In *Mission Mystique*, Charles Goodsell explores six organizations whose members have a special drive toward excellence. He studies these organizations through their belief systems, or what he calls their mission mystique. Goodsell wanted to learn more about what “permeates the institution’s culture, animates its workforce, and inspires a desire to improve” (p. 3). Mission mystique is the aura of excellence that naturally flows through the good work of the organization’s members.

Goodsell’s inspiration for writing this book is important to note. While on a tour of the Department of the Interior in Washington, D.C., he asked one of his former doctoral students and other officials which bureau within Interior had the best reputation. Each immediately answered with the National Park Service (Fish and Wildlife Service was a close second). This unanimous response led Goodsell to ask himself, “Why? What traits of the National Park Service stand out to others? What can we learn from such an organization?” This trigger was the beginning of an exploration of effective public administration organizations at the federal, state, and local levels through a new lens called mission mystique.

The first chapter develops the concept of the mission mystique belief system on a solid foundation within the literature. In brief, Goodsell builds the framework using the work of well-known scholars in the field of organizational theory, including Philip Selznick, Richard Scott, and Edgar Schein. The theoretical foundation grows with the works of Larry Terry, John Dilulio, Anne Khademian, James Q. Wilson, E. B. Knauft, Renee A. Berger, Sandra T. Gray, Hal Rainey, and Paula Steinbauer.

Organizations with effective mission mystiques, Goodsell found, share common attributes within their belief systems. These attributes are the foundation of his book and form a template as a general guide to exploring the mission mystique. The template consists of nine cells (or traits). The first three cells collectively convey organizations that are endowed with a sense of purpose. The next three cells together are the presence of passion and commitment. The final three cells together sustain the institution over time. Thus, to summarize, the template has nine cells that fall under three overarching attributes: (1) direction, (2) importance, and (3) confidence (sense of purpose); (4) dedication, (5) community, and (6) identity (passion...
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and commitment); and (7) dissent, (8) policy space, and (9) renewal (sustain the institution over time). As with any system, there is interconnectedness, and this is true of the traits in the mission mystique belief system.

Chapters 2 through 7 are each dedicated to a highly reputable and heavily researched organization. Goodsell developed his assessment of each of the organizations through its historical documents, newspaper articles, budgets, and interviews. At the end of each of these chapters, the mission mystique belief system template is applied, with each cell defined within the context of the organization. Four federal agencies with strong reputations were examined: the National Park Service (chap. 2), the National Weather Service (chap. 3), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (chap. 4), and the Peace Corps (chap. 7). At the state level, the well-respected Virginia State Police (chap. 6) was researched. Finally, a highly reputable local-level organization was examined—the Department of Social Services for Mecklenberg County, North Carolina (chap. 5). Chapter 2 is described below as an example of the format followed in chapters 2 through 7.

The first organization explored is the National Park Service, whose mission mystique comes from its mandate to take care of the nation’s parks. The famous statement by Wallace Stegner that “the national parks are America’s best idea” permeates a sense of pride that continues in the National Park System. In 1863, Frederick Law Olmsted (the designer of Central Park in Manhattan) entered Yosemite Valley in California and was enthralled with the beauty of the natural landscape. He was appointed chair of the Yosemite Commission, which was to administer lands of the state and protect Yosemite Valley from commercial exploitation. Olmsted described his vision for the valley in words that attracted the interest and support of conservationists. He wrote, “Yosemite should be held, guarded and managed for the free use of the whole body of the people forever” (p. 28). These words were the inspiration behind the statute that created the National Park Service, and they still drive the mission of this organization today.

In 1903, John Muir, a famous naturalist and conservationist, was selected to be a guide for President Theodore Roosevelt, who wanted to explore Yosemite Valley. This was an opportunity for Muir to promote preserving the valley for future generations and protecting it from commercial exploitation. Roosevelt’s experience in the valley and the relationship between these two men contributed to important legislation for creating five new national parks. After years of lobbying, a park system came into being in 1916 with the National Park Service Organic Act.

Today, the Park Service is the most reputable park service in the world. The integral component to the mission mystique is driven by its mission purpose (Cell 1, Direction). Its purpose is very specific: to conserve the natural life and objects in the parks and to provide enjoyment to those who visit today and in future generations. Through interviews and surveys, Goodsell found that Park Service employees have a strong commitment to the mission and believe in the importance of their work.

