less than 100 acres, accounting for about a third of the land.

Ranching was the major source of income for only 28 percent of the respondents although 66 percent raised some livestock on their land. Farming was the major source of income for seven percent of the respondents although 22 percent raised some food crops on the land. When a weighted sample was used for these calculations, it was found that only 7 percent of all oak woodland owners make their living from the land.[44] People who had lived in the county for ten years or fewer comprised 49 percent of the sample.

While Extension has traditionally had very close working relations with the Farm Bureau and livestock associations and often has reached its clientele through such organizations,[45] relatively few of the non-traditional clientele belong to them. While 63 percent of the farmers and ranchers (the traditional clientele) in the sample belonged to the Farm Bureau, 66 percent of respondents with other major sources of income did not. Similarly, 83 percent of the farmers and ranchers belonged to a livestock association, 80 percent of the "others" did not. Eighteen percent of the respondents were members of local, state or national environmental organizations, groups with which extension has relatively few relations.

Clearly, a large number of owners of oak woodland fall outside the traditional clientele of Cooperative Extension and yet could or possibly would be active in promoting agency interests. If we look specifically at respondents whose major source of income was neither ranching nor farming, that is, the non-traditional potential clientele, we find that they have many characteristics which in Meier's terms would make them a desirable clientele. Specifically, they are as likely as ranchers and farmers to live on their land year round. They are better educated than farmers and ranchers; compared with 15 percent of the ranchers and farmers, 42 percent of the "others" had post graduate education ($x^2 = 17.98$, significant at .01 level). They account for 43 percent of the owners of 1000 acres or more. Fifty-seven percent had written a letter on government policies or programs. Sixty-four percent were organization members including ten percent who served on the local school board.

Did Extension Foresters or Farm Advisors Serve the New Clientele?

The degree to which farm advisors and extension foresters responded

44. Respondents were defined as making a living from the land if their major source of income was farming, ranching, or timber production.

45. G. Baker, *supra* note 23 at xv, 211 ; W. Block, *supra* note 39; P. Selznick, *supra* note 5, at 119-21; F. Rourke,*supra* note 7, at 55.

to non-traditional clientele among oak woodland owners is presented in Tables 2 and 3 and compared with contact with the other sources of advice. Two measures of "traditionalness" are used—source of income and size of holding. Farmers and ranchers and large property owners are considered to be traditional clientele. Since at the time of the survey oak owners had only recently become a constituency, a delivery system for oak management advice was still in a very early stage. Nonetheless, 24 percent of the sample (30 respondents) had received advice about oaks. While we would not presume to make sweeping generalizations from the very small numbers presented here, the trends suggested by these data (namely that differences in professional norms result in differences in staff/client relations) are worthy of further study.

In Table 2, providing advice to ranchers and farmers is compared with providing advice to people with other major income sources. A greater proportion of the contacts of extension foresters and the staff of other agencies was with non-traditional clientele than those of the farm advisors. While "others" accounted for 70 percent of non-extension contacts and

TABLE 2.
Distribution of Agency Advice to Oak Woodland Owners by Income Source

Agency	Farmers/Ranchers		Others	Total
Cooperative Extension-Farm Advisors	3	(60%)	2 (40%)	5
Cooperative Extension-Forestry	1	(20%)	4 (80%)	5
Others[a]	14	(30%)	33 (70%)	47
Total Number of Contacts	18	(32%)	39 (68%)	57
Number of Respondents Receiving Advice	7	(25%)	21 (75%)	28
Percent of Sample		33%	67%	

a. Others includes Soil Conservation Service, California Department of Forestry, U.S. Forest Service, California Department of Fish and Game, consulting foresters, and unspecified others.

TABLE 3.
Distribution of Agency Advice to Oak Woodland Owners by Size of Holding Agency

	Acres		
Agency	100 or less	101-999	1000+
Cooperative Extension-Farm Advisors	0 (0%)	1 (20%)	4 (80%)
Cooperative Extension-Forestry	0 (0%)	3 (60%)	2 (40%)
Others[a]	9 (18%)	16 (32%)	25 (50%)
Total Number of Contacts	9 (15%)	20 (34%)	31 (52%)
Number of Respondents Receiving Advice	6 (20%)	8 (27%)	16 (53%)
Percent of Sample	30%	25%	45%

a. Others includes Soil Conservation Service, California Department of Forestry, U.S. Forest Service, California Department of Fish and Game, consulting foresters, and unspecified others.

80 percent of the extension foresters contacts, they accounted for only 40 percent of the farm advisors' contacts. And at the time of the survey, extension foresters had already begun holding meetings in metropolitan areas in order to reach absentee owners of forest land.

Table 3 shows contact by size of property holding, demonstrating that all agencies were more likely to be in contact with the larger landholders than small landholders. Contacts with the smallest landholders (30 percent of the sample) accounted for only 15 percent of all contacts and 20 percent of people contacted, while the largest owners (45 percent of the sample) accounted for 52 percent of all contacts and 53 percent of the people contacted. However, farm advisors were the most extreme, contacting no small holders and having 80 percent of their contacts with the largest owners. Extension foresters also neglected small owners but gave more attention to medium sized owners.

