

TOWARDS ACCOUNTABILITY IN DEMOCRATIC NETWORK GOVERNANCE

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

Network governance is becoming a dominant governing paradigm. Through this governing form, lateralized, pluricentric, and interconnected public, private, and semi-public actors make policy decisions. The application of power, through the act of governing, becomes departed from traditional democratic accountability mechanisms. Three Canadian cases are explored to make this point: the Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS), the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS), and the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer (CPAC). The problem of democratic accountability within network governance is the crux of my thesis. This thesis examines how those granted power, in a networked governing context, could be held to account. Existing approaches to this problem are limited due to a reliance on the idea of accountability as hierarchical and bureaucratic in nature, and as having a unidirectional ‘principal-agent’ foundation. This thesis moves the discussion towards a postliberal re-theorizing of new accountability frameworks that democratically qualify governance networks.

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED**

AANDC - Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada  
CPAC - Canadian Partnership Against Cancer  
CSCC - Canadian Strategy for Cancer Control  
DHCs - Ontario District Health Councils  
ESDC - Employment and Social Development Canada  
EU - European Union  
GHP - Greater Halifax Partnership  
GTMA - the Greater Toronto Marketing Alliance  
HPP - Federal Horizontal Pilot Projects  
HPS - Homelessness Partnering Strategy  
LIPs - Local Immigration Partnerships  
MAD - Multiple Accountabilities Disorder  
MLG - Multilevel Governance  
NAPS - the Toronto Strong Neighborhoods Strategy  
NPM - New Public Management  
OFI - Office of the Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians  
UAS - Urban Aboriginal Strategy  
U.S. - United States

## GLOSSARY

*Accountability:* A relationship where some actors (principals) transfer their authority to other actors (agents) to undertake set tasks pertinent to a specified area of action (domain), and based on an agreed-upon set of standards. Principals evaluate and sanction agents based on whether agents fulfill their tasks adequately.

*Agent:* An actor (or actors) to whom authority is transferred by a principal for the purpose of fulfilling specified actions on the principal's behalf. The agent must report to principals for actions taken.

*Democratic Accountability:* Accountability relations that are serviced through democratic mechanisms such as elections, ministerial debate, the role of the opposition in Westminster systems, referenda, among others.

*Domain:* A specified area of action (e.g. a policy sector).

*Governance:* Extra-legislative and process-based public policymaking strategies which include private actors, and which focus on set domain or sector of policymaking.

*Government:* A state-centred and set governing form characterized by hierarchy and autonomy.

*Network:* An interconnected structure containing nodes, premised upon relatively equal cooperation and resource exchange and/or pooling, and held together by relationship ties.

*Network Governance:* A governing form characterized by an interconnected matrix of interest groups, private interests, and sub national governing bodies. These 'nodes' interact with central governing bodies to develop best practices in policy development and implementation

*Node:* The conglomerations of agency which make up decision-making forces within a network. They include organizations, agencies, individuals, departments, public, private, and semi-private entities.

*Postliberal democratic theorizing:* Theorizing critically engaged in the revision and further extension of the central ideas of liberalism rather than something in fundamental opposition to or beyond liberalism.

*Principal:* An actor who transfers authority to another actor, with the expectation that the latter will fulfill specified actions on the principal's behalf. The principal is to whom agents are accountable for actions taken. The electorate is the principal in democratic accountability relationships.

*Policy Network:* The relatively stable policy-making relations that take place between governmental and non-governmental organizations. A policy network usually refers to a specific policy sector, and the actors (public, private, semi-private) involved in policy-making and implementation.

*Relationship Tie:* The bonds, whether formal or otherwise, which hold together nodes in a network. The strength and direction of these ties is premised upon shared resources, trust, knowledge, episteme, etc. Relationship ties are necessary in determining accountability. Examples would include contracts, subsidiaries, and hierarchies.



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## CHAPTER 1:INTRODUCTION

The challenges in governing modern and complex societies are ever-present and constantly evolving. In many liberal democracies, changes in public policymaking apparatus' feature prominently across numerous policy sectors. From the state-centred hierarchical bureaucracies of the 1940s to the encroachment of market-based New Public Management (NPM) in the early 1980s, there is an ongoing trend of governments losing powers of direct oversight and control of policymaking processes. Whether these transitions occur by choice and design, or through exogenous forces, they are most often touted as progressive maneuvers.

Governments lack the capacity to deal with many policy areas. As a result they delegate governing authority to the private sector, to public-private partnerships, and to designated non-governmental organizations (NGOs) familiar with complex policy areas. This has frequently been done through such strategies as the contracting out of public services and marketization. This neo-liberal turn in governing retains strong prominence. However, more often, governing processes are a conglomeration of several strategies: public-private partnerships, episteme and trust, dialogue and consultative committees, inter-organizational linkages or networks, among other forms. The new buzzword in describing these phenomena is 'governance.'

Governance is extra-legislative public policymaking that includes private actors and/or public policy-making by private actors, and which focuses on delimited sectoral or functional areas.<sup>1</sup> Aside from being interpreted as a form of governing, governance also indicates a broader way of understanding social reality. David Levi-Faur elaborates in *The Oxford Handbook of Governance* that governance is an area of research concerned with

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<sup>1</sup> Adrienne Héritier and Dirk Lehmkuhl, "New Modes of Governance and Political Accountability," *Government and Opposition* 46 (2011): 137; also, elaborating on this, see Mark Bevir, *Governance: A very short introduction*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 1, regarding how governance refers to all processes of governing, whether by a government, market, or network; whether over a tribe, corporation, family, or territory; and whether by norms, power, laws, or even language; and see Leslie A. Pal, *Beyond Policy Analysis: Public Issue Management in Turbulent Times* (Scarborough: International Thomson Publishing, 1997), 17, for an interpretation of governance as the process of governing or steering complex systems, while at the same time cooperating with other actors.

order and disorder, efficiency and legitimacy all in the context of the hybridization of modes of control that allow the production of fragmented and multidimensional order *within* the state, *by* the state, *without* the state, and *beyond* the state.<sup>2</sup>

The governance paradigm augments the trend of governments surrendering their customary powers of direct oversight and control of public policymaking. Governance represents a distinct break from prior governing models in its strong incorporation of extra-legislative actors, and their ability to retain substantial autonomy from central government control.

Jon Pierre describes governance as, “sustaining co-ordination and coherence among a wide variety of actors with different purposes and objectives such as political actors and institutions, corporate interests, civil society, and transnational governments.”<sup>3</sup> Common organizational properties of governance forms are their departure from traditionally hierarchical and autonomous organizations – features that are commonly classified under the *government* paradigm. Governance is also viewed as a paradigmatic approach to understanding social reality because it refers to “an analytic focus, emphasizing *process rather than formal organization* [emphasis added],” observe Peter Bogason and Juliet Musso.<sup>4</sup>

The transition from hierarchical to diffuse forms of governing is seen acutely in ‘network governance.’ A network is an interconnected and lateralized structure containing nodes (organizations, agencies, individuals, departments, public, private, and/or semi-private entities), and tied together by multidirectional relationship ties (contracts, subsidiaries, and so on).<sup>5</sup> Network governance eliminates what Eva Sørensen and Jacob Torfing describe as the “false choice” between state-based hierarchy or markets as dominant governing paradigms, and embraces an extra-legislative and interactive

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<sup>2</sup> David Levi-Faur, “From “Big Government” to “Big Governance”?” in *The Oxford Handbook of Governance*, ed. David Levi-Faur (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 3.

<sup>3</sup> Jon Pierre, *Debating Governance: Authority, Steering, and Democracy*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 3-4.

<sup>4</sup> Peter Bogason and Juliet A. Musso, “The Democratic Prospects of Network Governance,” *American Review of Public Administration* 36 (2006): 4.

<sup>5</sup> D. J. Brass, J. Galaskiewicz, H. R. Greve, and W. Tsai, “Taking Stock of Networks and Organizations: A Multi-level Perspective,” *Academy of Management Journal* 47 (2004): 795.

governing form that envelops a plurality of actors.<sup>6</sup> In addition, network governance is seen as a solution that sidesteps the most dysfunctional facets of governing via hierarchy and markets.

Network governance arises when government outsources and sub-contracts out to subsidiaries, privatizes state-owned companies, embraces arms-length policy implementation, and adopts private sector management techniques and ideals. Networks are formed through continuous interactions among structurally interdependent actors. The macro processes both catalyzing and reinforcing these changes are well known: globalization, state restructuring, state disaggregation, the knowledge economy, and technological advances.

This governing form presents unique potentials for governing complex societies. It allows for information transfer, expertise sharing, and it has a particular staying power as compared to government, which is subject to time constraints based on elections.<sup>7</sup> The linkages of manifold agents, partnerships premised on the need for cooperation, citizen involvement, and decentralization in many ways improve on prior governing approaches. Innovative possibilities for contemporary governing are made possible. In the following table I provide the major differences between prior governing forms (including government, and governance forms with oversight) with network governance:

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<sup>6</sup> Eva Sørensen and J. Torfing, "Introduction: Governance Network Research: Towards a Second Generation," in *Theories of Democratic Network Governance*, eds. E. Sorensen and J. Torfing, (Palgrave MacMillan: London, 2007), 3.

<sup>7</sup> Giandomenico Majone, "The new European agencies: regulation by information," *Journal of European Public Policy* 4 (1997): 269.

## Comparison of Prior Governing Forms with Network Governance

Prior Governing Forms	Network Governance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Unequal, non-negotiable, and hierarchical relationship among actors</li><li>• Premised upon markets (e.g. NPM) or state-based hierarchy, and there also exist governance neologisms that are hierarchy-based (e.g. MLG)</li><li>• Accountability mechanisms are based on a 'political-administrative' divide and premised upon hierarchy, unidirectionality, and bureaucracy</li><li>• Reliance on departmental categories and ministerial oversight</li><li>• Set governing reality is assumed</li><li>• In process-based governance forms oversight ameliorates problems associated with change</li><li>• Agent-principal, state-society, political-admin divides reinforced</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Equal, horizontal/interconnected partnership among actors</li><li>• Combines several governing strategies (public-private partnerships, episteme and trust, dialogue and consultative committees, inter-organizational linkages)</li><li>• Actors are not autonomous agents, exist as <i>nodes</i> and are interconnected</li><li>• Connected with relationship-ties premised upon resource exchange. Relationship-ties are not hierarchical</li><li>• Agent-principal distinction, state-society separation, and political-administrative divide (and associated accountability frameworks) become null</li><li>• Change/process-based governing without top-down oversight</li></ul>

Though on surface appearing as an innovative solution to the rigidity of 'bureaucracy' and formal government structures, the network structure introduces an element of chaos, and deconstructs features of governing legitimacy in liberal democratic states. It strains the departmental hierarchies that have developed contemporaneously with modern democracies. Networks involve many intermediate organizations (nodes) that are loosely incorporated into governing infrastructure – and they are incorporated horizontally. In addition, these nodes can have real decision-making power. Power is lateralized, and there is a relatively equal relationship among nodes.

The problem with this is that these nodes are not all of the state but are instead linked through various relationships based on resource exchange or pooling, information avenues, common interests, expertise, and so forth. Adding to this problem, they are not under the state in the sense that central government retains hold of the reigns and thus might impose accountability regimes and demand that accounts be made. Government is unable to control governing processes, and the demands of the electorate are not guaranteed.

In this thesis, I am interested in accountability as a central democratic tenet that crystallizes many of the problems that network governance poses for democratic legitimacy. Network governance blurs state-society distinctions, involves agents with

questionable accountability ties to any electorate, creates frequent changes, confuses institutional containers and boundaries, creates reliability and commitment challenges, fosters a lack of formal authority, among other problems. The networked structural form becomes increasingly misaligned with the accountability regimes of days past, or what I later refer to as ‘traditional’ accountability. When power becomes spread out across a network, what agent has formal authority? What standards should be followed? These questions remain unanswered.

In networks, authority is spread across a horizontal domain of civil society actors and is no longer filtered cleanly down departmental hierarchies. As a result, policy planning and decision-making often take place independent of ministerial oversight.<sup>8</sup> A democratically elected actor finds himself/herself embedded in a relatively equal partnership of all sorts of other actors. Government actors maintain a relatively equal and embedded relationship with other participants to leverage the structure and purpose of the network.

There do exist governance neologisms that are less problematic. Multilevel governance (MLG) is one such example. Anne-France Taiclet writes that network governance is an, “intricate configuration where no one can be clearly shown to have the upper hand in the whole process of policy-making, whereas MLG has ‘levels’ and therefore a likely dominant overseeing body.”<sup>9</sup> I use this comparison to emphasize the unique challenges that a diffuse and lateralized governing form poses. Network governance emphasizes an equalized playing field where policymaking occurs largely independent of oversight. Hierarchical and unidirectional avenues of authority and correlating streams of accountability are not ensured.

The governance literature introduces networks as a ‘third option’ – with markets and hierarchies as the other possible governing forms.<sup>10</sup> How do networks compare to these latter forms? Networks are characterized by non-hierarchical coordination between autonomous actors enjoying mostly equal status. Markets emerge from the self-

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<sup>8</sup> Sørensen and Torfing, “Introduction,” 11.

<sup>9</sup> Anne-France Taiclet, “Governance, expertise and competitive policies: the case of territorial development policies in France,” in *Governance and Democracy: Comparing national, European, and international experiences*, ed. Arthur Benz and Yannis Papadopoulos, (New York: Routledge, 2012), 77.

<sup>10</sup> R.A.W. Rhodes, “Forward,” in *Managing Complex Networks: Strategies for the Public Sector*, eds. Walter M. Kickert, E.H. Klijn, and J.F.M. Koppenjan. (London: Sage, 1997), xii.

coordination of relatively autonomous private actors, and are structurally spontaneous.<sup>11</sup> They are driven by principles such as competition and scarcity. This contrasts with network governance, which is based on non-hierarchical coordination – markets are not self-coordinating. Hierarchies form through the use of command and control, and the imposition of force in order to garner social order. The autonomy of actors is negligible. Particularly in hierarchies, there is a structural coupling with various governing mechanisms – I later argue that ‘traditional’ forms of accountability have taken on explicitly hierarchical characteristics.

R.A.W. Rhodes argues, “governments can choose between governing structures.”<sup>12</sup> Through this interpretation, government instigates the process of change. Governments recognize their limited capacity, and actively seek solutions to governing complexity. Or, to reword and simplify this, ideas drive institutions. However, though one can agree with the evolving importance of networks, I disagree with the notion that governments can always choose towards what governing structure they are oriented.

Though the benefits of network governance are clear, and though governments may frame their subscription to it as a ‘choice’ based on the demands of a networked and increasingly complex society, I put forward that networks are in some cases inevitable. Governments will have great difficulty remaining hierarchical and bureaucratic in an increasingly laterally integrated world. Certain policy areas may naturally evolve into a networked organizational structure. Following the ideas I put forward in this thesis, practitioners and social scientists must more critically question how network governance fits, or does not fit, with pre-existing democratic institutions and norms.

Although analogous governing structures have previously existed, I argue that network governance presents an altogether new challenge. For instance, corporatist arrangements are often identified as an earlier ancestor of network governance.<sup>13</sup> Corporatism, a concept that has been around for the last century, is societal organization based on groups of common interest coming together. These groups might be incentivized

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<sup>11</sup> Tanja A. Börzel and Diana Panke, “Network Governance: Effective and Legitimate?” in *Theories of Democratic Network Governance* eds. Sørensen, Eva, and Jacob Torfing (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), 155.

<sup>12</sup> Rhodes, xii.

<sup>13</sup> Börzel and Panke, 153.

to work towards policies of mutual interest; for instance, ethnic groups and labour representatives might come together to pursue lenient immigration laws. Phillippe Schmitter's (1974) definition of corporatism is most often cited. Schmitter writes:

Corporatism can be defined as a system of interest representation in which the constituent units are organized into a limited number of singular compulsory, non-competitive, hierarchically ordered and functionally differentiated categories, recognized or licensed (if not created) by the state and granted a deliberate representational monopoly within their respective categories in exchange for observing certain controls on their selection of leaders and articulation of demands and supports.<sup>14</sup>

This exemplifies why, in fact, network governance is still a departure from corporatism. Network governance is not hierarchical. As also noted, networks are not explicitly 'of' or 'under' the state. Network governance is something entirely new, and therefore it requires unique analysis. Further, the democratic experiment is unfamiliar with networks. Indeed, an argument might be made that many democracies are explicitly hierarchically structured – I explore this further in chapter two. As increasing power is allocated to intermediary and often non-political bodies, the issue of who is accountable for decisions made becomes a difficult but absolutely critical question.

This problem of democratic accountability with network governance is the crux of my thesis. What happens when the application of power, through the act of governing, departs from democratic accountability mechanisms, such as elections? How does power remain democratic, insofar as those granted power are accountable to their electorate, when the traditional mechanisms of accountability become opaque? These are the driving questions behind my thesis.

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<sup>14</sup> Phillippe C. Schmitter, "Still the century of corporatism?" in *The New Corporatism*, eds. Fredrick Pike and Thomas Stritch, (IN: Notre Dame University Press, 1974), 93-94.



## 1.1 THESIS:

I argue that democratic accountability has many potential manifestations, and can be ‘reconceptualized’ towards a coupling with networked forms of governing. My thesis coincides with a growing body of postliberal democratic literature. Anders Esmark defines the postliberal approach as “strands of thinking critically engaged in the revision and further development of the central tenets of liberalism rather than something beyond or in fundamental opposition to liberalism.”<sup>15</sup> My analysis is limited to presenting, contrasting, and assessing the idea of active accountability, accountability without clear actors or domains of action, the factors of directional orientation, and the possibility of multiple accountabilities. I am interested in clarifying the major points of contention between network governance and conventional understandings of the liberal democratic state, with a major focus on democratic accountability.

There is an overabundance of literature on the transition of government towards governance, and on the predominance of network governance. A majority of this literature stems from the public administration discipline, and this transition is usually framed with regard to its potential for influencing the efficiency of governing.<sup>16</sup> While insightful in its pragmatic domain, public administration does not explicitly address the normative basis of accountability in the democratic context. Tanja Börzel and Diana Panke argue that this is a major limitation in the literature: network governance’s potential for effectiveness is overemphasized, and democratic legitimacy is understudied.<sup>17</sup> This gap has been apparent for several decades – R.A.W. Rhodes’ 1994 seminal article, ‘The Hollowing Out of the State,’ warns of escalating obscurities in tracing lines of accountability within networks.<sup>18</sup> And yet little work has since been done to remedy this problem.

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<sup>15</sup> Anders Esmark, “Democratic Accountability and Network Governance – Problems and Potentials,” in *Theories of Democratic Network Governance* eds. Sørensen, Eva, and Jacob Torfing (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), 275.

<sup>16</sup> Yannis Papadopoulos, “Problems of democratic accountability in network and multilevel governance,” *European Law Journal*, 13 (2007): 469.

<sup>17</sup> Börzel and Panke, 153.

<sup>18</sup> R.A.W Rhodes, “The Hollowing Out of the State: The Changing Nature of the Public Service in Britain,” *Political Quarterly* 65 (1994): 147.

My study of democratic accountability contributes to filling this ‘gap’ in the literature on legitimacy. In particular, political science has the theoretical tools to confront how accountability might exist with network governance, and it is for this reason that my thesis makes a strong effort to bring political theory into the discussion.

Those concerned with this research area should: question attempts in the literature to reconcile network governance with existing strands of democratic accountability, acknowledge contradictions and consider them as worthy problems in need of research, theoretical analysis, and tangible improvement, and attempt to conceive of new forms of democratic accountability which may suit the network approach to governing. The underlying normative question in my thesis asks: can we improve on accountability by reconceptualizing it, given network governance as an independent variable?

My thesis begins with the premise that a material transition from one structure of governing to the next cannot be isolated from the theoretical underpinnings that facilitate governing structures – ideas that ultimately hold up the democratic state. There is a structural coupling in regards to governing form and what manifestation democratic accountability takes. Liberal democracy has reached its adolescence within the government paradigm. It follows that structural changes in governing form will cause unsure footing and even contradiction with central democratic tenets.

Network governance presents a considerable break from other governing models, and this break necessitates alternative conceptualizations of democratic accountability. Though wary of dichotomous assessments between the ‘old’ and the ‘new,’ in my literature review in chapter two I argue that traditional interpretations of accountability are inapplicable within networks. These interpretations rely on precedent and assume that the ways of the past suffice in the contemporary governing environment. I argue that ‘traditional’ accountability, a form that requires the infrastructure of the government paradigm, is of questionable usefulness given network governance. Network governance requires its own forms of accountability.

The underlying proposition throughout this thesis is what some might criticize as being unacceptable in its fundamental disruption of what has yet been ‘good enough.’ The proposition may be generally understood as follows: we can accept rules and tangible features of material reality, but through ideas and interaction these certainties become

more malleable. These ideas, once set in stone or enshrined in constitution, can change. Reality is something that we build. These ideas will be employed in the service of the argument that accountability may be interpreted in a variety of ways given its fundamental components, and these interpretations are applicable to a variety of circumstances. But first, what is the change this thesis reacts to? I will shortly proceed with an in-depth examination of network governance, and clarify my argument that it is in tension with a particular, and conventionally held, understanding of democratic accountability.

Chapter three introduces three Canadian case studies that exemplify why traditional accountability is inapplicable within networks. These cases are: the Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS), the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS), and the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer (CPAC). These cases demonstrate that network governance is often innovative, efficient, and effective, however adherence to traditional democratic standards of accountability is inadequate. These cases are helpful in clarifying how a network actually operates and why this governance form is a distinct break from prior governing models. I assess the accountability mechanisms employed in each case, and ultimately argue that new mechanisms of accountability are needed.

In chapter four I present my argument that accountability should be, and can be, reconceptualized to suit network governance. My argument is unique from other lines of argumentation that assume the primacy and untouchable nature of state form, and instead look to tailor governing form to suit democratic norms. My thesis takes the opposite stance. Networks are here to stay, and they are largely inevitable. Thus, they are an independent variable. The macro processes enabling them are largely exogenous to what governments can control. Accepting this, if networks are in tension with existing versions of democratic accountability, an alternative form of democratic accountability should be actively sought out. In my acceptance of interpretations of liberal democracy beyond (and at times contrary to) those most conventional avenues of thought on this subject, this thesis is heavily postliberal. For instance, my thesis necessitates an acknowledgement that state-society distinctions are increasingly null within the network approach.

I look at four factors: active accountability given process-based governance; accountability without distinct categories of actors or domains of action; horizontal,

multidirectional, and reciprocal accountability relationships; and multiple accountabilities. These are key factors differentiating accountability within network governance from that within *government* and other neologisms of the governance paradigm. Network governance is an independent variable, and a structural variable. My proceeding chapters continuously emphasize the foundational changes network governance causes in societal governance, and how these factors will have a structurally significant effect on accountability arrangements.

## 1.2 NETWORK GOVERNANCE

Network governance entangles a lively system of interactions, on multiple levels, across many relationships ties, and among a broad number of ‘nodes.’ It increases governing complexity and fluidity, civic engagement, reliance on private and semi-private agencies, and the need for constant adaptation to changing circumstances. In this section I argue that network governance fundamentally changes the governing relationship, and thus warrants democratic re-theorizing specifically in regards to accountability relationships.

D. J. Brass et al. define networks as a set of nodes and the ties representing some relationship or lack of relationship, which lead to “opportunities for and constraints on behavior.”<sup>19</sup> One might identify network governance when the act of governing features nodes and relationship ties, and when the structures created through these interactions have a tangible impact on policy outcomes. The network is an independent variable, as outcomes are dependent on governing structure.

There is a significant role played by the strength and nature of relationship ties, as this defines both the network and the actors within it. Networks are “an organizational form characterized by repetitive exchanges among semi-autonomous organizations that rely in trust and embedded social relationships to protect transactions and reduce their costs,” elaborate S.P. Borgatti and P.C. Foster.<sup>20</sup> Agents become mutually constitutive, cooperative, and trusting to the extent that they define the goals and identities of others

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<sup>19</sup> Brass et al., 795.

<sup>20</sup> S.P. Borgatti and P.C. Foster, “The network paradigm in organization research: a review and typology,” *Journal of Management* 29 (2003): 995.

within the network. Ties between nodes could be communication avenues where information, expertise, policy resources, and trust are exchanged. Yannis Papadopoulos adds that “deliberation, bargaining, and compromise-seeking are the rule” within network governance.<sup>21</sup> Features such as ‘trust’ and even ‘cooperation’ draw attention to the idea that network governance alters the relationships between policymakers in substantive ways.

Due to the encapsulated idea of nodal mutual constitution, the network approach does not allow for the study of nodes in isolation. Brass et al. write, “the focus is on relations rather than attributes,” within the network approach.<sup>22</sup> To understand a network, nodes must be analyzed with consideration of what other nodes they are connected to, how they are connected, and the strength and direction of their connection. In the Canadian context, the nodes in a governance network might be individuals, ad-hoc organizations, research institutes, not-for-profit organizations, private representatives, municipal governments, public health and educational institutions, ministries, Band/tribal councils, and other types of organizations.

Relationship ties may not be apparent, but they do exist. For example, actors (nodes) may make a decision over coffee (relationship-tie). This greatly impedes accountability, as no record of the relationship tie between these two actors will be made.<sup>23</sup> The direction and the strength of a relationship tie is also a relevant factor in understanding network governance approaches. Two closely related nodes with frequent and longstanding interaction might have a strong tie, and newcomers to the relationship might have weak ties. Borgatti and Foster also comment that ties might have various ‘directions’. For instance, they suggest that giving unreciprocated advice to someone would be a one-directional tie.<sup>24</sup>

Networks form as actors grow into situations of mutual dependence through sharing resources such as information and expertise. Governing becomes less adversarial and competitive, and is transitioning towards increased cooperation and coordination. The process of policymaking within network governance succeeds or fails based on the extent

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<sup>21</sup> Papadopoulos, 470.

<sup>22</sup> Brass et al., 795.

<sup>23</sup> Papadopoulos, 479.

<sup>24</sup> Borgatti and Foster, 992.

of cooperation.<sup>25</sup> Through networks, governing becomes less of a matter of rules, or “command and control,” but is based upon information and persuasion.<sup>26</sup>

Actors within the network become dependent on each other’s resources, and the resources required for policymaking must be made available through co-operation. “Participation [in a governance network] gives access to important and scarce resources and immediate benefits in terms of political recognition and social status,” write Sørensen and Torfing.<sup>27</sup> Governance networks constitute a “private good” for participating actors whereby certain resources and avenues of interaction are made accessible.<sup>28</sup> As a result of these features of the networked structure, many scholars identify it as a governance form on the rise.

Network governance has been declared by Tanja Börzel to be “one, if not the, predominant mode of governance in modern societies.”<sup>29</sup> Networks fundamentally characterize modern societies.<sup>30</sup> Governments might choose to integrate various actors within a networked structure, or network governance can be symptomatic of broader macro processes enabling a networked social reality. Acar and Robertson argue that there are four major trends bending governing into a networked form: third-party government, or the use of private firms and nonprofit organizations to fulfill policy goals and to deliver services; the digital revolution, which enables organizations and external partners to collaborate in real time; joined-up government, or the increasing integration in service provision by various levels of government and multiple government agencies; and lastly, consumer demand for more choices and varieties, and individualized services.<sup>31</sup> These processes are largely beyond government control.

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<sup>25</sup> Idem.

<sup>26</sup> Idem.

<sup>27</sup> Sørensen and Torfing, “Theoretical Approaches to Governance Network Dynamics,” 34.

<sup>28</sup> Idem.

<sup>29</sup> Tanja Börzel, “Rediscovering Policy Networks as a form of Modern Governance,” (Book review) *Journal of European Public Policy* 5 (1998): 255.

<sup>30</sup> Kickert, W. J. M., E. H. Klijn, and J. M. F. Koppenjan, *Managing Complex Networks* (London: Sage, 1997), xvii.

<sup>31</sup> M. Acar and P.J. Robertson, “Accountability challenges in partnerships and networks: Evidence from educational partnerships in the United States,” *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 70 (2004): 332.

British scholar R. A. W. Rhodes tells us that governance by networks is, and will continue to be, “ubiquitous.”<sup>32</sup> With the rise of governing by networks, more researchers are studying this area. D. J. Brass et al. suggest that network-related research “bears all the marks of a research tradition that will continue to flourish.”<sup>33</sup> This area of study opens up important research questions such as: what does network governance imply for democracy? And perhaps most importantly, does it change democratic models in fragmenting the frontier between state and society? These questions are touched upon in this thesis, although my primary focus is to explore, analyze, and assess the value of modes of accountability that might suit democratic network governance. But first, let me go into the greater democratic problems that these empirical shifts are contributing to.

