1. Introduction

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While the media and organizational discussions around the globe have been abuzz with talk of public sector ethics, academic research in the field was, until very recently, dominated primarily by American researchers focusing primarily on American topics. This is of no surprise given that it is only in the US that public sector or administrative ethics has developed as a separate discipline and area of study within public administration. Consequently, the vast majority of textbooks, courses, journals, and professional networks are US-based and reflect the American culture. Yet, this has changed recently as the debates on public sector ethics across the globe have also generated academic interest outside the US. This book represents these changes.

Born from presentations delivered at the first ‘Transatlantic Dialogue on Ethics and Integrity of Governance’, held at the Public Management Institute of the University of Leuven in Belgium in June 2005, the chapters in this book represent a milestone. The conference was jointly organized by European and American networks (the Study Group on Ethics and Integrity of Governance of the European Group of Public Administration and the Section on Ethics of the American Society of Public Administration, respectively), representing transatlantic dialogue in the truest sense. It is a dialogue of balance, integration, perspective and, ultimately, demonstrates an abiding respect for perspectives from both sides of the Atlantic. A peer-reviewed selection from amongst those myriad voices is presented in this book, challenging current suppositions, confirming mutual concerns, and challenging everyone interested in public sector ethics to move to the next level of inquiry and practice.

The book is organized in four parts. Part I addresses the moral qualities of governance and government, its mission and demonstrated values. Chapters 1 and 2 are empirically-grounded and emanate from a strong theoretical foundation. Vandenabeele and Horton focus on the qualitative aspects of integrity and ethics using historical institutionalism to frame their argument: What is the public ethos of government in the United Kingdom, how has that ethos developed, and which factors or institutions

had a significant influence on this evolution? Giacalone and Jurkiewicz pinpoint changes in basic societal values and extrapolate the significance of these measured shifts on organizational values, focusing on the impact to the individual. In the third chapter Lewis paints the ethical landscape with elements that figure prominently in ethical decision-making, including the psychology of moral development, emotions and context. The final chapter of this part is of a more normative nature. Six and Huberts ask what qualifies a public servant to be labeled as ethical or acting with integrity. Can someone be his or her own judge, should the legal framework be decisive, is it the politician's values and preferences that should be followed or is the citizen, in the end, the referee in this game of moral judgment?

Part II of the book addresses the dangers inherent in focusing too tightly on rationality and effectiveness in government. Adams and Balfour suggest that a central tension in present day public administration results when administrators perform rationally in a technical sense but in the process lose conceptions of moral responsibility that are essential for integrity. Emery and Wiser also tackle contradictions between rationality and effectiveness on the one hand, and morality and ethics on the other. They argue that borrowing measures and approaches from the private sector for use in the public sector could lead to unethical behavior, and draw upon empirical data to assess whether that danger is real.

An important developing area in the field of ethics and integrity research focuses upon identifying interventions that will lead to improved organizational integrity; that theme is addressed in Part III of this book. Fawcett and Wardman map the ethical framework of local government in England, reporting unexpected results from a study by the Audit Commission. Hoekstra, Belling, and van der Heide describe the evolution of ethics management in the Netherlands, calling for the current paradigm of compliance to be replaced by a more values-based approach. Finally, Lamboo et al. focus on a single 'instrument' of ethics management: utilizing the case study approach they assess the impact of leadership on unethical behavior.

Part IV addresses the relationship between ethics, integrity, and politics. Bowman and West review appointments in the public sector and question how definitive the criteria of merit and partisanship are, and should be. They conclude that a new politicization of appointments could bode negative consequences for the ethics of governance. Robert Kaye, conversely argues that conflicting demands within a democratic political system are desirable and should be left to their own natural progression in resolving the issues at hand; in other words, politicking is good. Next, Van de Walle concentrates on a key power base of politics: the support and trust of citizens. He tackles the chicken-egg question of whether perceptions of corruption affect the amount of trust citizens have in their government or

whether the amount of trust dictates perceptions of corruption. His conclusion challenges the hopes of many in that, in the final analysis, getting things done may be more important to the populace than getting them done with integrity.

The concluding part attempts to frame these multiplicative aspects of ethics, integrity, and governance within the broader context of research and practice. First, the burgeoning interest in ethics and integrity demonstrated by global institutions such as the UN, World Bank and OECD as well as NGO's like Transparency International, is critically examined. The question is addressed point-blank regarding whose interests are best served by all this enthusiasm for ethics management. Second, epistemological and ontological issues surrounding the research literature on ethics and integrity are put into perspective: what do we know, how do we know it, and what does it mean. It concludes with a summary of present research and policy agendas, a challenge to the parochial paradigm which limits our understanding of the truths we seek, and a slew of suggestions for the future of both scholars and players.

The chapters in this book have been selected from over 90 top-notch papers that were presented at the Conference, by a labor-intensive nomination protocol followed by a dual blind peer review process. We would like to thank these thoughtful and attentive reviewers sincerely for their extensive and very useful comments: Guy Adams, Frank Anechiarico, Daryl Balia, Nathalie Behnke, Rob M. Bittick, Mark Bovens, Jim Bowman, Richard Chapman, Gjalt de Graaf, Kathryn Denhardt, Patrick Dobel, Mel Dubnick, Richard Ghere, Robert A. Giacalone, Annie Hondeghem, Michael Johnston, Torben Beck Jorgensen, Emile Kolthoff, Terry Lamboo, Karin Lasthuizen, Alan Lawton, Carol Lewis, Michael Macaulay, Donald C. Menzel, Carel Peeters, James L. Perry, Terrell Rhodes, Robert Schwartz, Frédérique Six, Dennis Smith, Trui Steen, Wouter Vandenabeele, Hans van den Heuvel, Zeger van der Wal, Steven Van de Walle, Kathleen Vanmullem, Patrick von Maravic, and Pieter Wagenaar. We also thank Sonja Wellens and the publisher's team for their administrative and editorial support.

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