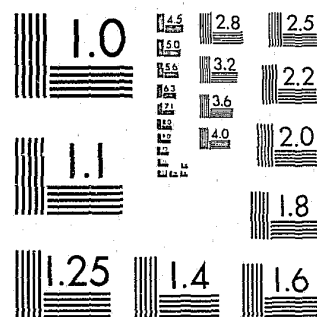National Criminal Justice Reference Service

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COPRODUCTION:

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN SERVICE DELIVERY

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Coproduction:

Citizen Participation in Service Delivery

by

Gordon P. Whitaker

Citizens influence the content of many public services through their direct participation in service delivery. This is especially the case in services designed to change people directly rather than to change their physical environment. Most economic activity -- including that of many public agencies -- is directed toward the production of goods. Raw materials are transformed into products which can then be delivered to consumers. Services are not like that. Education or health care or crisis intervention have as their primary objective the transformation of the consumer. Others may benefit from a child's education or a worker's good health or the pacification of a husband and wife in a heated argument, but the primary beneficiaries are the clients themselves. The terms "raw material," "finished product," and "consumer" all refer to the same individual.[1] In this context the term "delivery" takes on a new meaning, too. The agent delivering services is like the doctor or midwife delivering a baby.

The agent uses his or her skills and conducts activities to facilitate the process. But the person being served also has a major responsibility for the service.[2]

In "delivering" services the agent helps the person being served to make the desired sorts of changes. Whether it is learning new ideas or new skills, acquiring healthier habits, or changing one's outlook on family or society, only the individual served can accomplish the change. He or she is a vital "coproducer" of any personal transformation that occurs. The agent can supply encouragements, suggest options, illustrate techniques, and provide guidance and advice, but the agent alone cannot bring about the change. Rather than an agent presenting a "finished product" to the citizen, agent and citizen together produce the desired transformation.

The notion of citizens as coproducers of public services may seem quite odd. It is certainly at variance with the common idea of how government operates and how services are produced. Let us compare several uses of the term "citizen participation."

One use indicates the lobbying and litigation efforts of "public interest groups and citizen organizations."[3] This usage refers not to the activities of individual citizens so much as to the representation of

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[1] Victor R. Fuchs, The Service Economy (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1973), 357-374; and Harvey A. Garn, "Human Services on the Assembly Line," Evaluation, vol. 1, pp. 36, 41-42.

[2] Not everything that teachers or doctors or police officers do is "service" according to this definition. Expelling a student, isolating a patient with a contagious disease, and arresting a robber are all activities in which the subject of the agent's attention is not expected to benefit. In this sort of action, the agent's primary interest is in protecting others from the danger posed by the person being restrained.

[3] Stephen D. Cupps, "Emerging Problems of Citizen Participation," Public Administration Review, 37 (September/October, 1977), p. 478.

broad public needs and interests as distinct from the
more narrow, private, largely economic interests
represented by trade association, labor unions, ethnic
groups, and other traditional interest groups.[4]

Two points need to be made about this use of the term. First, while

this definition recognizes that administrative agencies as well as

"political" institutions make policy and can be subject to lobbying,

it overlooks the possibility that citizens might influence the execution

of public policy as well as its formulation. This usage implicitly accepts

the view of policy implementation as the mechanical carrying out of

decisions made by "higher authority." Moreover, this use of the term

refers to the expression of the interests of a broad part of the public,

not the expression of interests by a broad part of the public.

A similar use of "citizen participation" refers to the ways

neighborhood or ethnic group interests are represented in local policy-

making. During the past 15 years many cities have instituted citizen

participation programs, at least in part in response to federal grants-

in-aid requirements. While some of these consist of nothing more than

a few public hearings, more elaborate programs are common. Many in

fact constitute adjunct public authorities or representative bodies.