### 1.3 NETWORK GOVERNANCE WITHIN DEMOCRATIC STATES

Network governance is assumed to endow the act of governing complex modern societies with several advantages. It is thought to increase efficiency and cooperation in governing. It is also assumed to be democratic in the sense that citizens are more horizontally incorporated in policymaking processes. Papadopoulos adds that “policy takers” are “integrated into the policy-making process, and thus appear as ‘co-producers’ of the collectively binding decisions which affect them.”<sup>34</sup> This is something akin to direct democracy. Yet, aside from these ideals of efficiency, cooperation, or of democracy, the issues network governance poses in regards to democratic quality require further exploration.

The apparently positive features of network governance may distract from potentially hazardous implications. Political systems today now consist of layers upon layers of authority which “melt together increasingly with the society they govern, and that are increasingly internally fragmented,” observes Eva Sørensen.<sup>35</sup> Network governance makes it difficult to maintain coherence and co-ordination among a broad

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<sup>32</sup> R. A. W. Rhodes, “Governance and Public Administration,” in *Debating Governance: Authority, Steering, and Democracy*, ed. Jon Pierre, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 63.

<sup>33</sup> Brass et al., 809.

<sup>34</sup> Papadopoulos, 473.

<sup>35</sup> Eva Sørensen, “Democratic Theory and Network Governance,” *Administrative Theory & Praxis* 24 (2002): 694.

variety of actors with different objectives. These might include such varied entities as political actors and institutions, civil society, corporate interests, and transnational governments.<sup>36</sup>

Further, non-governmental agencies are given substantial formal and operational powers and autonomy.<sup>37</sup> Government and policymaking become characterized by “fluid sets of state and societal actors linked together by specific interest and resource relationships,” elaborates Michael Howlett.<sup>38</sup> The governing domain is an interconnected matrix of actors, interest groups, policy resources, ideas, interests, and experts. Governance by intermediaries places significant strains on departmental hierarchies and the traditional mechanisms of liberal democracy. For instance, in the case of the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) we will later see that the federal government is only remotely attached to public policymaking and implementation. Networks can hold a strong degree of autonomy from direct government oversight.

Who controls the network? Who oversees the ‘transition’ towards this governing form? “The development of ideas and theories on public policy and governance has long been based on an image of government as standing above society and being able to ‘steer’ it,” observe Kickert et al.<sup>39</sup> In contrast, in network governance a multitude of actors are organized together to share complimentary policy resources in pursuit of policy goals. This creates a significant, if not a radical, departure from ‘top-down,’ heavily bureaucratic, and deeply institutionalized conceptions of government, and of political power more generally. Governing is transformed.

Having transformed the governing relationship, what makes network governance undemocratic? As noted in the above section, networks stratify and dilute traditional connecting structures of accountability between the elected and the electorate, and between the elected and those designated to carry out the every day tasks of governing. Sørensen identifies four major challenges that network governance poses for liberal democracy. These include a threat to:

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<sup>36</sup> Pierre, 3-4.

<sup>37</sup> Schillemans, 177.

<sup>38</sup> Michael Howlett, *Canadian Public Policy: Selected Studies in Process and Style*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 65.

<sup>39</sup> Kickert et al., 3.



- the people” as a separate and established entity
- the representative link between “the people” and elected decision makers
- the administrative mechanisms as non-actors
- the institutional separation between society and political system.<sup>40</sup>

This list demonstrates the gravity of how network governance rips apart the foundational elements of governing in liberal democracies. Civil society actors can be both engaged in the governing network, and can be the principals to which the network is accountable. This introduces a significant grey area in discerning accountability relationships.

Akin to this problem, the role of elected decision-makers is reduced within more lateralized power arrangements. They might even negotiate side-by-side with the very civil society actors they are supposed to be representing. Further, a governing ‘network’ is necessarily an active and politically potent policymaking and implementing body that may prominently feature the administrative representatives of particular government ministries and policy subsystems. As a result, their political neutrality becomes questionable. And lastly, all of these features point to the last challenge that Sørensen identifies: state-society boundaries become blurred and opaque.

Interestingly enough, many of Sørensen’s concerns point to a need to re-define relationships, and to carve out set identities. And what idea, central to the liberal democratic form, involves these elements? *I argue that accountability is useful here, both as a democratic ideal and as a functional tool with which we can identify and re-tie agents and principals.* Ruth Grant and Robert Keohane define accountability, writing:

Accountability ... implies that some actors have the rights to hold other actors to a set of standards, to judge whether they have fulfilled their responsibilities in light of these standards, and to impose sanctions if they judge that these responsibilities have not been met.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Sørensen, 694.

<sup>41</sup> R. Grant and R. O. Keohane, “Accountability and Abuses of Power in World Politics,” *American Political Science Review* 99 (2004): 29.

The problems that network governance poses for liberal democracy hint at the need for accountability. Traditional democratic accountability (and by this I refer to a hierarchic, bureaucratic, and unidirectional form as will be discussed in chapter two) is not easily applied to network governance. Yet network governance is wanting of some connecting structure to affix disparate and dynamic ‘nodes’. Is it possible that accountability, though lacking in its current conceptualization, is in some form also the solution? Re-theorizing an alternative form of accountability may have the dual purposes of both restoring normative democratic deficits and, in a more functional sense, in fostering a new form of governing.

An underlying question I seek to answer through my study is how power and accountability relate. This theme will be evident in my case study analysis. Within the confines of democratic government, it is imperative to study where power goes when the governing process becomes diffuse and premised upon horizontally integrated networks. Similarly, it is imperative to understand which actors or institutions are accountable, democratically, within networked governance.

In each of the three cases explored in chapter three, I will summarize their governing structure and associated power allocations as a way of understanding *why* alternative accountability arrangements are warranted, and what these arrangements could potentially be. How, exactly, is governing authority within a democratic state diffused to disparate nodes within a governing network? Why, exactly, does this substantively change the governing relationship in a way that feeds back to change the democratic relationship?

Let me provide a word here on how I am interpreting power. In the governing context, power is the ability to make decisions or at least impact decision-making processes, and to do so on behalf of others. It is the ability to impact policy plans. In the unique context of networks, I would further add that this empowerment comes from the cooperative pooling or sharing of resources that allows for indirect or direct impact on decision-making. Thus, when assessing the impact of real world networks in chapter three, I will have a keen eye for their substantive impact on public decision-making.

This is because networks are largely comprised of unelected and democratically *unaccountable* actors with very weak or even unapparent connections to government. If

they have substantial decision-making ability and thus power, then my argument is strengthened. Networks are often inevitable, especially in certain policy sectors such as health care, environmental concerns, and even regarding economic concerns. They are also very often efficient and effective, and thus desirable additions to a governing toolbox. Unelected actors are empowered within network governance, yet there are most often loose or nonexistent accountability ties (in terms of traditional mechanisms, as will be discussed in chapter two) to the public. This problem warrants a re-theorizing of accountability models and mechanisms.

I assume that most effective examples of network governance empower their constituent nodes to a considerable extent (nodes, once again, are organizations, agencies, individuals, departments, public, private, and/or semi-private co-involved with public entities on networked governing strategies). By effective I refer to several factors. The most obvious understanding of an effective governing network is that it fulfills its goals. It appropriately and efficiently leverages the resources of its constituent parts to achieve policy outcomes that could otherwise not be achieved with a different governing structure. The networked structure is an independent variable, and it requires the dispersal of real political authority to its nodes.

Also, the longevity of the network is an important factor in network governance effectiveness. Nodes will stop participating if they are not endowed with some degree of authority and political legitimacy. Networks which are empowered with real decision-making power, even though it may be in some ways constrained, “are much more likely to remain active and retain civil society interest than those that are merely advisory,” writes Carey Doberstein.<sup>42</sup> Tokenistic incorporation of stakeholders within a governing network will not be sustainable. Sherry Arnstein’s 1969 seminal work on the involvement of non-government actors in policymaking defines tokenism as efforts to incorporate stakeholders through *informing* them, *consulting* with them, and *placating* them.<sup>43</sup> It is

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<sup>42</sup> Carey Doberstein, “‘Metagovernance’ of urban governance networks in Canada: in pursuit of legitimacy and accountability,” paper prepared for the 2012 Canadian Political Science Association Conference. Edmonton, AB, June 13-15, 10.

<sup>43</sup>S. Arnstein, “A ladder of citizen participation,” *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 34 (1969): 217.

likely that participants in a governance network will not be satisfied by these roles, and thus the longevity and effectiveness of the network will be jeopardized.

Arnstein argues that stakeholders will only participate in governing strategies that rely on their input if they are given some degree of substantive empowerment (through *partnership, delegated power, and citizen control*).<sup>44</sup> I interpret these features as different types of relationship ties that can exist within a governing network. These relationship ties determine the extent to which real power is allocated from public entities to non-public members of the network. It is also possible that a combination of these forms of participation could exist in any one governing network.

Arnstein makes several compelling remarks regarding the relationship between participation and empowerment, for instance:

participation without redistribution of power is an empty and frustrating process for the powerless. It allows the power-holders to claim that all sides were considered, but makes it possible for only some of those sides to benefit. It maintains the status quo.<sup>45</sup>

I use Arnstein's thinking as she makes the important argument that *stakeholders are allocated real governing power* to the extent that they take part in setting policies, allocating tax resources, operating programs, determining how information is shared, and how benefits such as patronage and contracts are allotted.<sup>46</sup> Here we have the foundational elements for a rubric of nodal empowerment through participation in networked governing processes. These are essential ideas when assessing the extent to which network governance involves non-government entities in activities involving the attainment of political power.

If it is effective, a case of network governance must provide its nodes with real opportunities for participation that extend beyond tokenism. I will overview the three tiers of Arnstein's model which allow for real stakeholder or citizen empowerment:

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid, 216.

<sup>45</sup> Idem.

<sup>46</sup> Idem.

- *Partnership*: negotiations between citizens and public entities serve to distribute power, and neither party has the authority to act unilaterally.<sup>47</sup> Through partnership these parties agree to share planning and decision-making responsibilities through planning committees, joint policy boards, and mechanisms for solving conflict.<sup>48</sup>
- *Delegated Power*: Like partnership, involves negotiation between citizens and public entities, however citizens can achieve dominant decision-making authority over a particular policy plan or program.<sup>49</sup>
- *Citizen Control*: Citizens possess a degree of power (which Arnstein here also defines as ‘control’) that guarantees that the participants can “govern” a program or an institution, negotiate conditions with outsiders, and be in charge of managerial and policy aspects.<sup>50</sup>

Many definitions of network governance emphasize the real allocation of political power to the constituent nodes of the network. Government involvement is often minimal, or it is on a negotiated basis among equals. Public entities become embedded in the network.

What does the allocation of real power to organizations, agencies, individuals, departments, public, private, and/or semi-private entities mean for democratic accountability? If we accept that citizen participation is citizen power, as defined by Arnstein, then real power *is* allocated to the nodal components of a governing network. Although it may be difficult to ‘measure’ the extent of political power at the frontlines of policymaking and implementation, ultimately *if it is there, then* this warrants re-theorizing about democratic accountability. Lastly, re-theorizing a new form of democratic accountability that incorporates the political power held by far-flung corners of a networked web of actors might actually allow us to better understand the nature and extent of power within network governance.

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid, 221.

<sup>48</sup> Idem.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid, 222.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid, 223.

## 1.4 DEMOCRACY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Governance without accountability is tyranny. Few principles are as central to democracy as this.<sup>51</sup> - Craig T. Borowiak, 2011

Democracy cannot exist without accountability. Elected officials must be accountable to the electorate, for their election promises, and through electoral mechanisms. Further, those accountable to elected officials (third parties tasked with fulfilling various policy goals) must be identifiable, separate from elected bodies, and accountable through set channels, and based on specified standards. Network governance is composed of public, private, and semi-private actors, and as a result there is no clear guarantee that the unidirectional accountability chain will be maintained from the ‘frontlines’ of public policymaking and implementation all the way back to the electorate.

Rather than despair at this possibility of fragmented and unwinding accountability chains we might instead look to alternative conceptualizations and mechanisms for accountability. I propose that accountability is unique in that it has a variety of manifestations. Several basic components are required for a relationship to be called one of accountability, as are revealed in chapter two. I argue that how these components are created and enforced is variable.

Accountability is both normatively ideal and it is functional. Accountability identifies and solidifies relationship ties, thus it is a useful governing instrument through which to foster order within networks. It is the connecting tie that reflects the public’s preferences.<sup>52</sup> It is also a process-based relationship that mediates power transfers between facets of a society. In contrast to *government*, governance is touted as a more process-based, ever changing, and ever evolving governing system. Simply put, if the concept of accountability may be agile enough to find and connect stakeholders and decision-makers in a networked system of changing and moving parts, then there is a more concrete possibility that democratic requirements can be fulfilled.

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<sup>51</sup> Craig T. Borowiak, *Accountability and Democracy: The Pitfalls and Promise of Popular Control*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 3.

<sup>52</sup> Grace Skogstad, “Who Governs? Who Should Govern? Political Authority and Legitimacy in Canada in the Twenty-First Century,” *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 5 (2003): 955.

In the next chapter I argue that existing frameworks for democratic accountability will not work with the network approach to governance. In addition to the issues that Sørensen identifies as major challenges that network governance poses for liberal democracy (the people as a separate entity, the representative link between the people and the elected, administrative mechanisms as non-actors, and state-society distinctions), I have discerned several other problems that network governance poses with a more targeted emphasis on the issue of accountability:

- accountability has traditionally required relational structures and power dynamics which have conventionally existed in more hierarchical forms of public service delivery.
- network governance demands a relaxing of the divide between government and governed, yet political accountability requires an affirmation of these distinct roles: principals and agents, and set domains of action and responsibility, must be clearly differentiated and identifiable.
- network governance spreads accountability across a broader domain, and implicates an incredibly more complex arena of activity and unclear structures of account-giving.

Reconciliation of these problems is yet unsatisfactory. A major weakness in the literature stems from the normative weight or untouchability of the idea of democratic accountability, and aversion to democratic re-theorizing. Related to this, there is an ever-present assumption, backed by attempts at cordoning off disciplinary boundaries, that issues concerning ‘governing’ and ‘politics’ reside in separate silos. Many scholars in public administration, planning, and heavily applied disciplines, are incapable of democratic re-theorizing or feel it is not required in their area of study. Another limitation is conceptual ambiguity. There are diverging interpretations of what is categorized as ‘accountability.’ There is also a tendency to cling to what I call ‘traditional’ (hierarchical, bureaucratic, and unidirectional) interpretations of the concept.

Another problem in advancing the literature is a lack of interest. Renate Mayntz, Pierre, and Sørensen observe a lack of interest in democratic theory within the

governance literature.<sup>53</sup> These problems may be due to disciplinary isolation, as over the past couple of decades the discipline of public administration has stepped away from political theorizing. Mayntz, and others, call for a “second generation” of governance scholarship that focuses closely on implications for liberal democracy.<sup>54</sup> I propose that the literature on governance, much of which comes from the public administration discipline, cannot be separated from regard for liberal democracy. My argument fits into this second generation of governance theorizing in its close considerations of theory and democratic norms. It is also a postliberal project. This thesis holds the ‘network governance’ variable still and instead advocates for the flexibility of democratic accountability and its associated mechanisms.

Ultimately this effort to explore the flexibility of democratic accountability opens up many big questions for students of political science. How do we reconcile efficient and effective governance with democratic accountability? How are centralized and democratically elected representatives accountable for the activities undertaken by decentralized public, private, and semi-private service providers? Democracy may be accepted as an ideal governing system, but to what extent must state form be tied to predominant governing paradigms?

Within network governance, structures and processes connecting agents and principals are stratified, and traditional forms of accountability continuously become obsolete. Of importance, the governance paradigm emphasizes the process of governing, not a set reality or a final end-state. Thus it is conceivable that the forms of accountability required for network governance will be similarly changeable and malleable. How can we conceive of such a thing? This thesis addresses this formidable conundrum. Rather than questioning the networked nature of social reality or network governance, I instead put forward that democratic accountability is not set in stone, and that it might be tailored to the governing form of the day.

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<sup>53</sup> See Sørensen, 694; Pierre, throughout; and Renate Mayntz, “New Challenges to Governance Theory,” in *Governance as Social and Political Communication* ed. H.P. Bang (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 38.

<sup>54</sup> Sørensen, 694.



## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Network governance has become a dominant trope in the governance scholarship.<sup>55</sup> This appears to be part of a broader trend. The emergence of new avenues of democratic participation has been complimented by a growing cross-disciplinary interest in networks in sociology, public administration, organization theory, and, to some degree, political science.<sup>56</sup> In the social science literature at large, the introduction of concepts such as ‘chaos,’ ‘emergence,’ ‘networks,’ ‘complexity,’ ‘interconnection,’ among others, reflects an important theoretical shift towards a recognition that reality can be relational, changeable, non-linear, and unpredictable.<sup>57</sup> Political science has not yet been active in exploring network governance, however I would argue that this discipline holds the greatest potential in approaching and answering the question of democratic accountability and legitimacy within networks.

Along with renewed interest in networks is a revival in scholarship on accountability. Lamentations over the ‘accountability deficit’ caused by a diffuse governing reality are scattered throughout the governance literature. Yet despite acknowledging accountability deficits, little has been done to substantially move the discussion past the identification of the tensions between existing accountability regimes and networked governance. Eva Sørensen argues that the challenge which networks pose for liberal democracy *is* substantial enough to warrant a “second generation” of postliberal re-theorizing.<sup>58</sup>

Why do scholars have difficulty moving beyond identifying tensions? Reasons for this shortcoming include: an apparent lack of consensus on the key concepts and parameters of the debate particularly regarding the concept of accountability; a bias towards ‘traditional’ models and mechanisms of accountability; and the normative weight

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<sup>55</sup> Jonathan S. Davies and André Spicer, “Interrogating Networks: Towards an Agnostic Perspective on Governance Research,” pre-print, February 2013, 1.

<sup>56</sup> Bogason and Musso, 4.

<sup>57</sup> Van Wezemael, 169.

<sup>58</sup> Sørensen, 694.

and untouchability of the idea of democratic accountability. There is also an assumption that ‘governing’ and ‘politics’ exist in separate disciplinary silos. Related to this, many scholars who have undertaken extensive work in describing and assessing network governance do not undertake democratic re-theorizing. The toolbox necessary to do this is lacking in the discipline of public administration, which, unfortunately, is the main discipline approaching network governance. These ideas structure existing literature and define its limitations. I will now go into them further.

## 2.1 A LACK OF CONSENSUS?

It appears that there is a lack of consensus about what ‘accountability’ is. There are numerous articles about how scholars and practitioners cannot agree on concepts and parameters.<sup>59</sup> I argue, in contrast, that there is a basic agreed-upon meaning behind the term – the problem is that this is overlooked. But first, where does the idea of discord come from? Accountability is subjective, contentious, and multidimensional.<sup>60</sup> As a result, it is difficult to establish ‘standards’ of accountability and evaluate accountability regimes. The term “represents an underexplored concept whose meaning remains evasive, whose boundaries remain fuzzy, and whose internal structure is confusing,” agrees Andreas Schedler.<sup>61</sup>

Adding to this complexity, accountability is often used synonymously with a host of only somewhat related terms describing various bastions of the democratic state. Accountability comes to represent good governance, efficiency and effectiveness, transparency, integrity, responsibility, responsiveness, among others – therefore studying it leads one into murky waters.<sup>62</sup> Faced with this, many will want to stay on dry land. But such problems need to be solved, not avoided. Academic study of accountability is not

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<sup>59</sup> See Richard Mulgan, “‘Accountability’: An Ever-Expanding Concept?” *Public Administration* 78 (2000): 555, for an exploration of the various meanings accountability takes on.

<sup>60</sup> Herman Bakvis and Mark D. Jarvis, *From new public management to new political governance: essays in honour of Peter C. Aucoin*, (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2012), 274.

<sup>61</sup> Andreas Schedler, “Conceptualizing Accountability,” in *The Self-restraining State: Power and Accountability in New Democracies*, eds. Andreas Schedler, Larry Jay Diamond, and Marc F. Plattner, (Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publications, 1999), 13.

<sup>62</sup> M. Bovens, “Two Concepts of Accountability: Accountability as a Virtue and as a Mechanism,” *West European Politics* 33 (2010): 946.

repetitive and overdone, but rather it is a necessary pursuit. Scholars should identify basic components of the term and stick to these.

Disagreement about concepts and parameters is seen in how many authors entrench their own definitions of terms such as ‘democracy,’ ‘accountability,’ or ‘networks,’ and thus associated cases and research domains become exclusive to these definitions. This is done to carve out separate territories of scholarly analysis for the purpose of creating debate, to develop a narrow area of expertise, among other reasons. This is a big problem in the literature. Mark Bovens writes, “every new edited volume on accountability – and, even worse, each of the individual edited chapters within these edited volumes – uses its own concepts, conceptualizations, and frameworks for studying accountability.”<sup>63</sup> In this thesis I use relatively accepted ‘basic’ definitions of key terms in an effort to appease the existing breadth of interpretation.

Another feature adding lethargy in the literature in addressing this topic is the normative weight behind the involved ideas: accountability, democracy, liberalism, the sanctity of political and administrative domains, and so forth. Proponents of network governance really do see it as the ‘way of the future’, and scholars of accountability tend to propound one particular interpretation of it, and the associated frameworks that might thrive within their perspective. This stymies neutral and dispassionate discussion.

In addition, accountability is without a doubt a symbolic term. It embellishes many a political speech, and it is a potent political idea. Accountability is eagerly snapped up into the lexicon of academics, practitioners, journalists, and politicians. Mulgan observes that the term “now crops up everywhere performing all manner of analytical and rhetorical tasks.”<sup>64</sup> It is often used to decorate white papers, political rhetoric, and media commentary, however the deeper meaning of ‘accountability’ is rarely systematically addressed.<sup>65</sup>

The problem with this ubiquity is that ‘accountability’ rarely means the same thing across multiple uses, or it is simply a decorative term used to give political declarations a sense of legitimacy. When you have too many definitions, you end up

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<sup>63</sup> Idem.

<sup>64</sup> Mulgan, “‘Accountability,’” 555.

<sup>65</sup> Bovens, 946.

having none. Over-use of the term leads to conceptual ambiguity, and scholars get caught up in clarifying and re-clarifying the term's contours.

When researching this thesis, I found dozens of recent articles dissecting the meaning of accountability, debating its parameters, and breaking it down into more manageable smaller pieces.<sup>66</sup> Mark D. Jarvis and Paul G. Thomas warn that, "the further the meaning of the term "accountability" is stretched, the fuzzier the standards of responsible and accountability behavior, and the more subjective, potentially even arbitrary, enforcement of those standards become."<sup>67</sup> While useful in a handful of publications, conceptually deconstructive academic works can be overdone and can distract from solving real problems.

I argue that there is a basic meaning of accountability, and given basic components we can further interpret it in useful ways. Similarly, future academic research needs to agree upon a definition of accountability so as to move the literature forward to more productive ends. I suggest that given something of a basic or 'core' understanding of accountability, various schools of thought might build off of it and in ways that correspond to particular governing forms. The next section will lay down these ideas of a 'basic' meaning, and how this dictates accountability's potential flexibility and applicability to a networked governing form.

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<sup>66</sup> Examples would include Bovens, 946-947; Staffan I. Lindberg, "Mapping accountability: core concept and subtype," *International Review of Administrative Studies* 79 (2013): 209; also see Schedler, "Conceptualizing Accountability," 13.

<sup>67</sup> Mark D. Jarvis and Paul G. Thomas, "The Limits of Accountability: What Can and Cannot be Accomplished in the Dialectics of Accountability?" in *From new public management to new political governance: essays in honour of Peter C. Aucoin*, eds. Herman Bakvis and Mark D. Jarvis, (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2012), 280.

## 2.1.2 ACCOUNTABILITY

Hundreds of generations have tried to reconcile liberty and law, authority and freedom. These same problems are posed in the oldest Egyptian tablets. Recall also that requirement in an old Greek city that whosoever desired to propose a new law should come into the place of assembly with a rope about his neck.

- Clarence A. Dykstra, 1939 <sup>68</sup>

I argue that there is a basic meaning of accountability. Though on unsure footing with network governance, and though subject to bending and twisting through a myriad of definitions, there is a ‘common denominator’ understanding. Even if debate carries on within the academic literature, our collective political and social experience gives us an understanding of the idea: accountability is a check to the otherwise chaotic wildness of power, and a check to the freedom of those wielding it. The purpose of identifying a congealed understanding of accountability is to retain the normative weight of the idea, in combination with an understanding of the mechanistic items required to establish accountability in a real-world situation.

There is something of an innate understanding of socio-political accountability. As noted, it is a safeguard to political power. “Throughout the ages, men have struggle[d] to contrive forms by which powers granted would be impotent for harm,” elaborates Dykstra. <sup>69</sup> Over time increasingly complex societies develop an understanding of the need for orchestrations of powerful actors. Some locus of power is deemed to be necessary for societal governance. As these orchestrations move away from the ascribed power of bloodlines, or seizing power by militaristic means, and as the idea of some groups of ‘the people’ choosing their leaders comes into prominence, the idea of accountability also comes into play.

“Modern governance – public as well as private – is, at its core, based on some form of accountability,” states Melvin Dubnick. <sup>70</sup> Through accountability, we can domesticate power. <sup>71</sup> Because the state form monopolizes power, accountability has a

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<sup>68</sup> Clarence A. Dykstra, “The Quest for Responsibility.” *American Political Science Review* 33 (1939): 1.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid*, 2.

<sup>70</sup> Melvin Dubnick, “Sarbanes-Oxley and the Search for Accountable Corporate Governance,” *GovNet EJournal* 1 (2007): 141.

<sup>71</sup> Schedler, “Conceptualizing Accountability,” 13.

crucial role to play in the political world. When authority is allocated from one entity to another, the one endowed with it must justify and answer for actions taken. For instance, from the electorate to the elected, from the elected to those agencies required to create public value and undertake policymaking, and so on.

This is a bit more complicated within a network. As Dykstra might inform us, referring back to his example of ancient Greece, within a governance network you would not be able to identify who should have a ‘rope around his or her neck’. The ability to make decisions and to create policy becomes spread out among a diffuse array of actors. In the Canadian case of the HPS, which will be further discussed in chapter three, those agents to whom authority is delegated to create public value include individuals, research institutes, for profit and not-for-profit organizations, municipal governments, public health and educational institutions, Band/tribal councils, and other Aboriginal organizations. Power is spread out broadly, yet when power is delegated there must be a reciprocal flow of accountability. The accountability relationship becomes complex and stratified. Before looking at how accountability becomes ‘spread out’ in a network, let us return to discussing the fundamentals of the concept.

Staffan Lindberg, writing in 2013, suggests that accountability has several basic components perceivable across the literature.<sup>72</sup> Lindberg provides five components of accountability, or what he calls ‘principles of accountability,’ distilled from more than fifty articles and books from political science and public administration:

- An agent or institution (agent) who is to give an account;
- An area, responsibilities, or domain subject to accountability;
- An agent or institution (principal) to whom the agent is to give account;
- The right of the principal to require the agent to inform and explain/justify decisions with regard to the domain; and
- The right of the principal to sanction the agent if the agent fails to inform and/or explain/justify decisions with regard to the domain.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Lindberg, 209.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid, 208.

Lindberg argues that these five fundamental principles of accountability are “essentially the same as in its long tradition in political science.”<sup>74</sup> In the article this list is taken from, his primary focus is on democratic accountability, but he comments that the above list captures the core of the concept in all instances.<sup>75</sup>

I use this list because of the extensive literature survey backing it. Lindberg’s principles also correspond to definitions seen throughout the literature. The main exception would be that newer definitions tend to emphasize informal processes, as well as the need for an accountability framework that allows for change and learning.<sup>76</sup> Further, Lindberg specifies only a unidirectional principal-agent understanding whereas I later argue that this is a limitation. I like this list as a starting point, however later in chapter four I critique several aspects of it and question whether all components can apply to network governance.

How do we move from definitions towards applications? Unlike political science, the public administration discipline has been devoted to a more applied theoretical stance. In addition to this, the barrier between academic and practitioner is significantly more permeable. Knowledge, policy ideas, and governing paradigms are more readily diffused, thus we can expect several interesting and possibly innovative ideas derived from practice.<sup>77</sup>

Another interesting point to make here is that I find that in the literature from the political science discipline, accountability is used primarily as a *normative* concept, whereas within public administration accountability is used as a practical institutional arrangement. From the public administration perspective, accountability is interpreted in a more *functional* way. For these reasons, public administration offers different insights about accountability, but also ones that may be complimented by what has been said in political science.

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid, 203.

<sup>75</sup> Idem.

<sup>76</sup> Jarvis and Thomas, 282.

<sup>77</sup> Grace Skogstad and Jennifer Wallner, “Transnational Ideas, Federalism, and Public Accountability: Food Safety and Mandatory Education Policies in Canada,” in *From New Public Management to New Political Governance*, eds. Herman Bakvis and Mark D. Jarvis (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2012), 242.