A strength of the Park Service’s mission mystique is its pride and familiarity with its own history (Cell 6, Identity). For example, the positions of park superintendent and ranger are still coveted and revered. Historically, superintendents were legends, and this history is well documented. Rangers used to “range” alone on horses through the Western parks. “Their isolation and resourcefulness won them a reputation
for courage, fortitude and an ability to tackle any task” (p. 46). Today, rangers carry the responsibility of protecting and interpreting the parks. Employees are proud of their affiliation with the organization and are constantly reminded of the purpose of the NPS through the retelling of its history.

Core values of the Park Service are important to the organizational culture and are taken seriously (Cell 5, Community). According to Goodsell, this is a part of a healthy belief system. All employees receive a small card to fit in their wallet that lists the five core values: shared stewardship, excellence, integrity, tradition, and respect. Based on interviews, park employees believe that these core values effectively guide decision-making, clarify the organization’s identity, and drive the entire agency.

The story of the National Park System does have its periods of struggle. The organization’s mission came under duress (Cell 7, Dissent) when Gail Norton of Colorado was secretary of the interior from 2001 to 2006. Parks employees believe that during her tenure the 1916 Organic Act was at risk. This put stress upon the National Park Service’s mission. Many of its policies were rewritten or discarded, particularly those influencing the concept of enjoyment of future generations. Features of the Organic Act “rewrite” included relaxing the rules to allow for cell phone towers, low-flying airplanes, and snowmobile use. In 1916, there were no such technologies, but the contemporary agency must wrestle with these changes. This leaves the door open for debate and new definitions for what constitutes park enjoyment. A discussion about the use of rifles and handguns in parks also arose during Norton’s administration, resulting in a strong debate between hunters and conservationists. All this occurred during a time when funding for the NPS was cut. Today, the story continues with a sense of recovery from the stresses experienced under Secretary Norton. Goodsell closes this chapter with an assessment of how the Park Service measures up to the nine cells of the mission mystique template.

Each chapter of this book is fascinating, and the contents can be applied to public administration fields of study such as organization theory, administrative leadership, and ethics. The history and development of each organization Goodsell profiles unfold smoothly and keep the reader interested. He argues for the importance of capitalizing on what is right in public organizations. He states, “My working assumption is that if we look at government agencies around us that stand out as ‘best,’ we will find they consist of cohesive groups of women and men who are ‘turned on’ by something. But by what? Not their paychecks, nor the latest reform gimmicks, but by the very work they are doing” (p. 1). There are numerous examples of public agencies doing good work. Goodsell believes this good work can be best explained within the nine-cell template of the mission mystique belief system.

The eighth and final chapter explores the significance of the belief systems and describes each cell in detail. An interesting and unexpected discovery was finding two different kinds of missions among the six organizations. Most of the literature on public organization missions highlights the benefits of having a specified mission. Goodsell finds this with one group whose missions are based upon formal law and are quite specific for their organizations (the National Park Service, the National Weather Service, the Peace Corps). For example, the Weather Service’s mission was formally written in 1869: “to provide for taking meteorological observations, at the military stations in the interior of the continent . . . and for giving notice
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. . . of the approach and force of storms.” A more modern mission is phrased as “saving lives and livelihoods.”

However, the organizations in the other group have more generic missions that were developed over time based upon the nature of their work (the Center for Disease Control, Mecklenberg’s Department of Social Services, and the Virginia State Police). For example, the Center for Disease Control has a mission that grows with the inevitable changes that occur in medicine and science. Its purpose is to protect the public’s health, and the mission organically grows as developments take place. Goodsell notes that generic missions are not a weakness: “Despite mission multiplicity it is possible for purposes to be plural yet not distracting when they are complementary at the operational level” (p. 252).

The best (and probably most numerous) public administration organizations possess a mission mystique. This belief system motivates and attracts their members to be engaged and have a desire to excel. *Mission Mystique* is an excellent book through which to explore how good organizations work. Educators can utilize this book to prepare students for a career of good work by understanding the mission mystique and how it can be developed. “If education is preparation for life, it is in many ways the preparation for a life of [good] work” (Gardner 2008, 128).