In the Community Action Program model, a not-for-profit corporation is

created to receive public funds and administer programs under the

authority of a council of citizens. In the Urban Renewal model, a

citizens' advisory board is formed to review government plans for

specific types of public programs in target areas. In both cases,

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[4]Ibid., p. 485.

participation by citizens at large is seen as attending public hearings,

electing representatives, and expressing opinions to and through those

representatives. Thus discussions of cities' citizen participation

programs, like the programs themselves, usually focus on the activities

of the representatives rather than those of the general citizenry.[5]

The aspect of broad scale citizen participation which has

received the most attention in the United States is voting,

but in the past decade and a half other citizen activities

which influence decision makers have been studied. Verba

and Nie, for example, include as citizen participation twelve types

of activities, all of which are techniques for influencing policy

choices of decision makers.[6] In such studies, the central concern has

been to find ways in which citizens attempted to influence the policy

decisions of public officials, not the execution of public policy.

Almond and Verba express this distinction as the difference between a

person's activities as "citizen" and that same person's activities as

"subject":

> The competent citizen has a role in the formation
> of general policy. Furthermore, he plays an influential
> role in this decision-making process: he participates
> by using explicit or implicit threats of some form
> of deprivation if the official does not comply with
> his demand. The subject does not participate in making
> rules, nor does his participation involve the use of
> political influence. His participation comes at the
> point at which general policy has been made and is being
> applied.[7]

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[5]Richard L. Cole, Citizen Participation and the Urban Policy
Process (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath and Company, 1974).

[6]Sidney Verba and Norman H. Nie, Participation in America: Political
Democracy and Social Equality (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), p. 31.

[7]Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, The Civic Culture (Boston:
Little, Brown and Company, 1965), p. 168-169.

In such a view, government may be democratic, but administration is not. Administration is seen as technical and, therefore, neutral.

Almond and Verba express a common point of view when they distinguish between an "upward flow of policy making" through which citizens exercise influence and a "downward flow of policy enforcement" toward which the citizen has "essentially a passive relationship."[8] The distinction has some merit, of course. Examples abound of public policies that were carried out without the cooperation of the general citizenry. The U.S. space program is a good illustration. Once policy was approved and funds allocated, experts took over and produced and deployed the machinery which has given us, among other things, pictures of the surface of Mars. But it is at our peril that we run programs such as public education in the same way. The pupil and the parents, as much as the teacher, influence the education that that pupil obtains. The best of lesson plans, instructional materials, and teaching techniques cannot educate the child who will not learn. Coproduction is essential in services which seek to change the client.

Ostrom has labeled our preoccupation with the distinction between politics and administration -- between deciding and doing -- as the "Intellectual Crisis in American Public Administration."[9] He argues that in adopting Weber's ideas about hierarchical control and Wilson's ideas about a single locus of decision-making, we have come to expect

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[8]Ibid. pp. 16-18.

[9]Vincent Ostrom, The Intellectual Crisis in American Public Administration (Tuscaloosa, Ala.: University of Alabama Press, 1973).

the behavior of bureaucrats to be determined by agency plans. In fact, the actions of the "street level bureaucrat," who delivers services are far from pre-determined. Lipsky points this out and offers an example:

> Consider the rookie policeman who, in addition to responding to his own conceptions of the policeman's role, must accommodate the demands placed upon him by (1) fellow officers in the station house who teach him how to get along and try to correct the teachings of his police academy instructors; (2) his immediate superiors who may strive for efficiency at the expense of current practices; (3) police executives who communicate expectations contradictory to station house mores; and (4) the general public, who in American cities today is likely to be divided along both class and racial lines in its expectations of police practices and behavior.[10]

Ostrom suggests that we should view all public employees and all citizens as decision makers regarding the public services with which they deal. Laws and rules in such a system should not be seen as prescribing a specific course of action. Rather they are constraints within which people make decisions. Laws and regulations are statements of the likely consequences of taking certain courses of action. As such, they serve as benchmarks against which to assess the wisdom of alternatives, but they do not determine behavior; neither do orders prescribe specific acts. Interpretation and interpolation are commonplace.[11] In large measure we conduct our public business in this way, but we rarely acknowledge it. We thus ignore the importance of the knowledge and judgement of "street level" public employees and the citizens they serve.

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[10]Michael Lipsky, "Street Level Bureaucracy and the Analysis of Urban Reform," in Neighborhood Control in the 1970s ed. George Frederickson (New York: Chandler Publishing Co., 1973), p. 105.