In a similar vein as Lindberg's work, but from the public administration discipline, Alnoor Ebrahim and Edward Weisband overview a substantial part of the literature on this topic area to conclude that accountability is generally understood to require:

- Transparency: collecting information and making it available and accessible for public scrutiny.
- Answerability or Justification: providing clear reasoning for actions and decisions, including those not adopted, so that they may be reasonably questioned.
- Compliance: monitoring and evaluation of procedures and outcomes, combined with transparency in reporting those findings.
- Enforcement or Sanctions: imposing sanctions for shortfalls in compliance, justification, or transparency.<sup>78</sup>

Each of these components builds off of the others, and Graefe et. al argue that *accountability relies on all of them*.<sup>79</sup> Political control and authority must be balanced by legitimacy as is derived through these components. I would like to draw attention to the fact that like Lindberg, Ebrahim and Weisband are emphasizing a principal-agent and very linear understanding of accountability. The agent is subject to providing transparency, justifying his/her actions, complying to standards set by the principal, and lastly facing sanctions based on performance. This relationship is unidirectional in the sense that the agent reports *to* the principal – linearity or ‘unidirectionality’ in traditional accountability relationships will be further explored shortly.

Interestingly enough, a close reading reveals that Ebrahim and Weisband's application-driven requirements of accountability appear to fit *between* those requirements outlined by Lindberg. They indicate the ‘actions’ that transition between Lindberg's five principles of accountability. Let me explain further. To get from Lindberg's conditionality 2. (an area, responsibilities, or domain subject to

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<sup>78</sup> Alnoor Ebrahim and Edward Weisband, eds. *Global Accountabilities: Participation, Pluralism, and Public Ethics*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 5.

<sup>79</sup> Peter Graefe, Julie M. Simmons, and Linda A. White, *Overpromising and Underperforming: Understanding and Evaluating New Intergovernmental Accountability Regimes*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013) 9.



accountability), to 3. (a principal to whom the agent is to give account) one must have answerability and justification for action. Elected officials (agents) would be accountable for election promises (domain) to the electorate (principals). To transition from Lindberg's conditions 2. to 3., the agent would have to provide clear and reasoned explanations for actions and decisions to the principal. Accountability requires that some actors hold other actors to account, based on a set of agreed-upon standards, and based on how these responsibilities are met, sanctions are then imposed.<sup>80</sup> This is a very revealing blending of the literature in that it shows that there is a degree of cross-disciplinary consensus as to what accountability is in terms of its basic requisite components.

The comparison between Lindberg and Abraham and Weisband's definitions is not seamless in all cases, for instance, Lindberg does not specify that accountability entails a transition through its composite elements, but simply that it requires them all. Regardless, given the extensive literature survey backing both of these definitions, the conclusion we might reach from this is that there is cohesion regarding accountability's most basic components. I argue that, given the maintenance of these core components, accountability can be tailored to the particular governing system at hand. In the next section I look at what democratic accountability looks like, with a specific emphasis on the Canadian case.

### 2.1.3 DEMOCRATIC ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability is a corollary to power, and unequivocally so in the democratic context. Mechanisms must exist whereby decision-makers can be called to answer for and justify their actions. Those who demand accounts are those who endow decision-makers with the power, for example, the electorate. 'Accountability' has a "core sense of being called to account for one's actions," clarifies Richard Mulgan.<sup>81</sup> Lindberg observes, "at a very fundamental level then, accountability is closely associated with authority."<sup>82</sup> I view it as a corollary to power in the sense that when authority is endowed, accountability *must* be the 'item' that is received in return. Authority – whether interpreted as the right to

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<sup>80</sup> Grant and Keohane, 29.

<sup>81</sup> Mulgan, 555.

<sup>82</sup> Lindberg, 208.

control, or the right to use force, or an offshoot of political legitimacy – is not freely granted. There is an exchange.

The liberal democratic doctrine stipulates an allocation of power to government, and government is accountable to citizens. This is representative accountability derived through the electoral mechanism. Philippe C. Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl elaborate that

Modern political democracy is a system of governance in which rulers are held accountable for their actions in the public realm by citizens, acting indirectly through the competition and cooperation of their elected representatives<sup>83</sup>

In liberal democracies, the electorate is the principal. The electorate's agency is conglomerated and conferred through the electoral mechanism to members of parliament (agents). We can apply this to the Canadian case. "The accountability chain continues with ministers and deputy ministers being accountable to the prime minister, senior officials being accountable to the minister of the department, director-generals being accountable to the deputy minister, and so it goes down the line," elaborates Thomas S. Axworthy.<sup>84</sup> Agents include the prime minister, ministers, the deputy minister, and so on and so forth to the lowest level public servant or to the 'frontlines' of policymaking and implementation. This might include those private or semi-private actors who are given tasks by public servants, and it is here that we see the networked structure begin to take shape.

Accountability is integral to the democratic state form. Axworthy adds "accountability is the central spine of democracy."<sup>85</sup> The democratic system is the culmination of making political power impotent to harm. Borowiak finds that accountability is the singular feature used to differentiate democracy from other regime forms.<sup>86</sup> Further, democratic accountability is a unidirectional relationship based on relatively compartmentalized roles between set inventories of actors. These actors, in

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<sup>83</sup> Philippe C. Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl, "What Democracy is... and is not," *Journal of Democracy* 2 (1991), 76.

<sup>84</sup> Thomas S. Axworthy, "Addressing the accountability deficit: Why the Martin minority government must pay more attention to the three A's," *Policy Options* (2004), 1.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid*, 2.

<sup>86</sup> Borowiak, 80.

turn, are embedded within an institutionalized hierarchy, or ‘chain of command.’ This chain, through which accountability is threaded, is democratic insofar as the electorate is the ultimate principal. It is crucial that these roles are plainly defined, and that relations between each link are maintained. The next section explores how network governance is incompatible with ‘traditional’ forms of accountability based on hierarchy, bureaucracy, and unidirectionality.

## 2.2 ‘TRADITIONAL’ ACCOUNTABILITY

The broad outline of Canada’s accountability regime has remained pretty well intact over the years. But everything else has changed. Precious few issues now fit neatly into departmental moulds. As a result, the machinery of government no longer provides clear space to policy actions and to individual public servants to assure policy and program responsibilities.<sup>87</sup>

- Donald Savoie, 2003

In this section I explore what ‘traditional’ accountability is, and why problems arise when it is applied to network governance. Traditional models and mechanisms of democratic accountability rely upon the political-administrative division of labour, and are premised upon hierarchy, bureaucracy, and unidirectionality. These features clash with the network approach to governing, yet they are deeply entrenched. I find that reliance upon these traditional features is apparent in the Canadian case. Mark D. Jarvis and Paul G. Thomas go so far as to write that Canada’s accountability arrangements tend to reflect “historical happenstance rather than logical planning.”<sup>88</sup>

As a note, I am using the term ‘traditional’ accountability as a general term in reference to the structural and process-based features conventionally associated with the formal doctrine of accountability in liberal democratic states, and with particular reference to administrative accountability and the Westminster system of ministerial accountability to parliament. In essence, ministers are accountable to the electorate for their own decisions, and for the work of their departments, *via* Parliament. There is also a division of labour here whereby in the administrative side of governing, civil servants are accountable to ministers for internal

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<sup>87</sup> Donald Savoie, *Breaking the Bargain* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 206.

<sup>88</sup> Jarvis and Thomas, 274.

operations. In addition, through this accountability model, the civil service is seen to be impartial and anonymous, and does not have a political role.<sup>89</sup>

In this section I examine traditional accountability and provide commentary on its incompatibility with networked forms of governing. I begin by exploring the ‘political-administrative’ divide, and conclude with assessing how hierarchy, bureaucracy, and unidirectionality manifest in traditional accountability, and why these features do not work well with networks. Throughout this section I explore several examples from my case studies – however, they will be more thoroughly examined in chapter four with respect to ‘new’ accountability models.

#### Overview: Traditional Accountability

- Retrospective and retroactive, assumes a set reality.
- Bureaucratic: comprehensive performance management systems, financial audits, and fiscal and legislative instruments for control and supervision.
- Unidirectional: agents accountable to principals in unidirectional way.
- Hierarchical (e.g. direction of power transfer: electorate → political entities → administrative entities), and the accountability relationship reverses these arrows).
- Relies on the political/administrative divide.
- Relies on the principal/agent divide.

#### 2.2.1 POLITICAL-ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION

Traditional accountability models both uphold and rely upon a political-administrative division of labour and correlating accountability mechanisms. There are many potential forms that accountability might take, and within the liberal democratic doctrine we are most familiar with two types: political and administrative accountability. Here I argue that neither type will suffice with networks as the bearer of democratic legitimacy – whether on its own or in partnership with the other. There may be some reality where a combination of these two types of accountability with another type will

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<sup>89</sup> Peter Barberis, “The New Public Management and a New Accountability,” *Public Administration* 76 (1998): 451.

work, but in this section I argue that these two conventionally relied-upon forms are not going to work. At the end of this section I examine how ‘hierarchical’, ‘bureaucratic’, and ‘unidirectional’ accountability forms are inapplicable in networks.

Governments cannot carry out all policymaking and implementing operations. As a result, there is a separation of labour between politicians and administrators – and public administrators are granted a substantial degree of autonomy.<sup>90</sup> This division of labour, or the ‘political-administrative divide,’ is a common theme in the liberal democratic doctrine and in the governance literature. Proponents of traditional state-based hierarchical governing, and market-based forms (as seen in the NPM literature) argue that this institutional division is based on separated roles:

- the political realm sets goals and frameworks
- the administrative realm is the site of production and implementation<sup>91</sup>

The administrative sphere is a nonpolitical body of relatively autonomous administrative entities with specific jurisdictions and associated expertise.

I bring up the issue of the ‘political-administrative’ divide as it adds an important layer to my discussion. These two realms each have their own form of accountability. Political accountability is that of elected officials to their constituencies. It is premised on mechanisms such as elections or referenda. Administrative accountability is that of administrative units, and administrative entities are accountable to political institutions. They are held to account via mechanisms such as rules (the law), standards of proper conduct, their peers, bureaucratic ‘box checking’ and review, financial auditing, report writing and assessment, and so forth. Public administrators are accountable to ‘the public’ in the indirect sense that they are firstly accountable to political entities that are then accountable to the public, and also in the sense of a supposedly noble pursuit of the common and public good.

Political and administrative accountability forms rely on unidirectional accountability chains. Once an elected official passes off his or her authority to the deputy

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<sup>90</sup> Sørensen, 709.

<sup>91</sup> Idem.

minister, and so on down the line, the accountability ‘chain’ is no longer premised upon political accountability in the strict sense that the electorate is the principal. The democratic accountability relationship is functionally only between the elected official and the electorate, as serviced by electoral mechanisms. There is a transition in the accountability chain whereby political accountability switches to administrative accountability. This relationship is shown in the following diagram: an administrative department is accountable to the elected official, who is then accountable to the electorate.

Department (administrative accountability)→ Minister (political accountability)→ Public

Similarly, if you reversed the direction of the arrows, this would demonstrate power transfer. In network governance, we see that even as authority and decision-making capacity is delegated along a chain, or amongst a network, it is assumed that the relationship to the democratic mechanism is still strong. Despite a transition in the form of accountability, a democratic relationship is still expected. The minister is still, to a reasonable extent, accountable for the operations of his or her corresponding administrative units.

This structural element has key relevance to my research question. I am concerned with *democratic accountability* and the retying of governing networks to the mechanisms of democratic accountability. Though numerous mechanisms of democratic accountability exist, the electoral mechanism is without a doubt the most important relationship tie. Elected officials and formal political entities increasingly become just one part of a network, and such a network can only be called one of ‘governing’ based on the degree of their involvement. *Neither political nor administrative accountability will work with network governance.* The network is not a directly representative body, and politicians are often merely one node in an equalized matrix of relations. Further, members of the electorate can act within the network. In essence, the network does not have an electorate. To reiterate – the network jeopardizes the central importance of the election as a source of political accountability.

In terms of administrative accountability, civil servants can act within the network in a political way: the network itself can create make decisions regarding policy. Further, Esmark notes that this puts civil servants at risk of becoming “accountable to network members and particularistic interests rather than politicians, citizens and a public ethos premised on the notion of a public good.”<sup>92</sup> Political actors might also find themselves arranging the mechanistic implementation of policies, and thus they take on what were formally administrative tasks. The ‘political-administrative’ dividing line becomes irreversibly blurred. This occurs because networks are premised upon relatively equal and lateralized relationships of resource exchange and interdependence.

### 2.2.2 HIERARCHY AND BUREAUCRACY

Hierarchical bureaucracy has been the reigning governing paradigm for the majority of the twentieth century, and common conceptualizations of accountability rely on this structural form. Authority is vertically delegated (unidirectional), units are strictly maintained and grouped based on function or expertise, and ministerial and departmental accountability are ensured based on the reporting of the use of public funds.<sup>93</sup> Under this paradigm public service delivery is “highly routine, albeit professional, ...with uniformity but without discretion,” write Goldsmith and Eggers.<sup>94</sup> The hierarchical model of accountability thrives in traditional *government* forms, and as noted, forms of governance such as MLG also operate with top-down oversight and control.

Weberian bureaucratic form is characterized by strict adherence to hierarchal authority, rules, promotion based on achievement, division of labour, efficiency, and impersonality. It seems apparent that hierarchy-based accountability has been entrenched in many democratic state forms. Public offices that bolster the democratic process, and may themselves be watchdogs to it, are likely to operate under an hierarchical organizational form.<sup>95</sup> With continuous drives to adopt private sector practice and to make bureaucracy more ‘efficient,’ the mostly hierarchical structures of the private sector

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<sup>92</sup> Esmark, 282.

<sup>93</sup> Jocelyne Bourgon, *A New Synthesis of Public Administration: Serving the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, (Canada: McGill-Queens University press, 2011), 48.

<sup>94</sup> Goldsmith and Eggers, 7.

<sup>95</sup> Schillemans, 176.

have also been readily adopted with little assessment of alternatives. Thomas Schillemans suggests that NPM translated the chain of command and hierarchical power structures commonly seen in private entities into the public sector, and that this transition has strong staying power.<sup>96</sup> Accountability has been interpreted to have a top-down or hierarchical form based on the simple idea that subordinates are accountable to their superiors.

Governing form dictates accountability form. A significant portion of the literature on accountability assumes its application in single, autonomous, and hierarchic organizations.<sup>97</sup> “In traditional forms of accountability, a superior demands accountability from a subordinate,” writes Lindberg.<sup>98</sup> This is why this form of accountability is vertical, and more specifically hierarchical. Power is imposed, and accounts are demanded. Regardless of whether a basic understanding of the idea exists, it has been largely assumed to sit within an hierarchical framework. Accountability mechanisms include comprehensive performance management systems, financial audits, and fiscal and legislative instruments for control and supervision.<sup>99</sup> Arrangements require a non-negotiable power imbalance and a hierarchical imposition of control.

Goldsmith and Eggers observe that governments continue to rely on narrow audit and control mechanisms of determining accountability, or an “overreliance on box checking and rule compliance.”<sup>100</sup> The authors argue that oversight and ‘steering’ of agencies that have been granted government contracts has negative outcomes. The authors write that this leads to adversarial relations, and can cause agencies to become “rigid and risk-averse. Innovation collapses and trust suffers, reducing the essential value of the relationship.”<sup>101</sup> Traditional accountability relies on rigid mechanisms premised upon detailed mandates, and thus extensive report-writing and auditing. This rigidity can hinder innovation. Given that private and semi-private sector innovation and expertise are a major policy resource that initially attracts

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<sup>96</sup> Idem.

<sup>97</sup> Acar and Robertson, 331.

<sup>98</sup> Lindberg, 178.

<sup>99</sup> Heather Millar, “Comparing accountability relationships between governments and non-state actors in Canadian and European international development policy,” *Canadian Public Administration* 56 (2013): 253.

<sup>100</sup> Goldsmith and Eggers, 122-123.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid, 123.



government interest in network governance, this is an undesirable outcome. I will now discuss how traditional accountability is unidirectional, and the shortcomings of this.

### 2.2.3 UNIDIRECTIONAL

In traditional understandings of accountability, the accountability chain is premised upon principal-agent understandings, and the assumption that responsibility is centralized. I call this unidirectional accountability. As Lindberg outlines, these understandings are integral to any accountability relationship. This was also exemplified in the above section on ‘political-administrative’ divisions of accountability. In democracies, authority is unidirectionally transferred from the electorate to elected officials, and from the elected to administrative entities. Conventional understandings of accountability see the relationship between principal and agent as asymmetrical, non-negotiable, and hierarchical – whereas networked realities call into question *all* of these features.<sup>102</sup> Esmark adds “there is a functional mismatch between the structures required by democratic accountability and the structure of networks.”<sup>103</sup> Democratic accountability (from elected *to* the electorate) is conventionally understood as asymmetrical, non-negotiable, and hierarchical.

In Canada, the principle of ministerial responsibility demonstrates this well. It is unidirectional and based on a single avenue of accountability, and this aligns with the ‘top-down’ hierarchical directional orientation. Jarvis and Thomas describe the principle of ministerial responsibility as “traditional, vertical, straight-line, and individualistic,” and argue that this does not mesh well with network governance, and it does not apply well across jurisdictional and organizational boundaries.<sup>104</sup> Further, many Westminster and parliamentary systems emphasize this strict principle of ministerial responsibility, and Bovens proposes that political and administrative *mechanisms* of accountability are heavily relied-upon.<sup>105</sup> My point in bringing this up is to emphasize the rigid nature of ‘traditional’ accountability arrangements.

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<sup>102</sup> Esmark, 283.

<sup>103</sup> Idem.

<sup>104</sup> Jarvis and Thomas, 286.

<sup>105</sup> Bovens, 963.

Unidirectional accountability also assumes a locus of political responsibility. Accountability begins at one unified ‘end’ of the chain, where action is taken, and where a concentration of responsibility for this action might be identified. This is clearly not the case in the governance paradigm, and especially so in networked governance. Colin Scott writes that:

Traditional mechanisms of accountability to Parliament... are problematic because in a complex administrative state, characterized by widespread delegation of discretion to actors located far from the centre of government, the conception of centralized responsibility upon which traditional accountability mechanisms are based is often fictional.<sup>106</sup>

Further, as noted in chapter one network governance creates the ability for ‘nodes’ within a governing network to accrue real power and to even advise on policy decisions, or to even make decisions themselves. Thus the locus of political authority and responsibility is *not* Parliament. It becomes diffuse. The idea of a unidirectional accountability path, and the assumption that action is taken by an identifiable locus of responsibility, are inapplicable to network governance.

Continuously recycled accountability models are no longer appropriate in networked governing contexts. However, little work is yet being done to re-theorize a model that will work with networks. Progressive maneuvers in Canadian public administration, such as the shift towards increased ‘professionalism,’ have largely sidestepped the central issue of accountability.<sup>107</sup> A departure from hierarchical and autonomous government organizations is nearly always specified as a defining characteristic of *governance*.<sup>108</sup> To conclude this section, let me touch on some of the reasons why traditional accountability perseveres despite its limitations.

Concepts and ideas are intimately tied to the context in which they are derived. This context could be when they came into common usage, when they were touted by political heavyweights, or when they were inscribed in a constitution. Concepts and ideas

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<sup>106</sup> Colin Scott, “Accountability in the Regulatory State,” *Journal of Law and Society* 27 (2000): 38.

<sup>107</sup> Axworthy, 2.

<sup>108</sup> Acar and Robertson, 332.

become ‘stuck’ even when contexts change. Central democratic tenets are difficult to extract from etiological foundations. This does not necessarily mean that hierarchic, bureaucratic, and unidirectional understandings of accountability are inapplicable in all instances, but it is apparent that they do not merge well with network governance. A new form of accountability is required. Though we should be wary of claims simply calling to “modernize!” discussion and conceptual meaning, democratic modes and mechanisms should be tailored to the predominant governance paradigm. The next section will explain why governance scholars hesitate to undertake this task.

### 2.3 ‘GOVERNING’ AND ‘POLITICS’

Decades of cordoning off disciplinary categories have led to a reality where writing about ‘governing’ is for public administration, and writing about ‘politics’ and democratic theorizing are for political science. Scholars of public administration, organizational behavior, and management have largely studied network governance.<sup>109</sup> The epistemological and methodological contours of these disciplines have also determined what work has been undertaken. For example, I find that the conceptual toolbox used to study network governance has been limited to concern for processes, mechanisms, structures, and the pursuit of ‘efficiency and effectiveness’. Network governance has been studied as a form of organization, rather than as a mode of governance, and without being situated within a democratic state form.

I argue that scholars of political science need to study network governance more actively. Recent work confirms that network governance, and governance more broadly, fail to be reconciled with democratic norms. Scholars are not yet studying this in substantive ways. In 2006, Beate Kohler-Koch assessed over 1600 research projects on European Union (EU) governance and found that only 17 per cent dealt explicitly with questions of democratic legitimacy.<sup>110</sup> Kohler-Koch found a tendency to use network approaches in pursuit of ‘efficiency’, but little reconciliation of this pursuit with broader

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<sup>109</sup> K. G. Provan and P. Kenis, “Modes of Network Governance: Structure, Management, and Effectiveness,” *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 18 (2008): 230.

<sup>110</sup> B. Kohler-Koch, “Research on EU Governance: Insight from a Stock-Taking Exercise,” *Connex Newsletter* (2006), 3, at 5. 5.

norms within democratic states. Writing in 2007, Yannis Papadopoulos similarly reviewed a large portion of the literature on governance processes, concluding that they are “usually analyzed under the angle of their efficiency, while their impact on the quality of democracy is neglected.”<sup>111</sup> The efficiency side of networks is over-studied. Governance is separated from political consideration, and work on democratic accountability is scarce. This lack of research leads to confusion, misunderstanding, and scholars talking past one another with little substantive cohesion.

In the Canadian context, I find the literature on democratic accountability over-emphasizes ‘high politics.’ The focus is on the relationship that Government has with Parliament, or the relationship between Government MPs and upper level bureaucrats, the relationship between the federal and provincial governments, or province-province relations, and so forth.<sup>112</sup> For example, Question Period is perhaps the flashiest feature of Canada’s accountability regime. This adds to the sense that the opposition’s ability to hold Government to account is of central importance. Certainly the ‘high politics’ focus is a result of the publicity that this governing domain receives, but this literature tells only a small part of the story.

Governing processes do not reside solely within the House of Commons, and thus the high politics focus is misplaced. Further, the substantial transitions (towards network governance) are occurring at the frontlines of public service delivery. If these are understudied, and thus under-reported, we are not catching this fundamental flaw in heavily relied-upon accountability regimes.

Even if the structures and context of governing have changed over time in a democracy, “the imperative that governing be effective and legitimate has not,” writes Skogstad.<sup>113</sup> As accountability is a cornerstone of a legitimate and effective democracy, it is necessary to blend research on political theorizing with that on governing. Regardless of how efficient and effective network governance may appear, governing form cannot be

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<sup>111</sup> Papadopoulos, 469.

<sup>112</sup> For example, see Peter Aucoin, “Improving Government Accountability,” *Canadian Parliamentary Review* 21 (2006): 21; also Graefe et al.’s recent (2013) book on intergovernmental accountability in Canada deals with the highest levels of governing.

<sup>113</sup> Grace Skogstad, “Policy Networks and Policy Communities: Conceptual Evolution and Governing Realities” (paper presented at the annual meeting of the CPSA, University of Western Ontario, Ontario, June 2, 2005).

departed from political form. Identifying an empirical shift, and deploring how our relatively confined democratic thinking does not well address this shift, crystallizes my research problem. In agreement with Skogstad, Susan Phillips writes that there is a “strong imperative to better understand the role and impact of networks in governance.”<sup>114</sup> More research must be devoted to uncovering how to institutionalize mechanisms of accountability within networks, and the employment of political theory is a useful start.

Some research is heading in this direction. Scholars are actively identifying and providing commentary on the lack of research on this subject, and specific areas requiring further work. Building from acknowledging the problem, a new generation of governance scholarship is beginning to ask questions about democratic legitimacy and quality. Governing within a networked structure has a direct effect on the nature of democratic representation. In addition, as there are different types of networks there may be different types of democratic representation. And of course, accountability is necessary. Certainly democratic re-theorizing is necessary, given the unique characteristics of network governance and the threats to liberal democracy that it presents.

## 2.4 CONCLUSION

Thinking of new models of democratic accountability is ultimately a form of democratic re-theorizing – an endeavor that has been so tiresomely pursued by theoretical heavyweights and ideologues so as to dissuade even the most eager student of politics from creating new content. A similar view is that what already exists is sufficient. C.B. Macpherson observes that having struggled to attain democracy in its current version, it is easy to view future democracies as fixed versions of this initial success.<sup>115</sup> Having carefully and meticulously built up ‘traditional’ accountability models and mechanisms, it is difficult to imagine alternative versions. I contend that scholars should not dwell on these forebodings. Democratic re-theorizing is important as it takes network governance

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<sup>114</sup> Susan D. Phillips, “The Myths of Horizontal Governance: Is the Third Sector Really a Partner?” (paper presented at the International Society for Third-Sector Research, Toronto, July, 2004).

<sup>115</sup> C.B. Macpherson, *The Life and Times of Liberal Democracy*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 7.

seriously as an independent variable. The structural form of governing has tangible impacts on democracy.

## **CHAPTER 3: AN EXPLORATION OF ACCOUNTABILITY IN THREE CASES OF NETWORK GOVERNANCE**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

Canadian governments, at federal, provincial, and municipal levels, are committed to exploring the most efficient and effective public service delivery methods. The recent trend has been to outsource and sub-contract out to the private for-profit and not-for-profit sectors, rather than to allow for full privatization. This hesitancy to relinquish control to private entities speaks to a history of Canadian federalism and its relationship with competing power centres. Multidirectional transfers within the matrix of federalism are often necessary, but accompanied by a strong inclination on the part of governments, especially at provincial and federal levels, to try to hold the reins.

As a result, although network governance is increasing in ubiquity, most examples are apparent at local levels, and are more intimately tied to partnerships with municipal governments. Examples include the Greater Halifax Partnership (GHP), the Greater Toronto Marketing Alliance (GTMA), the Toronto Strong Neighborhoods Strategy (NAPs), Ontario District Health Councils (DHCs), Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs, in Ontario cities), among several others.<sup>116</sup> Cases of network governance are very diverse, and difficult to compare, yet all consist of non-state or civil society actors participating in an “advisory or decision-making role that is distinct from traditional mechanisms of consultation by government decision-makers,” elaborates Doberstein.<sup>117</sup>

I explore three Canada-wide cases where network governance is relatively efficient and effective, however adherence to traditional democratic standards of accountability is questionable. My cases are: the Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS), the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS), and finally the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer (CPAC). They are effective as solutions to the policymaking and implementation

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<sup>116</sup> Doberstein, 8. Also see the chart on this page for academic sources that discuss each of these examples of network governance.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid, 9.

'gaps' caused by federalism in linking actors across Canada at all levels of government. Their networked structure links actors 'on the ground' or at the frontlines of public policy implementation with government. These cases also integrate 'policy takers' or those whom networks serve into the policymaking process. This is particularly helpful in sensitive or complex policy areas where governments may not fully understand issues as compared to those who face them on a daily basis.

In this chapter I go deeper into my argument that existing forms and norms of democratic accountability are inapplicable to network governance. This chapter builds towards chapter four, which extends from the literature in moving towards solutions to this problem. Here I overview the nature of each organization and its governing structure and power allocations, and then I go further into evaluating existing accountability mechanisms. Chapter three introduces real cases of network governance, and these cases will be further analyzed and compared in chapters four and five. In chapter five I provide analysis of chapters three and four, and go into a deeper comparison of the UAS, HPS, and CPAC cases.

### 3.2 THE URBAN ABORIGINAL STRATEGY (UAS)

The Canadian urban Aboriginal population is diverse and rapidly growing, yet it faces overall a lower socio-economic status than other Canadians. In the 1990s, and particularly in cities such as Regina, Saskatoon, and Winnipeg, it was noticed that the socio-economic inequalities between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal residents was acute.<sup>118</sup> This is still an ongoing problem.

In response, in 2007 Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) set up the UAS (although earlier versions can be traced back to 1997).<sup>119</sup> The UAS is a federally funded community-based network geared towards bettering the lives of urban Aboriginals through providing federal funding, setting goals and priorities, and

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<sup>118</sup> Ryan Walker, "Social cohesion? A critical review of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy and its application to address homelessness in Winnipeg," *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 25 (2005): 403-404.

<sup>119</sup> Canada, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, "Urban Aboriginal Strategy," last modified March 6, 2014, <https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1389724611277/1389724670841>.



coordinating services.<sup>120</sup> It received \$68.5 million for the period from 2007-8 to 2011-12 and recently this funding has been renewed for the same duration and amount.<sup>121</sup> The purpose of the UAS is to improve the lives of urban Aboriginal communities through: promoting job training; improving life skills; and supporting Aboriginal women, children and families.

