

Abstract

Traditions go a long way in moulding institutions and serving as a guide to public service reform. (Stillman II 2003: 19-40). Tradition underpins our values systems, but it is mostly challenges that shape its course, determining the nature and dominant features of structures that come out of reforms. The article, which follows, considers major policies, practices and concerns which, at various times, have served as catalysts of change, at each of the three tiers of the American government system: federal, state and local. From very modest beginnings in the early nineteenth century, the federal civil service waxed in both size and quality in the Reconstruction period, after the Civil War and later under the influence of the Progressive Movement. However, it was mostly the Great Depression striking in 1929 and the challenges of War, from 1941 to 1945 and beyond, that have been instrumental in changing and expanding the scope of government and public administration. On all the levels of government, the Administrative State and civil service policies reflecting the values of merit and expertise came clearly into their own. The dominance of Politics never really disappeared but, from the nineteen-eighties, "an escape from Politics" increasingly has been as mostly unrealistic. Some current trends especially have added to the effects that privatization, "contracting out", unionization and politicization of collective bargaining process have brought in their trail, substantially affecting the ways public services work. Still, it is two broader factors with roots in the external environment that currently produce profound transformative changes in the Structures and Ideals of the American Civil Services, on all three tiers of government. These, according to this article, are: Digital Era Automation, whose effects are yet to come and powerful societal forces combating discrimination and exclusion, thus favouring diversity in both the composition and several facets of civil services structure and policies.

Keywords: *Civil service, civil servants, USA, federal civil service, civil service policies*

Introduction

Five sets of American Civil Service practices and concerns are briefly explored in this analysis. Emphasis is placed on the importance of *relationships* among public workforce policies and practices and *impacts* on other governmental matters. Special focus has been granted to civil service developments that most relate to the international work of the Astana Civil Service Hub, headquartered in Nur Sultan, Kazakhstan. A key lesson is the fact that, in American government, *Escape from Politics is Impossible*. Of course, this leads to the question: *What Kind of Politics?*

The first two topics focus on *topmost present-day and accelerating Civil Service expectations*. They are concerns identified by the Hub in 2018 and 2019 for urgent collaborative deliberations: *The Digital Revolution* and *Civil Service Remuneration (Financial Needs and Costs)*. Among American national, state, and local governments, as the Hub has correctly determined from international perspectives, these developments are presently crucial to current and future Civil Services.

After glimpses into those high-priority challenges, the third set of the American experience summarised here focuses on *Civil Service Structures and Ideals*. It concerns the two most fundamental American expectations of governmental workforces. First, ideals are for Civil Services based on *Merit*. Purposes are *Expert and Professional Accomplishment, free of Corruption*

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and Political Spoils. Politically neutral Civil Service Commissions became principal structures to facilitate these ideals. The second important expectation of American Civil Service structures is practical responsiveness to responsible political authority under Constitutional Rule of Law. In recent years of extremely divisive and self-serving partisanship in politics and government currently undermines both of these ideals.

The fourth group of developments noted here concern *relationships* among three enormous governmental workforce changes during the last 60 years: *Public Employee Unionisation and Politicised Collective Bargaining*; *Privatisation of Government Functions*; and *Contracting Out of Performance of the Remaining Public Responsibilities*. These closely inter-connected political movements are related to the government workforce fragmentation and greatly reduced reliance on Career Civil Servants for topmost leadership positions.

Finally, summarised as the fifth set of vast Civil Service changes are efforts to eliminate adverse discrimination of all sorts. At the local, state, and national levels, American culture now mostly embraces *Values of Diverse Inclusion in Governmental Workforces*. *Arbitrary Exclusion from Civil Service has been illegal, nearly everywhere, for over 40 years*. However, highly divisive national political developments since 2016 have encouraged the resurgence of varied sorts of discrimination and civil rights abuses.

The Digital Revolution

Digital Technologies have transformed America. A New Historic Era of dependence on Artificial Intelligence and enormously transforming technologies exists. There is no awaiting 5G: merely anticipation. Professionally and personally, as well as institutionally and haphazardly, most Americans are addicted to digital dependency. Locally to globally, people rely on an *Internet of Everything* (including deliberate falsehoods and fraud).

