



Policy reasoning example: COVID-19

Suppose UW scientists estimate that COVID-19 will kill 600 UW-Madison students. The Wisconsin Department of Health Services is deciding between two vaccination programs: - Program A would use a conventional vaccine that can be counted on to save 200 people - Program B would use an experimental vaccine that has a $\frac{1}{3}$ chance of saving all 600 people and a $\frac{2}{3}$ chance of saving no one.

Which would you choose?

Policy reasoning example: COVID-19

Now suppose the Wisconsin Department of Health Services is considering two other possible vaccination programs:

- Program C would use a conventional vaccine that we know from experience will result in the death of 400 people
- Program D would use an experimental vaccine that would offer a $\frac{1}{3}$ chance no one would die and a $\frac{2}{3}$ chance that all 600 students would die.

Which would you choose?

What is rationality?

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 - Completeness: given a set of options A , B , and C can rank order them;
 - Transitivity: if you like A more than B and you like B more than C then you like A more than C ;

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 - Note: this does NOT require perfect or complete information;

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 - Optimization - compute the outcomes associated with all actions and decide which is best, choose the action that leads to it;
 - Note: this does NOT require perfect or complete information;
- Least minimally: actors have all the above and are Bayesian:
 - Bayesian means updating beliefs about what is true and false using data in a disciplined manner:

$$p(X \text{ is true} | \text{Data}) = \frac{p(\text{Data} | X \text{ is true})p(X \text{ is true})}{p(\text{Data})}$$

Paradoxes

(This statement is false)

Paradox examples:

- Policy victory/electoral loss;
 - Early Obama **policy** victories 2008-2010: ACA, Recovery Act, Dodd-Frank;
 - **Political** defeat: loss of house control in 2010;
 - Victory = defeat = victory?
- Boundaries on free speech;
 - WBC demonstrations at funeral of Matthew Synder;
 - Synder v. Phelps (2011): speech on a matter of public concern ≠ liability for emotional distress;
 - Democratic discourse = verbal assault?



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How can we resolve these paradoxes?

- The 'rationality project' (sidelines politics);
 - Goal: make policy via rational, analytic, scientific methods;
 - Examples:
 - Constitutional design;
 - Inductive analysis applied to appellate court decisions;
 - Policy making authority taken from elected bodies and given to experts;
 - Undergrad/grad eduction in public policy;
 - Rational choice in academia;
- The polis – Stone's approach (embraces politics);
- Read critically:
 - Stone is setting the rationality project up to fail – it is a strawman;
 - Critiques of the rationality project are positivist critiques (e.g. it is falsified by the data) but the rationality project itself might be best thought of as normative;

The Rationality Project

- **Model of reasoning:**

- identify objectives;
- identify actions to achieve objectives;
- Predict consequences of each alternative;
- Evaluate the consequences of each alternative;
- Optimize;
- Criticism: fails to tell Obama what to do; ignores emotions; ignores ethics

- **Model of society:**

- Market: society is a collection of autonomous, rational decision makers who come together only when they want to make an exchange;
- fixed, independent preferences maximized via rational calculation;
- Criticism: connections are varied, preferences are inconsistent;

- **Model of policy making:**

- Stages model of policy making;
- Birkland+ model of policy making;
- ACF, etc.

Polis: a model of a political society with simple forms of organizations
large enough to allow for politics

- community(ies) with community-level ideas, images, will, and effort;
- both self-interest and altruism are important for choices;
- public interest;
- problems are commons problems;
- influence and coercion are important;
- cooperation and competition are important;
- loyalty is normal;
- groups are main building blocks;
- information is not objective.

Community

- **Because politics and policy can happen only in communities they must be the starting point of our polis...**
- Characteristics of a community:
 - Members!
 - Decision criteria to determine who is in and who is out (e.g. citizenship)
 - Procedures to determine who can join (e.g. US citizenship test);
 - Rules and authority (e.g. the constitution);
 - Social, economic, and political rights and benefits (e.g. use of the golf course);
- **Cultural** community – shared culture/identities derived from shared language, history, and traditions;
- **Political** community – group who live under the same political rules/governance;
- Collective will.

Community



When thinking about collective will remember:

Arrows Theorem: no ranked voting electoral system can convert individual ranked preferences into a community-wide ranking ‘rationally’ except dictatorship.

Individual welfare.

- Humans care about others so a model of political community must recognize altruism as a powerful human motive...
- But does altruism exist?
 - 'No man giveth but with intention of good to himself' ~ Hobbes;
 - Data: altruistic action = satisfaction, fulfillment, meaning;
- Does it matter?
 - can think of altruism as acting in order to benefit others rather than oneself...
 - OR as maximizing elements of personal happiness that also help others;
 - claim: they are observationally equivalent.

- **Public interest:** the welfare of the general public; ex ante welfare of the representative individual; the social preference;
- According to the rationality project, the public interest is discoverable;
- According to Stone, the public interest is contested;
- Some of the ways one might try to identify what is in the public interest:
 - Aggregated individual private interests;
 - Aggregated individual interests for their community—“public-spirited self-interest”;
 - Goals on which there is consensus or a majority;
 - Things that are good for a community as a community (order, rules, stability, defense).

What sorts of problems are we going to deal with?

Commons problems: where private gains mean public costs (e.g. pollution) OR where public gains mean private costs (e.g. taxes).

Bridging individual interest and public interest

- **Influence:**

- Getting an actor to do something they would not otherwise do;
- Influence = coercion?

- **Cooperation:**

- Politics = building alliances to compete with opponents (are two person interactions 'politically empty'?);
- An essential expression of power;
- Good or bad? Depends on context – in economic activity described as collusion, price-fixing, etc., – in politics described as coalition, support, etc.;

- **Loyalty:**

- 'Sticky' or 'stretchy' relationships.

Groups

- Influence/cooperation/loyalty lead to **group formation** which are the 'building blocks' of the polis;
- Groups are important for three reasons:
 - Individuals depend on **groups to represent interests** (e.g. unions);
 - Policy making in part explained by how **groups form/split dynamically** to achieve public purpose;
 - Decisions of the polis are expressed in terms of **preferences aggregated at group level** (e.g. via voting);
- Is this self-contradictory? Groups are Stone's building blocks but according to Stone they don't act with a single mind...

- According to Stone **market information** = accurate, complete, and costless (it needn't be);
- **Polis information** = ambiguous, incomplete, possibly purposefully withheld;
 - Policy is complicated – hard to find the right causal models;
 - Education is required to acquire knowledge and is not uniformly distributed;
- Implications:
 - ⇒ interpretations are more important than 'facts';
 - ⇒ information revelation is strategic;
 - ⇒ actors will fight to control interpretations.

Goals

Whose goals?!