[11]Ostrom, Intellectual Crisis in Public Administration, pp. 102-113.

Many public services require for their execution, the active involvement of the general public and, especially, those who are to be the direct beneficiaries of the service. In a strict sense, not even the formal status of "citizen" is required for these sorts of participation. In most cases, any member of the community, regardless of age or residency or nationality, may participate in services in the United States.

Types of Coproduction

Three broad types of activities constitute coproduction: (1) citizens requesting assistance from public agents; (2) citizens providing assistance to public agents; and (3) citizens and agents interacting to adjust each other's service expectations and actions.

Citizen Requests for Assistance

Many public service activities are carried out only in response to specific requests from citizens. Social security, welfare, unemployment, and medicare payments all depend on citizen application. Emergency assistance from fire, police, or medical personnel is usually initiated by citizen request. The extent to which citizens who need these services receive them depends largely upon the extent to which they (or their neighbors) request assistance.

The point seems obvious. Yet only in the past few years have many public agencies begun to conduct "outreach" programs to inform citizens of the services they offer and to encourage those in need to apply.

Similarly, only recently have agencies made efforts to facilitate the receipt and processing of unusual service requests. This is not surprising given our common view of the responsibilities of public employees: that the work of the service agent is closely circumscribed by administrative rules and procedures. The agent's use of personal knowledge or judgment is precluded. Decision-making at that level is limited to sorting cases into appropriate categories. Katz and colleagues describe the model procedure this way:

> On one side of the desk sits the applicant for service, with all the needs, experiences, and idiosyncratic characteristics that combined to bring him there. On the other side of the desk sits a person whose function it is to determine the validity of the presenting request, the goodness of fit between it and the franchise of the agency, and thus the entitlement of the person. It is likely to be a brief conversation, although the preliminaries may be long. It ends with a decision, or a referral, either of which may satisfy or frustrate the client.[12]

When citizens' circumstances and requests do not fit prescribed categories as they often do not in education, counseling and other services, agents typically find themselves with no legitimate alternative to the unworkable bureaucratic model. Because agents are not encouraged to develop and to use their own judgment, informally defined categories of people and problems based on personal experiences and prejudices and the views of peers, replace administrative regulations as the categories for sorting cases.[13]

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[12]Daniel Katz, Barbara Gutek, Robert L. Kohn and Eugenia Barton, Bureaucratic Encounters (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press, Institute for Social Research, 1975), p. 180.

[13]Lipsky, "Street Level Bureaucracy and the Analysis of Urban Reform."

A central issue is who defines "need." How much credence are service agents prepared to place in a citizen's description of problems and needs when that description differs from the agency definition? Many requests for emergency police assistance, for example, concern family arguments and fights. Standard police response has been to separate the arguing parties and to get one of them to leave the scene if possible. Because police have usually defined their work as "crime fighting," domestic disturbance calls have commonly been viewed as nuisances, although the danger they can pose to officers is widely recognized. Where such calls are considered as outside the scope of "real police work," little training is given to officers in appropriate skills for handling these situations and little attention is directed to evaluating how well officers deal with them. Many departments do not even keep accounts of the number of calls of this type they receive, although they keep detailed records on calls they are interested in -- reports of crime.

Official recognition of what is requested by citizens has led some agencies to revise their training and supervision practices. For police who handle domestic disturbances, this has not only meant the introduction of a new set of standard operating procedures for family crisis intervention, but has often involved a redefinition of the police officer's role. Training for crisis intervention involves development of each officer's powers of discernment and judgment.

This training encourages the officer to examine each problem situation and respond to the problems the disputants themselves are presenting. It discourages the categorizing and treating of citizens as "types."[14]

Citizen requests for service may also influence the distribution of service allocations in a community. Some agencies may serve only those who make bureaucratically acceptable requests. For example, a library with a stock of books appealing only to highly educated readers with traditional tastes, will continue to circulate books only among those readers so long as new book orders reflect past patterns of usage. To reach new readers from other cultural backgrounds, the library staff must learn which books (and other media) appeal to non-users.[15]

Encouraging people to request new or different service activities may seem unwise for communities with scarce public resources. But in cases where the actitivites being conducted by public employees are seldom used (or used by only a small, comparatively well-to-do part of the community) continuation of current service activities results in ineffective or inequitable public policies. Especially in places where the residents (and their tastes, circumstances, and behaviors)

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[14]Morton Bard, "The Unique Potentials of the Police in Interpersonal Conflict Management." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science; The First National Conference of IOSGT, held in Washington, D. C., December 29, 1972.