Among America's many Civil Services, the Digital Revolution is both *liberating* and *dominating*. It especially requires high excellence in shared Governmental Workforce Policies and Management. Sixty years ago, among American Civil Services, this was called Manpower Planning. The Federal Government facilitated it through Labour Departments and Civil Service Commission research. Now, digital technologies among governments are increasingly Cloud Based (shared), jointly provided and/or dependent on private for-profit businesses. In part, they are security-protected by a Federal programme called *FedRAMP*, among many other Cyber Security frameworks.

As examples of vast changes, Civil Service/Personnel workforce jobs, that employed hundreds of thousands of local, state, and national American clerical employees 4 to 6 decades ago (in recruiting, testing, certifying, orienting, training, and compensating government employees, etc.), are now extensively automated and/or contracted out. Such low ranking public-services jobs, in other fields of work throughout governments, have mostly vanished also for similar reasons. American residents with inquiries from governments and businesses are now largely required to "fend for themselves," initially by trying to communicate electronically.

Robotics rule. Unemployed (*dis-employed*) and partly and fully employed workforces require continually sustained training for dynamic, digitised lives among accelerating technological changes. To cope with such perpetual dynamics, public and private organisations increasingly rely on short-time, non-career employees. **Gig Jobs** of short duration increasingly define important aspects of the American Economy. Employment is insecure (and/or unavailable during economic downturns) for numerous young people, while newly defined work opens splendid opportunities for many others. These realities of *Perpetual*

Movement/Ferment among labour forces—young and old—are among topmost Civil Service Workforce Management challenges.

As in America, much of the rest of the World is likewise caught up in this Digitised Era's magnificent wonders and challenges. Meanwhile, shared hazards are enormous. Mere hands full of gigantic, domestic and international, for-profit businesses and specialised governmental organisations dominate key aspects of *Digital Everything*. Haphazard developments and deliberate malware threats and hacking are daily, even continuous realities. Broader Cyber Warfare is threatened. Massive budgets are devoted to public and private defences, while many social and economic assets remain defenceless against the Cyber threats. Except for leadership among professional experts in many universities and responsible governments and businesses, negatives often nearly outweigh the positives. Clearly, American experience demonstrates that the Civil Service Hub's leadership with respect to Digital Government was and remains crucial. *Digitisation is Irreversible!* Along with Civil Service financial challenges, it is a foremost concern.

Civil Service Remuneration & Financial Needs and Costs

Finance challenges among American Civil Services include disproportionate remunerations; underfunded retirement and disability pensions; health insurance, safety & injury costs (in part termed workers compensation provisions); vacations and related other time off; and equipment & expense accounts. Especially costly are Digital Era technologies that often exceed the remunerations of former low-ranking workers whose jobs are now mostly lost to automation. Only the first two of these Civil Service costs concerns are summarised here. However, easy *Internet Research* provides extensive details on all of these important topics.

American Civil Services employees have historically suffered disproportionately from lower pay compared to their for-profit business counterparts. This has most often been defended as justified due to more secure government employment. Most Civil Service jobs are thought to continue without layoffs. Attrition is preferred. During the last 75 years, following the initiation of pensions, low pay has also been justified, in part among some public employees, who enjoy relatively better retirement and other "fringe" compensation. Such remuneration gains have been secured through political action by public employee unions (to be noted below). Similar benefits are still commonly unavailable to non-unionised, low-ranking private-sector labour forces. Public or private, most Gig employees remain Giggled.

During recent decades, most visible among remuneration problems other than pensions have been and still are *Across-the-Board Pay Freezes*. These have been utilised during periods of governmental financial stresses. They appeal mostly as "Political Theatre" for politicians with constituencies without many public employees.

As noted earlier, lower-ranks of local, state, and national Civil Services, that formerly included the largest numbers of Civil Servants, have been greatly reduced. Thus, middle and higher ranks of Civil Service employment now become more apparent. This leads outside critics to complain of Rank/Grade Inflation. Disproportionate compensation policies often follow. *Years-Long Freezes in Pay of Upper Ranks* occur, except for increasingly politicised topmost levels. Increasingly, labour unions agree to *Tiered Compensation* with reduced pay, fringe benefits, and security during the initial years of employment. Consistent with traditional union ideals of protection for senior workers, their higher remunerations and continued employment are preserved OR "Golden Handshakes of Early-Out Retirements" are arranged.