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**REFERENCE**
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The Good Cause: Theoretical Perspectives on Corruption

**EDITED BY GJALT DE GRAAF, PATRICK VON MARAVIC, AND PIETER WAGENAAR**

*Farmington Hills, Mich.: Barbara Budrich, 2010*

This highly recommended book arose from a workshop of the Study Group on Ethics and Integrity of Governance at the 2005 conference of the European Group for Public Administration. After the workshop concluded, the global experts who participated were invited to cover the different approaches to the study of the causes of corruption. No two of them thought exactly alike, but all had in mind official misconduct contrary to how governments should conduct themselves and breaches of public integrity that offended the populace. Was the misconduct due to defects in human nature or societal institutions or a mixture of both, and according to whose judgment? What triggers or predisposes a corrupt act? How are the causes of corruption theoretically framed? These questions deserve study because “understanding how different theories define, conceptualize, and eventually deduce policy recommendations will simplify our understanding of the complexity of corruption and illustrate the spectrum of
possibilities to deal with it analytically as well as practically” (p. 15).

The editors admit right off that questions lead to more questions rather than to answers. Confusion abounds. Different approaches produce different solutions. An overview reveals this and helps to eliminate outmoded conceptions. But the more that is known, the better the possibility of employing combative tools that actually work in any particular situation. As the forms of corruption are so varied, it is imperative to use interdisciplinary study to overcome confined vision. Valiantly, this book attempts to do. It pursues the subject further than any previous attempt by identifying eight distinct and separate approaches to the study of behavior that goes beyond what is commonly acceptable and undermines fairness and probity in governing, so that public officials appear to not be following appropriate standards of integrity.

In short, situations where there is something rotten in governance, although deviance from social norms might make personal relations between rulers and ruled and between officials and their clients smoother than might otherwise obtain. The informality that belies formal procedures may prevent the aggrieved from venting their frustration and anger in violence that could destabilize society and interrupt government operations. From one viewpoint, such conduct is contrary to the rules, but from another it provides the grease that keeps the machinery of government running, although it might well postpone needed reforms of officialdom.

Few like to openly admit to what others might perceive as misconduct. Since corruption is a deviant activity, the perpetrators try to keep their secret to themselves as much as they can. The outcome is that the actual extent of corruption in society is virtually impossible to measure with any accuracy. The best that can be done is to rely on guestimates, although some forms of corruption are easier to measure than others, and these may be taken out of context, exaggerated, and generalized, branding both guilty and innocent alike as scandals often do.

Even so, revelations are often one-day wonders, quickly forgotten as something else distracts public attention or people understand that everybody at some time makes mistakes. To expect to root out corruption altogether is demanding too much, and anyhow natural justice requires some measure of forgiveness and sympathy for the guilty if little harm is done and can be compensated. In any event, to concentrate only on official or public corruption ignores corruption in the private sector and its impact on contemporary governance at the interface where public and private merge, and also ignores the contemporary global society where the different levels of governance interrelate. Some of the worst instances of corruption occur at their boundaries, where conflicts of interest abound and where the rules of the game are still undefined. The whole world of corruption has been transformed over the past few decades. It is far more complex and complicated to fathom than ever before. An understanding of the causes of modern corruption has to reflect these developments.

The book identifies eight major approaches to these questions. They constitute the subject matter of the chapters, which are introduced and concluded by the three editors, who cannot avoid repeating the substance of each within a loose framework that tries to integrate them, summarize their findings, and stimulate further research that would embrace their common good cause—the effort to improve ways of combating corruption and reduce its extent. Although the methodology is objective, the aim of
all the contributors is moral. So what are
the eight schools of thought?

The Weberian Ideal-Typical
The first approach, examined by William
Rubinstein and Patrick von Maravic, is
based on rationality, “the triumph of
professionalized bureaucracy” over more
primitive forms of public administration
wherein public power was used for pri-
vate gain and deviance from the legiti-
mate order. From this perspective, once
the ideal type of bureaucracy emerged,
official corruption would disappear. It
would be a neutral instrument in the
hands of the government to devise the
best means of executing its policies with
economy, efficiency, and effectiveness.
But Max Weber the politician feared
the concentration of power at the bu-
reaucratic apex and the possibility that
bureaucratic elites would unite into a
meritocratic aristocracy that would sub-
vert liberal democracy. He never lived to
see this happen in his native country or
its use by Nazism and other totalitarian
forms of governance for evil purposes
wherein officialdom was corrupted and
ruined all that it touched.