Federalist Papers No. 68: The Mode of Electing the President (Hamilton)

- “It was desirable that the sense of the people should operate in the choice of the person to whom so important a trust was to be confided.”
- “It was equally desirable that the immediate election should made by men most capable of analyzing the qualities adapted to the station and acting under circumstances favorable to deliberation, and to a judicious combination of all the reasons and inducements which were proper to govern their choice.”
- “It was also particularly desirable to afford as little opportunity as possible to tumult and disorder.”
- “Nothing was more to be desired than that every practicable obstacle should be opposed to cabal, intrigue, and corruption.”
- “Another and no less important desideratum was that the executive should be independent for his continuance in office on all but the people themselves.”

**...to shape and sustain a peaceful,
prosperous, just, and democratic world and
foster conditions for stability and progress for
the benefit of the American people and
people everywhere.**

...preempt threats and further US national security objectives by collecting intelligence that matters, producing objective all-source analysis, conducting effective covert action as directed by the President, and safeguarding the secrets that help keep our Nation safe.

...To protect and enhance our natural resources: our air, land and water; our wildlife, fish and forests and the ecosystems that sustain all life. To provide a healthy, sustainable environment and a full range of outdoor opportunities.

What are goals?

- Goals dimensionalized:
 - Equity;
 - Efficiency;
 - Welfare;
 - Liberty;
 - Security;
- Goals have the feel of preferences over outcomes;
- Two situations in which goals can lead to intractable conflict:
 - 1) Pareto Optimality: a choice is Pareto optimal in a group setting when nobody can be made better off through a policy change without others being made worse off – conflict when trying to change a Pareto optimal policy;
 - 2) Imagine two people one with weights given by w and the other with weights given by v :

$$w_1 * \text{Equity} + w_2 * \text{Efficiency} + w_3 * \text{Welfare} + w_4 * \text{Liberty} + w_5 * \text{Security}$$

$$v_1 * \text{Equity} + v_2 * \text{Efficiency} + v_3 * \text{Welfare} + v_4 * \text{Liberty} + v_5 * \text{Security}$$

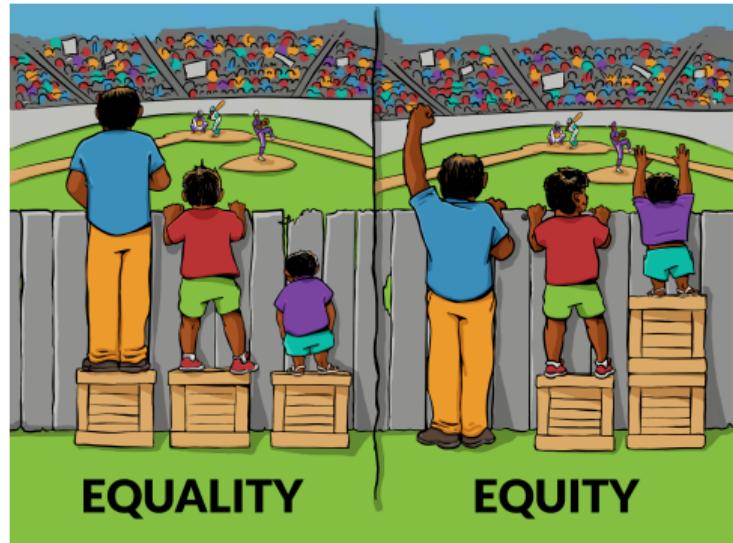
Conflict when $w \neq v$.

Goals : Equity

Everybody wants it but people disagree over definitions

Definitions

- Politics is the authoritative distribution of resources;
- All distributions have three parts:
 - Who gets something;
 - What they get;
 - How the distribution is determined;
- Equality denotes sameness in some part of the distribution of resources.



Dimensions: Membership

- All members of a group get equal parts of something – non-members get nothing;
- Who is a member?! This becomes a conflict over equity;
- Some examples:
 - 3/5s compromise;
 - Cherokee Nation membership;
 - EU citizens particular state membership;
 - Felony voting rights in the US;
 - Medicaid for immigrants;
- Paradox: Equal slices, unequal invitations.

Dimensions: Merit

- Maximize reward for individual achievement and minimize the role of immutable personal characteristics;
- Measure and quantify 'achievement' is hard. How to measure becomes a conflict over equity;
 - Admission tests (might be biased);
 - Increase in revenue (really needs counterfactual);
- Is 'effort' necessary or sufficient? How much = luck/shoulders of giants?
 - If necessary but not sufficient, should 'achievement' be rewarded at all?
 - If sufficient then a major justification for income inequality, but how much?
- Paradox: (un)equal slices for (un)equal merit.

Dimensions: Rank

- Society is a collection of subgroups and individual distribution should depend on membership in these subgroups;
 - Government general schedule;
 - University community;
- Rank membership/slices across ranks are conflicts over equity;
- Does rank really measure some sort of quality we'd like to reward?
- Paradox: (un)equal slices for (un)equal ranks.

Dimensions: Group-Based Distribution

- Society is a collection of subgroups **defined by immutable personal characteristics** and individual distribution should depend on membership in these subgroups;
- Often used to remedy history of unequal burden:
 - VA benefits;
 - Affirmative actions;
 - Reparations for slavery;
- Some challenges:
 - Do the subgroups depict some useful social reality (e.g. are race and ethnicity 'real')?
 - Identity characteristics may be only weakly correlated with historical burden;
 - Use of immutable characteristics are always illegitimate;
- Paradox: unequal slices but equal social blocs.

Dimensions: Need

- Use a particular distribution to compensate for shortfalls in the larger pattern of distribution;
- What should the 'larger pattern of distribution' include?
 - Financial aid as a fraction of total assets (current earnings, future earning, family earnings);
 - Tax policy (income, wealth);
- Paradox: unequal slices but equal consumption.

Dimensions: Value

- Switch from a standardized value to a customized value;
- Some examples:
 - Household specific poverty levels;
 - Job offers;
 - Auctions;
- How do we estimate ‘value’ - there are obvious incentives to misrepresent here;
- Paradox: unequal slices but equal value.

Dimensions: Competition, Lotteries, Elections

- Competition (e.g. markets):
 - Allow relative merit to determine outcomes organically;
 - Paradox: unequal slices but fair competition w/ equal resources;
- Lotteries (e.g. draft):
 - Allow chance to determine outcomes stochastically;
 - Paradox: unequal slices but equal statistical chances;
- Elections (e.g. for President):
 - Aggregate preferences about how to distribute power;
 - Paradox: unequal slices but equal votes.

How to choose?!

- Each of these dimensions yields different distributional outcomes:
 - Membership, merit, rank, and group-based distribution are about the 'who.'
 - Need and value are about the 'what.'
 - Competition, lotteries, and elections are about the 'how.'
- What is in the **objective function** – e.g. equal slices and lotteries maximize 'fairness' but may lead to ex post 'inefficiency';
- Some questions:
 - Who are eligible recipients and what makes them eligible?
 - What is being distributed and how do players define it?
 - What is the process for carrying out the distribution?
 - Are the resources to be distributed individually created or a product of common heritage?