Underfunded Public Employee Pensions are among America's largest Civil Service problems. The National Bureau of Economic Research estimates a current shortfall of \$1.5 trillion in State Pension Plans. Some national estimates are higher. As a leading example of this problem among State Civil Services, take note of California's *CalPERS* (covering most governmental employees) and *CalSTRS* (covering teachers and some other school personnel). These are the two largest American State pension plans. CalPERS market value reached \$400 billion and CalSTRS \$254.1 billion in January 2020. However, their combined unfunded liabilities totalled nearly \$250 billion: 29% of their obligations. Thus, incapacity to pay fully obligated benefits from invested funds has required cities, counties, and schools to pay large percentages from current revenues—nearly bankrupting some governments and many schools. How did this enormous Civil Service problem occur? Partly, it grew due to low investment earnings during the Global Recession of 2008+. However, a basic system problem is that, when pensions were initiated several decades ago, most retirees died within very few years after retirement. Now, many Americans retire early and have long lives, drawing pensions for 20 to 40 years or more. Also, highly important in recent decades, as public-employee unions have gained powers in elections, popularly selected City Councils, County Supervisors, and School Boards have engaged in *politicised collective bargaining*. They have routinely agreed to union demands for greatly enhanced pensions and other remuneration. Politicians have mostly failed to determine how to pay the costs of these legal obligations—postponing debts onto future generations.

Now, California's Governor has allocated \$7.1 billion in the proposed \$222.2 billion State Budget for 2020-21, in order to reduce *one-year* of unfunded liabilities. With the World's 5th largest economy (boasting over \$3 trillion annually, during current economic Boom Times), California aspires to 30 year-long hopes to eliminate underfunding. Meanwhile, the 2020-21 Budget proposal will save local governments and schools from collapsing now.

The New York State Common Retirement Fund, which is America's third largest state pension system, and New York City with five separate defined benefit plans are also key examples. That State Fund, among the most successful, reported being 94% funded with \$210.5 billion in 2019, and deficits due to earnings of only 0.19% in 2016 and 5.23% in 2019, below years-long averages of 7.3%. By disastrous contrast, New York City's pensions deficits account for 75% of the City's \$197.8 billion unfunded debt.

America's Federal Government has two retirement funding systems: the Civil Service Retirement System for employees hired before 1984 (a *defined benefit* system funded from revenues) and the Federal Employees' Retirement System (FERS, a *defined employee contribution* system, valued, in 2020, at \$931 billion), for those subsequently hired. The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) report that both systems remain safe. However, FERS is funded by *current* employee and employer contributions and by interest from Treasury Bonds, in this enduring period of Globally Very Low Interest Rates on borrowed funds.²

As portions of total employee remuneration, American Civil Services costs for public and private health insurance, generally, match pensions challenges. And most such costs cannot be postponed. The U.S. Bureau of Labour Statistics estimates that total Private-Sector employee benefits average around 30% of pay levels. It calculates that Civil Service fringes are lower, with such costs as pensions often partly postponed to undefined futures.

² As a related reality, note the U.S. Government's national debt of \$21.7 trillion in 2020 and the one-year 2020 budget deficit of \$1.1 trillion, with such revenue shortfalls expected to continue in future years.

Civil Service Structures for Meritorious Expertise & Political Responsiveness.

Importantly, the two foregoing sets of concerns, selected by the Astana Civil Service Hub for recent international deliberations—*Digitisation Developments* and *Civil Services Remunerations*—are topmost American Public Service challenges. However, *Civil Service Structures* have historically been the principal subject of concern in Public Administration studies and practices. Historically, these structures have been oriented to competing values of *Neutral Civil Service Expertise* and *Partisan Political Responsiveness*. Civil Service Commissions emphasized neutral expertise. Since the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978, political responsiveness has been increasingly stressed. In the Trump Administration’s 2021 Budget, it is proposed to move civil service policy functions into the Executive Office of the President. This proposal is briefly noted later in this analysis.