[15]Frank Levy, Arnold J. Meltsner and Aaron Wildavsky, Urban Outcomes: Schools, Streets and Libraries, volume in Oakland Project Series (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1974).

are changing, agencies which rely on citizen requests for service need to be alert to (and even help to encourage) requests for assistance with new types of problems. Unless public service agents are also encouraged to recognize and respond appropriately to new types of service requests, their actions are not likely to be as helpful as they could and should be.

Not every agency can be equipped to handle every problem, of course. In many instances, referral to another agency may be the most appropriate response. To make good referrals, service agents need accurate information about other service agencies. Referral should be viewed as a service in its own right. On the other hand, requests for special treatment or favors cannot be provided because they constitute unfair privileges or a failure to enforce rights and duties. Agents must be responsible to the law and to considerations of equity as well as to the particular requests of individuals. Each public servant accepts a substantial public trust and must be held accountable for the use of that responsibility.

Citizen coproduction of public services through service requests is not, as it has been discussed here, an adversarial form of participation. Although it is possible for citizens to overload an agency with requests or to boycott an agency in order to force some policy change, that is not the kind of influence which is most pervasive. There is a continual shaping of what an agency does by the kinds of requests made on it by citizens. Citizen requests for service should be recognized as the operational definition of much of the workload of service agencies. Recognition of agency dependence on service requests

and citizens' problems in communicating their requests in agency terms are important in improving service delivery.

Citizen Provision of Assistance

The success of many public policies depends upon the behavior of the citizenry. Too often we overlook the fact that transformation of citizen behavior is the service objective. The police officer who stops a reckless driver may view the act as apprehension of a violator of the law. A more constructive view of that interaction is that the officer is attempting to change the driver's behavior to reduce the likelihood that the driver will injure himself or others. This latter view is more constructive because officers who hold it are apt to focus their attention on drivers whose behavior is dangerous, while those who hold the "law enforcement" view are more likely to seek the less hazardous infractions which are commonly more numerous.

The behavior of citizens whose actions are not the target of agency concern also often influences the execution of public policy. The importance of parents' actions in the education of their children is one example. Another is the role residents and other users of an area play in maintaining public safety in the area. Twenty years ago when Jacobs wrote that through certain kinds of routine daily behavior toward their neighbors people could prevent burglaries and street crimes, her analysis was viewed as highly novel.[16] Today the major textbook

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[16] Jane Jacobs, The Death and Life of Great American Cities (New York: Random House, 1961).

for police administrators takes the position that "if there are no
effective forces of community social control at work, there is little
if anything the police can do to deal with crime and lawlessness."[17]
The social disintegration of neighborhoods and changes in expectations
about how to relate to neighbors has left many places without the
kind of shared concern for the common welfare that supports public
safety. Thus, actions which assist police, such as neighbors watching
each others' property, no longer occur as a part of routine social
interaction. In the absence of such behavior, police have begun to
encourage it through special crime prevention programs.[18]

General citizen cooperation in public programs becomes increasingly
important with the continued weakening of the family and small group
relationships through which people used to work for common goals.
Cooperation with public agents in pursuit of a common objective is
an important form of political participation.

Cooperation needs to be distinguished from compliance and
habit, of course. If citizens act in accordance with public service
goals because they fear reprisals for their refusal, or if citizens
act in accordance with public goals because they have become habituated

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[17]Hubert G. Locke, "The Evolution of Contemporary Police Service,"
in Local Government Police Management ed. Bernard L. Garmire (Washington,
D.C.: The International City Management Association, 1977), p. 15.