Inequality

- When inequality goes up in a **community**:

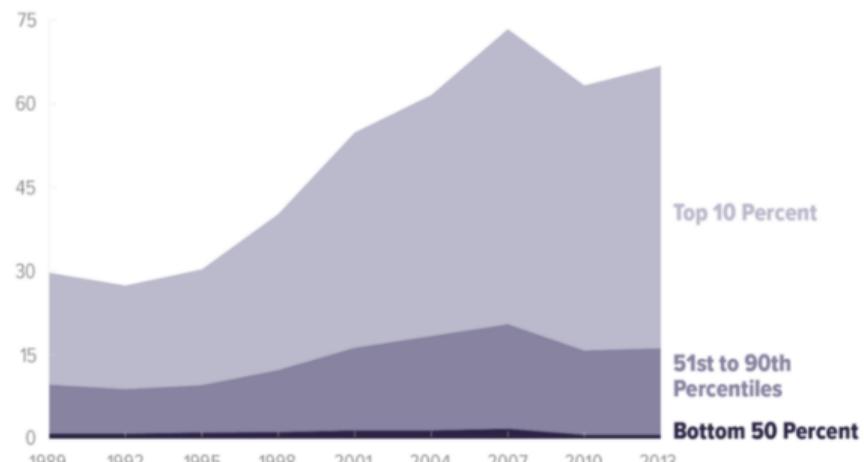
- interpersonal trust goes down;
- interpersonal hostility goes up;
- violence goes up;
- discrimination goes up;
- civic and political participation goes down;

- Income inequality undermines **democracy**:

- Selects out individuals from seeking office;
- Responsiveness to wealthy interests;
- Lobbying.

Holdings of Family Wealth

Trillions of 2013 Dollars



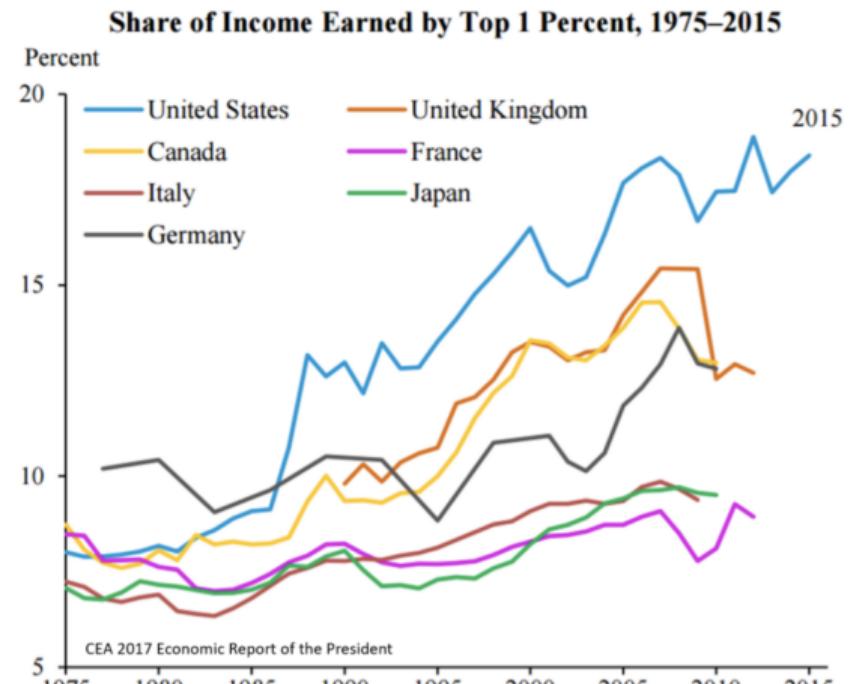
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Goals : Efficiency

The ratio between input and output, effort and results, expenditure and income, or cost and benefit

- How do we measure efficiency (need to measure both inputs and outputs)?
 - How to balance multiple objectives?
 - What if the value of a given output is multidimensional?
 - What if something is both input and output?
 - Do we count second and third order effects as outputs?
 - What do we do with opportunity costs?

- **Theoretical:** markets w/ voluntary exchange maximize efficiency, social welfare;
 - Voluntary exchange = at least one actor better off and nobody worse off;
 - If actors optimize and social welfare = their summed utility then it will be maximized;
- **Corollary:** free markets can produce social welfare more effectively than governments;
- Results on maximized social welfare are developed in the context of **full information** and **Voluntarism**;
 - In the Polis information revelation is strategic;
 - Welfare results can be extended in an ex ante sense to incomplete information environments;
 - Involuntary trade compromises efficiency and welfare;
- Stone's critiques: many roles; interdependent welfare; ignores distribution; community goals.

Goals : Welfare

Government is a contrivance of human wisdom to provide for human wants (Burke)

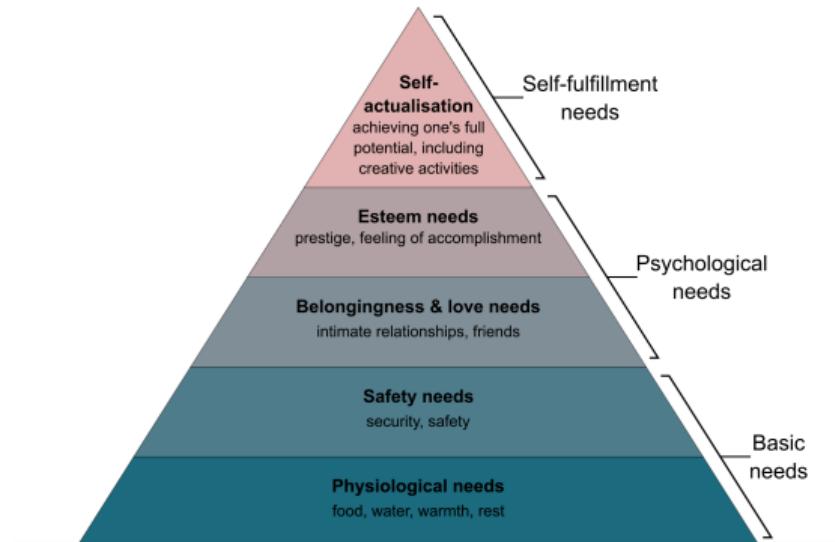
Dimensions of need:

- **Material/Symbolic** (e.g. food satisfies cultural need too);
- **Intrinsic/Instrumental** (e.g. money is instrumental, freedom to choose is intrinsic);
- **Volatility/Security** (e.g. minimize risk);
- **Quantity/Quality** (e.g. how much longer you live vs how well you feel);
- **Individual/Relational** (e.g. need to care for others);
- **Absolute/Relative** (e.g. keeping up with the Joneses).