The UAS is a network in that it brings together a diverse set of actors concerned with the issues facing off-reserve Aboriginals, as well as in a number of related areas pertaining to job creation, health, family services, among others. Actors include provincial and municipal governments, private companies, Aboriginal organizations, not-for-profit organizations and a few federal government programs.<sup>122</sup> The UAS is designed to create a redistribution of power through the effective participation of its members.<sup>123</sup> Mai T. Nguyen writes, of the strategy, that “effective participation requires relationship building, which must begin from the top down, and this includes equalizing power dynamics,” for instance, through greater transparency.<sup>124</sup> Powerholders (public entities) must agree to re-allocate the ability to make decisions to UAS members for it to work effectively.

The UAS is an interprovincial strategy, and this feature also demonstrates a cooperative and more horizontal relationship among players. The UAS aligns provincial and federal government projects oriented towards addressing the current needs of the off-reserve Canadian Aboriginal population while recognizing the relationship that Aboriginal people have with the federal government, and areas of provincial jurisdiction.<sup>125</sup> The UAS can be understood as an urban-centric effort to reduce the disparities between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.

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<sup>120</sup> Idem.

<sup>121</sup> Idem.

<sup>122</sup> Canada, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, *Impact Evaluation of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy*, PDF file, (Ottawa: Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, 2011), vi. Accessed January 10, 2015, [http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/DAM/DAM-INTER-HQ/STAGING/texttext/ev\\_uas\\_1324665459650\\_eng.pdf](http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/DAM/DAM-INTER-HQ/STAGING/texttext/ev_uas_1324665459650_eng.pdf).

<sup>123</sup> Mai T. Nguyen, “Consulting Whom? Lessons from the Toronto Urban Aboriginal Strategy,” *The International Indigenous Policy Journal*, 5 (2014): 22.

<sup>124</sup> Idem.

<sup>125</sup> *Impact Evaluation of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy*, 6.

In chapter two, Savoie was quoted writing that “precious few issues now fit neatly into departmental moulds.”<sup>126</sup> The complex and sensitive challenges facing urban Aboriginals similarly cannot be solved through the efforts of one federal government department (AANDC). These challenges require an innovative response. I will now discuss the specific governing structure seen in the UAS. How are decisions made, what power allocations are evident, and how do these features impact accountability requirements?

### 3.2.1 GOVERNING STRUCTURE AND POWER ALLOCATION

The UAS is an example of network governance, but how exactly does the network work? How is power allocated? Going back to the definition of power presented in chapter one: power is the ability to make decisions on behalf of others, and the ability to do so even if others may not necessarily choose to make these decisions. In a governing context, power is the ability to impact policy plans. We can better understand what power the network has by tracing how decisions are made. It is integral to understand power dynamics within a network if we are to move towards ensuring that appropriate accountability mechanisms are apparent.

The UAS serves as a facilitator of partnerships between government (at all three levels) and stakeholders – a recent *Impact Evaluation* calls it a “horizontal strategy for building a coordinated approach to service delivery.”<sup>127</sup> Referring back to Arnstein’s work presented in chapter one, partnership *is* an allocation of real power. The *Impact Evaluation* refers to the allocation of power to UAS members. A major goal of the strategy is to sustain community capacity to plan, make decisions, and act effectively on those decisions.<sup>128</sup> Partnership entails negotiations between citizens and public power holders that ultimately distributes power, and neither party may act unilaterally.<sup>129</sup>

Who makes decisions within the UAS? The UAS governance structure operates through Steering Committees in all designated communities. These committees take part

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<sup>126</sup> Savoie, 206.

<sup>127</sup> *Impact Evaluation of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy*, viii, 3.

<sup>128</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>129</sup> Arnstein, 221.

in coordinating work, planning, and making funding decisions in response to Aboriginal issues (using funding channeled through AANDC and the OFI).<sup>130</sup> Steering Committees are comprised of a varied cross-section of the local Aboriginal community, government representatives (from all three levels), and the private sector.<sup>131</sup> This composition is intended to maintain the objective that there be a strong partnership between the government and the community.

How are decisions made in the UAS? Through partnerships, decision-making will be a cooperative and negotiated exercise. No party may act unilaterally, so extensive negotiation and consensus-building is assumed. In the UAS case, the federal government provides funding – thus does it have a monopoly over decision-making? Ideally, no. “Federal officials approve the projects, but the practice across the country has been to provide the UAS Steering Committees a great deal of autonomy with respect to recommending projects and their funding levels, provided that the program terms and conditions are met,” the *Impact Evaluation* states.<sup>132</sup> The UAS website also propounds this intention. It is written that “regardless of whether funding is delivered by a community organization, federal officials or a combination of the two, funding through the UAS is designed to promote co-operation with other key partners ... and stakeholders in support of community interests.”<sup>133</sup>

However, in practice, it seems that there have been mixed results as to whether the federal government really does cede decision-making authority to Steering Committee negotiation and consensus. In some cases the federal government still has final say. For example, the Toronto UAS has had to struggle with government partners at municipal and federal levels unilaterally moving or cutting funding. For instance, in 2011 the federal government reallocated \$60,000 of the Toronto UAS’s funding to another UAS chapter without explanation.<sup>134</sup> There has also been an ongoing concern that UAS members do not have input into project funding decisions.<sup>135</sup> One member of the Toronto UAS explicitly

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<sup>130</sup> “Urban Aboriginal Strategy.”

<sup>131</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>132</sup> *Impact Evaluation of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy*, 45.

<sup>133</sup> “Urban Aboriginal Strategy.”

<sup>134</sup> Nguyen, 21.

<sup>135</sup> *Impact Evaluation of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy*, 33. Also see Nguyen, 20-22.

stated that committee members were feeling “tokenized.”<sup>136</sup> This evidence suggests that the strategy is not a significant re-allocation of power.

Yet in other cases decision-making *is* done at the Steering Committee level, and no member acts unilaterally. The Ottawa UAS Steering Committee is completely comprised of Aboriginal members, and there is also a greater degree of autonomy over planning and funding allocations.<sup>137</sup> The Thunder Bay UAS and Winnipeg UAS chapters are also examples of where governments support Steering Committee decisions, actively allocate decision-making authority to them, and defer to Steering Committee decisions.<sup>138</sup> The UAS is not just providing tokenistic empowerment to its constituent nodes. Instead, it appears to vary case-by-case.

Although power allocations may be hindered by the unique circumstances of each UAS chapter, the strategy is a significant effort to draw from community-based knowledge and directly incorporate input from those persons whom it serves. There is an effort to allocate power to constituent nodes within the UAS network. Nguyen writes that,

Decision-making power through the consultation process is a step towards political inclusion and the development of trust between governments and Aboriginal peoples. That is, by equalizing power relations, governments are entrusting Aboriginal communities with the ability to chart their own destinies.<sup>139</sup>

Even if the UAS is not a perfect allocation of power in all cases, it is designed to be. Perhaps it is not quite there yet. Local-level Steering Committees of the UAS are intended to be able to set local priorities and allocate funds locally as they see fit.<sup>140</sup> This delegation of decision-making capacity to those with experience and knowledge of the issues facing urban Aboriginals is important.

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<sup>136</sup> Nguyen, 22.

<sup>137</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>140</sup> Doberstein, 10.

Accessing community input in the policymaking process is particularly important in policy areas that regard Aboriginals. Excluding the voices of Aboriginals from the policy process is neither effective nor does this display sensitivity to regrettable past precedents. A significant barrier to the UAS's success is that there is still a "lack of trust that Aboriginal people feel towards both mainstream government, and also frustration with typical government approaches to delivering Aboriginal programs and services," according to the *Impact Evaluation* report.<sup>141</sup>

The UAS represents a distinct break from typical government approaches to delivering programs and services. The UAS serves to increase the governing capacity of local service providers: the authority to act is allocated to the actors at the frontlines of public policymaking and implementation, as opposed to policy goals being delegated by AANDC. The UAS is based upon deriving input from actors with experience regarding the issues facing urban Aboriginals.

The UAS reflects the beginnings of a paradigmatic shift whereby Aboriginal representatives are increasingly included in policymaking. The *Impact Evaluation* states that the UAS is intended to counter typical government approaches to delivering Aboriginal programs and services "that maintain control and decision-making authority in the hands of non-Aboriginal people."<sup>142</sup> In 1993 the Canadian federal government made formal recognition of Aboriginal rights to self-government.<sup>143</sup> Although this 'self-government' is perhaps not yet apparent in the UAS, the strategy *does* integrate Aboriginals and key stakeholders in substantive policymaking and implementation. The UAS increases knowledge, aligns programming, and develops the governing capacity of involved organizations.<sup>144</sup>

Why is the UAS not an example of self-government, or what Arnstein labels as 'citizen control'? Some, such as Ryan Walker, argue that the UAS is only a weak proxy move in this direction.<sup>145</sup> Despite increasing community capacity, the UAS is simply a network of different types of interconnected policy actors, and ultimately it is just

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<sup>141</sup> *Impact Evaluation of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy*, 6.

<sup>142</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>143</sup> Walker, 395.

<sup>144</sup> *Impact Evaluation of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy*, vi.

<sup>145</sup> Walker, 410

oriented towards decreasing the socio-economic gap between urban Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals. The focus is also not explicitly on Aboriginal Canadians and their needs or rights. One UAS policy advisor interviewed by Walker says:

Our focus is on practical results. So, we've steered clear from the self-government, and a number of Aboriginal organizations have criticized us for that... What we want to do right now is just address the gap and part of the research that we want to test is, well, is self-government an important component of actually addressing the gap? We don't know that.<sup>146</sup>

Tying this statement back to the UAS governing structure and delegation of real power, although network governance incorporates Aboriginal actors intimately tied to this policy area, it does not completely allocate political power and governing authority to them. Funding allocations are given to organizations that address Aboriginal 'need' as opposed to giving funding, and control of funding, primarily to Aboriginal organizations on the basis of rights to self-determination and self-governance.<sup>147</sup>

Walker notes that the federal government provides funding based on an organization's ability to create networks with other supporting community partners, and thus again it is unlikely that complete Aboriginal control of UAS funding will be apparent.<sup>148</sup> When power is spread across a network of actors, no one actor or group of actors can claim monopoly over it. In this way, network governance through the UAS represents a 'safe' allocation of power to community organizations, which already possess the resources and capacity to address a complex policy area. It is safe in the sense that the networked structure ensures that the federal government is not ceding control of political power to one particular actor or interest group.

### 3.2.2 ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS

Accountability mechanisms are an integral aspect of a governing network. They not only ensure the normative requirement that decision-makers are fulfilling the needs of

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<sup>146</sup> Ibid, 405.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid, 410.

<sup>148</sup> Idem.

those whom they serve, but they also lower the costs of those participating in the network. If traditional accountability arrangements do not work well within a network, it is then crucial to establish new ones to fulfill both normative and functional goals. In each of my three case studies, I will explore *to whom*, *how*, and *for what* each governing network is accountable. This is done to reveal the main accountability model at hand. It is also done to reveal any gaps that I hypothesize will be created due to the discrepancy between prevalent ‘traditional’ accountability models and the structure of network governance.

To whom is the UAS accountable? The UAS has a close relationship with the Office of the Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians (OFI). The Federal Interlocutor is also the Minister of AANDC, and is the lead federal Minister (and political representative) responsible for the UAS.<sup>149</sup> As a result of this connection, we can view the OFI as a mediator between the ‘political’ and ‘administrative’ realms. The OFI both brokers UAS funding, and ensures the delivery of the UAS.<sup>150</sup> The OFI is the political entity ‘to whom’ the UAS and its constituent actors are accountable. The OFI is responsible for financial and operational monitoring, and the audit of program recipient’s fulfillment of the terms and conditions of contribution agreements and the reliability of the outcome data.<sup>151</sup>

How and for what is the UAS accountable? Conventional audit processes dominate. In 2011, the Evaluation, Performance Measurement and Review Branch (EPMRB) in combination with several external independent consultants conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the UAS. Their study reviewed the UAS’s effectiveness, efficiency, and economy, its data reliability, and its responses to previous audits.<sup>152</sup> The evaluation included a document and file review, a literature review, statistical analysis, case studies, and interviews with key informants. The audit found that the strategy is generally effective in ensuring its funds are spent properly for their intended purpose, and on most fronts has positive reviews. Further, the UAS’s networked governing structure

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<sup>149</sup> *Impact Evaluation of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy*, 5.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid*, 4.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid*, 5.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid*, iv.

was found to create cohesion among existing initiatives, and there was no evidence that the UAS was overlapping these initiatives.<sup>153</sup>

These accountability mechanisms regard the retroactive assessment of an organization based primarily on its ability to keep records. Further, the standard of ‘good’ auditing today assumes the need for external independent review, as also seen in the UAS case. External review implicates the idea that the network is primarily externally accountable (to principals ‘outside’ of the network, such as the OFI), and that there are no significant accountability relationships within the UAS, on an agent-agent basis. I will go further into these ideas in chapter four.

Let me turn to whether the results of the 2011 audit revealed areas for further improvement, specifically regarding whether existing accountability arrangements suffice. Several areas for improvement were found within the UAS. Some of the conclusions of the audit are as follows:

- Governing allocations across sites are not clear and create disparities.
- There are no clear standards established for appropriate investments in administration, partnership integration, and capacity building as compared to project related expenses over time or across sites. The process of governing by network may take resources away from the frontlines of public policymaking and implementation
- Longstanding issues related to the quality of performance measurement have not been addressed.<sup>154</sup>

All of these points bring to the surface new issues for accountability pertaining to the unique structure of the network. They all have to do with where capacity and real governing power lie.

Do existing accountability mechanisms work? The 2011 *Impact Evaluation* report finds that there is “an inability to reconcile the Strategy’s horizontal terms and conditions

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<sup>153</sup> Ibid, vi.

<sup>154</sup> Idem.



with department/agency accountabilities.”<sup>155</sup> The evaluation made several further recommendations with the intent to solve problems related to this structural incompatibility. These included: improving the monitoring and measuring of results at priority or community levels, diversifying the UAS’s delivery models, working more closely to facilitate the efforts of federal partners to “streamline administrative and reporting requirements in horizontal initiatives,” among others.<sup>156</sup>

This inability to reconcile the structural orientation of the UAS with the accountability requirements of government departments is particularly intriguing. This speaks to the tension at the crux of my thesis: network governance presents innovative and often more efficient solutions to modern governance, yet *it is a fundamental transition away from prior governing models and power allocations*. It is ultimately a delegation of real political power to the actors most closely involved in a policy area. And, with the delegation of power and authority comes the correlating need for this power to be checked. Yet the network itself is extra-legislative, and in many ways it is outside of the jurisdiction of departments. There is a clear need for additional accountability mechanisms in the UAS.

### 3.3 THE HOMELESSNESS PARTNERING STRATEGY (HPS)

Homelessness has been an ongoing problem in Canada for the last few decades, and notably more so with the 1980s neoliberal turn towards ‘small government,’ and an increasing reliance on market solutions. Although it is difficult to measure the exact number of homeless people across Canada, numbers such as the growth in food bank use point to an ascending problem. The Canadian food bank had over 700,000 users in 2006, and this represents a 91 per cent increase since 1989.<sup>157</sup> There are also several city specific statistics that point to an increase in homelessness. Calgary, for example, has seen its homeless population grow by 650 per cent between 1997 and 2007.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> “Final Report: Impact Evaluation of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy,” v.

<sup>156</sup> *Impact Evaluation of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy*, vii.

<sup>157</sup> Stephen Gaetz, “The Struggle to End Homelessness in Canada: How we Created the Crisis, and How We Can End it,” *The Open Health Services and Policy Journal*, no. 3 (2010): 22.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid*, 24.

Extreme poverty has increased over the past few decades in Canada. Contributing factors include stagnating and dropping incomes, reduction in rental housing availability, a reduction in government spending on social or affordable housing, and a reduction in federal funding for post-secondary education, health, and welfare services.<sup>159</sup> Other issues adding to the problem include the de-institutionalization of mental health facilities over the twentieth century and a failure for communities to develop mental-health response capacities.<sup>160</sup> Other contributing factors relate to criminal activities and a failure to re-integrate those recently released from correctional facilities.<sup>161</sup>

The circumstances of homelessness in Canada vary greatly from city to city. “Homelessness and the provision of affordable housing represents a different problematic in Vancouver, where sky-high housing prices make affordability a problem even for the middle class,” as compared to in Winnipeg, “where homes in some neighborhoods deteriorate because their market value is so low that owners cannot recoup the costs of renovation,” write Christopher Leo and M. August.<sup>162</sup> Thus, a uniform national housing or homelessness policy is not desirable.

Homelessness is a complex problem with many contributing factors. Therefore a multi-pronged response based on the coordination of many actors is necessary. In response to an exceptional social problem that demanded a networked response, the HPS was created in 1999 (as the National Homelessness Initiative, it has now been rechristened). Graham notes that homelessness requires “collective action” and “co-ordination and common purpose” among both public and private actors.<sup>163</sup> Nothing like the HPS program had really been undertaken before: the unique complexity of the problem of homelessness demanded an innovative approach.

Homelessness is a policy area with multiple causal inputs, and as a result there are multiple interventions that can make a difference. Graham writes, “intervention choices

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<sup>159</sup> Ibid, 22.

<sup>160</sup> Andrew Graham, “Vision, Collaboration, Persistence, and Hard Work: The Canadian Federal Government’s Homelessness Partnering Strategy” in *A New Synthesis of Public Administration: Serving the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, eds. Jocelyne Bourgon (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2011), 170.

<sup>161</sup> Idem.

<sup>162</sup> Christopher Leo and M. August, “National Policy and Community Initiative: Mismanaging Homelessness in a Slow Growth City,” *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, 15 (2006): 6.

<sup>163</sup> Graham, 167.

are owned by various players, differ across communities, and often demand collective action that needs co-ordination and common purpose.”<sup>164</sup> The ‘instruments’ of the public policy process require government, the voluntary sector, and both collective and individual action. They are “neither public nor private, but both,” says Graham.<sup>165</sup>

The HPS program provides funding for various agents who may apply to serve as coordinators for its policy goals. These agents may include individuals, research organizations and institutes, for profit enterprises, not-for-profit organizations, municipal governments, public health and educational institutions, Band/tribal councils, and other Aboriginal organizations. Homelessness demands a diverse set of governing instruments and resources owned by an array of actors.

The HPS works in 61 designated urban communities facing significant problems with homelessness, but it can also provide outreach to rural areas and small cities.<sup>166</sup> Each ‘node’ has specific resources (knowledge, authority, information, financial backing, etc.) that can be used by other nodes in moving forward towards solutions to this policy area, but a formal governing structure is needed to integrate these nodes. Relationship ties must be created whereby each node can be assured that their participation within the network is mediated and fair. For instance, they must assure that one particular node, such as a municipal government, is not unduly pulling the weight of the entire HPS program.

Communities can apply for HPS funding to support local efforts in addressing homelessness. For instance, the HPS’s Housing First strategy funds local efforts to move homeless people directly from street or shelters into permanent housing, and once housing is ensured services are provided to assist individuals in re-integrating into their community, finding jobs, or dealing with personal issues contributing to their chronic homelessness.<sup>167</sup> Aside from the Housing First strategy, the HPS contains a number of other expected outcomes. These include engaging partners to maximize collective efforts,

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<sup>164</sup> Idem.

<sup>165</sup> Idem.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid, 171.

<sup>167</sup> Canada, Employment and Social Development Canada, “Terms and Conditions of the Homelessness Partnering Strategy,” Last modified April 30, 2014, <http://www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/communities/homelessness/funding/terms.shtml>.

increasing understanding of homelessness at the local and national level, and addressing community-level homelessness priorities.<sup>168</sup>

### 3.3.1 GOVERNING STRUCTURE AND POWER ALLOCATIONS

The HPS is a federal program, however the federal government builds capacity for local action, as opposed to directly acting.<sup>169</sup> Although the HPS is funded and administered by Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC), ESDC does not make decisions.<sup>170</sup> The federal government's role is altered: instead of serving as a direct funder and overseer, it is a collaborator. It is embedded within the governing process, and this is what ultimately makes the HPS a case of network governance. For example, under one of the HPS's funding streams, the Shared Delivery model, Service Canada and local community organizations work jointly in selecting programs that will receive funding.<sup>171</sup>

Is the HPS a case of partnership? In chapter one Arnstein tells us that partnership can constitute a real allocation of power. In partnerships, negotiations between citizens and public entities distribute power, and neither party has the authority to act unilaterally.<sup>172</sup> In the HPS case, we see that ESDC must work with other nodes and cannot make unilateral decisions. The fact that the HPS is funded by ESDC does not mean that ESDC makes decisions. Instead, the federal government's role is that of a collaborator towards negotiated decision-making with community partners.

Does the joint decision-making protocol in the HPS serve to distribute power? To what extent do involved parties agree to share planning and decision-making responsibilities through planning committees, joint policy boards, and mechanisms for solving conflict? The HPS governs and makes decisions through Community Advisory Boards. These boards are comprised of community homelessness stakeholders, and these boards *do* have the authority to make policy plans in their designated community.<sup>173</sup> The

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<sup>168</sup> "Terms and Conditions of the Homelessness Partnering Strategy."

<sup>169</sup> Graham, "Vision, Collaboration, Persistence, and Hard Work," 169.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid, 171. Also note that ESDC was formerly Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC).

<sup>171</sup> Idem.

<sup>172</sup> Arnstein, 221.

<sup>173</sup> Graham, "Vision, Collaboration, Persistence, and Hard Work," 171.

Community Advisory Boards also work in partnership both with Service Canada, and other incorporated community organizations designated to work with the HPS. For example, the Regina HPS has the local YMCA chapter as the designated incorporated community organization chosen to work with the HPS. The Shared Delivery model exemplifies this joint decision-making. Further, the Community Advisory Boards have the power to set priorities and to allocate funds as they see fit, within the confines of specific goals and funding allotments set out by ESDC.<sup>174</sup> So *yes* the HPS is an example of agency and power being transferred to the constituent nodes of a network. This power allocation is limited to consensus-based or collective decision-making by the Community Advisory Board, as well as the other limits I have just mentioned imposed by ESDC.

This idea of the federal government as a builder of local governing capacity is intriguing, and poses problems when considering power and agency transfer, and also accountability arrangements. Graham observes that this contradicts the “traditional notion of power and authority – one that stresses direct government intervention or a single programmatic solution applied across the country.”<sup>175</sup> Building local governing capacity could indicate an allocation of real power to these local ‘nodes’ within a network. This is especially true when the HPS’s Community Advisory Boards are able to make decisions about policy plans.

The theme of partnership and cooperation is also seen at the federal level. A unique feature of the HPS’s governing structure is its federal Horizontal Pilot Projects (HPP) component. The HPP assists in harmonizing programs with other ESDC projects, as well as with other federal departments and agencies.<sup>176</sup> This coordinates services and reduces overlap. It also helps in addressing a complex issue by tapping into the resources of many different government agencies and as a result it increases the likelihood of success.

An example of an HPP is the Pre-Discharge Support for Federal Offenders Initiative, which aims to reduce the risk of homelessness for recently released criminals in

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<sup>174</sup> Doberstein, 10.

<sup>175</sup> Graham, “Vision, Collaboration, Persistence, and Hard Work,” 169.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid, 172.

Kingston, Ontario.<sup>177</sup> Federal partners horizontally integrated into this project include the ESDC, the OFI, and the Correctional Service of Canada.<sup>178</sup> This idea of horizontal cooperation even at the highest levels of government indicates a substantial departure from previous governing forms and the departmental bureaucratic emphasis on ‘program and compliance’ earlier mentioned. I will now touch upon Provincial and municipal government involvement in the HPS.

Provincial governments have not been very involved in the HPS. Gaetz argues that the record for Provincial involvement in the HPS is “rather uneven,” for instance, with Ontario having *never* had a coordinated strategy to end homelessness (as of 2010).<sup>179</sup> This is the problem with a largely ‘federally-funded’ initiative that depends on input from all levels of government. Gaetz also cites the fact that the Provinces have been slow on reinvesting in affordable housing in recent years.<sup>180</sup>

There is evidence that much of the weight of participating in the HPS is on the backs of municipal governments and community organizations. This makes sense, as actors ‘on-the-ground’ have been responding to the homelessness problem even since before the HPS came about. It is also argued, by Gaetz, that these locally organized responses to homelessness have often “brought out the best, highlighting innovation coupled with compassion.”<sup>181</sup> The value in network governance is in its ability to leverage this pre-existing knowledge, expertise, and capacity with government funding and a unified strategy.

Lastly, I want to discuss the important factors of cooperation and trust with the HPS governance network as this greatly differentiates networked governing structures from other governing models. Aside from including a variety of agents (or ‘nodes’), the HPS encourages relationship ties between these nodes. The program has been designed to encourage collaborative governance. For instance, the ‘Shared Delivery’ funding structure links community agents to fulfill tasks related to the HPS’s goals.<sup>182</sup> The HPP is

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<sup>177</sup> Idem.

<sup>178</sup> Idem.

<sup>179</sup> Gaetz, 24.

<sup>180</sup> Idem.

<sup>181</sup> Idem.

<sup>182</sup> Graham, “Vision, Collaboration, Persistence, and Hard Work,” 171.

also an example of cooperation as it ‘harmonizes’ federal government programs across ministries.<sup>183</sup>

Harmonization between nodes with various domains of expertise is encouraged. The federal government, through ESDC, funds and administers the HPS, but its role in the program is that of a network integrator rather than a service provider in a direct sense. This role as a network integrator is crystallized through the HPP’s cross-ministry harmonization. The HPS program requires substantial collaboration, and increasing interpersonal trust and ‘cross-agency enterprises’ are seen in policy outcomes. Graham quotes one HPS official, who states that:

the leveraging we get from these relationships goes way beyond just good will. Often it means that someone will connect the dots along the value chain of the program to find more resources, bring in a new funder and, most important of all, smooth over any threats to the total program by one change, reduction in funding, or shift in emphasis.<sup>184</sup>

The collaborative nature of the HPS has been viewed positively. It leads to increased coordination of programming, and builds trust and a sense of common purpose between incorporated nodes.<sup>185</sup>

The HPS case demonstrates “how states can address complex issues by applying power *through* others (via funding) and *with* others (through processes of collective governance),” according to Graham.<sup>186</sup> In the face of the complexity of homelessness, the federal government finds itself with limited capacity to address the problem. Therefore, it must turn to engagement with community partners, and municipal and provincial governments. To sustain these relationships, partnerships must be created. These partnerships require that the federal government, and to an extent provincial and municipal governments, cede governing authority and real decision-making capacity to various non-public nodes within the HPS governing network.

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<sup>183</sup> Ibid, 172.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid, 174.

<sup>185</sup> Idem.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid, 169.

### 3.3.2 ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS

What accountability mechanisms are seen in the HPS? This is a particularly interesting question, as the HPS itself is composed of both public and private actors: government, the voluntary sector, and both collective and individual decision-makers. The HPS, as an agency, is itself embedded within a network of homelessness stakeholders, and it makes decisions cooperatively and jointly with government representatives, the community, and other nodes. The federal government engages in community capacity-building and action, rather than in direct decision-making.

This deterioration of the government as the direct decision-maker, and the traditional notion of government power and authority, poses problems when we seek to determine how the HPS is accountable. We know a lot about accountability in circumstances when the federal government is the imposer of public will and is an entity that can demand of its administrative arms that accounts be made. In a hypothetical situation where federal government representatives oversaw all aspects of HPS governance, we can imagine the power structure with ESDC like a sort of puppeteer hovering over the complex strings of connection and the myriad of movements and actions in the HPS. The administrative arms (for example, ESDC) would be administratively accountable to the Government of Canada, and the Government would be politically accountable to those whom it represents.

But this still leaves open the question of accountability *within* the HPS network. To whom is the HPS accountable? Who are the principals in the accountability relationship? This question is difficult to answer because the HPS itself *is* a network comprised of so many different types of actors, including the very stakeholders whom it serves. It can theoretically be comprised of both principals and agents. Yet, at the end of the day, the HPS reports to the federal government. I will go into this shortly. Reporting to the federal government exemplifies my contention that a whole host of accountability requirements *within* the governance network are ignored, and reliance upon what I have labeled as traditional accountability perseveres.

How is the HPS accountable? The HPS is still subject to what I would classify as a traditional accountability regime. For instance, the standards for which the HPS is to be



held to account require extensive report writing and record keeping. Graham observes that this is rather onerous, and the federal government most often imposes requirements. The federal government has specific reporting requirements for the partnership based on its budget cycles. The HPS's funding renewal process is based on the federal government's policy reviews and evaluations of the partnership, and there is a continuous demand for clarification, information, and answers.<sup>187</sup>

Further, the federal government did not consult with actors in the HPS network when designing the program's 2009 renewal, nor did it appear to respond to suggestions made in HPS reports.<sup>188</sup> This demonstrates a significant hierarchical component in the accountability arrangements. Existing accountability measures are frustrating, and are often developed in isolation from actors involved in governing 'on the ground.'