Most fundamentally, before industrialisation and urbanisation, which began prior to the 1860s Civil War years, government was seldom of great concern in lives of most Americans. During Post-War Reconstruction, the newly constitutionally empowered U.S. Federal Government grew importantly. Local governments still counted most among people for many decades. But by the 1870s, some cities became big and politically important. Transcontinental railroads helped to define national industrial realities. Corruption, which had plagued war efforts, was widespread in economic and governmental affairs. Large concentrations of wealth in the hands of a tiny percent dominated the economy. For example, John D. Rockefeller alone owned two percent of all wealth. Agrarian political protests arose against oppressive capitalism, and urban civic reform movements grew. They combined politically in support of creating a new form of government by specialised *Independent Regulatory Commissions, combining legislative, executive, and judicial powers*. As bipartisan or non-partisan structures, these were to combat crime, corruption and amateurish ignorance in businesses and governments, and also to promote economic, social, and “Rule of Law” excellence. Survival of constitutional democracy and support of capitalist economics were at stake. In 1883, the U.S. Civil Service Commission (CSC) was the first such creation in the national government. As a three-member, bipartisan institution devoted to *Merit-Based Expertise and Professionalism*, the CSC became an enduring model among local and state governments.

Regulatory Commissions remained dominant national structures in American governance until after the vast reorganisations conducted in support of policies and programmes to combat the Great Depression of the 1930s and the comprehensive World War Two expansions. Before and during the beginnings of the Twentieth Century, Progressive Reform Movements supported values and practices, many borrowed from Europe and elsewhere, which quickly defined the emerging field of Public Administration. By the 1930s, these became more-or-less codified as concepts of *The Administrative State*. Among many leaders in American governments, theories and practices of the *Executive Branch Bureaucratic Structures under an Empowered Office of the President* became principles. Great efforts were made during President Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal to replace the U.S. Civil Service Commission by a presidentially dominated agency. Those efforts failed. The CSC survived, strengthened by support and authorities of an Interagency Group of empowered agency personnel directors.

Note that, except for the war years, American national government remained small by today’s standards. During the Post War 1940s, the annual budgets were only in ranges below \$15 billion. As late as 1964, President Lyndon Johnson sought to limit the proposed budget to \$100 billion. Presidents Truman and Johnson provided powerful support for the CSC

structure of Merit-Based Civil Service. Both were dedicated to the administration of government by expert professionals, including responsibilities for both policies and implementation. Johnson even designated the independent CSC Chairman as the White House Personnel Advisor, in support of Merit and Ethics.

At the end of the 1960s and throughout the 1970s, the National Government rapidly expanded. American political ideals began to fracture. Partisan politics spread. Vice President Agnew was forced to resign due to Bag-Money Corruption. President Nixon resigned, escaping certain impeachment and conviction. Incoming President Carter from rural Georgia campaigned against Washington Institutions. Following his election, partisan political supporters (some as amateurs in government) were favoured as appointees in exceedingly vital positions. The CSC and career service structures and practices were politically targeted. Public administration experts from universities and elsewhere, who were devoted to what they considered to be Administrative State bureaucratic principles, revived 1930s proposals to abolish the CSC. The *Civil Service Reform Act* of 1978 was created. It authorised placement of nearly all CSC responsibilities within the newly created *Office of Personnel Management* (OPM). It was designed to be an Executive Branch organisation under the control of the President. Following the first presidential election after CSRA enactment, President Reagan appointed, as his OPM Director, a libertarian partisan who was sceptical of Big Government. With respect to the Ideals of a Neutral Civil Service, he commented to me saying that *Such Escape from Politics is Unrealistic*.

The 1978 legislation technically preserved some bipartisan CSC powers by creating a tiny *Merit Systems Protection Board* (MSPB) and an Office of Special Counsel. When created, critics considered this “Merit Systems Watchdog” arrangement to be a toothless lapdog. Reagan’s MSPB appointees included partisans with no personnel experience or interests. One was later rewarded with an Appeals Court appointment. Public employee unions also won important statutory status under the CSRA of 1978, as will be noted later.

Subject to the apparatus summarised above, separate Civil Services now exist within the National Government. Agencies with specialised functions and political support. Such are the State Department, the FBI, the CIA and NASA. Fragmentation increasingly characterises Federal Civil Services.