[18]George Washnis, Citizen Involvement in Crime Prevention (Lexington,
Mass.: D.C. Heath and Co., 1976).

to that set of behaviors, their actions do not constitute cooperation.
Cooperation is voluntary. Exercise of conscious, citizen influence on
public service through "assistance" depends upon the citizen's capacity
to withhold or to give cooperation.

Opportunities for citizen cooperation are thus also opportunities
for noncooperation. Noncooperation can have as powerful an influence
on public services as cooperation. One situation in which citizen
cooperation (or noncooperation) is especially influential is the
introduction of a new public program requiring widespread citizen
activity. An example is the recent attempt of several cities to
institute curb-side garbage pickup for residents who have been
accustomed to back-door pickup. Facing revenue limits, cities have
sought to reduce the costs of garbage collection by shifting some
of the labor from city employees to residents. By having residents
place their garbage cans at the curb on collection days, a city
can collect the same amount of garbage per truck in the same (or
less) time and reduce staff by one worker per truck. This would
result in a considerable saving of public funds. But citizen cooperation
is essential to this plan. Compliance with the plan is difficult to enforce --
the garbage needs to be collected for maintenance of sanitation and
public health (regardless of citizens' cooperation) and fines for
noncompliance are unwieldly on a massive scale.

The distinction between cooperation and compliance is often hazy, because the enforceability of legal sanctions is always open to question in the courts. People who do not comply with what they regard as unjust laws or regulations have increasingly turned to the courts for relief. When the courts ruled that compliance with laws racially segregating public facilities were unenforceable in the United States, noncooperation with the old public policy of segregation soon changed southern patterns of seating on buses and access to lunch counters.[19] Citizen noncooperation -- even in the face of possible sanctions -- received a major impetus from the Civil Rights movement. Citizens increasingly influence public policy by their noncooperation whether it is recognized formally through court suits or, more commonly, through the acquiesence of public officials when citizens fail to comply.

One way for citizens to indicate lack of agreement that a policy is good is to fail to cooperate. If enough citizens withhold their assistance, a project based on cooperation cannot succeed. As Washnis concludes regarding public safety:

> . . . . it appears that not much meaningful will ever be done about reducing crime without the active concern of all citizens. Responsible individual citizens will have to take the lead in setting up ways to get residents involved, and simultaneously police and other city officials will have to understand citizen involvement, encourage it, and provide some resources and incentives to keep it going.[20]

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[19]Harrell R. Rodgers, Jr. and Charles S. Bullock III, Law and Social Change: Civil Rights Laws and Their Consequences (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972).

[20]Washnis, Citizen Involvement in Crime Prevention, pp. 136-137.

Citizen cooperation can be used to influence explicit policy choices -- the implementation of new laws, regulations, or program plans, for example. But like citizen requests, cooperation also has a continual, day-to-day effect on the content of public policy.

Citizen/Agent Mutual Adjustment

In some public service delivery situations agents and citizens interact to establish a common understanding of the citizen's problem and what each of them can do to help deal with it. This reciprocal modification of expectations and actions involves more communication than a simple request for assistance. It also involves more than the citizen's acquiesence in or rejection of the action proposed by the service agent. Sometimes no agreement is reached on what needs to be done or how to do it. Mutual adjustment occurs when the actions taken by both the service agent and the citizen are based on their joint consideration of a problem.

Mutual adjustment is most important in the delivery of services which aim to modify the client's behavior. Of course, mutual adjustment of expectations and behavior is not the only way to change the way people behave. Both persuasion and coercion are also used. Gersuny and Rosengren discuss a number of manipulative techniques used by service agents to secure coproduction of services. Their review of rhetoric used (mainly by private, profit-making agencies) to persuade the gullible to cooperate, suggests that too often citizens may be

unwilling or unable to exercise independent judgment about their actions.[21] Although persuasion is by no means all fakery, Gersuny's and Rosengren's discussion illustrates the need for citizens to maintain a healthy skepticism about persuasive appeals. A healthy skepticism about public agents' use of coercion is also valuable in a democracy. But like persuasion, coercion also has its place in government. Police powers are necessary to "reduce the advantages which the remorseless and the strong have over the sensitive and the civilized."[22]

While mutual adjustment is not possible in all situations of public service delivery, it seems clearly possible and preferable in many situations. In an exchange of this type, both the citizen and the agent share responsibility for deciding what action to take. Moreover, each accords legitimacy to the responsibility of the other. The citizen coproducer is not a "client" in the sense that he or she is not a supplicant seeking the favor of the agent.