Max Weber the sociologist did not
quite envisage that the bureaucracy
would become a powerful institution
in its own right, exercising independent
power, administering in its own profes-
sional self-interest, and pushing its own
values on society. Like any authority ex-
cercising power, it could be just as corrupt.
Long before Weber, the 1848 Communist
Manifesto worried those who feared that
the government of persons would be
replaced by the administration of things
and later by those who envisaged that
the socialist enthronement of a welfare
state would result in the bondage of the
workers in the tyranny of bureaucrats,
an argument that antistatists have used
ever since. Social institutions begin rea-
sonably enough but through universal
metamorphosis transform into something
quite different. So it is with bureaucracy,
meaning officialdom, which will demand
obedience and enforce it through coer-
cion. Eventually, the whole of life will be
controlled and individual freedom will
be lost to despotic bureaucracy. After all,
almost any attempt to organize people on
any scale has failed without resorting to
bureaucracy. To live without its benefits
means living a much simpler life, a price
few people seem willing to make. With
bureaucracy, one has to take the bad with
the good, and that bad includes corrup-
tion because bureaucracies and bureau-
crats are imperfect. The Weberian ideal
does not exist outside of a slave society
and probably not even in that.

All this is hindsight, because in We-
ber’s time the emerging administrative
state run by professional experts was
much cleaner than the Old Corruption.
The new public professionals were proud
of their performance and achievements
and of their deserved reputation for
competence and integrity. Yet they were
not free of scandal, as Rubinstein and
von Maravic recount, because the Old
Corruption lingered on in the buying of
positions, public contracting, and war
profiteering. It still does, but official
secrecy prevents the wider public from
knowing what really goes on in the cor-
ridors of power, although the transforma-
tion of information technology in recent
years makes transparency easier.

It seems probable that professional-
ization and other public service reforms
dampen down the propensity to cor-
rupction through self pride, tested com-
petence, codes of conduct, and career
reputation. Unfortunately, this has not
prevented official complicity in crimes
against humanity and the deployment of
bureaucracy for evil purposes, a condi-
tion in which deviation from the rules has
to be praised from a moral perspective.
The Structural Functionalist

Frank de Zwart investigates whether and in what circumstances corruption can be considered functional because it anticipates and offsets the harm that bureaucracy does or threatens to do. While the official rules may not allow this, corruption in certain instances eases the adversarial relations between agents of officialdom and their clients. It reduces the power distance between the rulers and the ruled, between those with authority and those without. It smooths the operations of the administrative state. Where the parties cannot even meet, let alone agree, it allows brokers to intervene to overcome isolation, personal idiosyncrasies, prejudice, discrimination, and any other factor causing antagonism and resentment. Why should this be? Usually because the execution of public policies and laws creates too many difficulties for compliance. Official regulations may be unrealistic, unintelligible, unenforceable, irrelevant, too harsh, too arbitrary, too unfair, too fuzzy. This is where officials use their discretion to modify, adjust, change, and unofficially rewrite the rules to make them more acceptable; they may even go further by using their initiative to protect and safeguard those likely to be harmed, thereby becoming their defenders, caretakers, and shepherds. They humanize public administration, putting a human face on the administrative state.

When bureaucrats do such favors, Weberian officials should expect no reward or reciprocity, because such conduct is part of the job for which they are compensated. But such sophisticated organizations are by no means universal, certainly not in failed and failing states, where much public administration is not sufficiently professionalized, which is only one cause among many others why their governance is so bad. Their officials do not feel they are amply compensated and do expect to be paid for their services, and their clients know that if they do not pay out enough, in future they cannot expect any service. In any event, a favor deserves a favor, and recipients feel obliged to reciprocate in some way, summed up in the familiar phrase “you scratch my back and I’ll scratch yours,” which may have little to do with public administration and more to do with normal social relations. The snubbing of reciprocity, as required by the Weberian ideal bureaucracy, is resented and considered insulting, so that officials who conduct themselves this way are seen as standoffish if not downright rude and arrogant.

This cultural dimension of corruption was not well understood by the technical experts who immediately after World War II went out to change the world by transforming defeated enemies into loyal allies and speeding up the development of backward peoples. Their initial successes fooled them into believing that they could attain similar results elsewhere. However, they ran into great difficulties. To discover why, the American Society for Public Administration introduced its Comparative Administration Group under the leadership of its guru Fred Riggs, whose pioneering studies of prismatic societies, still underdeveloped and not yet modern, showed that their corruption was a throwback to the Old Corruption. When foreign experts exported their institutional models, the importers adapted them to their own particular circumstances, so what looked the same on the surface functioned differently locally. Traditional norms when viewed through modern eyes were seen as corrupt, but in their own societies they were perfectly acceptable and not considered at all corrupt. Official misconduct had to be studied within its environment.