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Moral Hazard

- **Moral hazard:** an entity has an incentive to increase its exposure to risk when it does not bear the full costs of that risk;
 - post-contract shifts in optimal choice;
 - information asymmetry;
 - principal-agent problems;
- Originally from insurance (from back in the 18th century!);



Goals : Liberty

Unconstrained choice

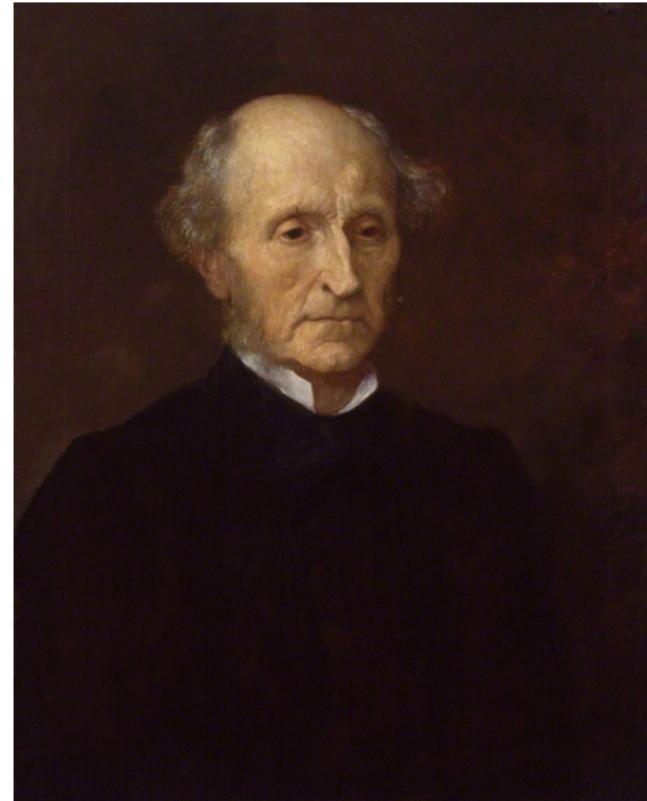
Questions:

- When can government legitimately interfere w/ citizens' choices and activities?
- When should community goals supersede individual choice?
- Under what circumstances should public policy limit individual autonomy?

Answer:

The sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number is self-protection...[T]he only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others.

~ John Stuart Mill



what counts as 'harm' to others?

- Mill: physical injury caused to another;
- In commons problems (e.g. private gains mean public costs) how to apply this?
 - Grains of sugar thought experiment;
 - Who is to be regulated in group situations?
- Other harms – recognition of these is a matter of political struggle:
 - Economic and material;
 - Aesthetic;
 - Psychic (e.g. worry);
 - Spiritual/moral.

Positive/Negative liberty

- **Negative liberty:** “I am free to the extent that no one interferes with my activity.”
 - Coercion = taking the resources of another;
 - “Those who are taxed without their own consent are slaves.”
- **Positive liberty:** “I am free to the extent that I can choose my life path.”
 - Coercion = significant deprivation relative to status quo;
 - Health care, nutrition, shelter, and political power are essential for exercising freedom (Sen);

Goals : Security

Three concepts of security

- Absence of worry (Rockwell);
- Good policy (Roosevelt);
- Scientific risk mitigation (expected values);



Risk analysis and Expected Value

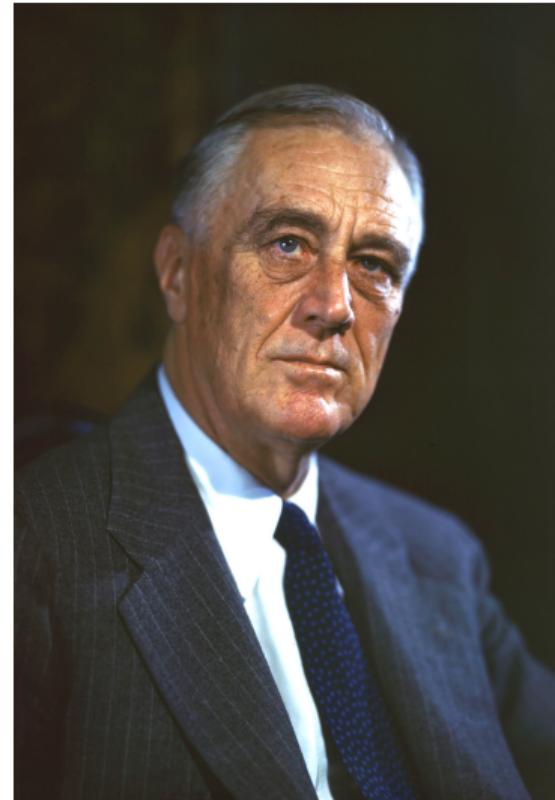
- **Expected value** = weighting the value of each outcome by the likelihood that it happens;
 - Gambling: suppose w/ probability 0.75 you win \$10, w/ probability 0.15 you win \$5, w/ probability 0.1 you lose \$10. Then expected value is:
$$0.75 * 10 + 0.15 * 5 + 0.1 * (-10) = \$7.25;$$
 - Strong axiomatic reasons to use (e.g. Von Neumann-Morgenstern Utility Theorem);
- Widely used (in much more general forms) in economics and mathematics;

Criticism of Expected Value

- Expected value \neq psychological security – requires agenda setting (e.g. cholesterol);
- An event is less bad if it isn't certain to occur;
 - If an event would be absolutely catastrophic but highly unlikely to occur, it would count for almost nothing in the analysis;
 - Not clear why this is problematic – should something become *more* impactful if less likely?
- Expected value isn't the way people experience insecurity:
 - Before: doesn't account for imagination (why can't you just add more terms?);
 - After: Actual outcome does not equal expected value (irrelevant as long as it is one of the possibilities);
- More compelling – results from experimental economics:
 - Ellsberg paradox: choices violate predictions of expected utility;
 - Allais paradox: axiom of rationality (Independence) may be violated.

Security in the Polis

- Threat prevention;
- Harm mitigation;
- Reassurance;
 - Project control;
 - Absolute characterizations;
 - Decisive action (e.g. Cheney's one percent criterion).



Are there tradeoffs?

Equality-Efficiency Tradeoffs

- Argument: equality seeking policy (e.g. redistribution) compromise efficiency and thereby social welfare;
 - Inequality promotes productivity;
 - Redistribution is administratively costly;
- Empirical evidence is mixed.

Welfare–Efficiency Tradeoffs

- Moral hazard arguments can be used to suggest a tradeoff:
 - Welfare policy = meeting needs without work;
 - Recipients will work less as will providers;
 - Total productivity will go down;
- Theoretical: how to square distaste for risk with welfare–efficiency tradeoff?
- Empirical: sketchy support in the data (e.g. NJ negative income tax, cross national employment comparisons, consumption of medical care).

Liberty Tradeoffs

- Liberty–Equality Tradeoff

- Redistribution creates equality (in resources) but costs liberty for the advantaged;
- Tradeoff is clear under the negative conception of liberty;
- Stone: Under the positive conception of liberty a society that maximizes equality of wealth, health, knowledge, and power also equalizes its citizens' freedom to choose their life plans.
Liberty and equality are not in a trade-off (maximize equality of wealth without limiting life plan choice for the advantaged?);

- Liberty–Welfare Tradeoff

- Help = dependence;
- Formal rights may not help much when power dynamics favor one side.