The importance of mutual adjustment between teacher and student is suggested by experiments which found that teachers' expectations of student achievement have a marked influence on how well students do at their studies.[23] Teachers who look for potential in their

[21]Carl Gersuny and William R. Rosengren, The Service Society (Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman Publishing Co., 1973).

[22]William Ker Muir Jr., Police: Streetcorner Politicians (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1977), p. 277.

[23]Robert Rosenthal and Lenore Jacobson, "Pygmalion in the Classroom," in Bureaucracy and the Public eds. Elihu Katz and Brenda Danet (New York: Basic Books, 1973), pp. 375-388.

students are more likely to find the potential and to tailor their teaching to stimulate that potential. From the other side, students who see their teachers as capable of presenting materials of interest and importance to the students are likely to commit themselves more vigorously to their own education than are students who are simply expected to cooperate or forced to comply.[24]

Mutual adjustment obviously does not involve the interaction of equals. The service agent almost always has greater resources. The agent generally has the advantage of greater skill or special knowledge. This professional authority normally gives the agent a socially accepted power to prescribe actions for the service recipient.[25] Or the agent may have special legal authority to use force or impose other sanctions. But authority, either professional or legal, may be insufficient to induce the kind of personal change which many citizens' problems seem to demand. A study of patients' compliance with doctors' advice shows some limits of professional authority:

[24]Jonathan Kozol, Death at an Early Age (Boston, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin, 1967).

[25]Eliot Friedson, "The Impurity of Professional Authority," in Institutions and the Person eds. Howard S. Becker, Blanche Geer, David Reisman and Robert S. Weiss (Chicago, Ill.: Aldine Publishing Co., 1968), pp. 25-34.

Communication between doctor and patient ideally necessitates a certain degree of reciprocity. Each person has certain rights and obligations. When the doctor performs a service, the patient is obliged to reciprocate: first, by cooperating with the doctor in their interaction; and second, by complying with the medical recommendation once he leaves the doctor's office. We have seen, however, that there are deviations from these norms.[26]

Patients who were overbearing tended to ignore the advice of more passive physicians. Conversely, doctors who questioned patients extensively, but failed to share their use of the information with the patient were also less likely to be obeyed.

An officer's account of his encounter with a young man who had armed himself with a bat to avenge his younger sister's rape illistrates limitations on the use of legal authority:

I took the guy with the bat into a small cubicle all by ourselves and appealed both to his pride and to his manhood. I told him honestly, if I was the object of his hostilities -- I didn't say it quite this way, but this was the general idea -- I wouldn't take off my badge and fight it out with him. He was too big for me, and besides I would have to arrest him, and no one wants to arrest him. He didn't do anything wrong. I try to give everyone an avenue of escape. You have got to save his face. Some devices for that are privacy -- he can walk out of that cubicle just as big as he went in and as strong as ever. But alone I could advise him to do it the right way. Next day, get on a phone to the police department, and get a policewoman, or a juvenile officer to come out to the house. And interview him, his sister, his mother, his grandmothers. Get statements, even do some medical testing on the sister.

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[26]Milton Davis, "Variations in Patients' Compliance with Doctors' Advice: An Emperical Analysis of Patterns of Communications," in Bureaucracy and the Public eds. Katz and Danet, p. 369.

He went for that eventually. Initially, you see, he would have sacrificed himself, would have gone to jail knowingly. But he had no alternatives in mind; he had to beat up the guy who had raped his little sister. So you have to offer an individual an escape from his bind. But a policeman cannot afford to lose, and what you have to avoid as a policeman is putting yourself into a spot with a win-or-lose basis. I could have presented an ultimatum, "You shut up or you're going to jail." The final ultimatum is the authority to arrest, and there is a perfect legal right to do it. But is it going to be a peace-keeping move -- and especially in the long run?[27]

The officer in this encounter is clearly trying to inform and persuade the young man with the bat, but he is also listening and shaping his own expectations and behavior on the basis of the young man's view of his problem and the actions he decides to take. As the officer notes, he chose to be open to the young man's explanations and the possibility of a noncoercive resolution. Similarly, the young man was willing to listen to the officer and consider his information and advice.