For what is the HPS accountable? The HPS has specific performance measures, or what I earlier described as 'expected outcomes', that are used to hold the strategy to account. These include the Housing First strategy, maximizing collective efforts, increasing understanding of homelessness, and addressing community-level homelessness priorities. Each of these categories is given precise numerical measures that serve as standards of HPS success or failure. Performance measures include: the amount invested by external partners into the HPS program, decreasing the length of time homeless people stay in shelters, decreasing the amount of shelters needed for chronically and episodically homeless individuals, and the percentage of individuals who go through the Housing First program who maintain their residence in permanent housing.<sup>189</sup>

There are several 'gaps' in the existing accountability model employed in the HPS program. The networked structure of the strategy is not complemented by a similarly shared and distributed model of accountability. This is acute when trying to account for money invested. Graham calls this the "Achilles' heel of an otherwise exciting collaborative model."<sup>190</sup>

Further, the federal government still treats the HPS as an administrative arm that must be accountable *to* the government (whereby the administrative arm is the agent and

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<sup>187</sup> Ibid, 172.

<sup>188</sup> Idem.

<sup>189</sup> "Terms and Conditions of the Homelessness Partnering Strategy."

<sup>190</sup> Graham, "Vision, Collaboration, Persistence, and Hard Work," 169.

the government is the principal), such that the government can then be accountable *to* those whom it represents (the government here becomes the agent, and the electorate is the principal). This unidirectional relationship does not work. Allocating real political power and decision-making capacity to the outer-most corners of a network fundamentally changes the governing relationship. In addition, this unidirectional relationship does not work when the federal government is embedded within a governance network, and when this relationship is premised upon partnership.

“The shift to *collaborative* governance and co-funding with partners at multiple levels was a genuine innovation,” Graham writes of the HPS.<sup>191</sup> This is genuine innovation in terms of governing form and structure, however not in terms of accountability regime. It is unclear that the accountability regime seen in the HPS has been innovative and has made any progress away from traditional forms and norms that do not capture the power dynamics within the HPS network. This shift away from traditional accountability is imperative. I have made it clear that there is a misalignment between these accountability features and the structure and purpose of a governing network.

### 3.4 THE CANADIAN PARTNERSHIP AGAINST CANCER (CPAC)

The Canadian Partnership Against Cancer (CPAC, or the Partnership) is a pan-Canadian federally funded not-for-profit corporation intended to coordinate and hasten actions against cancer. It commenced operations in January of 2007. The CPAC was given \$250 million over five years by the federal government at its inception, and this funding has recently been renewed for the 2012-2017 period.<sup>192</sup> It is a relatively innovative policy experiment: the partnership is the first disease-based federally funded organization outside of government, and it is oriented towards sustaining coordinated

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<sup>191</sup> Ibid, 175.

<sup>192</sup> L. Fairclough, J. Hill, H. Bryant, and L. Kitchen-Clarke, “Accelerating knowledge to action: the pan-Canadian cancer control strategy,” *Current Oncology* 19 (2012): 75, accessed January 21, 2015, doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3747/co.19.1019>.

action and bringing together information from across a wide array of stakeholders and related organizations.<sup>193</sup>

The CPAC brings together partners and information for the purpose of coordinating action towards its three major goals: reducing the impact of cancer; lessening the likelihood of Canadians dying of cancer; and enhancing the quality of life for those affected by cancer.<sup>194</sup> The Partnership works horizontally with its partners to support the multi-jurisdictional accrual of knowledge to better inform policy planning and “drive improvements in quality and practice across the country,” states the CPAC’s recent *Annual Report*.<sup>195</sup> The CPAC’s partners are diverse, and operate at all levels of government, and range from individual experts to nation-wide health and patient organizations. They include provincial and territorial level programs; federal agencies; both patient and professional perspectives; experts; and First Nations, Métis, and Inuit organizations.<sup>196</sup>

The CPAC’s mandate is to translate and transfer expertise, knowledge, and best practices, and to support health care providers, policy makers, patients, and the cancer community at large.<sup>197</sup> The CPAC’s main policy program is the Canadian Strategy for Cancer Control (CSCC). The CSCC undertakes projects including research, knowledge brokering, screening surveillance, primary prevention, among many others.<sup>198</sup> The Partnership does not merely spread knowledge and support the policy-making endeavors of other agencies. Instead, with its community partners, the CPAC identifies and launches initiatives relating to advancing cancer control for Canadians.<sup>199</sup> It exists to create coordinated action, recognizing that there area already a multitude of Canadian cancer-related organizations with narrower specialized mandates.

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<sup>193</sup> Ibid, 70.

<sup>194</sup> *Delivering as One: Annual Report 2013/14*, 42.

<sup>195</sup> Idem.

<sup>196</sup> Idem.

<sup>197</sup> Canada, Health Canada, *Final Audit Report: Audit of the Grant to the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer Corporation, September 2011*, PDF file, (Ottawa: Health Canada Audit and Accountability Bureau, September 2011), 1, Accessed February 2, 2015, [http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/alt\\_formats/pdf/pubs/audit-verif/2011-09/2011-09-eng.pdf](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/alt_formats/pdf/pubs/audit-verif/2011-09/2011-09-eng.pdf).

<sup>198</sup> Fairclough et al., 70.

<sup>199</sup> *Final Audit Report*, 1.

### 3.4.1 GOVERNING STRUCTURE AND POWER ALLOCATIONS

The CPAC engages in knowledge brokering and coordinating action among involved actors. Its governing structure is heavily oriented towards these two goals, and these goals also shape our ability to understand how power manifests within the Partnership. The CPAC network exemplifies a somewhat alternative understanding of power whereby ‘soft power’ and cooperative and coordinated action are more prominent than unilateralism. To what extent does partnership and joint-action constitute real power? To what extent does providing the knowledge and coordination necessary for decision-making constitute involvement in decision-making? These are the questions we must keep in mind when considering whether and how the CPAC allocates power to its nodes, and the extent to which this power allocation is departed from connecting ties of accountability.

First, a major component of the CPAC’s mandate is to broker knowledge. The partnership is active in disseminating an epistemic organizational culture of common purpose. In all of its initiatives, the CPAC integrates diverse actors into its jurisdiction and creates opportunities for dialogue and exchange.<sup>200</sup> This serves as means to create “connections and to share expertise and experience; to synthesize evidence; and to broaden planning, implementation, and evaluation with stakeholders,” according to L. Fairclough et al.<sup>201</sup> This aligns with the neo-institutional idea of creating a culture of accountability, whereby agents act in concordance with the expectations of their peer group. They receive both explicit and implicit, active and retroactive, forms of sanctioning based on their adherence to shared goals.

The CPAC partakes in a knowledge management approach, and it forms an epistemic community. Knowledge management involves numerous interdependent processes oriented towards governing the creation, utilization, and dissemination of knowledge.<sup>202</sup> There are four interdependent core components of the knowledge management approach. These include managing: content, technology, processes, and

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<sup>200</sup> Fairclough et al., 72.

<sup>201</sup> Idem.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid, 71.

lastly culture.<sup>203</sup> Though I will not go deeply into these features here, it is suffice to mention that a major part of governing a complex array of actors is in coordinating shared knowledge. This is especially true in an area like cancer control, where there are deeply developed yet relatively disconnected and highly technical areas of knowledge.

This is also seen in how the CPAC creates common technology and information platforms. Because the network of actors is complex and wide-spread, the website [cancerview.ca](http://cancerview.ca) was set up to bring members of the partnership together to share resources, evidence, information, and tools, as well as to strengthen the pan-Canadian nature of the partnership.<sup>204</sup> This virtual tool serves to support the exchange of resources (again, integral to a governing network) and promote coordination.

Second, the CPAC coordinates the actions of researchers, experts, policymakers, patients, managers, and the public. Some of the actors involved in the CPAC network include the National Colorectal Cancer Screening Network, the Cancer Risk Management Advisory Committee, the National Cancer Staging Advisory Committee and the Advisory Committee on First Nations, Inuit and Métis Cancer Control, among others.<sup>205</sup> The CPAC brings together these actors to provide guidance pertaining to its initiatives.

These are also the ‘nodes’ within the CPAC governing network. Actors come together to pursue policy goals of common interest, and their relationships are predicated on resource exchange rather than unilateral influence and the concomitant demanding of accounts. The purpose of this coordination is to reduce duplication, bolster collaboration, and overall to promote a ‘shared vision’ for reducing the impact of cancer upon Canadians.<sup>206</sup>

This cooperative pursuit of common interest makes it difficult to understand power relations within the CPAC network. Conventional understandings of ‘power’ imply decision-making, and making decisions on behalf of others when they might not make these themselves. In contrast, networks are based upon resource exchange, cooperation, and joint decision-making, as opposed to the ability to make unilateral action without consulting others.

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<sup>203</sup> Idem.

<sup>204</sup> Fairclough et al., 72.

<sup>205</sup> *Final Audit Report*, 2.

<sup>206</sup> Fairclough et al., 71.

The CPAC is both a part of its own governing network, and it facilitates the creation of networks of experts and key stakeholders.<sup>207</sup> It creates networks under its jurisdiction of actors in the cancer care community. For example, the National Colorectal Cancer Screening network harmonizes provincial organized screenings to minimize duplication and foster best practices.<sup>208</sup> The CPAC, and the CSCC work *through* networks “to make research evidence and best practices easily accessible, transferable, and actionable,” write Fairclough et al.<sup>209</sup> The Partnership is a Canada-wide network devoted to resource exchange for the purposes of cooperative and coordinated action.

Where exactly does ‘power’ go in the CPAC network? As I have stated previously, power is interpreted uniquely within a governance network. The CPAC supports “collective work” and coordinated action among a variety of actors representing Canada’s cancer community as a whole.<sup>210</sup> The Partnership works through coordinated system-level change (the network as a whole is seen as the ‘acting’ entity). The CPAC outlines key objectives for cancer-related organizations across Canada to work towards.

Who has the authority to set policy plans and make decisions? Health Canada provides the CPAC with its funding grant, and regularly audits the CPAC. The federal government also gave the CPAC the mandate to enable knowledge transfer, and to increase coordinated action across Canada in relation to addressing cancer.<sup>211</sup> Despite these features, the federal government does not have a monopoly over decision-making.

Federal representatives make decisions *with* other stakeholders on the CPAC Board of Directors. The board is comprised of key stakeholders with a variety of perspectives. The board includes policy experts, leaders in cancer control, representatives from the Canadian Cancer Society, Aboriginal communities and cancer patients, a federal representative appointed by the Minister of Health, and provincial, territorial and regional

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<sup>207</sup> Canadian Partnership Against Cancer, *Sustaining Action Towards a Shared Vision: 2012-2017 Strategic Plan*, PDF file, (Toronto: Canadian Partnership Against Cancer, 2012), 68, accessed January 29, 2015, [http://www.partnershipagainstcancer.ca/wp-content/uploads/Sustaining-Action-Toward-A-Shared-Vision\\_web.pdf](http://www.partnershipagainstcancer.ca/wp-content/uploads/Sustaining-Action-Toward-A-Shared-Vision_web.pdf).

<sup>208</sup> Idem.

<sup>209</sup> Fairclough et al., 71.

<sup>210</sup> Canadian Partnership Against Cancer, *The 2014 Cancer System Performance Report: March 2014*, PDF file, (Toronto: Canadian Partnership Against Cancer, 2014), 8, accessed January 31, 2015, [http://www.cancerview.ca/idc/groups/public/documents/webcontent/sp\\_report\\_2014.pdf](http://www.cancerview.ca/idc/groups/public/documents/webcontent/sp_report_2014.pdf).

<sup>211</sup> Fairclough et al., 71.

appointees.<sup>212</sup> Again, this suggests that the CPAC is a partnership, by Arnstein's definition, and the CPAC allocates power to actors other than government representatives. Power is distributed through negotiations between citizens and public entities.<sup>213</sup>

### 3.4.2 ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS

To whom is the CPAC accountable? Throughout the *Sustaining Action Towards a Shared Vision: 2012-2017 Strategic Plan*, it is repeatedly stated that the CPAC is accountable "to Canadians."<sup>214</sup> The vagueness of this statement is evident. The CPAC also states that through publicizing its activities, it bolsters its accountability to Canadians.<sup>215</sup> Again, this betrays the assumption that transparency and publicity are the same as accountability. In chapter two I outlined that a common understanding of accountability is that it is *comprised* of transparency, as well as publicity (answerability or justification), and these components alone do not make up accountability. For instance, transparency is collecting information and making it available and accessible for public scrutiny.<sup>216</sup> This does not include the other aspects of accountability such as sanctioning by principals, or justifying what is transparently evident.

The *Sustaining Action* report also assumes that public accountability is the same as democratic accountability. The report states, "as part of its accountability to Canadians, the Partnership is committed to regularly reporting its progress in implementing Canada's cancer action plan."<sup>217</sup> The CPAC is actually directly accountable *to* Health Canada, which is then accountable to its respective Deputy Minister, who is accountable to the Minister of Health, who is then accountable to Canadians. The Partnership must strive for alternative accountable measures (e.g. relying on publicity) specifically because it is difficult to connect all of its constituent nodes and their own varying policy strategies *to*

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<sup>212</sup> *Final Audit Report*, 1, and see p. 18 for the Partnership's Board of Directors composition as of September 2011.

<sup>213</sup> Arnstein, 221.

<sup>214</sup> *Sustaining Action Towards a Shared Vision*, 124-125.

<sup>215</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>216</sup> Ebrahim and Weisband, 5.

<sup>217</sup> *Sustaining Action Towards a Shared Vision*, 125.

Health Canada, and so on and so forth down the democratic accountability chain to Canadians.

Another problem in answering the question of ‘to whom is the CPAC accountable?’ is that the Partnership involves principals in the policymaking process. It is a partnership of “leaders, organizations, professionals and the public,” and incorporates actors *outside* of the political and administrative realms which traditional democratic accountability relies upon.<sup>218</sup>

How and for what is the CPAC accountable? In 2007 the CPAC was set up with clear plans laying out anticipated outcomes and deliverables. “The Partnership uses a contractual model that specifies objectives, deliverables, and timing. This approach ensures that all parties involved are accountable for the initiative,” the *Sustaining Action* report states.<sup>219</sup> Some examples of priority areas are as follows: addressing a key known gap; alignment of federal/provincial/territorial priorities; likelihood of measurable outcomes within five years; scale, with priority given to large-scale initiatives encompassing multiple jurisdictions; the likely long-term impact on the overall issue of cancer or on the ability to address it, among others.<sup>220</sup> When the Partnership is evaluated, these are the standards to which it is held to account.

The Partnership is active in keeping records and producing reports on its progress in these areas. For instance, it publishes regular Performance Reports, with the most recent one out in March of 2014.<sup>221</sup> Overall I find these reports to be quite comprehensive in reporting recent data, explaining and justifying how data is measured, and providing additional information about areas where there is under-measurement. The Performance Reports make this information readily available for audit and review, and also to the public and the CPAC stakeholders. “Evidence indicates a high level of satisfaction on the part of stakeholders with the credibility, assessment, and timeliness of information

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<sup>218</sup> *Sustaining Action Towards a Shared Vision*, 125.

<sup>219</sup> *Ibid*, 68.

<sup>220</sup> See Fairclough et al., 73 for a chart elaborating further on the standards within each of these priority areas.

<sup>221</sup> *The 2014 Cancer System Performance Report*, 14.



provided by the Partnership,” Fairclough et al. write.<sup>222</sup> This demonstrates a high degree of transparency as well as strong public accountability.

As noted, public accountability is not democratic accountability. To what extent is the CPAC accountable to the Government of Canada? The federal government audits the CPAC. In 2010 Health Canada reviewed whether the CPAC is effective in undertaking CSCC objectives through using a third party auditor (EKOS Research Associates) to interview 43 key informants, survey over 100 stakeholders, as well as to undertake an online literature review, and to scrutinize documents and files.<sup>223</sup> As a whole, it was found that the partnership was making good progress with respect to its objectives – the CPAC network is both efficient and effective. Yet despite this there are some glaring warnings of inadequacy in the accountability arrangements within the Partnership and the strategy.

The audit pointed out that the Partnership had developed collaborations with many other actors in the cancer control domain in Canada, however despite this there was a strong “lack of clarity and understanding among various stakeholders of the specific roles and responsibilities in their relationship with the Partnership and with the strategy.”<sup>224</sup> I interpret this as a suggestion that many of the actors holding salient roles within the CPAC and the CSCC were not tied to an accountability mechanism, and thus did not understand their level of responsibility. If these actors did not understand their relationship with the Partnership and the strategy, then it is unlikely that they would adhere to its standards of account giving. Actors, or ‘nodes’ partaking in the CPAC and its strategy are tied to its accountability regime based on the extent of their incorporation into the network. Therefore, it is very possible that loosely integrated nodes will not be accountable for their actions – even if these actions are significant.

### 3.5 DISCUSSION AND CHAPTER SUMMARY

Accountability is a check to the otherwise chaotic wildness of power, and to the freedom of those wielding it. My concern with network governance is that the ability to make decisions is allocated to the constituent nodes of a network. We can also interpret

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<sup>222</sup> Fairclough et al., 75.

<sup>223</sup> Idem.

<sup>224</sup> Idem.

this as the allocation of agency to the nodes of a network, in a principal-agent relationship. If agency is transferred, then accountability mechanisms are absolutely necessary. I find that the three cases explored are not well serviced by existing accountability models and associated mechanisms. In many cases, there is a misalignment between the structure of the network and the structure of traditional accountability models. The allocation of power is not complemented by ‘checks,’ in a large part because we are relying on audits, report-writing, financial statements, retroactive assessment, among related features.

Although the cases of the UAS, HPS, and CPAC differ substantially in focus, scope, and the types of actors they involve, there are several common themes. I will discuss a few here, but go further into them in my chapter five analysis. All three of these cases arose because policy-making within conventional departmental realms does not incorporate the knowledge, information, resources, or connections to make well-grounded policies. Aboriginal affairs, homelessness, and disease control are all policy areas where local-level initiatives have been around for some time, and thus coordinating them and ensuring continuous funding and support for them has been something of an inevitable catalyst for a networked governing structure. Network governance becomes a necessary solution. This occurs particularly in complex policy areas that rely on local experience and expertise. Adding to this, all three of my cases regard policy areas where community-based or expert-level initiatives had previously developed some capacity to deal with a problem, and therefore it was very important that government act symbiotically with these actors.

In all of my cases, this symbiotic action included the government’s faith in the capacity and ability for partnerships of actors to make decisions and execute them. This points to the fact that the networked structure represents a significant re-thinking of how we interpret political power, and the role of government. I will further delve into implications for power in chapters four and five.

In the process of collecting research, I had difficulty finding Canadian cases of network governance that had been active earlier than the 1990s. As the reader will note, all of my cases begin in the later years of this decade, or the early 2000s. I also notice that many other cases of network governance, such as those listed at the beginning of this

chapter, are from the last ten to twenty years. This suggests that the shift towards network governance is a relatively new phenomenon. Network governance is not yet widespread in Canada as it is in, for instance, the EU. Despite this, I see the trend towards networks as one that will intensify as other policy areas become more complex. Further, the cases of network governance described in this chapter, the UAS, the HPS, and CPAC, have proven on the whole to be extremely innovative and useful forms of policy development and implementation. This type of innovation does not often go unnoticed, and it is likely that other policy sectors will look to network governance.

In the Canadian context, the shift towards an allocation of real governing power to community ‘partners’ of government, at all levels, was particularly trendy under the Paul Martin government (2003 – 2006).<sup>225</sup> Yet the trend has continued. The idea that government can leverage community capacity to achieve its own policy ends, and often with a more efficient and knowledgeable community of actors, is extremely appealing. Further, government can take credit for network governance outcomes, which are very often successes. And when unsuccessful, due to weak accountability mechanisms, the blame is not directly on government.

In each case I have studied, there exist gaps in accountability. These gaps bring me to the conclusion that it is unclear whether the UAS, the HPS, and CPAC are indeed accountable. If measured by traditional standards of accountability, then no, these governing networks are not accountable. This speaks to the tension at the crux of my thesis: network governance presents innovative and often more efficient solutions to modern governance, yet *it is a fundamental transition away from prior governing models, power allocations, and traditional accountability regimes*. However, traditional forms of accountability are not the only kinds of accountability. In the next chapter I advocate for several new forms of accountability that will be better suited for network governance. In my chapter give analysis I probe deeper into my three cases to extrapolate whether they show any evidence of moving towards ‘new’ networked accountability arrangements.

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<sup>225</sup> Leo and August, 4.

## **CHAPTER 4: NEW ACCOUNTABILITIES**

...the misfit between a system of network governance and the traditional image of liberal democracy does not necessitate a choice between network governance and liberal democracy. It calls for a reformulation of the traditional image of liberal democracy.<sup>226</sup>

- Eva Sørensen, 2002

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

Accountability premised upon hierarchical, bureaucratic, and unidirectional mechanics does not adequately serve to democratically qualify network governance. Traditional accountability is also accompanied by an increasingly misplaced reliance on the political-administrative division, and the power and accountability relations specific to this division of labour. This clashes with network governance, and an accountability deficit results. If measured by traditional standards of accountability, network governance is not accountable. As accountability is a central feature in a democratic state, the research question at hand is: what ‘new’ accountabilities might best operate within network governance?

Traditional forms of accountability are not the only kinds of accountability. There exists “potential for extended mechanisms of accountability in supplementing or displacing traditional accountability functions,” agrees Colin Scott.<sup>227</sup> Therefore, in chapter four, I will examine new conceptualizations of accountability in some detail. These ideas are my own, derived from a thorough examination of the literature, and a consideration of some of the gaps existing between traditional accountability and the requirements of network governance.

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<sup>226</sup> Sørensen, “Democratic Theory and Network Governance,” 715.

<sup>227</sup> Scott, 38.

In this chapter I sketch out four elements of new accountability that will better suit networks:

- active accountability given process-based governance;
- accountability without distinct categories of actors or domains of action;
- horizontal, multidirectional, and reciprocal accountability relationships;
- and multiple accountabilities.

I will explain what these are and why they work with networks, what mechanisms they might require, how they differ from traditional concepts of accountability, and where there might be dispute and tension regarding how useful these new concepts are. Later, in chapter five, I analyze how these new accountabilities apply to network governance, and I illustrate this discussion with examples from my case studies.

The postliberal project, which challenges and strengthens existing formulations of liberal democracy, need not contain elements of accountability that completely contradict ‘traditional’ accountability. Instead, I see these new elements as a refinement or an extension of current understandings of accountability within the liberal democratic state. I turn my attention towards the postliberal ‘second generation’ project of moving beyond the mere identification of problems and instead I look to hypothetical solutions. In chapter two I identified what traditional accountability is, and why problems arise when it is applied to network governance. Here I move away from a focus on problems and instead look to conceptualizations of accountability that will be compatible with networks.

## 4.2 ACTIVE ACCOUNTABILITY

### 4.2.1 WHAT IS MEANT BY ACTIVE ACCOUNTABILITY?

Governance is process-based: structures and processes are actively determined. In particular, network governance is a complex and potentially chaotic process involving numerous and equally complex interests and identities.<sup>228</sup> Given that so much of decision-making can happen ‘in-the-moment,’ and potentially in ways that are not documentable, it

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<sup>228</sup> Sørensen and Torfing, “Theoretical Approaches to Governance Network Dynamics,” 25.

is important to develop active forms of accountability. The assumption that accountability is derived only after a decision has been made (and often months and months later based on audit cycles) is not helpful.<sup>229</sup>

There exist *ex tempore* (in the moment and active) and *ex post* (after the fact, seen with traditional accountability) conceptualizations of accountability. *Ex post* accountability looks back on a set of decisions made regarding a specific policy domain, and by a certain locus of responsibility (agent) making these decisions. It assumes a set reality. Fixed traditional accountability mechanisms are examples of *ex post* accountability, and it will be difficult if not impossible to apply them to constantly changing and adapting networks. To try and impose such mechanisms would risk compromising the specific advantages of network governance.

In contrast, active or *ex tempore* accountability operates while decisions are being made and provides real-time information to stakeholders and principals, and theoretically can be also complemented by real-time opportunities for justification and sanctioning. *Ex tempore* accountability does not require a retrospective demanding of accounts, or information gathering and publicity, or retroactive sanctioning. Only recently has the literature on this subject begun to accept that network governance poses challenges precisely because it is flexible, adaptive, dynamic, and strategically innovative.<sup>230</sup> I argue that accountability models can be flexible and process-based so as to align with the requirements of network governance.

#### 4.2.2 MECHANISMS OF ACTIVE ACCOUNTABILITY

A dominant thread in the literature on active accountability emphasizes its intimate tie to the *norm* of accountability. Normative accountability assumes that the agent is basically inclined towards acting in an accountable way. This occurs due to reasons such as: a noble pursuit of the ‘common interest’, adherence to an organizational ethos of responsibility, a personal adherence to a specific set of values, among other potential explanations. Herman Finer writes that this type of accountability requires “a

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<sup>229</sup> Scott, 39.

<sup>230</sup> Greenaway et al., 719.

*sense* of responsibility, largely unsanctioned, except by deference or loyalty to professional standards.”<sup>231</sup>

The idea of norm-based accountability is also well articulated by Bovens through his idea of ‘accountability as virtue.’ Accountability as virtue interpretations are behavior-based, and derived from implicit or explicit standards of behavior to which public officials, or agents in a broader sense, actively conform to.<sup>232</sup> This is also a heavily agent-centric formulation of accountability. “Organizations or collectives don’t have moral responsibilities, only individuals do,” states Axworthy.<sup>233</sup> When accountability is seen as a virtue, the focus is on the correctness of the actions of individual agents in real time, whereas in contrast, technical understandings of accountability are derived from assessing institutional arrangements retrospectively.<sup>234</sup> The focus here is on the individual agent and his or her subscription to norms, as opposed to system-wide mechanisms of accountability.

It is problematic to speak of the ‘mechanisms’ of normative accountability. Why? Let me begin with why mechanisms are imposed in conceptualizations of accountability that are more departed from norms. Many mechanistic and institutionally constructed understandings of accountability assume mistrust and the need to keep a close watch of agents. Surveillance, control, and demanding that accounts be made ensure agents are fulfilling specifically articulated mandates, keeping financial records, and so on to the evaluation phases where sanctions may actually need to be imposed. To go back to my earlier discussion, *ex post* accountability is easily departed from normative understandings.

In contrast, in normative understandings of accountability, mechanistic features are less readily required as agents are inclined to act with accountability in mind. Active norm-based accountability entails that principals are assured that agents will act in their behalf. Retrospective sanctioning mechanisms are not needed. Agents act with genuine

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<sup>231</sup> Herman Finer, “Administrative Responsibility in Democratic Government,” *Public Administration Review*, 1 (1941): 335.

<sup>232</sup> Bovens, 961.

<sup>233</sup> Axworthy, 7.

<sup>234</sup> *Idem*.

regard to the best interests of the principal, and/or in regards to an agreed-upon set of standards.

A related strand in the literature propounds the idea of accountability through self-regulation.<sup>235</sup> Self-regulation requires a degree of trust in actors (again, something often assumed as a derivative of supposedly cooperative networks), along with other factors such as the capacity of independent agents to self-regulate, agreement upon standards to be adhered to, and so on. H ritier and Lehmkuhl also add that self-regulation may be useful in that it uses the expertise of private agents – no one knows their jurisdiction better than they do.<sup>236</sup>

Another idea for actively determining accountability is peer accountability. Peer accountability requires supposedly unbiased peers to provide watchdog services in real time. This form of accountability is already found within networked forms of governing.<sup>237</sup> Papadopolous suggests that peer accountability is created through “embeddedness” and that it is based on mutual monitoring within a network of both public and private groups sharing common concerns.<sup>238</sup> This also coincides with the idea of soft power – an idea now prolific within the governance literature. Through peer accountability, nodes are “deemed to be ... accountable to their negotiation partners, usually in a ‘soft’ sense,” elaborates Papadopolous.<sup>239</sup> The point of these examples is to reinforce the idea that ‘real-time’ mechanisms of accountability are possible. They could exist within the processes of governance, and the added dynamism and complexity introduced by networks.

In the political science discipline, accountability is used primarily as a normative concept, whereas public administration sees it more as a mechanistic feature to be applied retroactively. These *ex post* features are evidenced in Ebrahim and Weisband’s list of the aspects which the public administration discipline has decided are crucial in an accountability relationship: transparency, answerability, compliance, and enforcement of sanctions. The traditional accountability relationship discussed in chapter two applies

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<sup>235</sup> H ritier and Lehmkuhl, 127.

<sup>236</sup> Idem.

<sup>237</sup> Papadopolous, 480.

<sup>238</sup> Idem.

<sup>239</sup> Idem.



these features ‘after-the-fact.’ Yet the normative slant that political science provides serves as a strong basis for re-theorizing democratic accountability as *actively* derived.