Security Tradeoffs

- Liberty–Security Tradeoff
 - Maximizing security requires restrictions on individual liberty;
 - e.g. the Patriot Act/war on terror, suspension of Habeas Corpus;
- Efficiency–Security Tradeoff
 - Guns vs butter.

Why should we care?

If there are tradeoffs then increasing one goal means decreasing another – will exacerbate conflict caused by $v \neq w$:

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Why should we care?

Many policies aim at mitigating risk of harm (e.g. the what would happen if we didn't act question). Understanding how to produce security and what makes risk acceptable enables policy makers to manipulate support for their policies.

Birkland+ Model of Policy

- Policy Domain: what substantive problems are under consideration? This specifies:
 - The actors involved, official actors who can make decisions + stakeholders;
 - Distribution of benefits/costs ⇒ actor organization, e.g. iron triangle, policy community;
 - The systemic agenda;
- Input-output Model:
 - Actors: legislature, executive, bureaucrats, justices and the available levers;
 - Inputs: agenda setting (application of power/social construction, focusing events, indicator change driven esp by unofficial actors) **sets goals**, determines the causal model, which specifies the institutional agenda, and leads to the policies on the decision agenda;
 - Black box decision making, timing (incrementalism, punctuated eq) driven by indicators/focusing events, choice driven by e.g. median voter thm, Arrow's thm;
 - Round 1: works on decision agenda, leads to outputs (e.g. statute laws, rules, court decisions);
 - Round 2: Implementation, leads to outcomes;
- Outcomes: Feedback from failure and success, learning leads to iteration and updates.

Problems : Symbols

Something that stands for something else – tell stories that define policy problems.

Stories of Change

- Two variations, **rising** and **declining**:
 - Rising: things are becoming more favorable (e.g. post Communist Poland);
 - Declining: things are becoming less favorable (e.g. post WWI Britain);
- Perhaps correlated with development:
 - Developed countries' progress is past;
 - Developing countries current experience is material and technological progress;
- 'Change is only an illusion' – (e.g. Why Most Published Research Findings Are False, Ioannidis 2005).



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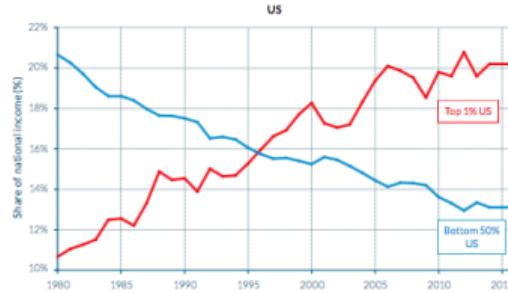
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Figure E3

Top 1% vs. Bottom 50% national income shares in the US and Western Europe, 1980–2016:

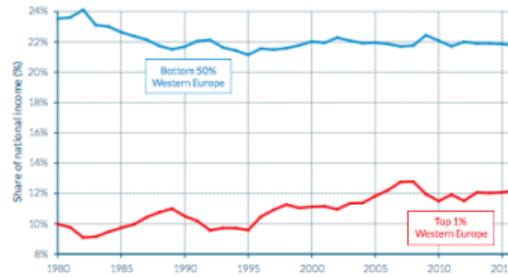
Diverging income inequality trajectories



Source: WID World (2017). See wdi2018.xls(wdr) for data series and notes.

In 2016, 22% of national income was received by the top 1% in Western Europe, compared to 20% in the United States. In 1980, 30% of national income was received by the top 1% in Western Europe, compared to 11% in the United States.

Western Europe



Source: WID World (2017). See wdi2018.xls(wdr) for data series and notes.

In 2016, 22% of national income was received by the bottom 50% in Western Europe.

- **Helplessness and Control:**

- "This is bad but let me argue that this is a **problem** and not a **condition**";
- Example: climate change;
- Example: Keynesian economics;
- Tied to Kingdon's streams metaphor;

- Variations:

- Conspiracy: "This is bad and under human control... but it's been controlled by a small group secretly who wants to harm you!"
 - Shift issues from fate to human control;
 - Reveal harm has been deliberately caused or knowingly tolerated;
 - Call to wrest control from the few who benefit at the expense of the many;
 - e.g. the deep state, the financial crisis;
- Blame-the-victim: "This is bad but it's under **their** control so it's their fault!"
 - Shift issues from fate to human control;
 - Locates control in the people who suffer from the problem;
 - End with a call for victims to reform their own behavior;
 - e.g. the financial crisis, students.

Stories of Power: blame the victim

During the State of the Union, President Obama called for a new era of responsibility, and declared that there will be “no bailouts,” yet he offered a supposed solution for the ongoing mortgage crisis that rewards irresponsibility by promising even more bailouts for “underwater” homeowners.

From Mortgage Crisis: Stop Rewarding Irresponsible Consumers

Narrative Types

- Synecdoche: the whole represented by one of its parts:
 - OSHA tooth regulation;
 - Ticking time bomb terrorist;
 - Stone's presentation of the market model;

- Metaphor: if *A* is like *B* then we can solve *A* the way we've solved *B*:
 - Organisms (organizations have goals);
 - Natural laws (Malthus);
 - Machines (economics);
 - Wedges/Slippery slopes/Scale changes (gun control);
 - Containers (borders, power vacuum);
 - Disease (communism);
 - War (drugs, COVID).

Why should we care?

Political actors use symbols that define problems in ways that will persuade doubters and attract support

again¹⁵. The quality of affordable housing has been shown to be low as well. Comparing the number of code violations (figure 1) to the areas with the highest cost burden, the darker shading in figure 2, there is an obvious correlation. The Biennial Housing Report explains that the highest concentration is on the isthmus because the housing supply is older and it is primarily student renters who are not aware of their rights.