But the Riggsian approach eventually
was overtaken by what has now become the Good Government movement, which has reverted back to the universalism of the postwar idealists and their belief that cultural differences are merely excuses for justifying corruption simply because corrupt leaders and corrupted institutions benefiting from corruption are unwilling to do much to combat it. They must be weaned off corruption to speed up their development in the global society. If they require outside assistance, curbing corruption is the price they have to pay, either by compulsion or preferably voluntarily. They lack the political will to act and defy their own peoples, who want much cleaner government but have not yet engaged in collective action to goad their leaders into curbing corruption. Time is not on their side, because the poor are coming to realize how they are the innocent victims of corruption and the Good Government movement shows them the way to overturn their exploiters. Rulers have good reason to fear the revolt of the masses at the ballot box and on the streets as resentment grows when the powerless compare their lot with those who benefit from the corruption that benefits the few.

The Institutional Economists

The maven of them all on this topic, Susan Rose-Ackerman, has contributed this chapter, in which she points out that bureaucrats are no different than anybody else as rational utilizers who seek that which is most profitable to them in a world of scarcity. They can be just as unscrupulous, although their opportunities differ according to what they do and what controls are placed on them as well as the discretion they exercise, the secrecy of their operations, and the collusion of other stakeholders. They lie, deceive, destroy incriminating evidence, and feather their own nests at public expense. Collectives of all kinds do the same in seeking to optimize their advantages. If all is fair in love and war, so too does it seem to be the case in business and official aggrandizement, as demonstrated in rent-seeking and transaction-cost analysis. Thus monopolies, both public and private, exploit their positions, and officials have the further advantage of using their reserve coercive power.

Economic theory can justify countermeasures too. If competition reduces the ability to exploit, so stripping government organizations of their coercive powers and making them compete with private rivals should reduce their propensity to corruption. Indeed, let the market system take over the delivery of public goods and services altogether through privatization or competitive bidding on public contracts, with public organizations confined to steering, while the heavy labor of rowing is outsourced. But humans are political animals not entirely captivated by economic self-interest alone. They have moral values, social ideals, religious beliefs, and political ideas that may well take precedence, and they may sacrifice economic principles for higher ends. This is best illustrated in the conflict between wartime profiteers and patriotic volunteers who do the actual fighting and sacrifice themselves on behalf of the community, in caregivers who give up profitable alternative careers to nurse the sick, and in professional officials who do not take bribes or exercise nepotism but enforce strict codes of conduct, not forgetting whistleblowers who take great risks in breaking codes of silence. The concept of public service still has meaning and appeal.

Systems Theory

Corruption is rarely committed by individuals acting alone. The corrupt have partners who know what they do. They
have to hide their misconduct from public view. Corruption occurs in networks which bend the rules for much the same reasons as individuals do, a list that grows and grows, as is described throughout the book and is brought together toward its end. Peter Heller shows how systems enable people to share a common cause, band together to protect themselves, and divide whatever spoils might be around. They are suspicious of outsiders who might expose their misconduct and keep them at arm’s length, thereby preserving the in-group comradeship. Yet they may believe that they are selfless and cross no moral line, self-justifying themselves even while others see them as corrupt and corrupting as they work at cross-purposes with how they are expected to behave. This double vision becomes particularly acute when systems intersect and give rise to ambiguous conflicts of interest that slide so easily into corruption when personal networking transcends departmental, functional, and group boundaries (p. 77). Whether it does or not depends much on who is the observer and on the observer’s moral evaluation. Nonetheless, some systems are clearly more prone to corruption than others, as when inspectors are induced to be blind and regulators just follow the desires of the regulated and the public purse is plundered by the greedy and unscrupulous.

The Institutional Designers

Guy Peters maintains that corruption arises when institutions do not fulfill their expected functions but instead create uncertainty and disorder. Economic systems that fail to alleviate poverty or provide sufficient employment induce fear as to where the next meal might be coming from, and cutthroat competition worries entrepreneurs about profitability. Political systems that cannot maintain law and order lose support and compliance. Beware authorities who put themselves first and last, lest the ruled take whatever evasive action they can. The least prone to corruption are responsible representative governments that provide effective safeguards against the misuse of power, such as transparency, rule of law, party competition, human rights, and equitable treatment—that is, all the ingredients of good governance. Among the important safeguards are effective ways and means of reducing official misconduct and improving individual integrity so that honesty and decency prevail in all social relations.