Another interesting idea supporting ‘active’ accountability is accountability derived from complete transparency and publicity. This need not have a completely normative base either, as it forces network participants to act in an accountable way if they are constantly observable. The network as a whole provides real-time reporting about its operations, decisions, and actions. Its constituent nodes, ideally, will also provide as much information about their internal goings-on as is relevant to the outcomes of networked decision-making.

#### 4.2.3 COMPARISON WITH TRADITIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Traditional accountability relies on a set state of affairs. Hierarchy is an entrenched structural order, bureaucracy assumes an organizational mode with set mechanisms to support it, and lastly unidirectionality assumes that accountability relationships are always predicated upon the same principal-to-agent unidirectional path. The accountability mechanisms discussed in chapter two are based on information gathered *ex post* (after the fact) through devices such as comprehensive performance management systems, financial audits, and fiscal and legislative instruments for control and supervision.

The policymaking models used in public administration incorporate underlying theoretical backings that assume a set present entity that social scientists might then analyze.<sup>240</sup> Joris Van Wezemaal elaborates that:

networks ‘become’ through the governing process, they are only known *ex post* (after the event) through the attempts to govern them. The fetishization of an already-present identity is the ‘enemy’ of democratic network governance as it limits the process of creativity.<sup>241</sup>

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<sup>240</sup> Paul A. Sabatier and Hank Jenkins-Smith, *Policy Change and Learning: An Advocacy Coalition Approach*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1993), 17.

<sup>241</sup> Joris Van Wezemaal, “The contribution of Assemblage Theory and Minor Politics for Democratic Network Governance,” *Planning Theory* 72 (2008): 167.

Many scholars have difficulty studying accountability in any way other than retrospectively, and with the assumption that they are studying a set reality. As an example, Harlow and Rawlings write: “we recognize that accountability may encompass prior participation in policy making, comprising also a standard-setting function, but emphatically reject the idea that these can provide an adequate substitute for *ex post facto* political and legal accountability.”<sup>242</sup> But if political and legal standards of accountability are based on a set configuration of empirical reality, and if this is subject to change, then finding an accountability framework with a more active theoretical backing is still the challenge at hand. Theorizing must move towards accepting the process-based nature of network governance, and use this in re-theorizing accountability arrangements.

There is a proclivity to view change within network governance as incremental and insignificant, or to assume that the nature of change becomes routine and it is not a random or complicated outcome of network structure (and thus networks are not independent variables).<sup>243</sup> Even if changes occur, they are not seen to actively threaten existing arrangements to the extent that new mechanisms of accountability are needed that somehow compliment a process-based governing environment.

A model for accountability within democratic network governance needs to work with process and dynamism. Accountability must be actively determined during the process of governing, and not solely after. Accountability must be first understood fully in all of its dimensions. For instance, *ex post* accountability assumes the need for reporting and sanctioning – what does *ex ante* (before the fact) accountability entail? Or *ex tempore* (in the moment) accountability? Although I have provided several suggestions, there are still a multitude of potential answers to these questions that remain unexplored.

#### 4.2.4 LIMITATIONS OF ACTIVE ACCOUNTABILITY

There are several limitations to the idea of active accountability. First, is it really accountability? Accountability is the responsibility of an agent to a principal, with the principal enabled to demands accounts from and sanction the agent. Sanctioning is

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<sup>242</sup> Harlow and Rawlings, 544.

<sup>243</sup> Idem.

generally understood as positive or negative feedback applied to the agent *after* decision-making and action have occurred. If this is the case, then it seems sanctioning must be retroactive and based on the assessment of decisions and actions already made.

Sanctioning is a key feature of accountability, thus is accountability also always *ex post*?

What exactly do we call the process of ‘active’ oversight and reprimanding? Is this something other than accountability? Some, such as Scott, label the active processes of ensuring proper behavior and adherence to standards as ‘control’ and ‘managerialism.’<sup>244</sup> Networked actors require sufficient autonomy, but also must be actively controlled and managed during processes of negotiation among partners and decision-making. Real governing power will not be allocated to networks if sufficient control mechanisms are not in place. Yet, ultimately Scott concludes that active ‘control’ of governing *is* still a form of accountability. “It seems better to see control and accountability as linked concepts, operating on a continuum,” he writes.<sup>245</sup> The purpose of these two ideas is essentially the same, and their mechanisms are also comparable – the main difference is that control operates *ex ante* (this term is used by Scott, it means ‘before the event’ of accounts being demanded) whereas accountability is an *ex post* means of ensuring agents act on behalf of principals.<sup>246</sup> Ultimately, given this discussion and that provided earlier, the idea of forms of accountability other than just *ex post* forms appears to be a viable avenue for future enquiry.

The questionable nature of ‘norms,’ and an individual or organization’s ability to adhere to norms, is another obvious limitation to the types of mechanisms for active accountability I propose. The suggestion that a governance network could maintain accountability via a ‘culture’ of accountability, and a shared ‘ethos’ premised upon trust and cooperation is highly questionable. Although my thesis has abstained from a rational-choice based analysis of why individuals diverge from the common goals of a group, it is common sense to understand that not all nodes within a network will subscribe to the same accountability regime based purely on ideals.

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<sup>244</sup> Scott, 39.

<sup>245</sup> Idem.

<sup>246</sup> Idem. I would also add here that Scott uses the term ‘*ex ante*’ referring to decisions made before the event of reporting an retroactive sanctioning, thus *ex ante* decision-making by his definition aligns with *ex tempore* in the moment accountability by my definition.

Yet others argue that we cannot just have accountability *mechanisms*. A sense of accountability, and adherence to related standards of behavior, is required. As noted, traditional accountability is embedded in a legalistic and public administration-derived worldview. These perspectives emphasize mechanisms. Peter Barberis writes “it may be that highly developed systems of accountability negate the spirit or morality of accountability.”<sup>247</sup> Although it can be argued that norms do not stand alone as harbingers of a more actively-derived accountability, they are needed in a symbiotic balance with mechanisms.

Another idea for active accountability is to conflate the constituent parts of accountability, such as ‘transparency’ or ‘publicity’ or potentially others, with accountability as a whole. Lindberg, as well as Ebrahim and Weisband, and undoubtedly many other academics, would be uncomfortable with the idea of deriving accountability from a couple of its constituent components. Yet I challenge the ideas, put forward in chapter two, which specify that accountability *must* in all instances have the constituent components outlined by these theorists. Arguably, these components were derived from governing contexts that are starkly different from network governance. They are thus not relevant in all cases.

This also ties to the idea of whether we need a ‘hard’ and rigorous accountability regime all the time in all cases, or whether a softer and weaker form of accountability works adequately in certain situations. Network governance would be an obvious example of a situation where there is little ‘hard’ power, but soft power through partnership, negotiation, and joint decision-making. Power becomes diffuse and diluted, and therefore weak and premised upon ‘soft power.’

## 4.3 ACCOUNTABILITY WITHOUT DISTINCT CATEGORIES

### 4.3.1 WHAT IS MEANT BY DISTINCT CATEGORIES

Within networks, there can be a departure from understandings of accountability that rely on categories. By ‘categories’ I refer generally to operationally distinct institutional boundaries, or the parameters of nodal agency, which are so heavily relied

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<sup>247</sup> Barberis, 464.

upon by traditional forms of accountability. These categories define agents who are to give accounts for specific decisions, and related to this, areas of responsibility (or ‘domains of action’) associated with particular agents or groupings of agents. Traditional accountability operates under the assumption that there exist loci of responsibility and clearly differentiated domains of action. In contrast, network governance fragments organizational containers and introduces a variety of rules, standards, and procedures. Based on the extent of integration with a network, this governance form calls into question the boundaries delineating physical entities, as well as conglomerations of interests and identity.

The building blocks of accountability cannot always rely on categories of agency and domains of action. Groupings of frequently interacting agents develop similar structures, processes, norms, and rules. Even actors with diverging interests will come together when they realize that they can share or pool resources in order to govern a particular policy domain. Dependence, interdependence, and finally a form of mutual constitution can result. Nodal identity becomes mutually determined based on the degree and strength of interaction (relationship ties) within a governing network.

Mutual dependence and constitution are characteristics of network governance, and these features demarcate it from other governance neologisms. “Networks develop and exist because of the interdependency between actors,” writes E. H. Klijn.<sup>248</sup> Network governance is premised upon shared knowledge, resources, and episteme. Many scholars argue that networks are best viewed as epistemic communities or advocacy coalitions.<sup>249</sup> This feature is most apparent in a closely connected network with strong relationship-ties and frequent interaction.

As a result, I hypothesize that network governance requires some form of accountability that can exist without clearly differentiated principals and agents. The very use of the term ‘node’ when referencing the networked organizational structure indicates an inability to refer to agents and agency. Node is a more accurate concept.

If actors are mutually constituted, then nodes are knowingly or unknowingly making decisions co-dependently based on the nature, extent, and strength of relationship

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<sup>248</sup> E. H. Klijn, “Policy Networks: An Overview,” in *Managing Complex Networks: Strategies for the Public Sector* eds. W.J.M. Kickert, E.H. Klijn, and J.F.M. Koppenjan (London: Sage, 1997), 31.

<sup>249</sup> Skogstad, “Policy Networks and Policy Communities.”

ties. Agency requires a more substantial degree of autonomy. We cannot speak of networks as autonomous actors coming together to create, implement, or evaluate policy. The implications of this for determining any sort of accountability would include the obvious difficulty in establishing the agent, inability to establish an agent's domain, limitations in tying decision-making responsibility to any agent, among others.

#### 4.3.2 MECHANISMS

Accountability without the operationally distinct categories of 'principals' and 'agents,' and without the parameters delineating designated areas for action, seems like a tricky reality to conceive of. Lindberg tells us about *necessary* requirements for accountability: these include agents or institutions who must give accounts (agent); and area of responsibility for which accounts are to be given (domain); and an agent or institution who is to receive accounts (principals).<sup>250</sup> As my above analysis demonstrates, network governance can negate all of these features. We are challenged to critique Lindberg, and many others, who specify a model of accountability that is derived from past governing paradigms. Many of my proposals for new accountability go against past precedents for ensuring accountability.

So how can accountability be ensured? Lateralized, pluricentric, and interconnected governing forms develop shared understandings of accountability and correlating mechanisms, given the extent of integration. Accepting this, it is at least possible to build a form of accountability within the networked structure even if categories of agency and domains of action become obscured. Resource sharing eventually evolves into a closely cohesive structure. Understandings about what constitutes appropriate conduct and reference to co-defined accountability regimes become common sense or second nature.<sup>251</sup> This end-state of deep integration will be quite implicit. Jarvis and Thomas describe this eventual cohesive end-state as a "submerged cultural world of accountability involving shared assumptions and

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<sup>250</sup> Lindberg, 208.

<sup>251</sup> Jarvis and Thomas, 279.

understandings, informal influences, and implicit bargains that are difficult, if not impossible, to document.”<sup>252</sup>

These ideas about network integration also colour whether they are to be viewed as ‘wholes’ or as conglomerations of autonomous and unique agents. I hypothesize that the network might be placed upon a spectrum with ‘whole’ or ‘diffuse’ as the poles. When the relationship-ties between nodes are tightly woven, the network is more whole. When relationship-ties are weak and nodes do not frequently interact and develop similar structures, processes, norms, and rules, then the network is diffuse. Whole or diffuse here would refer to both structure and also the depth of episteme and shared ethos.

Whether and how shared understandings develop will determine what mechanisms of accountability need to be applied. If a network is something of a isomorphic ‘whole’ with shared rules, ideas, structures, and norms, then it might be said that the network itself is an institution, and accountability must be strengthened through formal agreements, contracts, rules, and standards of performance. Exploring the degree of integration gives us an idea of whom an ‘agent’ is within a governing network – nodes may act independently as agents, or co-dependently to the extent that even the network as a whole ‘governing coalition’ is an agent.

David Marsh and Martin Smith note that structure, rules, ideas, and goals become institutionalized to the extent that they shape the behavior of actor’s within the network.<sup>253</sup> Therefore, the extent of interconnectedness is a significant variable when understanding what accountability arrangements best work within a specific case of network governance. Closer integration will lead to stronger adherence to co-defined structures, rules, ideas, and goals.<sup>254</sup>

These ideas coincide with the neo-institutionalist idea of building a ‘culture’ of accountability. There is potential for alternative frameworks of accountability based on ideational transfer – a network can be an epistemic community.<sup>255</sup> If accountability becomes a ‘value’ that nodes in a closely integrated network all share, and if reporting

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<sup>252</sup> Ibid, 287.

<sup>253</sup> David Marsh and Martin Smith, “Understanding Policy Networks: towards a Dialectical Approach,” *Political Studies* 48 (2000): 5.

<sup>254</sup> Idem.

<sup>255</sup> Klijn and Koppenjan, 143.

mechanisms are simply freely provided communication in real time, there may no longer be need for explicit sanctioning mechanisms. A ‘social’ sanctioning may naturally occur based on expectations. A form of trust may evolve in networks that is derived from repeated interaction and the continued assurance that players “act in the interests of the partnership and do what they say they will do,” write Cosmo Howard and Susan Phillips.<sup>256</sup> I will get ‘back to basics’ for a while here to propound why the extent of network integration is an important factor in building alternative accountability models.

Governing networks lateralize relationships of authority. Elected representatives pass their authority off to administrative entities, as well as to a host of other actors. It is here that network governance wreaks havoc to traditional relations of democratic accountability. Within network governance, resources, information, and capacity, are *shared*. Influence is multidirectional. Pathways of democratic accountability are intricate and difficult to identify, assuming that principles and agents can be delineated at all.<sup>257</sup>

It is a challenge to identify principals and agents because network governance creates a political space that can be actively engaged with by agents other than those democratically elected. We saw this clearly in the three cases explored in chapter three. For example, in the UAS case, community-level organizers can access funding and make decisions regarding funding allocation and what projects to invest in. Decision-making entails a real allocation of power to non-public sector nodes and thus political capacity as well.

Similarly, in the case of the CPAC, federal representatives make decisions *with* other stakeholders on the Board of Directors. This board includes leaders in cancer control, a federal representative, representatives from the Canadian Cancer Society, policy experts, Aboriginal communities and cancer patients, and provincial, territorial and regional appointees. The CPAC in particular is a case where decisions are made co-dependently and thus it is difficult to refer to ‘agents’ and concentrations of responsibility for decisions made.

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<sup>256</sup> Cosmo Howard and Susan Phillips, “Moving Away from Hierarchy: Do Horizontality, Partnerships, and Distributed Governance Really Signify the End of Accountability?” in *From new public management to new political governance: essays in honour of Peter C. Aucoin*, eds. Herman Bakvis and Mark D. Jarvis, (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2012), 334.

<sup>257</sup> R.A.W. Rhodes, “The Hollowing Out of the State: The Changing Nature of the Public Service in Britain,” *Political Quarterly* 65 (1994): 147.



Mutual constitution is a relevant factor in assessing accountability arrangements for network governance. The identities of agents and principals are made unclear, and actors within a network might have no idea as to what their role is. Esmark informs us that “getting decision-makers to assume the role of [agents] is the most basic and simple precondition implied in democratic accountability.”<sup>258</sup> Accepting responsibility and being identifiable as an agent must complement making decisions on behalf of others. Thus, the factor of mutual constitution is an especially tricky aspect when delineating principals and agents.

If the electorate becomes involved in public policymaking and implementation, then it becomes both a principal and an agent. In the traditional accountability relationship, the electorate is never an agent. This does not mean that there cannot be an accountability relationship within such a network, but rather that we need to think hard about the value of distinguishing between agents and principals. Are principals and agents necessary for an accountability relationship? The answer may be more nuanced, for example, it may be that principals are at some moments in time agents, and at other times principals based on circumstance. Traditional accountability relies on specified domains of action, and actors to be designated as either principals or agents, and the associated allocation of power therein. Administrative arms of government are supposed to be non-actors.<sup>259</sup> They are not supposed to be politicized through having real power to the ability to impact decision-making. As seen in the cases of the UAS, the HPS, and CPAC, the supposedly nonpolitical nodes actually do have real decision-making power and are thus politicized.

State-society distinctions are another crucial element in many conventional interpretations of democratic accountability within the liberal doctrine. Earlier in this thesis, Sørensen was cited warning that network governance challenges the institutional separation of state and society. In large and complex societies, direct democracy is put aside in favour of representative forms. Power is allocated by the majority to a fraction of society on the basis of equal representation, and the liberty of civil society.<sup>260</sup> The realm

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<sup>258</sup> Esmark, 282.

<sup>259</sup> Sørensen, 694.

<sup>260</sup> Idem.

of representative democracy is minimized to maximize space for citizens to decide for themselves in a self-governing society.<sup>261</sup> This distinction is integral for democratic accountability – an idea entrenched in the liberal democratic doctrine. Representatives must be identifiable, their actions must be transparent and measurable, and they must answer to their electorate for actions, election promises, and so forth. Yet based on the above discussion, it is clear that network governance also blurs the lines dividing state and society in involving ‘society’ in decision-making, and in embedding the state in networks of societal actors.

#### 4.3.3 HOW IT DIFFERS FROM TRADITIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability without operationally distinct categories is a substantial departure from traditional accountability. Of particular concern considering the resilience of traditional accountability, network governance calls into question what nodes within a network are agents and which are principals through patterns of repeated multidirectional interaction. Further, having principals and agents could be considered a foundational requirement for accountability. As Lindberg has informed us, these identities are crucial in determining accountability relationships.

Who are the principals in cases of network governance? Networks involve civil society representatives. For instance, individual citizens, experts, lobbyists, interest groups, and NGO’s are frequently incorporated in the policymaking and implementation process. Several representatives of the electorate (principals) are then made to be agents. In the case of the CPAC, medical experts are technically acting on behalf of politically delegated mandates to serve the Canadian public, yet members of the CPAC medical community are *also* citizens. Here we have a principal-agent overlap, and things become quite complicated.

Within the literature this kind of thinking spirals off into considerations of direct democracy and the preferential treatment of certain stakeholders. My use of these ideas here is to demonstrate how the traditional accountability relationship becomes disjointed. Network governance introduces a variety of supposedly non-political actors who then

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<sup>261</sup> Ibid, 701.

have significant say in policymaking and implementing processes. It becomes difficult to identify exactly what node, or group of nodes, may be responsible for any particular decision. Any approach to accountability that relies on loci of responsibility and clearly differentiated domains of action is limited in its applications to network governance.

In traditional accountability relationships, agents are accountable to principals. The accountability regime is premised upon a relatively simple unidirectional relationship. In relationships of democratic accountability, the citizenry is the principal. Assuming that democratic mechanisms are operating properly, the choices of the electorate will be conglomerated and conferred to elected representatives. Those elected (agents) are then accountable to the electorate (principals) for decisions made.

Who are agents in cases of network governance? As the above discussion indicates, there is not a clear answer to this question. The liberal perspective emphasizes elected representatives as agents, however the networked policymaking and implementation process delegates this agency and disperses it broadly. Through conventional delegation in the *government* paradigm, a chain of principles and agents is formed. Those elected are unable to fulfill all of the requisite tasks of policymaking and implementing, and as a result they confer their agency and capacity to administrative entities. “Government deems itself unable to muster all the technical and scientific expertise necessary,” elaborate Héritier and Lehmkuhl.<sup>262</sup> The citizenry is *not* an agent within the traditional democratic accountability relationship. Elected representatives are the agent, but they can allocate their agency down accountability chains (through the minister, deputy minister, public servants, and so forth). Clearly, there is no clear chain of action in a governance network – relationships are complex, lateralized, and pluricentric.

#### 4.3.4 STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Decision-making in many of chapter three’s case studies relates to ‘cooperative’ or joint decision-making, but it is unclear that audit processes capture the manifold agents involved in coming to a decision, and in acting upon this decision. It is difficult to identify a locus of responsibility. In addition, I had difficulty identifying the processes of

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<sup>262</sup> Héritier and Lehmkuhl, 132.

mutual constitution that many scholars posit occurs in networks. This lack of evidence does not necessarily mean that the blending of agents, and of principal-agent divides, is not happening, but that existing reporting and audit methods do not capture these relationships. There is a problem with measuring the empirical evidence that would support a change towards accountability without operationally distinct containers. Although this is a thread within the literature, its uptake into praxis will likely be slowed due to our inability to thoroughly capture and understand ‘mutual constitution’ or the blending of principals and agents, among related features.

In addition, our ability to apply neo-institutionalist ideas of a ‘culture of accountability’ or ‘accountability through shared episteme’ are limited by the possibility that networks will actually be diffuse and uncoordinated, and may not greatly exchange knowledge as a common resource. When we view democratic accountability narrowly as a function of representative democracy whereby direct unidirectional paths between electorate, representative, minister, public servants, are maintained, weaker relationship ties and a less concrete structure might make neo-institutionalist approaches to creating accountability regimes irrelevant.

#### 4.4 HORIZONTAL, MULTIDIRECTIONAL, AND RECIPROCAL

The power arrangements in network governance demand that accountability frameworks be different from traditional accountability. Structures and processes connecting agents and principals are increasingly stratified, and traditional hierarchic and unidirectional forms of accountability apply less easily. I argue that the ‘direction’ of an accountability relationship is a critical way of sketching an alternative arrangement to suit networks. This line of argumentation follows the work of Lindberg, as well as Schedler who posit that the *spatial direction* of relationships is a significant factor in distinguishing different forms of accountability.<sup>263</sup> Accountability relationships can be vertical (top-down/hierarchical or bottom-up), horizontal, multidirectional, or even reciprocal.

But first, what do I mean by ‘directional orientation’ and why can it be used to talk about structural arrangements for accountability? Can we even imagine the spatial or

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<sup>263</sup> Lindberg, 21; and see Schedler, “Conceptualizing Accountability,” throughout.

directional orientations of concepts? It is arguable that as democratic accountability has a distinctly tangible nature (it regards *mechanisms*) and thus a structure, it might be said to have some sort of orientation. I find that imagining the directional orientation of these ideas provides a heuristic for actual structural accessories, and as a result I can better theorize new frameworks for accountability.

#### 4.4.1 HORIZONTAL ACCOUNTABILITY

By ‘horizontal’ I refer to a relatively equal playing field where agents interact willingly and are provided with mutual benefits in participating in a network. Agents benefit through sharing resources such as information, professional capacity, values, norms, and conventions. Horizontalism requires agents to be, or act as, equal partners.

Networks are structurally lateralized. This occurs through resource exchange, reciprocity, shared knowledge, as well as more intangible features such as trust and cooperation. Structural form can be coupled with complementing form of accountability. “Horizontal accountability operates largely through mutual communication, professional and collective values, and norms and conventions,” write Howard and Phillips.<sup>264</sup> This implicates several other ideas which throw complexity into determining accountability. For instance, horizontality coincides with the factor of mutual interdependence as well as constitution. Relationships are not premised upon ‘superior to subservient’ hierarchy, but rather ‘agent-to-agent’ cooperation, exchange, and joint decision-making. Nodes share and disperse resources to the extent that it becomes unclear as to the direction or ordering of influence.

It also becomes problematic to use words such as ‘agent’ and refer to agency when relations are interdependent and when identities are shared. Rules and oversight cannot be imposed in a ‘top-down’ way, as this is not to the mutual benefit of all involved. Agents have their own rule preferences. Howard and Phillips observe that given the array of partners in a network, “while rules are useful in horizontal management, they

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<sup>264</sup> Howard and Phillips, “Moving away from Hierarchy,” 334.

need to be more adaptable and broadly applicable.”<sup>265</sup> The will of individual agents is reduced.

Relationship ties are founded upon information exchange and persuasion, thus accountability is premised upon intersubjective knowledge. The idea of collaboration suits horizontal organizational forms in that there is an underlying idea of dialogue and equal partnership. Further, a horizontal or multidirectional form of accountability suggests the needs for a collective identity whereby nodal components are committed to ensuring and promoting the needs of the whole. Standards of accountability are followed for reasons beyond rules, for example, due to the neo-institutionalist ideas of cohesion or collective ethos. An example of horizontal accountability is ‘peer accountability.’ Peer accountability is prolific within networks.<sup>266</sup> Peer forms of accountability are based on mechanisms such as mutual monitoring, soft power, persuasion, and negotiation. Peer accountability is horizontal in its agent-to-agent orientation.

How does horizontal accountability relate to *democratic* accountability? Democratic accountability, a component of political accountability, relies on unidirectional relationship-ties between the elected (agents) and the electors (principals). It is also bolstered through administrative accountability: civil servants are accountable *to* political entities. Again, these relationships are unidirectional and depend on the ‘chain’ of accountability discussed in chapters one and two.

Can horizontal accountability work *with* existing forms of accountability? In regards to the ability for the horizontality of networks to operate with top-down hierarchic control, Goldsmith and Egger’s note that the “two approaches often clash.”<sup>267</sup> Further, it is unclear as to how horizontal ‘democracy’ might work, especially in regards to maintaining ministerial responsibility. As I earlier noted, the structures and processes of the liberal democratic state, even in Canada, operate within hierarchical confines. Thomas Schillemans claims that horizontal accountability differs from democratic control through ministerial responsibility.<sup>268</sup> This is a significant problem.

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<sup>265</sup> Ibid, 322.

<sup>266</sup> Papadopolous, 480.

<sup>267</sup> Goldsmith and Eggers, 22.

<sup>268</sup> T. Schillemans, “Accountability in the shadow of hierarchy: The horizontal accountability of agencies,” *Public Organization Review* 8 (2008): 190.

Yet some scholars suggest that a ‘shadow of hierarchy’ ameliorates democratic tensions. The shadow of hierarchy thesis asserts that ‘top-down’ ministerial control of lateralized networks guarantees democratic accountability. I later conclude this section with a discussion of the ‘shadow of hierarchy’ thesis. If strong, this thesis would partly call into question much of my own argument. In my defence, I propose that the shadow of hierarchy thesis can be interpreted as an end of a spectrum of state control of networks. Weaker state control of networks requires a new form of accountability that might be based on a more horizontal and multidirectional orientation, and tied through accountability based on peer review, ethos, intersubjectivity, among other features.

#### 4.4.2 MULTIDIRECTIONAL

I have extensively covered accountability in a hierarchical ‘top-down’ orientation. However, vertical accountability can also have a ‘bottom-up’ orientation – for example, when shareholders hold business executives to account for a company’s performance.<sup>269</sup> This can also be seen in network governance. The assumption of ‘partnership’ and players coming together on an equal playing field lends to the assumption that non-public members of a particular network can hold government to account for not participating with them.

For example, in the case of the Toronto UAS, Nguyen found that members felt that the government should be accountable *to* them. For example, the government should be forthcoming with information about funding decisions – “the federal government...is very quiet and doesn’t say anything. There is no transparency,” one UAS member said in an interview.<sup>270</sup> This differs substantially from the bureaucratic idea of political bodies delegating authority to subsidiaries, who then are held to account by political avenues such as Parliament and the courts. “When politicians hold bureaucracies and their leaders accountable... the accountability relationship runs downwards in a vertical fashion,” observes Lindberg.<sup>271</sup> Thus, both ‘bottom-up’ and ‘top-down’ vertical accountability

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<sup>269</sup> Lindberg, 212.

<sup>270</sup> Nguyen, 17.

<sup>271</sup> Lindberg, 212.

forms are possible, and could hypothetically be apparent within the same accountability regime. But what about vertical and horizontal arrangements?

The idea that vertical and horizontal arrangements are always in tension is questionable. A mixture of vertical and horizontal accountability frameworks might be applied based on an ability to delineate where and how these different forms are needed. Cosmo Howard and Susan Phillips agree with this, and suggest that vertical forms of accountability are often integral in planning and improving upon horizontal mechanisms, but at times “contemporary Canadian incarnations of hierarchical accountability, particularly using the instruments of rules and oversight, are smothering experimentation with new forms of horizontal accountability.”<sup>272</sup> Similarly, to appease Schillemans’ contention that horizontal accountability is *not* the same as ministerial control and responsibility, a hierarchical form of accountability might be used specifically for this purpose. Horizontal accountability could be apparent for other purposes, such as in mediating agent-to-agent resource exchange and pooling within a network.

Although the continuation of more traditional forms of accountability can be accepted, and in some cases they work in tandem with alternative frameworks, this does not negate my argument that scholars need to round out alternative accountability frameworks. Much of this analysis also supports my next point. Accountability in network governance has the unique potential to have a *reciprocal* orientation.

#### 4.4.3 RECIPROCAL

Networks are premised upon resource exchange and pooling. Another way to think of these resources (time, money, expertise, experience) is that they serve as instruments for decision-making and action. They enable manifestations of real power. Thus, if resources are being exchanged, so is power. And, as accountability is a corollary to power, it is possible to also think of it as an item that can be exchanged with reciprocity.