In sum, extension foresters had more contact with non-traditional clientele than farm advisors. In this respect they were more like the staff of other agencies than the non-forestry staff of their own agency.

Applying the Theories

In this case, the existing theories are more helpful in explaining the actions of farm advisors than of foresters. As in the case of CDF, cooptation theory is not applicable here.

Capture theory predicts that farm advisors would stay with their traditional clientele. Although the formal relationship between the Farm Bureau and Extension no longer exists, the traditional clientele still have considerable leverage over county level staff. All expenses of county extension programs except the salary of the farm advisor are met by appropriations from the County Board of Supervisors which tend to be controlled by traditional economic interests, that is, large ranchers and farmers. Hence attention and services to the organized traditional clientele pay off in terms of budget in a way that services to newcomers would not. In contrast, extension foresters are in a sense an uncaptured staff in this once-captured agency. They operate at both the state and county level and therefore are less reliant on county resources. Hence capture theory would predict that they would be freer to reach out to a new clientele.

Based on this same logic, the agency resource perspective would predict that faced with the choice to change or expand its constituency, farm advisors would choose their traditional clientele. As noted above, although it is relatively small, the traditional clientele is well organized and has considerable local political power. Further, it has concrete economic interests directly related to Cooperative Extension's mission. As Friedland and Kappel[46] have pointed out, for extension workers to succeed, their

46. W. Friedland & T. Kappel, Production or Perish: Changing the Inequalities of Agricultural Research Priorities (1979).

clients must succeed in their area of expertise. Larger producers who depend on their land for their livelihood might be expected to be more likely to succeed in oak management than smaller owners who do not depend on their land.

Under agency resource theory, newcomers would seem unlikely to become more favored as clients until a shift in county-level political power occurs. However, the argument could be made under this theory that the wise bureaucrat would see that the balance of power is already shifting and would arrange to have a foot in the new camp by reaching out to the new clientele. Hence, this theory leaves us in an ambiguous situation in which understanding the norms of bureaucrats can be helpful in predicting how a bureaucrat will act. In this case the norms about appropriate clientele led the farm advisors to stick with their traditional clientele. Extension foresters, on the other hand, were not particularly influenced by the farm advisors norms and their own professional norms placed no restrictions in educative situations. Hence, they were able and willing to seize the new opportunity.

CONCLUSIONS

In both cases discussed here population changes provided a situation in which the agency could have expanded its clientele. What ensued can in part be explained by some of the existing theories of agency-client relationships. Cooptation theory did not apply in either case for reasons specific to the organization of the agencies. Capture theory provides some explanation, particularly in the case of Cooperative Extension, but it is too blunt an instrument. For example, increased public scrutiny and the threat of possible court suits by excluded clientele may have reduced in at least some cases the ease of keeping a "captured" agency captive. Agency resource theory likewise is partially helpful. However, its usefulness is reduced in situations in which the agency may benefit, albeit in different ways, both by excluding or including a new clientele. Agency resource theory alone is not sufficient to predict how agency bureaucrats will act.

It is in this sort of situation that the integration of the professional norms and beliefs of agency staff into the analysis is likely to be particularly helpful, resulting in a deeper understanding of the factors driving bureaucratic decisionmaking. In the case of farm advisors, responding to the new population would violate a deeply held belief about whom they should serve. In the case of CDF, reaching out to the new population would violate an equally deeply held professional tenet about the nature of professionalism and professional responsibility. Extension foresters were not restricted in the same way as the tenets of forestry professionalism did not proscribe whom they might reach out to with education.

Although, as we have seen, in both cases the pool of potential clients bore little resemblance to agency beliefs about what the world does or should look like, agency staff acted on the basis of their own beliefs rather than undertaking the most elementary forms of data gathering which would have revealed the truth about their public.

These case studies suggest that a better analysis of constituency relations would result if current theories were augmented with an understanding of the lens (professional beliefs and norms) through which agency personnel view the world and their constituencies. This addition to existing analytical frameworks could no more stand alone than the existing theories. However, by adding professional norms and beliefs to the analysis of agency action we add a depth to our analysis of constituency relations which increases our ability to explain agency reactions to population changes. Perhaps more important, identifying the significance of factors not considered in existing theories may enable us to be more effective in addressing the problem of unserved constituencies. An incorrect analysis of agency failure to serve a potential clientele may lead to an incorrect prescription for rectifying the problem. Thus, if an agency has truly been captured, the mobilization of other interest groups may form part of the solution.[47] If, on the other hand, the problem is the lens through which agency staff view the potential clientele or the nature of the problem, then attention to the makeup of the agency and the process by which agency personnel are socialized is called for.

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47. *See, e.g.*, Fairfax, *'I Talk to the Trees . . .' Scholarly Influence on Public Lands Policy, 1951-1976*, Paper presented at a Symposium on the Federal Lands, Utah State University, Logan Utah (April 1982).