The agent does not relinquish professional or legal authority when engaging in mutual adjustment of expectations and actions. Rather the agent helps the citizen being served by sharing authority. Thus the doctor explains the diagnosis and how alternative treatments might work and the police officer explains the basis of actions and the legal options available.

The importance of coproduction, and especially mutual adjustment, to "delivery" of services is underlined by Norval Morris's analysis

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[27]Muir, Police: Streetcorner Politicians, pp. 119-120.

of the failure of convict rehabilitation programs. Morris argues that
the diagnosis/treatment model which prescribes "rehabilitative" activities
for the inmate and obtains the inmate's compliance with those activities
has not been successful because it has ignored the crucial role that
motivation plays in shaping behavior.[28] If an inmate "participates" in
training programs or counseling only because he knows that doing so will
earn him privileges in prison and perhaps reduce the time he must spend
there, we should not be surprised that the "training" and "counseling"
have little effect on his life once he has been released. Unless inmates
really want to change their lives, or at least explore that option as
an alternative, they do not really participate in rehabilitation programs;
they just go through the motions. Morris recommends that inmates who
so desire should be given professional assistance in learning how to
live within the law as citizens of a free society. No special inducements --
which in prison are simply the obverse of coercion -- should be offered.
The sentencing to prison is one thing. Rehabilitation activities are
another. In the long run, even those over whom a democratic society
exercises the greatest control cannot be forced to change their personal
behavior. A prisoner's active, voluntary participation is required for
public agents to help facilitate rehabilitation.

Mutual adjustment is not feasible in all service situations.
Sometimes public agents have to coerce some citizens -- even at the
cost of foregoing the opportunity to help them -- in order to protect

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[28]Norval Morris, The Future of Imprisonment (Chicago,
Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1974).

other citizens. For coproduction to be possible, citizens, as well
as agents, must be willing to recognize the legitimacy of the public
policies the agents are charged with implementing. At the very least,
they must be willing to talk and to listen. Citizen participation
in the reciprocal transformation of agent and citizen expectations
and actions is a means for making services more effective.

An Overview of Coproduction

Citizens participate in the execution of public policies in
several important ways. By requesting assistance from public agents,
citizens exert considerable influence over the kinds of activities
agencies conduct and the way those activities are distributed among
members of the community. Citizens also influence public policies
directly through their cooperation or noncooperation with activities
requested by public officials. Although both these forms of participation
are acts of individual citizens, their effects on public policy are
usually most pronounced in the aggregate. The kinds of requests citizens
make influence the basic workload of many agencies. The kinds of
assistance citizens provide limit the types of programs agencies can
implement. Agencies which recognize their reliance on citizens can
develop ways to deal with the limits they impose and the opportunities
they offer.

The mutual adjustment of expectations and actions between service
agent and citizen is a third type of coproduction. Agent and client often

mutually consider the citizen's problem and what each of them can
do about it. Mutual adjustment influences public policy by introducing
the unique considerations of individual citizens into agents' service
activities. The aggregate influence of mutual adjustment on the agency
may be to disrupt procedures more than to establish new procedures.
But, as with the other forms of coproduction, the aggregate effects of
mutual adjustment on such public goals as education, health, and safety
should be pronounced. Service agencies need to encourage agents to
develop and use their own good judgement and share service responsibility
with clients. If they do, citizens will be more likely to make the
desired changes in their behavior.

Coproduction is especially important for services which seek
transformation of the behavior of the person being served. By overlooking
coproduction, we have been misled into an over-reliance on service agents
and bureaucratic organization of human services. We need to examine the
ways in which agencies can organize to facilitate the types of coproduction
most appropriate to the services they seek to deliver. We have too
often come to expect that agencies can change people and have forgotten
that people must change themselves.

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