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The social construction of public administration : interpretive and critical perspectives

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Abstrak

In this conceptual guided tour of contemporary public administration, Jong S. Jun challenges the limitations of the discipline which, he argues, make it inadequate for understanding today's complex human phenomena. Drawing on examples and case studies from both Eastern and Western countries, he emphasizes critical and interpretive perspectives as a counterforce to the instrumental-technical rationality that reduces the field to structural and functionalist views of management. He also emphasizes the idea of democratic social construction to transcend the field's reliance on conventional pluralist politics. Jun stresses that public administrators and institutions must create opportunities for sharing and learning among organizational members and must facilitate interactive processes between public administrators and citizens so that the latter can voice their problems and opinions. The future role of public administrators will be to transcend the limitations of the management and governing of modern public administration and to explore ways of constructing socially meaningful alternatives through communicative action and the participation of citizens.