Reciprocal accountability is seen in Robert Behn’s idea of “360 degree” compacts between a multitude of collaborative agencies that share a sort of “mutual collective

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<sup>272</sup> Howard and Phillips, “Moving away from Hierarchy,” 316.



accountability.”<sup>273</sup> For example, in intricate and complex professional relationships, Behn specifically references “trust” and “friendship” as features that develop over time when actors continuously interact, and provide implicit peer watchdog and review functions.<sup>274</sup> Relationships are not competitive, but based upon mutual trust and collaboration. Behn also notes that these relationships can be horizontal and agent-to-agent (such as in professional relationships), or vertical. Superiors could be accountable to subordinates, and subordinates could be accountable to superiors.<sup>275</sup> Clearly then, Behn’s thinking has a strong normative foundation. Similarly, this departs from the idea seen in ‘traditional accountability’ whereby agents cannot be trusted and must be watched, and must have sanctions imposed upon them.

Another proposal for a form of reciprocal accountability is Harlow and Rawling’s idea of ‘accountability networks.’ In accountability networks, agencies specializing in accountability come together to share professional expertise and ethos.<sup>276</sup> An ‘accountability network’ (within a network) would serve as a watchdog ensuring the network as a whole conforms to certain standards of account giving. A major function of such accountability networks is in disseminating information, promoting best practices, and more generally serving educational functions.<sup>277</sup> This might be taken to suggest, more generally, the trend towards information-based coordinating networks that might also serve functions in promoting networked accountability.

#### 4.4.4 HOW IT DIFFERS FROM WHAT WE HAVE NOW

Network governance challenges the traditional image of the state standing above governing processes, and thus being able to impose accountability arrangements and demand that accounts be made.<sup>278</sup> The processes within the network are complex and based on resource exchange and pooling. It is unclear as to whether the network can be

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<sup>273</sup> Robert Behn, *Rethinking Democratic Accountability*, (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2001), 120-135.

<sup>274</sup> Ibid, 161.

<sup>275</sup> Ibid, 98.

<sup>276</sup> Harlow and Rawlings, 560.

<sup>277</sup> Ibid, 561.

<sup>278</sup> Kickert et al., 3.

seen as a ‘whole’ locus of responsibility from which government can demand accounts. Therefore the traditional chain of accountability is *not* satisfactory as the sole accountability mechanism in network governance.

Because accountability is a corollary to power, it is important to ask questions such as: what does political power look like in network governance? Networks present an entirely different arrangement from prior governing models. It may be difficult to understand how political legitimacy and authority is laterally dispersed within a network. To envision the spatial orientation of power, I often think of a sort of pyramid or ladder. Power is commonly interpreted to be a vertical idea, and such conceptual orientations easily transfer to accountability as a sort of ‘corollary’ to power. Yet hierarchical and unidirectional chains of accountability do not work in networks precisely because of the structural arrangement and delegation of authority within networks. Accountability is *not* a corollary to control, because networks are not about imposing control. Accountability is *not* a corollary to non-negotiable political authority, as authority is negotiable, shared, and interdependent.

As noted in chapter one, networks envelop a relatively equal and interconnected partnership among actors. Governing strategies are not imposed ‘orders from the top’ to be met with detailed reports and accounts, but are instead based on public-private partnerships, episteme and trust, dialogue and consultative committees, and inter-organizational linkages. As noted, we know a lot about the types of ‘accounts’ that are unidirectionally provided through the accountability chain seen in traditional relationships, but little about how these new relationships are to be tied to accountability.

How *exactly* does political legitimacy and authority become dispersed within a network? I ask this question as it feeds directly into how accountability manifests. Networks are created through the use of special-purpose bodies and contracted-out services.<sup>279</sup> When government contracts out a service, it must retain a relationship tie to the service-provider. This creates a two-way network. Service providers may, in part, have relationship ties with a number of other intermediaries, suppliers, contractors, consultants, clients, and so on. This creates a *web* of vertical, horizontal, informal and formal, and multidirectional accountability ties.

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<sup>279</sup> Rhodes, 64.

According to Klijn and Koppenjan, governance through networks, “takes into account the interdependencies of public, private, and semi-private actors.”<sup>280</sup> Interdependence refers to the more symmetrical relationship among nodes. Network governance includes all input and advisory mechanisms that are related to the policymaking process – from elected public officials in centralized seats of power, to the most tangentially connected citizens. All kinds of actors have input, and may affect real policy outcomes.<sup>281</sup> It is easy to understand why hierarchy does not easily apply. Network governance entails a degree of autonomy among nodes that shirks even the ‘steering’ delegated to the governance paradigm. Similarly, we saw in many of the cases discussed in chapter three that government is *part* of the network. In the UAS, the government at all levels is supposed to make decisions jointly with non-government members. “Integrated networks resist government steering, develop their own policies and mould their environments,” writes Rhodes.<sup>282</sup>

I can conclude that accountability cannot be stringently hierarchical within a networked organizational form. Forms and norms of democratic accountability that ascended within hierarchical contexts are deeply challenged.<sup>283</sup> Consider that networks tend to involve local-level experts or interest groups. Decision-making is devolved to those closest to actual policy implementation. “Hierarchical and prescriptive accountability mechanisms do not provide the flexibility require to develop policy and to adjust service delivery to meet changing circumstances or local realities,” write Ian Green, Katherine Baird, and Kate Fawkes.<sup>284</sup>

And what about *democratic* accountability? Networks, as a whole, claim a degree of autonomy from government that calls into question their relationship with it, and thus this jeopardizes their relationship to democratic mechanisms for accountability to a set electorate. However, it should be noted that to maintain their status as ‘network *governance*,’ networks must maintain a relatively strong relationship tie to government actors and institutions. Government actors and institutions are elected, appointed, and

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<sup>280</sup> Klijn and Koppenjan, 136.

<sup>281</sup> Kickert et al., 2.

<sup>282</sup> Rhodes, 64.

<sup>283</sup> Acar and Robertson, 332.

<sup>284</sup> Ian Green, Katherine Baird, and Kate Fawkes, *Canada’s Public Service in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, (Ottawa: Public Policy Forum, 2007), 3.

built on a variety of mechanisms ensuring public input and responsibility to public needs. Thus, should a governing network retain a strong bond to its ministerial counterpart, it might be said that democratic accountability is strong. However, should a level of autonomy be reached where this relationship tie becomes brittle, democratic accountability is jeopardized.

#### 4.4.5 LIMITATIONS OF THIS MODEL

Multidirectional accountability may be limited in the sense that the question of ‘is it needed?’ or ‘in what circumstances is it needed?’ remains open. There is debate about the nature of the metamorphosis from hierarchical, bureaucratic, and unitary government towards horizontally organized, fragmented, and self-regulatory network governance. The ‘shift’ may be a complete paradigmatic change. Or, the other side of the debate posits that networks are one additional mode of governing, in combination with hierarchy and markets.<sup>285</sup> Another perspective is that the above transformation will occur to an extent, but networks will not subsume prior modes of governing, but compliment them. And, as I have argued that accountability follows governing form, a transformation in accountability model may be equally unnecessary. Existing ones may be adequate as the ‘degree of change’ in governing form is unsubstantial, *or* slight alterations complimenting existing accountability regimes may suffice.

Let’s return to this idea of the ‘degree’ of transition in governing form. Writing in 1994, Fritz W. Scharpf is credited with recognizing that most political systems in Western industrialized countries will employ a mixture of lateralized *and* hierarchical modes of governing. These more lateralized forms will govern “in the shadow of hierarchy.”<sup>286</sup> It is frequently argued that horizontal organizational structures, such as networks, operate within the shadow of hierarchy. To illustrate, consider that ministers can influence decentralized decision-making without active personal influence, and without even knowing that they are influencing decisions.<sup>287</sup> For example, networked nodes might

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<sup>285</sup> Sørensen, 694.

<sup>286</sup> Fritz W. Scharpf, “Games real actors could play: Positive and negative coordination in embedded negotiations,” *Journal of Theoretical Political* 6 (1994), 37

<sup>287</sup> Schillemans, 190.

anticipate that government will audit them, and thus they will make decisions that government will favour in order to secure future funding and support. Therefore, network governance does not represent a startling departure from more traditional government schemes, and thus associated forms of democratic accountability need not be significantly altered. The goings-on within a network are often subject to state approval.<sup>288</sup>

If this thesis is correct, then the transition from hierarchical and state-centric governing to more diffuse and disjointed forms may not be as acute as I have argued. If so, this also would entail that ‘new accountabilities’ are less needed. However, I interpret this thesis as a point on a spectrum of state control of networks. The ‘shadow of hierarchy’ thesis merely sits at one end where a strong democratic anchorage ensures parliamentary oversight and thus accountability for networked decisions. Whether the ‘shadow of hierarchy’ thesis is applicable, then, is an empirical question: to what extent can the state hierarchically mediate relations within a network? As my cases have indicated, as well as numerous evidence taken from the literature throughout this thesis, network governance most often creates a substantial break from state control and oversight.

My own view is that hierarchical, horizontal, multidirectional, and reciprocal accountability are often needed in concert and in different degrees based on the type of organizational form. Jacob Torfing and Peter Triantafillou also hold this view, writing that “interactive forms of governance are both supplementing and supplanting traditional forms of governance through hierarchical government and competitive markets.”<sup>289</sup> Rather than interpreting this as a ‘black or white’ situation, there are diverse types of accountability that can be customized to the organizational form at hand.

But what about *democratic* accountability? Are hierarchical and unidirectional structures and processes of governing better in ensuring the maintenance of a strong democratic state? Horizontal accountability may fundamentally clash with aspects of democratic accountability such – for instance, with the principle of ministerial responsibility. It clashes with the clear unidirectional chain between citizen and parliamentarian. Acar and Robertson agree that this is an issue warranting further

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<sup>288</sup> Papadopoulos, 471.

<sup>289</sup> Jacob Torfing and Peter Triantafillou, *Interactive Policy Making, Metagovernance, and Democracy*, (Colchester: ECPR Press, 2013), 1.

consideration, and question where political power and authority ends up in the processes of lateralizing governance. They offer that formal processes (such as democratic elections) must be balanced with more informal processes of determining accountability (relational aspects of partnership and collaboration).<sup>290</sup>

But again, the question of what type of accountability best serves democracy remains open. If political power lateralizes and becomes spread out in tandem with the lateralizing of service provision, then how could democratic accountability be maintained? Systems of patterns and values that determine the rules under which public officials operate, the nature of decision-making, and the identity of those actors with access to particular policy domains, can be tailored to the needs of empirical reality.<sup>291</sup>

My final contribution to this discussion of potential new accountability models is that *one model of accountability is insufficient* within networks. This is an obvious extension from the above argument that there can exist hierarchical, horizontal, reciprocal, or multidirectional forms of accountability. I argue that ‘multiple accountabilities’ is a necessary feature in cases of network governance.

#### 4.5 MULTIPLE ACCOUNTABILITIES

Network governance is frequently heralded as a boon for the democratic project because it integrates a broad variety of actors. This harks to somewhat over-idealized ideas of participatory democracy and plural access to the levers of political power. Networks allow a multiplicity of diverse actors “access to influence, exchange of resources, playing by the same rules, flows of information, flexibility, reciprocity, diplomacy, responsiveness to pressure and ability to open up in response to pressure,” write Greenaway et al.<sup>292</sup> Sørensen and Torfing add that “networked policy output is a contingent result of negotiated interaction between a plurality of interdependent, and yet operationally autonomous, actors.”<sup>293</sup> Yet if each actor brings a set of standards and rules of action to the table, what does this mean for accountability?

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<sup>290</sup> Acar and Robertson, 342.

<sup>291</sup> Schmitter and Karl, 76.

<sup>292</sup> Greenaway et al., 719.

<sup>293</sup> Sørensen and Torfing, “Theoretical Approaches to Governance Network Dynamics,” 25.

#### 4.5.1 WHAT IS MEANT BY ‘MULTIPLE ACCOUNTABILITIES’?

In this section I will outline some of the compulsory attributes of multiple accountabilities, how this idea can be applied, and potential weaknesses of this approach. By multiple accountabilities I refer to different standards, mechanisms, and enforcement strategies for accountability within a governance network. There are various and variable interpretations of what would be required to install democratic accountability mechanisms within governance networks. The literature contains “wildly differing traditions” Kickert et al. write.<sup>294</sup> Multiple accountabilities, or ‘pluralistic accountability’ entails applying common principles and benchmarks of public accountability in different contexts, and tailoring them to the structural form at hand.<sup>295</sup>

The idea of multiple accountabilities requires working with the situation at hand to apply accountability’s mechanical characteristics - transparency, answerability, compliance, and enforcement or sanctions. To illustrate, Lindberg outlines the right of the principal to sanction the agent, if the agent fails to perform his or her duties, or properly explain decisions with regard to a particular domain.<sup>296</sup> Within the liberal democratic doctrine, this principle could be electors using the ballot box as a sanctioning mechanism. Candidate competition for political office will weed out those political actors who do not act as representatives to their electorate. In social contexts, if you lend someone money to buy coffee on your behalf, and they inexcusably instead buy themselves lunch with this money, you might impose social sanctioning mechanisms such as expressing anger towards them. The point here is that multiple accountabilities works with the situation at hand, and mechanisms are flexible and diverse.

#### 4.5.2 MECHANISMS

In networks like those explored through the cases of the UAS, the HPS, and the CPAC in chapter three, I assume that there are at least three forms of accountability at

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<sup>294</sup> Kickert et al., 2.

<sup>295</sup> Lisa Jordan and Peter van Tuijl, eds. *NGO Accountability: Politics, Principles, and Innovations*, (London: Earthscan, 2006), 5.

<sup>296</sup> Lindberg, 209.

play. For one, there is the internal accountability of each node. Organizations, individuals, departments, think-tanks, private businesses, and others involved in a network all have their own accountability arrangements. These will usually be based on industry standards. Each participating node has its own institutionalized accountability regime, and then in joining a network each node succumbs to these more ‘networked’ requirements for accountability. Yet, other nodes must also accept the arrangements of those nodes they are partnered with.

Second, there is the node-to-node *horizontal* accountability within a network. Networks are valuable because they provide resource exchanges, or resource pooling, yet nodes must be accountable to other nodes for how they use such resources. Horizontal accountability, as overviewed, could entail any variety of mechanisms. A good example is the case of the CPAC explored in chapter three, where information transfer and coordinated action occur in real time through a high degree of transparency. If nodes can always see what other nodes are doing, and are informed, this creates a culture of accountability.

Lastly, we know there must be some sort of accountability tie to public entities in order to make the network a *governance* network, and further, to qualify accountability as *democratic* this tie must somehow extend to the electorate. Here we see a reliance on legalistic and Parliamentary avenues of accountability, and what I have labeled as traditional accountability. These forms may be sufficient in ensuring this particular tie between principals and agents, but as the last two paragraphs have explained – networks require additional forms of accountability.

Network governance frequently lacks the defined administrative hierarchy previously relied upon to determine accountability. Using just one form of accountability may not adequately tie diffuse nodes to the electorate. It is necessary to weave multiple types of accountability into a governance network.

#### 4.5.3 HOW IT DIFFERS FROM TRADITIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Traditional accountability is essentially a set model in that it prescribes elements that must be apparent for a true case of ‘accountability.’ This model of accountability thrives within a specific structural arrangement, commonly associated with *government*. I



have also overviewed how it operates within the liberal democratic doctrine that relies on legalistic and Parliamentary levers of control. Traditional accountability also assumes the political-administrative division of labour.

The idea of multiple accountabilities recognizes and confronts head-on the significant structural changes posed by networks. Structural changes require ideational changes in how we understand governance processes and how they might be democratically qualified. Accepting these structural changes, and the diversity of actors, domains of action, types of labour, and so forth, it becomes difficult to apply one accountability model.

But what does this inclusion of so many actors entail for accountability? Due to many nodes, with their own accountability arrangements, relationships between nodes, *and* the relationship of network ‘as a whole’ to principals, it is an obvious conclusion that *one model of accountability is insufficient in network governance*. Given a broad variety of actors involved in delivering public services, Scott writes that there are:

dense networks of accountability associated with both public and private actors concerned with the delivery of public services. Traditional accountability mechanisms are part, but only part of these complex networks, which have the potential to ensure that service providers may be effectively required to account for their activities.<sup>297</sup>

The problem, Scott argues, is that we continue to bolster and rely upon these traditional mechanisms, assuming a “linear and partial view” of accountability premised upon Parliament and the courts.<sup>298</sup> Multiple accountabilities should be more thoroughly understood and refined.

#### 4.5.4 STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Multiple accountabilities appears to be a useful idea. Both scholars and practitioners of networks, interorganizational collaboration, and public-private

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<sup>297</sup> Scott, 39.

<sup>298</sup> Idem.

partnerships, are willing to accept the idea of multiple standards of accountability.<sup>299</sup> Kickert et al. observe the need for multiple new forms of accountability, and in many different forums.<sup>300</sup> Mulgan suggests that no single framework for accountability is universally applicable.<sup>301</sup> Jarvis and Thomas write “when the political system and administrative apparatus involve so many different functions and relationships, there is no perfect and enduring structure of accountability,” and thus, we need a variety of forms and norms.<sup>302</sup> We saw this inapplicability of just one accountability model in the case of traditional accountability. These understandings of accountability are based more on historical happenstance rather than logical planning. Acar and Robertson also write that new forms of governance are, “born out of necessity,” and require “the cooperation and collaboration of others in their task environments but not necessarily in their organizational boundaries.”<sup>303</sup>

The idea of multiple accountabilities also has weaknesses. Based on the nature of collaboration, and what accountability arrangements pre-exist within and between the numerous nodes involved, there could be a detrimental overlap of mechanisms. Redundancy is a very realistic possibility, despite the fact that the purpose of network governance is to coordinate among nodes. There could be a disjointed interplay of several accountability frameworks.

Paul Thomas refers to this idea as multiple accountabilities disorder (MAD).<sup>304</sup> The fallout of MAD includes preventing disclosure and honest dialogue, institutionalizing distrust between elected and appointed officials, and restricting autonomy, creativity, innovation, and flexibility.<sup>305</sup> Papadopolous adds that multiple accountability mechanisms leads to a ‘competence mix’ whereby new accountability problems *are created* and not

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<sup>299</sup> Acar and Robertson, 331.

<sup>300</sup> Kickert, et al., xiv.

<sup>301</sup> Richard Mulgan, *Holding Power to Account: Accountability in Modern Democracies*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), throughout.

<sup>302</sup> Jarvis and Thomas, 287.

<sup>303</sup> Acar and Robertson, 334.

<sup>304</sup> Paul Thomas, “The Crisis of Trust in Government: Rhetoric or Reality?” (paper presented at the Public Policy Forum Breakfast Series, Ottawa, March 29, 2007), 5.

<sup>305</sup> Jarvis and Thomas, 291

solved – for example, one problem being the dilution of responsibility due to too many nodes.<sup>306</sup>

Jarvis and Thomas warn that, “particularly in an era of “joined up” and “networked” government, it is conceivable that there can be examples of both too little and too much accountability.”<sup>307</sup> A public official might spend too large a portion of his or her time filling out paperwork, preparing for audits, and writing detailed reports. This might distract from more pressing matters. Another fallout is the possibility that too many actors within a network will actually dilute responsibility. This can occur even if each actor is connected to accountability mechanisms. Papadopolous refers to this as the ‘problem of many hands’ or the ‘paradox of shared responsibility’ whereby multi-centric decision-making confuses the origins of decisions made, thus agents are difficult to discern, principals have difficulty holding them to account, and so on.<sup>308</sup> This problem occurs regardless of whether there is one or many typologies of accountability in play – it is simply a symptom of the networked organizational structure.

Another problem with multiple accountabilities is that ‘to whom’ agents are accountable becomes questionable. Due to the unique agent-to-agent horizontal power relations within networks, premised upon resource sharing or pooling, there has to be some sort of lateral accountability relationship. This will over-emphasize ties *within* the network, and not properly connect it to political and electorate principals – assuming these other actors can be differentiated. And I would argue that they rarely can be differentiated. Political actors are embedded within the network.

In addition, the barriers separating the network from those whom it serves are porous. As an example of this agent-to-agent horizontal accountability, elected representatives may form relationships with fellow network members in addition to those they already have with their constituencies.<sup>309</sup> This is not democratic accountability.

This issue of ‘what constitutes a relationship of democratic accountability’ is perhaps the most important limitation of multiple accountabilities. Here we find several red flag issues: the political legitimacy of nodes within the network and the associated

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<sup>306</sup> Papadopolous, 479.

<sup>307</sup> Jarvis and Thomas, 281.

<sup>308</sup> Papadopoulos, 473.

<sup>309</sup> Esmark, 278.

value of their internal accountability mechanisms; accountability relationships with other nodes; and the ability for the network to interact with the bigger picture of governing and democratic legitimacy through network-wide accountability arrangements.

It is unclear that introducing ‘multiple accountabilities’ in the sense that the actors might have their own mechanisms and benchmarks solves the fundamental problem of whom these actors are, and why they have legitimate jurisdiction to make decisions and act within a network. Papadopolous writes that:

Network governance increases the number of actors who are involved in the policy process without being democratically authorized *ex ante*, and without being subject to democratic control *ex post*. It therefore amplifies the fictitious character of political responsibility.<sup>310</sup>

Actors who have not been given democratically legitimate decision-making powers come to hold real power to make such decisions, and similarly, after the fact there are scarce mechanisms by which to hold these actors to account. Networks entail a blending of both democratically legitimate *and* democratically illegitimate nodes in governing, often to the deterioration of the former’s authority and ability to demand that accounts be made.

## 4.6 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

In altering accountability relationships, and in adding additional ones, are we also altering democracy? The answer is *yes*. The need to ask these big-picture questions is seen in trends such as the allocation of decision-making power to unelected technocrats under the assumption of expertise, or delegation of governance to the ‘frontlines’ of governance where society-state boundaries lie. This also corresponds to an increase in ‘soft power’ in network governance: power becomes dispersed and diluted, thus is accountability necessarily weaker? I have focused on network governance from the angle of democratic accountability – my major focus has been on accountability from a political perspective, and a minor focus has been allocated to more technical and mechanistic features of accountability.

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<sup>310</sup> Papadopolous, 476.

An active stance in creating accountability within networks needs to be undertaken. In addition, the deeper theoretical questions suggested in this thesis should be proactively addressed. For example, where does authority lie in network governance? If the answer to this question is that authority *should* still remain in the hands of public actors, then a new form of control and authority must also be arranged.

A locus of power, with the capacity to demand accounts and impose rules for accountability, must find a way to ‘impose’ itself among relatively equal players. For instance, the Canadian federal government might be able to better preserve democratic accountability as an integrator of networks. It could do this precisely because it has formal authority backed through traditional electoral mechanisms to do so. I have argued that networks are largely inevitable. However, this does not mean that all levels of government will not be able to mediate the encroachment of network structures, and *actively* build accountability arrangements within them. I discuss this line of thought further in chapter five.

Due to many nodes, with their own accountability arrangements, relationships between nodes, and relationship of network as a whole to principals (e.g. electorate), it is an obvious conclusion that one model of accountability is insufficient in network governance. This is not to say that any one solution that I have offered will suffice. Further, I recognize that there is obvious overlap in these new accountabilities, and they blend into one another and are often mutually reinforcing. The ideas for ‘new accountability’ that I have presented here enable a broadening of thinking about accountability, and are intended to inform real solutions to the problem my thesis addresses.

Canadian scholars and practitioners can embrace the idea that accountability is not set in stone. I do not propose that all of these new forms of accountability are ‘better’ than hierarchical, bureaucratic, or unidirectional forms in all instances. These new accountabilities need not contradict and/or override traditional forms, but might supplement them. The alternatives explored above join the roster of interpretations of accountability, and their associated mechanisms, which might best suit instances of networked governance and other new governing forms. A proclivity towards accepting

dynamism and learning breathes life into new forms of accountability and ultimately revitalizes liberal democratic thinking.

## CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS

This chapter provides analysis of themes introduced throughout my thesis. Key ideas are tied together, and gaps in the discussion so far are addressed. I begin with an analysis of the cases presented in chapter three, and I then connect this to analysis of ideas introduced in chapter four. This serves to reveal *how* new accountabilities might be applied, *what* specific models and mechanisms are required given different cases of network governance, and lastly *who*, or what specific entity, has the power to ensure that accountability regimes are apparent given that government must be, or act as, an equal and embedded actor. This analysis goes back to my initial remarks in chapters one and two about state-society distinctions and the shifting role of government. I lastly introduce ‘metagovernance’ – a concept that describes an embedded and process-based oversight of network governance.

### 5.1 CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

Going back to chapter three, we find three distinct cases of network governance. The UAS is an urban-centric yet federally funded project that coordinates service delivery, and on top of this the network involves Aboriginal actors. The HPS network is uniquely sculpted to each community it operates in, recognizing that the nature of homelessness is not the same in any two communities. The HPS leverages pre-existing municipal and community-level capacity for decision-making and action. And lastly, the CPAC is distinct from these other cases in that it is a Canada-wide professional network, involving a narrower stratum of actors than the UAS and the HPS. The distinctness of all three of these cases, in combination with the fact that they are all instances of network governance, points to the idea that there is a spectrum of different types of this governance form.

There are a number of factors that can be used to distinguish and describe various types of network governance. In chapter three I explored the variety in the purpose, domain, or governing structure of governance network cases. Other distinguishing factors could include:

- the composition of actors within a governance network;
- the resources the network is equipped with;
- the extent of interconnectedness (discussed in chapter four);
- whether the network has already been established prior to government involvement;
- whether a formal government entity creates the governance network;
- and the motivations of nodes in agreeing to join and maintain participation.

It is easy to see how several spectrums might be established in identifying and comparing certain types of network governance. Government might actively construct some networks. In other cases, the network pre-existed but is then provided with embedded government actors, as well as government funding and support. I will go into some of the above points differentiating governance networks, and tie this discussion back to my chapter three case studies.

First, the composition of governance networks can vary. Any mix of individuals, ad-hoc organizations, research institutes, not-for-profit organizations, private representatives, all levels of government, Band or tribal councils, among other types of actors and institutions, can exist in instances of network governance. Due to the complexity of certain policy areas, public actors are forced to engaged in negotiated interaction with external actors.<sup>311</sup> Actors come together in pursuit of resource exchange or pooling. The UAS is intended to equalize power dynamics, and ensure the effective contribution of its members – provincial and municipal governments, private companies, Aboriginal organizations, not-for-profit organizations and a few federal government programs. It is possible that public actors can heavily occupy a governance network. In another case, experts or private representatives are more prominent. This is seen with the CPAC. Given the specific composition of a governance network, different accountability requirements may need to be imposed. For example, in a network that includes relatively

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<sup>311</sup> Eva Sørensen and Jacob Torfing, “Theoretical Approaches to Governance Network Failure,” in *Theories of Democratic Network Governance*, eds. E. Sorensen and J. Torfing, (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), 99.



independent private sector representatives, there may be a need to impose some accountability requirements on the internal operations of nodes.

Each network is supplied with very different resources based on its composition. For instance, city homeless shelters provide pre-existing knowledge, connections, and physical space to the HPS. Graham observes that “the capacity for the federal government to act on its own is limited,” with regard to the problem of Canadian homelessness.<sup>312</sup> In this case, as with all governance networks, governments seek to leverage the resources of actors already involved in the issue at hand, or closely related issues. In the example of the CPAC, governments are leveraging expertise from a largely professional network. The CPAC is comprised of doctors and other highly experienced healthcare service providers in collaboration with provincial and national partners.<sup>313</sup> As a result of an inability to provide necessary resources when addressing complex policy areas such as homelessness, urban Aboriginals, or disease control, governments at all levels seek to access the capacities of external agencies to fulfill many facets of policymaking. My point here is that each governance network, given its policy focus and the specific mix of actors and resources, will be quite different.

Some governance networks take advantage of the pre-existing resources already apparent in a community of connected actors. Government can begin to provide funding, advise, or other resources, in exchange for these pre-existing resources. Public actors interact as equals with this relatively organically formed conglomeration of already invested actors. A good example of this would be the case of the HPS. Homelessness is a vastly different problem in each Canadian city, and thus a uniform federal government strategy would make little sense.<sup>314</sup> Yet the HPS takes advantage of pre-existing actors and resources in its 61 designated communities. The HPS bolsters already existing programming and coordinates local-level action.<sup>315</sup>

Governments can also actively create governance networks. Stakeholders with an array of disconnected resources are brought together into a networked governing structure. An integral aspect of successful governing networks is their ability to integrate

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<sup>312</sup> Graham, “Vision, Collaboration, Persistence, and Hard Work,” 170.

<sup>313</sup> *The 2014 Cancer System Performance Report: March 2014*, 1-2.

<sup>314</sup> Leo and August, 6.

<sup>315</sup> “Terms and Conditions of the Homelessness Partnering Strategy.”

and coordinate action among disparate nodes. An organization like the CPAC forms where no other Canada-wide coordinating network ever previously existed. Similarly, the UAS fills a void in Aboriginal services: Band Councils and social service providers are ill equipped to address some of the complex and vaguely defined social problems facing urban Aboriginal Canadians.