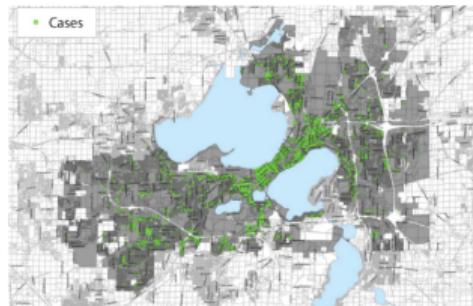


Figure 1 - from City of Madison

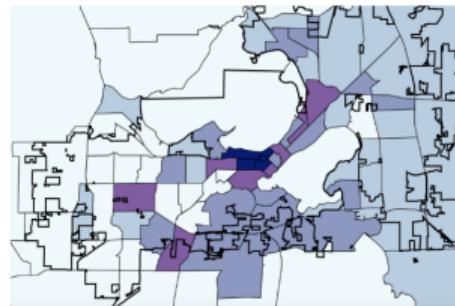
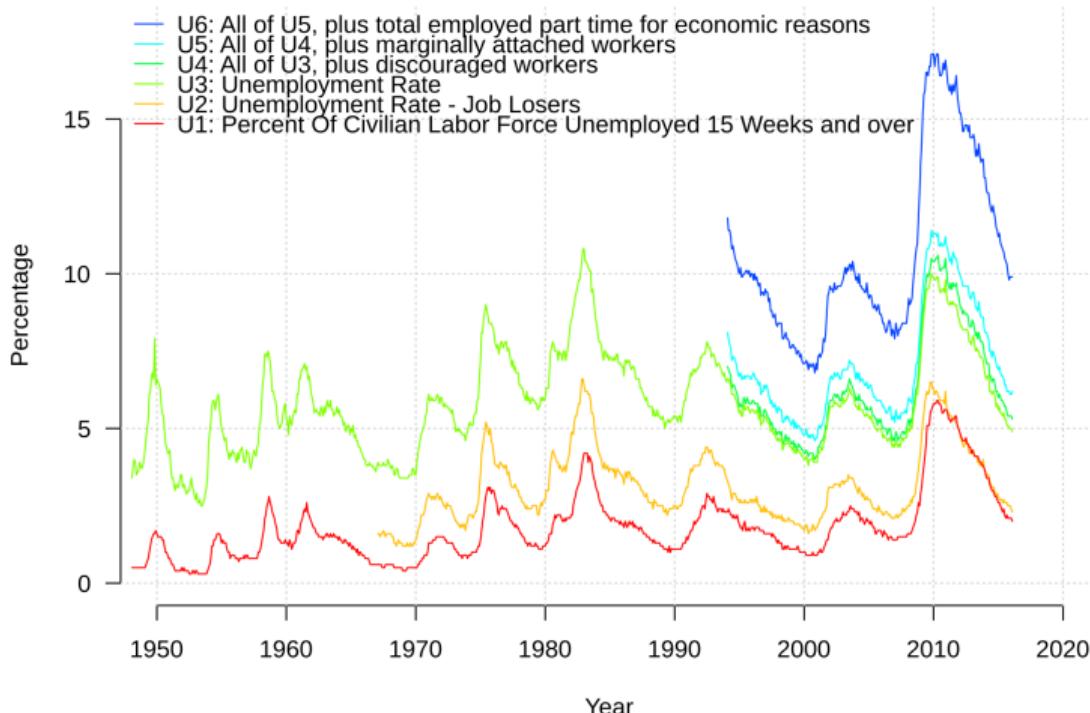


Figure 2 - From HUD CPD Map

Problems : Numbers

Describing with numbers

Measurement of unemployment



Choices

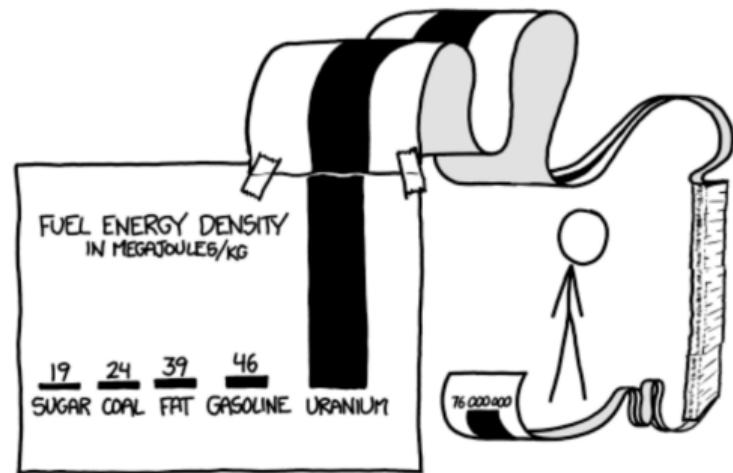
- How many public water systems are there in the US?
- Public water system: ≥ 15 service connections or service to an average of ≥ 25 people for ≥ 60 days a year;
- With this definition, over 148k;
 - Community Water System;
 - Non-Transient Non-Community Water System;
 - Transient Non-Community Water System.

Choices

- “As answers to policy problems, the resolution numbers offer is nothing more than a human decision about how to count as” (i.e. numbers = metaphors);
- Wrongful exclusion:
 - Assertion of a likeness where measurement assigns a difference;
 - Examples: unemployed, homelessness, grades, excess mortality during war;
- Wrongful inclusion:
 - Assertion of a difference where measurement assigns a likeness;
 - Example: excess mortality during war (Iraq war deaths);

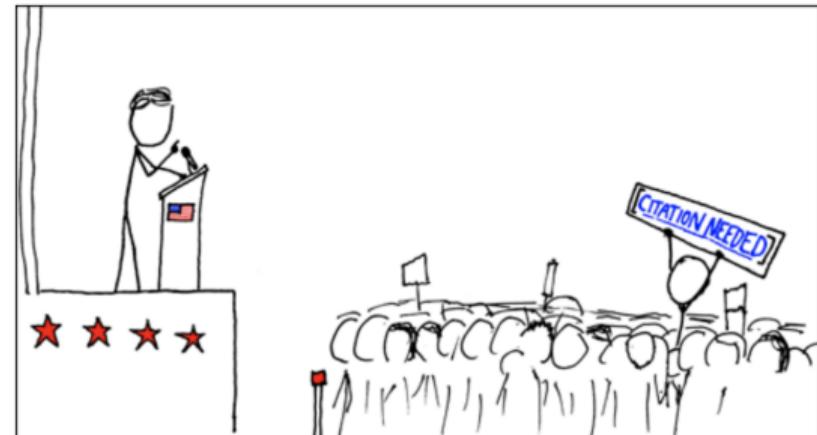
Artifacts and dangers...

- Numbers can reduce conflicts to a single dimension;
 - e.g., if we only considered the energy density of fuel sources (versus cost or safety), we might draft policy to build more nuclear power plants...
- Numbers legitimize political decisions;
 - ...and sometimes mask the political nature of a decision;
 - For example, numbers suggest that safety can be defined through science (but recall the complexity and subjective nature of “Security”);
 - Back to Egan: What is a “safe number of organisms that could be discharged per cubic meter of water?”



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Observer Effects

- In science (especially social science), we confront observer effects—the fact that things, and especially people, behave differently when observed;
 - Physics: uncertainty (Heisenberg) and its generalizations;
 - Social science: poll responses;
- Can interact with counting – by counting people as part of a group, a policy may induce them to act as a group (statistical community becomes a natural community). Group theories of politics (e.g., pluralism) tell us to expect these groups to then advocate for resources, privileges, or protection in future policy processes.
- Question: if the Department of Justice Antitrust Division measures market concentration to decide whether to permit corporate mergers and acquisitions, how do you think this might affect how large companies lobby regarding the definition of their “market”?

Why should we care?

The power to measure is the power to control. Measurers have a lot of discretion in their choice of what and how to measure.

Problems : Causes

How the world works

To Know the Causes of Things

- **Causality:** necessary and sufficient conditions;
 - Very difficult;
 - Absolutely crucial for effective problem solving;
- Ideal: causes are objective and can be identified by scientific analysis;
- Stone: causal analysis has prescriptive power:
 - Like numbers, causes highlight some aspects of a problem and ignore others;
 - Causal chains are stories that define problems and assign blame;
 - Because they have this power there are incentives to use them strategically.