In May 2019, the Trump Administration proposed to terminate the independent agency status of OPM. It proposed to move most civil service functions under the General Services Administration (GSA), with the exception of policy placed directly within the Executive Office of the President, as noted earlier. Congress blocked this proposal, requiring a study by the National Academy of Public Administration. However, in the proposed 2021 Budget, President Trump proceeded, in February 2020, with plans to fund merger of OPM within GSA.

While knowledge of the foregoing U.S. Federal Government framework is important, it is also vital to understand that numerous, separate government workforces exist as distinct Civil Services at the local and state levels. Around half of cities are structured as Council/Manager Governments. They are largely influenced by mixed Progressive Era and Administrative State ideals. Human Resources Management/Personnel responsibilities are commonly assigned to a professionally expert director, who reports to the CEO City Manager, while the City Council may also utilise a Civil Service Commission of local citizens to oversee operations, particularly Ethics and Merit Standards. Instead, some independent Civil Service Commissions directly appoint personnel directors. Labour Management Relations (LMR) activities are handled under varied structures, noted later.

State governments' Civil Services mostly have histories similar to those of the Federal Government. In some, as in the importantly big state of Texas, both neutral professional systems and partisan political frameworks have been virtually institutionalised side-by-side for decades in key jurisdictions. That is an especially noteworthy framework, in Chicago, and some other large cities nationally, under a Strong Mayor Form of Government.

Unionisation, Privatisation, & Contracting Interrelationships

Public employee unionisation during and following the 1960s, and privatisation together with the contracting out movements which followed are *interrelated developments*, that have vastly impacted all levels of American governments. Connectedness among these three *powerful political movements* must be understood to grasp current Civil Service realities.

Most American governmental employees (with exceptions primarily in Southern states) have gained the rights to union membership and to varied forms of collective bargaining since the early 1960s. Earlier, nearly everywhere, governmental employment was legally defined as a *privilege*, supporting a doctrine called *Work at Will* of the Sovereign Government (the King's will in earlier European times). Prior to the New Deal legislation calculated to combat the Great Depression (The 1935 Wagner Labour-Relations Act), an even more brutal *Work at Will* doctrine controlled private enterprise. Unionisation was an illegal *Restraint of Trade*. Harsh penalties were exacted. Today, in many governmental organisations, employees in offices of politically elected and appointed officials are commonly in *Excepted Work-at-Will Positions*, without career Civil Service rights and responsibilities. Instead, they rely on and provide partisan political support.

Despite former hostile doctrines, Guilds of some Crafts Workers and union-like Brotherhoods of Government Printers, Police, Firefighters, and Military Veterans became common before, during, and after World War I. However, it was not until New York City authorised Collective Bargaining in 1958 that public employees unionisation quickly became widespread. In the 1960 Presidential Election, public employee unions supported John F. Kennedy. He credited their Chicago votes for his narrow Illinois victory (by only 0.5%), thus becoming President. Kennedy had promised unions his support. He promptly appointed a study group in 1961, and on 17 January 1962 he issued Executive Order 10988, authorising a form of collective bargaining by many U.S. Federal Government Civil Service employees. It forbade strikes and similar job actions, and Congress maintained authority over *wages and hours*. Most unions preferred lobbying over bargaining because of their political influence. Working conditions, especially grievances, became negotiable.

Unions subsequently continued to secure broadened rights by Executive Orders, but they did not gain their goal of Statutory Institutionalisation until the 1978 Civil Service Reform Act. Pursuant to that legislation, in May 1978, President Carter transmitted his *Reorganisation Plan No. 2*, authorising direct political control of civil service operations by the president. In addition to creating the MSPB and Office of Special Counsel, as noted above, it included an empowered Federal Labour Relations Authority (FLRA). As manager of the 1977-78 CSRA Labour Management Relations Task Force, I was quietly told by AFL/CIO union officials not to include Wage & Hour or Payroll Dues in bargaining. Although most unions publicly claimed to support such provisions, Congressional politics remained more promising. The CSRA framework largely continues, with timely amendments. However, due to subsequent national trends of extensive Digital Era Automation, Privatisation, and Contracting Out, unionisation of Federal workforces has not increased in influence.