Another factor differentiating types of network governance will be the fact that constituent nodes all have very different motivations for joining the network, and for maintaining a certain level of involvement with the network. For some actors, a specific policy goal may be a desired outcome on the basis of a normative contribution to societal governance. The incentive for joining a governance network will be simply to contribute to this outcome. A normative pursuit of joint-problem solving through the exchange of resources and capacities is sought, and networks are uniquely defined by their abilities to provide these outcomes.<sup>316</sup>

For other actors, self-interest drives motivations for joining governance networks. Nodes gain legitimacy, reduce their costs in achieving desirable outcomes, gain access to resources, cooperative and joint action, information, and so forth. Nodes have a self-interest in joining governance networks as they desire these outcomes, yet jointly take part in pursuing outcomes. The cost of participating is reduced. This is why the participants are willing to come to the table in the first place: they know that the act of participating does not bind them in any way or overly strain their resources. Networks must have some incentives for nodes to voluntarily participate, and to continue participation. For instance, the legitimacy of taking part in a *governing* network is often a substantial boon for the voluntary and private sector, as well as for individuals such as experts and activists. This legitimacy, along with a number of other benefits, is combined with relatively low participation costs. Policy development is negotiated, not imposed; flexible, not permanent; and not binding, rather than binding.

Yet any distinct realm of decision-making and action, with substantial government support and legitimacy, will also face internal motivations to *exclude* certain nodes from participating. Those within a network will be incentivized to protect their exclusive access. “The inclusion of the relevant and affected actors might be hampered by the

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<sup>316</sup> Sørensen and Torfing, “Theoretical Approaches to Governance Network Failure,” 99.

closeness of governance networks,” write Sørensen and Torfing.<sup>317</sup> Thus the composition of a governance network is a tricky issue – and is relevant in any discussion of democratic accountability. Should a governance network be accountable *for* its composition? Should it be accountable *for* excluding certain actors? For example, should the CPAC include more representatives of patient groups, or private medical technology or pharmaceutical industry representatives? These questions push beyond the scope of my thesis. These ideas are relevant to mention as network governance presents a potent avenue for *political* action in Canadian society: networks have real and independent decision-making and acting capacities. This problem will be particularly acute in organically created networks with little formal government oversight. As will be mentioned shortly, the need for some sort of “oversight” despite the equalized nature of relationships within a governance network is important. My discussion of ‘metagovernance’ at the end of this chapter will broach this subject.

Clearly my thesis provides only a sample of what is going on in Canada in terms of the arrival of network governance. What can be concluded is that there are different types of networks. Further study might explore the variety in some of the other networks I mentioned in chapter three: the GHP, the GTMA, NAPs, DHCs, LIPs in Ontario cities, among others. The theoretical observation I extrapolate in some of the instances of variety among network governance types is that this may have a concomitant effect on the way in which real political power is distributed – and in particular, the way power derived through the democratic mechanisms is allocated. As has been extensively noted, these trends also impact how accountable governance networks are. The next section will explore how some of the ‘new’ accountabilities introduced in chapter four can be applied to network governance given the variety of forms it can take.

## 5.2 HOW NEW ACCOUNTABILITIES APPLY TO CASE STUDIES

Governance networks of private, public, and obscurely enmeshed conglomerates of both entities throw great complexity into the webs of structures and processes

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<sup>317</sup> Idem.

connecting stakeholders and decision-makers. Due to these complexities, traditional accountability is not appropriate. This is a reason to be concerned, due to the central role of accountability in ensuring an effective and legitimate democratic state. I argue, in chapter four, that there are alternative forms of accountability. Yet, *how* can new accountabilities be applied, and *what* specific models and mechanisms are required given different cases of network governance? These questions are particularly tricky given that there are many different types of governance networks. A natural conclusion from the above discussion is that different types of accountabilities will apply to different cases of network governance. A whole host of different governance paradigms might be best paired with a certain handful of accountability models and mechanisms.

Certain networks may more readily require ‘active’ accountability than other based on the extent to which decisions are made ‘in the moment’ and how process-based all other operations of the network are. In the UAS, decision-making is a cooperative negotiated exercise. Negotiation is a process. Similarly, CPAC operates through processes of brokering and creating opportunities and actions among its nodes.<sup>318</sup> Although, by definition, all instances of network *governance* are process-based, it is conceivable that there will be a spectrum of cases. Some governance networks will be easier to audit retroactively. This might occur if they pertain to a specific policy area that is time-dependent. For instance, if a governance network is put together to undertake a particular infrastructure project, and this project is completed within a year, then a retroactive audit of the year’s activities is justified despite the unique structure and changing nature of the network.

Others networks will be so active and full of *ex tempore* decision-making that a concomitantly *ex tempore* mode of accountability will be required. Many instances of network governance have ongoing projects that cannot easily be hedged by the confines of yearly audits. Due to the process-based reality of governance and the added complexity of governing by network, the network may be held to account *ex tempore* or ‘in the moment.’ I find that all of my three cases, introduced in chapter three, are very active and process-based governing forms.

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<sup>318</sup> Fairclough et al., 72.

Even despite the fact that the UAS's evaluations are often retroactive and based on traditional accountability mechanisms, there is evidence of actively derived accountability. The UAS must act with some discretion given agreed-upon standards for behavior and decision-making. The *Impact Evaluation* found that the UAS is proactive in "identifying areas that require improvement and employs an approach of continuous improvements. Thus, as it gains experience and a better understanding of challenges in the design and delivery model, it attempts to make the appropriate adjustments."<sup>319</sup>

This notion of continuous improvement is particularly intriguing as it refers to self-auditing and perhaps even self-sanctioning in the pursuit of active improvement. As the purpose of accountability is to hold governors responsible for actions taken in pursuit of the public good, any increase in efficiency and effectiveness in a network is theoretically an active pursuit of the norm of accountability. Principals can trust the performance of a governance network. In contrast, intensive reporting, record-keeping, and the retroactive auditing of an organization based primarily on its ability to keep records assumes a degree of mistrust. In the UAS case, there is still quite an over-reliance on external review and *ex post* traditional accountability.

In another example, I found that the CPAC practices accountability through transparency and publicity – these are both real-time components of accountability. A major facet of the CPAC's mandate is to broker and disseminate knowledge. It is believed that through publicizing its activities, it bolsters its accountability to Canadians.<sup>320</sup> Transparency and publicity are, of course, not the same as accountability. They do not include reporting the specific items for which an agent must make decisions, justifying decisions, or the ability for principals to impose sanctions. Accountability is technically *comprised* of transparency, as answerability or justification, and these components alone do not make up accountability.<sup>321</sup> However, an argument could be made that where all of the requisite components of accountability are not possible, as is at times the case in network governance, intensive forms of transparency and/or publicity could satisfy many of the accountability gaps this thesis has pointed to.

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<sup>319</sup> *Impact Evaluation of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy*, viii.

<sup>320</sup> *Sustaining Action Towards a Shared Vision*, 124-125.

<sup>321</sup> Ebrahim and Weisband, 5.

The CPAC also contains an epistemic organizational culture of common purpose. In all of its initiatives, the CPAC integrates diverse actors into its jurisdiction and creates opportunities for dialogue and exchange.<sup>322</sup> This serves to create “connections and to share expertise and experience; to synthesize evidence; and to broaden planning, implementation, and evaluation with stakeholders,” according to L. Fairclough et al.<sup>323</sup> This integration aligns with the neo-institutional idea of creating a culture of accountability, whereby agents act in accordance with the expectations of their peer group. They receive both explicit and implicit, active and retroactive, forms of sanctioning based on their adherence to shared goals. Given this analysis, it is evident that active accountability should be further explored as an option in democratically qualifying governance networks.

Similarly, the extent to which accountability without distinct categories of actors, or domains of action is needed will be dependent on the extent of mutual constitution and interdependency within any one case of network governance. This will depend on the constitution of the network, and how strong the relationship-ties between nodes are. It might be the case that newer networks, such as the majority of my case studies, have not yet been around long enough to become substantially mutually constitutive. As it is, the most apparent problem in the cases of the UAS, HPS, and the CPAC is that they involve supposedly non-political actors in decision-making processes, thus blurring state-society distinctions. We can still discern actions taken by each node in these networks.

Another valuable ‘new’ form of accountability is to simply accept a variety of forms and norms, and based on this tailor the requisite components of an accountability relationship to the case at hand. This strand of thinking meshes well with the idea that there can be many different types of governance networks. For instance, the CPAC illustrates multiple accountabilities. It contains a mixture of traditional accountability mechanisms and several additional ones. In the CPAC the unidirectional accountability chain goes something like this: the Partnership is accountable to Health Canada, which is accountable to its Deputy Minister, who is accountable to the Minister of Health, who is then accountable to Canadians. The CPAC is accountable to these actors via contracts

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<sup>322</sup> Fairclough et al., 72.

<sup>323</sup> *Idem.*

detailing objectives, deliverables, and timing.<sup>324</sup> The federal government also imposes audits based on this rubric of action. Yet, these traditional accountability avenues exist alongside ‘new’ forms of accountability in the CPAC.

As has been already discussed, a major focus of the CPAC’s accountability regime is to make its decisions and actions publically available, and to work on a high degree of transparency. Examples would include frequent reports geared towards Canadians. For example, the *Sustaining Action* report states that a component of its accountability plan is to regularly report its progress in implementing Canada’s cancer action plan.<sup>325</sup> The CPAC also publishes regular progress reports.<sup>326</sup> As I noted in my section on active accountability, whether or not accountability via a high degree of transparency and publicity constitutes accountability is up for debate. Certainly it is better than nothing. The CPAC is also unique in fostering an internal knowledge community. Ideally this will ensure the adherence of participating nodes to standards to which they may be only tangentially connected. Involved actors become part of an organizational culture which fosters an ethos of accountable action – as noted in my section on ‘active’ accountability, this is a potential option for holding governance networks to account.

I noted that as there are different types of networks, there may be different types of democratic representation. The identification and assessment of alternative forms of accountability also points to a deeper discussion of postliberal forms of democracy. Héritier and Lehmkuhl refer to the importance of distinguishing new modes of democratic accountability, and argue that these are derived from different *strands of democratic control*. The most obvious strand is the democratic accountability of governing actors to their constituency through democratically elected representatives and their control of governing functions.<sup>327</sup> To re-iterate, this is seen in the liberal democratic relationship. As my thesis demonstrates, the traditional accountability model associated with this strand of democratic control is very often obsolete.

Networked partners are joined together in a ‘soft’ sense through resource pooling and exchange. Nodes are incentivized to join networks due the benefits provided by such

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<sup>324</sup> *Sustaining Action Towards a Shared Vision*, 68.

<sup>325</sup> *Sustaining Action Towards a Shared Vision*, 125.

<sup>326</sup> *The 2014 Cancer System Performance Report*, 14.

<sup>327</sup> Héritier and Lehmkuhl, 137.

pooling or exchange. Decision-making and action is most frequently a joint endeavor, yet each actor remains through the current system only accountable to themselves and relevant and connected stakeholders. They may have to justify to other nodes their reasons for participation, or they may have to participate in some formal accountability processes, but ultimately accountability could potentially be very weak and informal. Is weak and informal accountability better than no accountability? And what does this mean in terms of democratic ‘control’ of network governance? This thesis has offered several potential solutions to this question – for instance, there can be a mix of accountability models. Given this discussion of the variety of types of network governance, and how we might determine which accountability models would suit certain types of networks, I will now move on to *who* has the authority to ensure that these accountability relationships are present.

### 5.3 STATE-SOCIETY RELATIONS REVISITED

Here I ask the question: *who*, or what specific entity, has the power to ensure that accountability regimes are apparent given that government must be, or act as, an equal and embedded actor within a governance network? Who has the power to ensure that a governance network includes all necessary relevant and affected actors? I argue that the state appears to have the legitimacy to ‘govern’ network governance, but it must provide some form of embedded oversight or act as a network integrator. Networks blur state-society distinctions by embedding formal public actors, politicizing administrative entities, including members of the electorate in decision-making, and by diluting the authority of elected officials. Our ability to define a ‘state-like’ authority, when networked governing is in full force, becomes challenged. It can be difficult to discern a locus of power and formal political authority that might undertake the task of ‘overseeing’ network governance, and the task of assuring that accountability regimes are apparent. In this section I overview these ideas, introduce the concept of ‘metagovernance,’ and ultimately argue for a form of embedded oversight of network governance.



Network governance allocates real power to a wide range of actors, and their participation within the governing network is not necessarily subject to gatekeeping through the formal mechanisms of the democratic state. Advisory and input into the policy-making process are not restricted to conscious or deliberated forums, but can be accessed by members of society.<sup>328</sup> Policies may be subject to the whim of a policy consultant, or the intuition of a particularly vocal interest group representative, or the decision made by two individuals over coffee. Multiple channels to policy-making centres may actually devalue experts to the benefit of private lobbies and others who may not hold the public interest at heart. What can be concluded is that the role of those with the public interest at heart, such as civil servants, as well as the role of elected representatives is diminished within the network approach.

Real decision-making and policy-making power must be allocated to non-governmental nodes in order for networks to adequately leverage local resources and expertise. For the ‘nodes’ within a governance network to willingly participate, participation must be meaningful as defined by this allocation of real power from the state. Stakeholders are allocated governing power and the ability to set policies, operate programs, determine how information is shared, allocate tax resources, and so forth.<sup>329</sup> Yet when governing power is allocated, accountability relationships must be created. *Who* has the authority to create accountability relationships given these dynamics?

The replication of state structures upon networks has been suggested as a solution to this problem. A form of state control might enable a movement towards the ‘new accountabilities’ offered in chapter four: active accountability given process-based governance; accountability without distinct categories of actors or domains of action; horizontal, multidirectional, and reciprocal accountability relationships; and multiple accountabilities. How does a network, as a composite of a variety of autonomous actors, move towards some of these new models of accountability? A popular strand in the literature argues that networks must be directed by a locus of authority with recognized legitimacy.

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<sup>328</sup> Kickert et al., 2.

<sup>329</sup> Idem.

Many refer to this as ‘metagovernance,’ a concept that refers to political authorities “organizing the self-organization of partnerships, networks and governance regimes,” clarifies Bob Jessop.<sup>330</sup> A metagoverning entity can undertake actions necessary in facilitating coordination and order within a network. It can impose and consolidate rules and relationships, decide what ‘nodes’ are allowed to partake in a network, determine which nodes are central and which are peripheral, and oversee the division of powers between actors.<sup>331</sup> It can also create and maintain accountability regimes. Through creating and maintaining these regimes, it is possible to garner control of complex and new governing forms.<sup>332</sup> Accountability is a functional mechanisms *and* a norm.

How does this occur without oversight? Network governance is lateralized, with no one entity ‘standing above’ and overseeing governing operations. I argue that there might be a form of embedded oversight. This could occur through resource-exchange, the coordination of other nodes, integrating the network, among other roles. For instance, government might operate as a node in a pan-Canadian network, such as the CPAC. The question is: can the ability to impose accountability regimes and demand that accounts be made exist without hierarchy? In network governance, no single actor has enough resource capacity to dominate unilaterally. Unlike MLG, corporatism, and other governance forms, network governance is characterized by horizontal power arrangements. Network governance is neither of the state, nor under the state.

Many scholars point to public actors as being ideal metagovernors of network governance. Doberstein writes that “governance networks require some basic regulation in order to function efficiently, and... the state is the most appropriate mediator, institutional designer, and integrator.”<sup>333</sup> Papadopolous adds that

Formally authorized institutions should first set the ‘meta-governance’ procedural rules for fair participation and for accountability in network forms of governance. Although it sometimes happens that the formalization of networks (provisions

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<sup>330</sup> Bob Jessop, “Capitalism and Its future: remarks on regulation, government and governance,” *Review of International Political Economy* 4 (1997): 575.

<sup>331</sup> Doberstein, 3.

<sup>332</sup> Stephen Bell and Andrew Hindmoor, *Rethinking governance: The centrality of the state in Modern society*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 47.

<sup>333</sup> Doberstein, 6.

about selection of participants, mode of operation, etc.) becomes an open political issue, it would be innovative to assign explicitly the design function to the democratically authorized institutions.<sup>334</sup>

Networks often come into being organically or out of necessity, and with little oversight. Thus, if we intend for network governance to be accountable, accountability must be actively created. Further, the ‘creating’ entity must have a substantial degree of political legitimacy.

Of particular interest in its applications to network governance, a concentration of power is required for a metagovernor to exist, and for a particular area to be governable.<sup>335</sup> Examples of potential metagoverning entities include the Steering Committees or Community Advisory Boards in the cases of the HPS and the UAS respectively.<sup>336</sup> These organizations provide leadership and support within a network, while not overseeing it in a hierarchical way. They are potential metagoverning entities in that their role is still limited, for instance, they do not yet impose accountability arrangements or demand accounts be made. I argue, of course, that some entity must actively distinguish what sort of network is at hand, and what accountability regime is necessary – thus the role of these metagoverning entities may need to be expanded.

Is power imbalance required to metagovern? Network governance regards the equal status of autonomous actors coming together to pursue policy goals. The UAS is unique in having several regional-level Steering Committees tasked with recommending projects and funding amounts to the federal government. These entities are highly autonomous and also work *with* their respective network in ensuring that the Strategy’s terms and conditions are met.<sup>337</sup> This kind of leadership is embedded within the network, and it is departed from hierarchical oversight. How can a public actor impose accountability relationships and order upon other networked actors, given this equal status? The answer to this question harks back to the relationship-ties within a network:

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<sup>334</sup> Papadopolous, 485.

<sup>335</sup> Kees Van Kersbergen and Frans Van Waarden, “‘Governance’ as a bridge between disciplines: Cross-disciplinary inspiration regarding shifts in governance and problems of governability, accountability, and legitimacy,” *European Journal of Political Research* 43 (2004): 156.

<sup>336</sup> Doberstein, 10.

<sup>337</sup> “Final Report: Impact Evaluation of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy,” 6.

they are premised upon sharing resources. These may be financial, material, information-based, epistemic, and so forth.

Metagovernance of networks could be based on sharing another resource: governing legitimacy. Through exchanging this resource for others from the network (expertise, political support, information, financial support, etc.) formal public actors need not impose their will. Instead, they can construct accountability arrangements as a necessary gate-keeping mechanism in a network. For example, if private actors wish to have the legitimacy and authority associated with participating, they must subscribe to accountability arrangements.

Accountability is both an ideal, and it is functional. Functionally, accountability arrangements are potent tools in imposing order upon new and complex governance arrangements. Accountability has the ability to simplify complexity and tie down the moving parts in a networked system of governance. Metagovernance fosters the creation of the levers of governing: rules, structures, norms, and processes. I have argued that a metagovernor might not 'stand above' a network and govern it hierarchically. Control is not necessarily imposed. The metagovernor might provide a resource that other networked actors need, and in accessing this resource the network actors must act by the metagovernor's mandated accountability arrangements.

## CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

### 6.1 CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE LITERATURE AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This is, without a doubt, an expansive area of study and to do it justice will require several shelves worth of books, and substantial empirical investigation. My foray into this topic area is intended as an introductory exercise, and the arguments I make are offered in hope of spurring on further investigation. This further investigation is crucial to the strength and longevity of the liberal democratic state. Kickert et al. write that representative democracy requires,

explicit accountability; in multiple forms and in many forums; with openness of information and access to sustain warrants of discourse; and flexible institutions willing to encourage experiments with multiple and new forms of accountability. The task has scarcely begun, in either theory or practice.<sup>338</sup>

A major part of my intention here has been to thoroughly emphasize the significance of the research problem: network governance clashes with liberal democracy, and accountability deficits are at the crux of this clash. Further, there is a paucity of research addressing this problem.

I have looked at what aspects of the liberal democratic form clash most potently with network governance. These include: the people as a separate and established entity, electoral mechanisms as an effective representative links between the electorate and elected decision makers, state-society separation, among many others. Given this clash I demonstrate that network governance is not the variable that can be changed. The cases I explore exemplify how network governance can be an independent variable because

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<sup>338</sup> Kickert, et al., xiv.

certain policy sectors require a networked response. I take empirical reality as given and instead look at how central democratic tenets might persevere.

Literature on the departure from government to governance, and on the predominance of the network approach, is abundant. Recognizing this traversed ground, I instead argue that scholarly work needs to reach further in assessing how these changes might sit with the democratic principle of accountability. The political science discipline needs to step in and work more cohesively with planning, public administration, organizational theory, and other involved disciplines in search of answers to the research problem I have posed. There is a pressing need to investigate policy networks from the political science discipline, and this thesis marks one effort, ideally of many, towards this end.

Democratic norms are often viewed as untouchable and unchangeable. As a result, when the reality of network governance clashes with traditional accountability, many will rise up in arms and address this new reality as a ‘problem.’ Similarly, traditional images of democratic accountability will be defended. Governing by network is treated as a newfangled idea in need of fixing. In contrast to this, I argue that democratic accountability requires alterations.

Future empirical study of network governance would be extremely useful. This requires several considerations. Network governance is necessarily complex: complications are interdependent and are prone to build off of one another. Jocelyne Bourgon observes that governance displays “dynamic complexity when the interactions across systems are so intertwined that the issue can only be resolved by looking at the system as a whole.”<sup>339</sup> This is seen in how nodes are defined by their interactions with other nodes. Therefore, empirical studies must in some way incorporate a wide range of variables and ideas.

Even in its birthplace, the discipline of public administration, network governance is understudied. Many key questions are yet unaddressed. I also would suggest that it is likely that many studying this area will not look to democratic re-theorizing as a way to solve accountability deficits, but instead may look at aspects of network governance that could be altered to appease pre-existing forms and norms of accountability. Network

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<sup>339</sup> Bourgon, 21

governance appears to be a more tangible and atheoretical topic, thus it seems to be an easier item to change. A student of policy sciences considers making network governance more accountable in terms of changing mechanisms, rules, and oversight. It is much easier to do this than to think about how democratic accountability might be changed. This would require theoretical heavy lifting. It is for this reason that the discipline of political science, and its theory-heavy toolbox, must inform discussion of network governance. Theoretical analysis should *also* be combined with case-based and best practices analysis.

There is a need to cross-pollinate the literature from public administration, planning, organizational theory, international relations, and related areas. This may seem like an overwhelming task, but as has been argued, a step in the right direction would be to simply introduce political theory into governance literature. Renate Mayntz, Eva Sørensen, and others suggest that there is a lack of interest in democracy within the governance literature.<sup>340</sup> In contrast, political science offers a more in-depth theoretical treatment of democratic accountability within various organizational structures. Given the breadth of theorizing in political science, a comparable amount of theorizing and flexibility is applicable to policy studies. Policy scholars are often preoccupied with giving substantive advice and as a result they focus largely on empirical research.<sup>341</sup> Exploring the variety of democratic forms has not been a popular pursuit.

There has been some governance scholarship that blends both policy sciences and political theory in pursuit of answering some of the questions this thesis has posed.<sup>342</sup> In particular, there has been an increasing understanding that one form of accountability need not dominate. Jarvis and Thomas write “the external and internal accountability environments of the Government of Canada have moved over the past two decades from being relatively simple, unidirectional, and stable to being more complicated, multidirectional, and dynamic.”<sup>343</sup> Yet, despite this, hierarchical control of networks

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<sup>340</sup> See Sørensen, 694; and Mayntz, 38.

<sup>341</sup> Paul A. Sabatier, “Political Science and Public Policy: An Assessment,” *Advances in Policy Studies since 1950* eds. William N. Dunn and Rita Mae Kelly (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 1992), 28.

<sup>342</sup> Mayntz, 38.

<sup>343</sup> Jarvis and Thomas, 283.

predominates.<sup>344</sup> As explored in chapter three, correlating accountability frameworks rest uneasily within networks. Even in networked policy sectors, traditional forms of accountability persevere.

In addressing the problems associated with diffuse and dispersed power and governing authority within network governance, future research should also delve into where power and political legitimacy lie in these new governing forms. Bell and Hindmoor argue that national governments are losing their legitimacy and that there is a need to reclaim modern forms of governing within the democratic fold.<sup>345</sup> Are certain forms of ‘control’ of governance, and accountability, more democratically legitimate? This is without a doubt a fascinating avenue for future research.

Many of the conclusions my thesis study has come to only serve to open up other areas for future research. For instance, if the diffuse and dispersed power within network governance is ‘soft’ and ‘weak’ as compared to conventional governing, and if so, are associated accountability regimes also weaker? As we move from conventional government (as defined in chapter one), towards less formal forms of governing and especially network governance, the less formal ‘power’ an organization has. For example, a network cannot make formal decisions that bind all actors. Partners can decide to partake, or they can decide not to. Partners can subscribe to a network’s accountability requirements, or can decide not to (although this may jeopardize future participation).

I argue that future research should embrace the idea of critically evaluating and revising existing core concepts and mechanisms of the liberal democratic state. Postliberal democratic theorizing regards avenues of thought concerned with the critical revision and further development of the central tenets of liberalism.<sup>346</sup> This does *not* include thinking that goes far beyond or against liberalism. Frameworks for democratic accountability within networks require broader flexibility in our ideas about democracy. Postliberal democratic theorizing moves the discussion of network governance beyond what Greenaway et al. describe as its potential to “obfuscate or even undermine”

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<sup>344</sup> Doberstein, 17.

<sup>345</sup> Bell and Hindmoor, 30; also see Van Kersbergen and Van Waarden, 157.

<sup>346</sup> Esmark, 275.



democracy, and towards a discussion of its unique abilities to promote democracy.<sup>347</sup> This thesis project is explicitly postliberal.

Presenting and evaluating the idea of active accountability, accountability without clearly set actors and domains of action, multidirectional orientations of accountability, and multiple accountabilities is an extension of this thinking. Accountability is a vital component of liberal democracy and it must be blended with networked forms of governing.

## 6.2 CONCLUSION

Networks reflect a paradigmatic change in societal governance. This change has a feedback effect on systems of accountability and liberal democracy more broadly. This has been acknowledged for some time. However, little re-theorizing has yet been done. The transition into networks may well be an ideal direction for governing to move in, but this will lead to a fragmentation of several existing accountability mechanisms and consequently central democratic tenets. In the pursuit of a number of important policy goals that network governance helps to facilitate, this thesis proposes that we also explore the compatibility of such structures with the norms of our liberal democratic regime.

In chapter two I explored why existing literature has yet to move towards uncovering solutions to the incompatibility between network governance and traditional accountability. There is a lack of consensus regarding concepts and parameters; a bias towards ‘traditional’ models and mechanisms of accountability; the normative weight of the idea of democratic accountability; and an assumption that ‘governing’ and ‘politics’ exist in separate disciplinary silos. I conclude that these features restrain our ability to move into a second generation of postliberal theorizing and what Sørensen refers to as a reformulation of the ‘traditional image of liberal democracy.’ Moving into this phase of theorizing will lead to a proactive seeking out and assessment of alternatives.

In chapter three I grounded my analysis with an exploration of three Canada-wide case studies of governance networks: the UAS, the HPS, and the CPAC. Each of these cases demonstrates how a governance network operates in practice, and this chapter

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<sup>347</sup> Greenaway et al., 718.

allows for a better understanding of the real challenges for democratic accountability due to the structure of a network. Each of these cases demonstrates the allocation of local knowledge and expertise through government funding, and government itself is most often in partnership with these community members. This echoes my remarks made in chapter one: in networks, authority is spread across a horizontal domain of civil society actors and is no longer filtered cleanly down departmental hierarchies. Policy planning and decision-making can even take place independent of ministerial oversight. Network members are granted a real allocation of power to make decisions and take action.

And, of course, when power becomes lateralized and dispersed concomitant accountability frameworks are required. I explored what accountability regimes exist within the UAS, the HPS, and CPAC, and found a mixing of both traditional accountability, and a few seedlings of new accountability. However, on the whole there is an over-reliance on traditional accountability. There was an over-emphasis on accountability between the network and ‘government,’ and a lack of focus on what accountability arrangements are needed *within* the network. Substantial power and decision-making abilities are apparent between nodes, and as a result this must be a focus in determining accountability arrangements.

Having overviewed why traditional accountability is increasingly misaligned with network governance, and having illustrated this in my chapter three cases, I then moved on to presenting and assessing alternatives. As noted in chapter one, my intention here is to open up and expand avenues of thought on this subject – this is a postliberal project. I explored four ideas: the idea of active accountability, accountability without clear actors or domains of action, the factors of directional orientation, and the possibility of multiple accountabilities. Certainly these ideas could be said to be mutually supporting. Ultimately I feel they succeed in better exposing and even bridging some of the major tensions between network governance and traditional accountability.

Modifying accountability to better suit network governance presupposes a broader alteration in understandings of democratic state form. This is why it is integral to tie the pragmatic and empirical study of network governance with the theoretical and comparative offerings of political science. The argument was presented that scholars should actively challenge and improve upon democracy and its central tenets. Throughout

this thesis, I have argued that accountability is a touchstone issue that crystallizes the tensions between network governance and democratic legitimacy. If network governance is earmarked to become an important governing paradigm, then scholars and practitioners should explore how this impacts our state system, political realities, and the norms that liberal democracy claims to uphold.

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