Preface

Books of this kind find meaning when the contributing authors are free to explore questions of research they view as most significant. This is the cornerstone of the *Handbook for Collaborative Public Management*. The forty-eight contributors were asked to offer new research or a fresh reflection on an area of study in collaborative public management. The scholars included hold the study of collaborative public management as a significant subject in our field. As the reader will discover, this is a subject that has received enormous attention starting just before the turn of the century when government began the transformation into governance (Kettl 2002). The energy and vibrancy that originally brought us to this subject remains. Part of the interest is that collaboration is a central component in the practice of public administration. Those who study public administration are comfortable with the exploration of collaboration as well as seeking ways to improve collaboration. Four themes contribute to comfortable acceptance: interdependence, the commons, the disarticulated state and complexity. The variety of collaboration we now witness is born from these themes.

Interdependence. One can observe a growing recognition of the deep interconnection we have with one another. This means there is a nascent understanding of our interdependence. How we achieve our desired state of affairs will be based, in part, on this understanding. Events once thought to be too distant, or too insignificant, are now proximate and significant (Rosenau 2003). It is a recognition of how interdependence shapes our power in these relationships and the necessity to collaborate (Nye and Keohane 1977; see also Chapter 2 of this volume). As the intensity of interaction increases in our relationships, so do the connections deepen among participants.

Commons. There is concomitant recognition that the challenges we face are interconnected. These interconnections are to be found at all levels of jurisdiction and indicate a growing understanding that we have a share in all commons. While natural and resource commons are endowments that are geographically arranged, their use (and misuse) is collectively absorbed. The challenge of public administration is in the coordination of competing interests in these highly interdependent spaces. The coordination among the variety of stakeholders and constituents is one of the profound challenges of collaborative public management (Innes and Booher 2010; Meek and Marshall 2014).

Disarticulated State. Writing at the turn of the century, H. George Frederickson (1999) observed that our deeply jurisdictionally driven and territorially bounded arrangements of jurisdictions were “disarticulated.” The issues that these traditional jurisdictions must now address do not start nor end within the defined jurisdictions but evolve from and move beyond our jurisdictions. The fundamental and essential components of society – transportation, water resources, energy use and resources, environmental quality, adequate housing, economic prosperity – are influenced by events and patterns well outside jurisdictions. Consequently, the ability to control and manage jurisdictions in isolation becomes frustrating, if not impossible.

Complexity. John Gaus (1947) observed that government functions must increase with growth in society’s complexity, division of labor, technology, interdependence, and that society’s strength is proportionate to its administrative capacity. It is noted that with the interdependent conditions we now experience and the threatening of our commons, various

kinds of complexities challenge our administrative efforts: substantive, strategic and institutional (Klijn and Koppenjan 2016). The demand for jointly managing these complexities in collaborative public management forums will call upon the need for institutional learning and cooperation among the stakeholders and constituents involved.

New forms of collaborative public management, the subject of this volume, are emerging to address the interdependent conditions we experience. The profound variety of approaches – creating governance arrangements in both smaller forms (neighborhood councils) and larger forms (region-wide metropolitan planning organizations) functioning at the same time – is evident in many of our communities. The increasing complexity of societies force public officials to develop new models of governance processes (Goldsmith and Eggers 2004). Recognition of common interests has led to the formation of *networks of arrangements*, formal and informal. *Civic and public engagement* collaborative efforts to co-produce services with citizens, to engage in public deliberation of the design and implementation and assessment of public services are illustrations of extending collaboration to include citizens and stakeholders in communities. *Governance and cross-sector collaboration strategies* to engage stakeholders and partners in policy design and implementation are reflective of the emergence of collaborative public management.

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This volume is dedicated to improving our understanding of how these governance networks evolve, are managed and how they perform. The scholars in this collection ask important questions: what leads us to collaborate, what determines the arrangements, what arenas can we find collaboration in, what limits collaborative efforts and how do we improve collaboration? One message is clear, collaborative public management is a fundamental area of practice and study in public administration. We are continually learning more about how administrative systems operate and function together.

In the Fall of 2018, when I was approached to coordinate this project, we had no idea of the seismic shifts that would soon unfold. Considerable existing challenges were present at the time, the most significant represented in climate change. Several forces at play were disrupting states, many related to the quickly globalizing world. Responses to globalization took many forms and with the 2007–2008 economic recession, many were characterized as isolationist. Alliances became threatened and economic interests were to be determined on individual terms rather than through coordinated action. Responding globally to common threats – economic, political, technological, ecological – would be a steeper challenge. Momentum toward an administratively linked world facilitating common interests would be challenging, if not stalled. In December of 2019, the rise of COVID-19 as a global challenge fell into this distracted and disarticulated condition.

By early 2020, most of the chapters for this work had been selected and engaged. Because of timing, most of the contributors to this volume had little time to address this significant and pressing event. Still, some authors were able to set their expertise on COVID-19 and we include their work. I am confident that future work on collaborative public management will focus on the experiences with COVID-19 we are experiencing at the time of this writing. It was the end of May 2020 when George Floyd was killed in Minneapolis igniting a Black Lives

Matter movement demanding institutional reform across jurisdictions and a re-examination of our history and institutional foundations. These demands are unfolding at the time of this writing and will certainly receive significant attention in the research that follows.

It was intentional to ask a diverse community of authors to contribute to this volume. The mix of intellectual traditions, approaches, geographic contexts and scholarly experience produced a wide variety of productive thinking about collaborative public management included in this volume. The attention to scholarship and the reliance on peer review contributed to the quality of the chapters. The global reach of the scholars included here speaks to the significance of the subject across an array of cultures and experiences.

Collaborative public management is an evolving field, as you will discover upon further reading. Yet, this area of study – networks, network management, collaborative public management, collaborative governance – in all of its variation and nuance is also a maturing field, a field worthy of continued exploration.

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