Where union powers have significantly grown is among state and local governments and school systems. While EO 10988 did not apply to them, it immediately impacted national politics. Except in Southern States (where "Right-to-Work" provisions remained exceptions to the Wagner Act), unionisation among Civil Services employees more-or-less exploded into public actions during the 1960s and 1970s. Unions soon became decisively more powerful in elections of city, county, school, and state officials. They swiftly composed favourable legislation and ordinances and got them enacted. In subsequent collective bargaining over wages, hours, and working conditions, the officials, who increasingly owed their elections to the unions often agreed to generous remunerations and working conditions, including control over basic work rules (rarely negotiable in private-sector collective bargaining). *Importantly note:* a most powerful criticism of American Civil Service Systems for decades had been that they were thought by many to cripple governments with rigidly bureaucratic rules and mediocrity. Collective bargaining contracts, some with detailed union controls over civil service rules, became widely seen by critics as even more frustratingly hostile to effective government management and performance.

Efforts to escape what many considered to be entangled government bureaucracy were immediately undertaken by the Reagan Administration, inspiring nationwide trends. Reagan's OPM Director favoured libertarian values, as previously noted. Many other officials and congressional members shared scepticism of Unionised Civil Services. Privatisation became one attractive alternative. Reliance on for-profit enterprise to provide some formerly government functions had already proved to be politically and economically profitable in the 1960s. Disneyland and SeaWorld were popular examples. Public institutions for care of mentally and physically dependent residents had been generally displaced, especially in the 1970s. "Community Care" became doctrine. Resulting homelessness, addictions, diseases, and "prescription-pill-pushing-for-profits" that followed had not yet become as notoriously visible as they now are. For decades, toll bridges and barges had facilitated transportation, and the privately funded Kansas Turnpike with no speed limits still appeared to be a gainful privatisation investment. Many utility services were and remain for-profit enterprises. Thus, privatisation was not new. It simply expanded greatly. In part, it promised critics some escape from unionised government.

Realistically however, few additional governmental functions, aside from enlarging new technological developments, could be readily privatised. Instead, reliance on *private performance* of continuing and fast expanding governmental functions increasingly became extensive. This not only brought an escape from Civil Service and LMR union rules; it also brought enlarged profits to contractors. American Civil Servants are usually forbidden to make political contributions. Contractors usually can. Also, back then, "Hatch Acts" forbade other partisan activities. Performance contracting and related politics were already old practices in construction of government buildings, highways, sewers, and water systems. Ships, planes, vehicles, computers and most other needs were and still are privately resourced. Federal laws require selective employment of unionised labour by contractors for some privatised work. But those rule systems are mostly invisible to voters. By comparison, Civil Service and Labour Contract Rules were criticised as increasingly troublesome. America was becoming transformed not only by Digital Era Technologies but by accompanying social, economic and legal changes. Large-scale national and international businesses and complex public/private networks were gaining powers. Now in the Twenty-First Century, global scale organisations reach electronically into the hands of individual cell phone addicts, even in tiny communities and many remote places.

In brief, Digital Era transformations include extensive state and local government dependence on large-scale private contractors for automated operations and cloud-based information management and research. Civil Service and LMR systems that are inconsistent with essential technological agility are increasingly brushed aside unless unions can preserve legislated statutes that support their contracts. In short, existing American government workforces are challenged by giants. While gigantic international organisations are somewhat restrained by European Union authorities, former American antitrust laws and related regulations now lack effective political support.

Diverse Civil Service Inclusion v Discriminatory Exclusion

America's two most fundamental Civil Service Ideals — *Merit Based Practices* and *Neutral Political Responsiveness under Constitutional Rule of Law* — were defined until recent decades by two quite contrary sets of values and practices. Throughout most of recent history, both ideals were defined largely by *Exclusion* from the most desirable Civil Service jobs of nearly everyone except for *Privileged White Males*. Now, *Diverse Inclusion* prevails in most Civil Services. However, extreme political divisiveness since 2016 inspires renewed opposition to diversity.