One must go beyond formalities to delve into the informalities of how powerholders and their clients interact in practice and whether they deviate from the ideals of universalism, achievement, and effective neutrality (p. 86). Administrative corruption may be minor and easier to control than the misuse of power in the larger scheme of things ingrained in religious, political, economic, and social systems that contradict their ostensible purposes. Concrete examples illustrate how different political institutions either encourage or discourage deviance and enlarge or restrict opportunities for corruption in the public sector (p. 95). Indeed, the newer governance models that emphasize efficiency and promote greater private use of public power may well increase the propensity to corruption.

Since the actual extent of corruption cannot be known, reliance on impressions puts the failing and failed states worst in reputation, while those considered the most clean are small, open, liberal social democracies. However, there are exceptions. Some failing states have actually improved their standing because of better governance and economy, whereas states once considered the most clean have slipped, a circumstance
variously blamed on the erosion of religious adherence, changes in social values, the pull of money in politics, the aggrandizement of the business corporation, commercialism (and with it greed), and the perceived poor performance of public organizations. There is much disappointment with regard to international organizations whose credibility has fallen because they have never lived up to the initial optimism of their establishment and have been subjected to exposure of their systemic corruption. The implication is that much institutional redesign is in order both to correct misconceptions and restore the functionality and performance of public organizations, and to head off institutional anarchy.

Post-Positivists
Gjalt de Graaf, Pieter Wagenaar, and Michael Hoenderboom attempt to respond to the challenge posed by Michael Johnston (1996) “to investigate how the content of notions of abuse, public role, and private benefit are contested in specific places and at specific times” and “how clashes over the boundaries between public and private, politics and administration, institutions and sources of power, state and society, private and collective interests, and the allocative limits of the market develop” (p. 19). The meaning of corruption has to be seen within its social setting. Deviance varies from society to society. Corruption represents a social mechanism to achieve solidarity within kinship groups. Perceptions of corruption reveal the social construction of reality. Just because corruption is perceived differently from place to place and the social milieu is tolerant does not mean that outsiders should accept this situation. While there may not be absolute universal agreement, there is substantial agreement among moralists, and has been for thousands of years, about its blatant forms and the harm it does to its victims. Post-positivists understand this and concern themselves less about the substance of corruption than its effects, which has important social impacts not always detrimental. This can be known just by listening to people’s stories about their experience with what they consider misconduct, and these reveal the difference between “is” and “ought” and between past and present.

Better understanding of the social context may explain why well-intentioned anti-corruption campaigns fail. Good governance measures are based upon and incorporate values that are anathema to their targeted audience. Too much of a distinction is made between public and private and between politics and administration, which in Riggsian prismatic societies does not exist and no longer exists in contemporary governance circles. Moreover, the very international organizations that promote anticorruption measures are themselves tainted with the same brush. They do not practice what they preach and are seen as hypocritical. Reforms have to be adjusted to specific circumstances, and reformers will have to accustom themselves to ambiguity.

The Criminologists
The longest chapter, contributed by Wim Huisman and Gudrun Vande Walle, brands many common forms of corruption as criminal, thereby taking the concept well beyond deviance in officialdom and its classic forms in the administrative state. Public employees are no different from anybody else, although they are expected to provide an exemplary model of good behavior, and special measures are taken to weed out the unworthy lest public office be disgraced. While they are probably better behaved, miscreants
slip through who are guilty of criminal offenses and are eventually caught and pass through the criminal justice system. The chapter is sprinkled with court cases taken from the Netherlands, ranging from petty offenses to grand-scale misconduct and public mismanagement and official collusion in devious activities.

Because of the scale of criminality, everyone is a victim of corruption and the idea that it is a victimless crime is just untrue. The most obvious victims are the weak, the poor, and the uninformed, because they are the least able to protect themselves in the global society with its increasing privatization of public power multiplying linkages among micro-, meso-, and macro-levels, and the interconnectedness between context, organizational culture, and individual behavior, which are discussed in some detail. The pressures to deviate can be overwhelming. The rewards for committing misdeeds can be quite tempting (all have their price), the risks are well compensated, the deterrents are easily evaded, and the penalties are light, more so in the private sector than in the public arena, where it is more difficult to avoid the law, secrete wrongdoing, and defy public ethics.