Typology of causal theories (Table 9.1)

- Unguided actions/Intended consequences – **mechanical cause**:
 - Machines that perform to spec but cause harm;
 - Rigid bureaucratic routines;
- Unguided actions/unintended consequences – **accidental cause**:
 - Natural disasters;
 - Fate/bad luck;
- Guided actions/Intended consequences – **intentional cause**:
 - Oppression;
 - Conspiracy;
 - Known but ignored harms;
 - Victim blaming;
- Guided actions/unintended consequences – **inadvertent cause**:
 - unintended side effects;
 - Victim blaming.

Complexity

- Many policy problems—such as toxic hazards, global warming, oil spills, and food safety—require a more **complex model of cause**... can shift problems to appear accidental or unintended;
- Complex systems:
 - Social systems necessary to solve modern problems are inherently complex;
 - Multiple actors + complex feedback loops = certain but impossible to anticipate failure;
- Institutional complexity:
 - Social problems caused by webs of large organizations with built-in incentive structures and patterns of behavior;
 - e.g. US government procurement;
- Historical complexity:
 - Decisions in one period determine the choices available in future periods;
 - Path dependence – e.g. QWERTY keyboards.

Why should we care?

The role of causality is why good research and understanding of legal authority are so important for writing policy memos. Without evidence and authority that your audience sees as legitimate, they will not take your recommendations seriously.

Causal theories are efforts to control interpretations and images of problems, to describe harms and difficulties, to attribute them to actions of actors, and thereby to allocate government power to stop the harm.

Problems : Interests

Who is affected and in what way

How are interests represented?

- In the market model of society:
 - Actors know their own tastes/preferences better than anybody else (perfect info?);
 - Leaders don't need to define other people's interests;
 - Actor goal is to maximize utility;
- In the polis model of society:
 - Actors don't enter politics with well-defined interests;
 - Leaders try to gather support for proposed policies by explaining to actors what their interests are;
 - Group identities and memberships shape actor interests;
- Example – black woman who is a small business owner and parent:
 - Black (race, NAACP);
 - Woman (gender, NOW);
 - Small business owner (class, Chamber of Commerce);
 - Parent (family status, MADD).

Mobilizing Interests

- **Mobilization:** when people understand their problems are shared by others and they organize to influence policy;
- How does it happen?
 - Pluralism – if people are adversely affected by a social condition they will organize;
 - Rational choice – group formation will be rare b/c **prisoner's dilemma** and **free riding**;
- Prisoner's dilemma (nobody uses this anymore!):

		Actor 2	
		Confess	Clam up
	Confess	-5,-5	0,-10
Actor 1	Clam up	-10,0	-1,-1

Problem here isn't that actors can't talk - it's that they can't make post-game enforceable contracts (but see repeated PD);

- Free riding: public goods mean that everybody receives benefits even with no work (but see The Logic of Collective Action Olson 1965).

Mobilizing Interests

- Stone: groups do form (thus falsifying rational choice) but don't get equal opportunity to influence policy (thus falsifying pluralism);
 - Note: Stone is conflating rational choice w/ prisoner's dilemma (i.e. a synecdoche) – this is not correct, e.g. coop. game theory, non-coop. game theory w/ self-enforcing coalitions;
- In the polis:
 - Actors have **ties** (e.g. parents, friends, partners, teachers, bosses, and cultural heroes);
 - Ties create strong **mechanisms** of influence and moral leadership;
 - Mechanisms create **norms** (e.g. altruism, reciprocity, cooperation) and ready channels for collective action;
 - All of these factors create **social capital**, which, like physical assets or material wealth, can be used to harness individual energies for the common good;

Issues and interests define each other

- Different policy tools generate different kinds of politics:

	Concentrated Benefits	Diffuse Benefits
Concentrated Costs	Interest Group Politics	Entrepeneurial Politics
	Social security	Tariffs
	Sales tax	State mandated health insurance
	Stalemate/alternating victory	Status Quo
Diffuse Costs	Clientele politics	Majoritarian politics
	Food safety regulation	Labor-management bargaining
	Carbon tax	
	Rapid change	Gradual expansion

- Stone: “Programs don’t themselves have inherent distributions of costs and benefits. Rather, political actors strategically represent programs as contests between different types of costs and benefits.”

Why should we care?

An effective policy memo analyzes the political terrain of existing stakeholder groups and anticipates how stakeholder interests that might be mobilized by policy, even interest groups that are not yet mobilized or do not yet exist because policy proposals create interests.

Problems : Decisions

Optimization?

How do we choose?

- **Rational choice (used by policy makers internally?)** – a policy problem is a choice facing a political actor:
 - Given a fixed goal...
 - Given an enumerated list of alternative means for attaining the goal...
 - Estimate consequences for each alternative;
 - Choose the alternative most likely to attain the goal;
- Most rational choice approaches connect the second two with optimization;
- **Polis (clearly external):**
 - Define goals ambiguously to maximize support (e.g. Greenspan);
 - Keep undesirable alternatives off the agenda by not mentioning them;
 - Make your preferred alternative appear to be the only feasible or possible one;
 - Focus on one part of the causal chain and ignore others that would require politically difficult or costly policy actions;
 - Blend alternatives to avoid triggering opposition;
 - Select only consequences whose costs and benefits will make your preferred course of action look best.

Control over decisions

- **Issue framing:** the process of focusing attention on a particular slice of an extended causal chain;
- Recall the COVID vaccine example:
 - Same expected values;
 - Changing labels (“lives saved” vs. “deaths”) can turn most people from risk-tolerant to risk-averse = power of issue framing;
- Suggests that choices among policy options depend on more than their expected outcomes;
- **Hobson’s Choice:** an either/or choice in which one choice is clearly terrible:
 - e.g. Friedman’s “central direction involving the use of coercion” vs “voluntary cooperation”;
 - It’s a trap! Disarm it by imagining more possibilities;

Utilitarian vs. deontological decision-making

- **Utilitarianism (normative ethical theory)**: the morality of an action should be based on consequences, specifically maximizing the resulting good or utility;
- **Deontology (also normative ethical theory)**: the morality of an action should be based on whether that action itself is right or wrong under a series of rules;
- What are the arguments for/against torture?
- Is the Constitution utilitarian or deontological?

Utilitarian vs. deontological decision-making

“Converting the Great Lakes fishery from one that was essentially managed as a self-sustaining public food supply into one that was intensively managed for the thrill of recreational anglers was, for Tanner, a natural evolution. **“You manage the resource to produce the greatest good for the greatest number for the longest period of time,”** Tanner said, borrowing the axiom of the first boss of the U.S. Forest Service, Gifford Pinchot.” – Egan, p. 84.



Why should we care?

This is why it is important to compare good options—that is, options your reader will agree are some of the best things they might do. If the options you present appear to bias the decision, they are not going to take your analysis seriously. But, of course, the options you choose will always affect the decision! The trick is to present options that don't make your analysis seem pre-judged or tilted to a particular outcome.