White male heterosexual domination reflected a deep and broad national culture of racial, gender, religious, social and economic discrimination. This privileged culture was enforced by law and broadly shared customs. Changes were slow to appear before the two most recent transformative generations. Legally enforced racial discrimination was successfully challenged in the Supreme Court in 1954, but a doctrine of "All Deliberate Speed" permitted gradual change. Ten Years later, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 supported racial, gender, and other advances toward a society of *Diverse Inclusion*. This was followed, during the rest of the *Twentieth Century*, by national, state and local legal provisions designed to forbid arbitrary discrimination and to promote integration.

Affirmative Actions (seeking out and employing qualified minorities and women) became widely required among Civil Services during the 1970s and 80s. Critics called these efforts *Reverse Discrimination*. Mostly, they slowly succeeded. Yet, as late as in the 1970s, only six percent of Federal Executive positions were filled by females. Racial minorities served in even fewer high Civil Service responsibilities. The Federal Executive Institute (FEI) was created in 1968, last year of the Lyndon Johnson Administration, in part to accomplish inclusive Civil Service leadership. The FEI always included at least one or two female and minority faculty members, as exemplars. But despite affirmative efforts, in the early decades, FEI cohorts of around 65 executives rarely included more than one or two women. During my two appointments at FEI, 1971-76 and 1980-81, the most ever was five in one session. Minorities remained even more scarce until the late 1980s. By contrast, presently, women are sometimes majorities in FEI programs, and women have served as Institute Director and Deputies. This example is now typical of most Federal Government agencies.

Among local and state governments, realities were and are mostly similar. For example, before current generations, nearly all city and county managers were white males. During the 1960s, the topmost respected city manager in America said to me, while rejecting an outstanding female proposed intern, that "*women have no place in city management and never will have*". At that time, students and professors, in the most elite professional program in the field at the University of Kansas, were white men. Now, a woman serves in the most honoured distinguished professorship there and another woman is Director of the School, following an African American. Diverse graduates are managers nationwide. Inclusiveness similarly prevails now among most levels of local and state Civil Services.

Government workforce diversity has broadened far beyond race and gender differences. In 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provided extensive rights that apply in private and public employment, as well as in other matters. Forced early-age retirement is now generally replaced by rights of aged seniors to remain employed for as long as they are competent. Homosexuals were strictly excluded from Civil Services before judicial decisions which, in the 1970s, required showing that an adverse *nexus (connection)* weighed against their governmental employment. Lesbian and Gay Employment Rights remained widely challenged during following decades. However, American social culture has been rapidly transformed during the present century. Same-sex marriage is now not only broadly approved, but Civil Service benefits increasingly apply to such spouses and their children, just as among heterosexuals.

Conclusions: Changing Times and Enduring Values

The Astana Civil Service Hub importantly emphasised, in 2018, that times are changing fast internationally; not simply incrementally but globally, in historic terms. A *Comprehensively Transformative Digital Era* is already underway. Americans have become forever more diverse throughout much of their history. An enormous recent change toward shared sameness is *Digital Addiction*. However, electronic *Social Networking*, facilitated by mostly gigantic digital-services providers that track users, now enables *extremes* of both divisively separated and broadly shared cultures. As related developments, American politics have become greatly fractured. Especially serious are extremist partisan divisions in all three National Government branches. Notably, the U.S. Supreme Court in *Citizens United v. FEC* in 2010 held, 5-to-4, that corporations, unions and associations enjoy the same rights as individual citizens to political communications and expenditures. This has resulted in extreme influence by wealthy organisations in politics. Gigantism is vastly expansive.

Because Civil Service values and practices became both broadly institutionalised and deeply valued among American local, state, and national governments before these troubled times, they are mostly surviving. But institutions are undergoing massive changes. Automation shrinks unionised workforces. As noted above, the upper levels of Federal Government that were previously subject to Civil Service merit standards are now increasingly exempt and subject to political partisanship. Similar Civil Service exempted status increasingly prevails among state and local governments.

Merit Based Civil Service was never intended as an escape from responsible politics.

However, America's great concerns are *What Kind of Politics?* Ethical or corrupt? Expert or incompetent? Divided by self-serving politicians among partisan extremes? By contrast, America's fundamental political values have been shared *Search for Human Dignity* and *Reasonableness under Constitutional Rule of Law*. These remain as the foundations for American Civil Services.

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