How, then, are people socialized into deviance, into corruption? Are they taught at a young age to accept wrongdoing and accommodate themselves to it? Are they tested as to whether they are willing to participate, thereby trapping themselves, subjecting themselves to blackmail, and colluding in guarding themselves from exposure? Do they become so morally numb that when criticized by outsiders, they feel they have to justify themselves? Is this “normal learning behavior” (p. 138)? In systemic corruption, wrongdoing becomes the norm and participants have to stand aloof to neutralize themselves. This is where the rationalizations for corruption come in handy as excuses heard every day in law courts and given in self-justification for the good side of corruption, so why otherwise is corruption so ubiquitous or long-lasting? Obviously, corruption is seen as worthwhile, which it must be for the corrupt and corrupted, and punishment does not deter others from trying to benefit.

Ecology

Combining the micro-, meso-, and macro-levels and their complex linkages in the global society is the valiant task undertaken by Leo Huberts in a comprehensive integration of most of the important causes of corruption. It owes much to the pioneering research of Ben Hoetjes (pp. 150–153), subsequently followed up empirically by Daniel Treisman, Johann Lambsdorff, Daniel Kaufmann, and Leo Huberts himself, much of it based on the latest data collected by Transparency International and the World Bank. The analysis is so well done that empiricists can just concentrate on this comprehensive chapter, which conveniently summarizes much contemporary thinking about corruption and the nature of integrity. It cannot avoid repeating the arguments made in the other seven approaches, but it does clarify their commonalities in tabular form and delves into the factors that prevent individuals falling from grace, which is the opposite side of the coin. It supports the conclusion that clean organizations and honest stakeholders, backed by the activism of public leaders and their supporters within the populace, are the keys to reducing corruption and taking the initiative away from the corrupt.

The final chapter, contributed by the editors, reviews the whole effort to come to grips with the multiple causes giving rise to corruption, not just in officialdom or the public sector but also
in the wider society, and how they play on one another. It emphasizes the need for a broad interdisciplinary approach to unravel this complex phenomenon that has puzzled intellectuals throughout the ages as to why it exists, has existed, and probably will continue to exist to bedevil communities everywhere in its different forms. Would the absence or diminution of corruption have advanced human progress any quicker without a cost in development, and could effective countermeasures cleanse both governance and the individual soul? This book goes much further than most of the works listed in its comprehensive bibliography (pp. 175–199) in contributing some answers and highlighting research that is still badly needed to further advance the Good Cause.

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The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks

REBECCA SKLOOT

New York: Crown, 2010; Broadway Paperbacks, 2011

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks presents the story of a poor African American woman who, before dying of cancer at an early age, unwittingly became the source of the now famous HeLa cell cultures used for groundbreaking medical research. Efforts to isolate human cells that could be cultivated outside the body had long been largely unsuccessful. However, in 1951, Dr. Howard Jones removed some cancerous cervical tissue from Henrietta Lacks during her treatment at Johns Hopkins, a hospital originally intended to treat the indigent. He turned it over to Dr. George Guy, who specialized in cellular research. Guy and others had repeatedly failed in their efforts to grow cellular tissue outside the body, but to their amazement the cancerous Lacks tissue sample was the first to be successfully grown in the laboratory.

This breakthrough eventually was turned into a major enterprise in growing human tissue in a laboratory setting and providing samples for research throughout the world. That tissue became a key component of cancer research and in the development of numerous breakthroughs, including the polio vaccine and advances in AIDS treatment. Sales of HeLa cell cultures resulted in millions of dollars in revenue for research laboratories and companies, although neither Guy nor Lacks was a beneficiary of this revenue. Unfortunately, the same cells also contaminated numerous other cellular research efforts as other cell lines were developed. Despite some setbacks, HeLa cells continue to be important to biomedical research.

The author divides the book into three sections. Part I describes the life of Henrietta Lacks from her birth in 1920 until the time of her diagnosis in 1951, and it introduces a number of Lacks family members into the evolving story. The removal of tissue from Lacks and the discovery that her cancer cells were the first to be grown outside the body are described, as is the beginning of the distribution of HeLa cells for research.
Part II describes the diagnosis of Lacks’s cancer and its treatment, primarily with radium, until her death in October 1951, when her entire body was wracked by the disease. Part II also describes the expanding use of HeLa cells, controversial research reports related to that use, how Lacks’s name became public, and includes other names incorrectly associated with the HeLa research. As in Part I, the author weaves the Lacks family members into the narrative. Part III chronicles the ten years of research by the author and looks in depth at the Lacks family and its involvement in the research, as well as their occasional frustrations at being excluded from the financial benefits of HeLa cell sales and research.

This well-researched book tells the story of a poor African American family over the decades from the segregated South of the 1950s to contemporary America. It focuses on the personal lives and issues of the extended Lacks family, making it appropriate to ask what value *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* has for discourse about ethics in the public sector.

The treatment of blacks in the American South during Henrietta Lacks’s lifetime, especially in regard to the delivery of healthcare, raises numerous ethical issues, but that is not the focus here. Instead, the primary focus is on the human interest in studying the Lacks family, especially the ethical questions related to research on tissue extracted from human subjects without their consent and certainly without any participation in the resulting financial gains.

Times have certainly changed in today’s world, what with the passage of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) in 1996, other health information privacy regulations, and especially regulations in the area of human subjects research, which could lead to one to suppose that the ethical questions related to the HeLa cell case have been resolved, but that is clearly not the case.

Rebecca Skloot raises a number of significant ethical issues. One of the most troubling is that in 1954, during the Henrietta Lacks affair, a well-known researcher injected cancerous HeLa cells into unknowing subjects who were told the injections were tests of their immune system (pp. 127–130). The fact that Henrietta’s name was revealed at all would certainly cause privacy issues today, but to make matters worse, in 1985 a reporter for a science magazine published a book which contained information taken directly from Lacks’s medical records (pp. 210–212).

Skloot reports that in 1973, while attempting to find a way to control contamination of other cell cultures by HeLa cells, researchers approached the Lacks family. They wanted to obtain blood samples as a way to isolate Lacks-specific DNA to be used in verifying the presence or absence of HeLa cells in other cultures that were then being grown in laboratory settings. While the researchers maintained that they made no inappropriate claims about the reason for the tests, the Lacks family was left with the impression that the samples were taken to test them for the presence of Henrietta Lacks’s cancer (pp. 185–190). Again, the question of informed consent is at the center of this incident.

What may well appear to be the most significant ethical issue raised by Skloot is the fact that provision of HeLa cells for research became a profitable business, but neither Henrietta Lacks nor members of her extended family benefited from this lucrative undertaking.

Skloot provides an extensive afterword which chronicles the legal and regulatory developments in medical research, specifically focused on the
ethical questions of informed consent and the need for institutional research boards (IRBs) in federally funded research involving human subjects. While Title 45 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) deals with both IRBs and informed consent, the National Research Act leading to current regulations was not enacted until 1974, long after the HeLa affair was well under way. Today federally funded human research is often covered by the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, or the so-called “Common Rule” (the informal designation for the extensive set of codified regulations dealing with human subject research) published in 1991 and codified in separate regulations by fifteen federal departments and agencies (CFR 2009). Skloot points out that use of the Common Rule still has two significant limitations. The first is the reality that most tissue research is not federally funded; the second, that since the researcher does not have contact with the donor and seldom knows the donor’s identity, such work is not classified as human subject research.

The key issue is that research not funded by the federal government is not bound by these rules, and as Skloot aptly points out, there are two unsolved questions: informed consent and money (p. 317). Informed consent is a reasonably clear concept when the taking of human tissue is purely for research. However, this does not address the question of the use of human tissue taken during medical procedures that is later turned into research material or commercialized. The debate about money is more complex. The book suggests that the research community is opposed to requiring financial agreements with tissue donors because such arrangements would be too complex and would stifle research. According to Skloot, researchers argue that the purpose of their research is for the greater good and should not be hindered in any way. However, there is ever greater pressure from activists, ethicists, doctors, and patients for more regulations allowing patients to control their tissues (pp. 318–319).

Skloot’s best-selling volume tells a compelling story, one that raises significant ethical questions of interest to the medical profession, the legal profession, governmental healthcare agencies, and legislative bodies. It has been widely discussed in newspapers and magazines. A Washington Post book review (Roston 2010) suggests some of the relevant lessons from Skloot’s findings:

This book, labeled “science-cultural studies,” should be treated as a work of American history. It’s a deftly crafted investigation of a social wrong committed by the medical establishment, as well as the scientific and medical miracles to which it led. Skloot’s compassionate account can be the first step toward recognition, justice, and healing.

However, the implications of the book go beyond social wrongs because they raise significant, ongoing ethical issues for the medical community and governmental regulatory bodies to keep in the forefront.

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