Birkland+ Model of Policy

- Policy Domain: what substantive problems are under consideration? This specifies:
 - The actors involved, official actors who can make decisions + stakeholders;
 - Distribution of benefits/costs ⇒ actor organization, e.g. iron triangle, policy community;
 - The systemic agenda;
- Input-output Model:
 - Actors: legislature, executive, bureaucrats, justices and the available levers;
 - Inputs: agenda setting (application of power/social construction, focusing events, indicator change driven esp by unofficial actors) sets goals, determines the causal model, which specifies the institutional agenda, and leads to the policies on the decision agenda;
 - Black box decision making, timing (incrementalism, punctuated eq) driven by indicators/focusing events, choice driven by e.g. median voter thm, Arrow's thm;
 - Round 1: works on decision agenda, leads to outputs (e.g. statute laws, rules, court decisions);
 - Round 2: Implementation, leads to outcomes;
- Outcomes: Feedback from failure and success, learning leads to iteration and updates.

Birkland+ Model of Policy, goals

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Solutions : Incentives

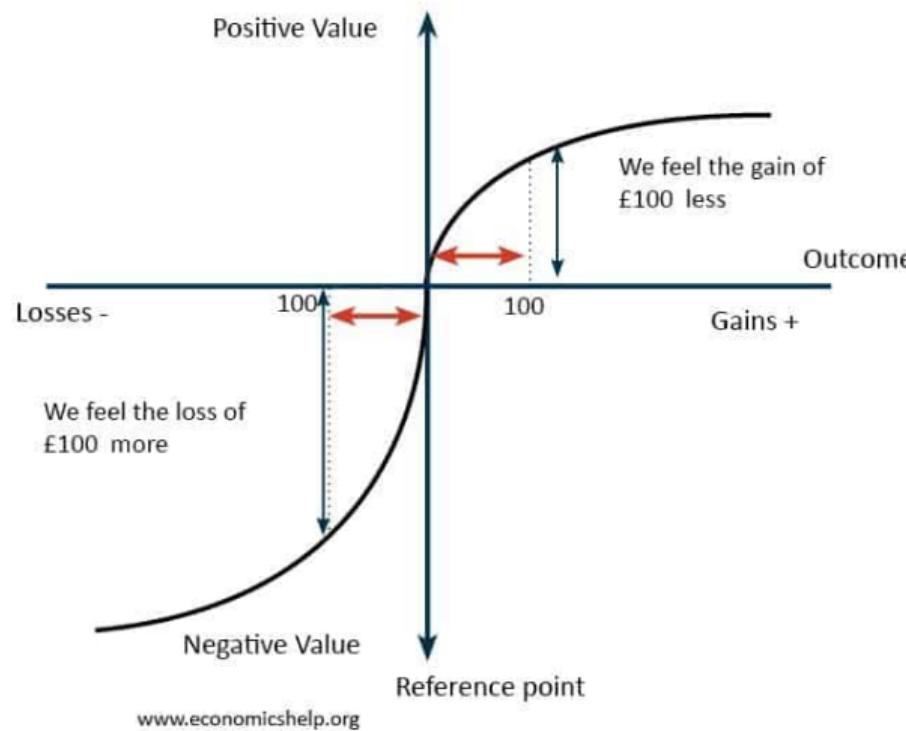
Behavior change through rewards and penalties

Commons problems: where private gains mean public costs (e.g. pollution) OR where public gains mean private costs (e.g. taxes).

Commons problems: where private gains mean public costs (e.g. pollution) OR where public gains mean private costs (e.g. taxes).

Incentive policies are **intended to bring individual preferences in line with community goals**

Prospect Theory: preferences



How are incentives supposed work?

Incentives are designed by one group (e.g. policy analysts), applied by another (e.g. exec branch bureaucrats), and received by a third (e.g. individuals, firms, etc.).

How are incentives supposed work?

- Four parts: Designer, Giver; Target; Incentive;
- Incentive-based policies are implicitly **based on utilitarian behavioral model**:
 - Targets are rational w/ well-defined preferences and take purposive action in pursuit;
 - Targets can choose, are prospective, and are unitary (why must they be unitary?);
- In the polis Giver/Target may be collective entities with some inner conflict and some ability to act as a unified group;
 - Giver: city common council, large executive branch agency (e.g. IRS, State Dept);
 - Target: a single person heading a firm, organization, or government entity (what about Arrow's Theorem?).

Designing Incentives

- Effective incentive design requires a good causal model;
 - Numerous penalties and rewards structure any actor's life PRIOR to another intervention;
 - If problem is rooted in institutional/historical patterns targeting a small group is likely ineffective;
- Requires understanding the social relations incentives create:
 - What is the baseline?
 - Positive incentives can create bonds of obligation through reciprocity – an alliance;
 - Negative incentives can create an adversarial relationship;
 - Successful negative incentives are free, successful positive incentives are costly;
 - Both imply unequal power: one party sets terms/rules, monitors behavior, and decides whether to dispense consequences;
- Example: time horizons.

Implementation in the polis

- Gaps between Designers and Givers – people don't usually want to cause suffering by meting out penalties:
 - professional disciplinary board reluctant to revoke licenses;
 - Best undergraduate thesis recommendations;
 - Mandatory minimums, Medieval juries;
 - Poor incentive design = penalties that can't be used;
- Gaps between Designers and Targets:
 - Differences in understanding of meaning (e.g. high school);
 - Targets are strategic and adaptive (e.g. firms pass penalties on to consumers);
 - Pay for performance schemes;
 - Worker safety at DuPont.

Some things to be aware of...

- Make no mistake: incentives are an exercise of power;
- Incentives can be demeaning;
- Incentives can undermine public spirit.

Why should we care?

Incentives are the currency of policymaking – many of the recommendations you've made are probably expressible as incentives. These are factors that increase/diminish the likelihood the incentive structure you assemble will succeed.

Problems : Rules

The essential form of social coordination

What is a rule?

A statement that prescribes **actions** to be taken in certain **contexts**.

What is a rule?

- Rules have two parts: **actions** and **contexts**:
 - Actions are usually well-defined and consistent with the Constitution;
 - Context = personal identity, credentialing, location, time, combinations thereof;
 - Ambiguity of contexts create fuzzy boundaries;
- Example: If LWRF discharges to a non-point source that is the functional equivalent of a direct discharge then it must apply for an NPDES permit;
- Example: If LWRF applies for and receives an NPDES permit then it can dispense treated wastewater into class V wells.

40 CFR 230.3(s) The term waters of the United States means:

- ① All waters which are currently used, or were used in the past, or may be susceptible to use in interstate or foreign commerce, including all waters which are subject to the ebb and flow of the tide;
- ② All interstate waters including interstate wetlands;
- ③ All other waters such as intrastate lakes, rivers, streams (including intermittent streams), mudflats, sandflats, wetlands, sloughs, prairie potholes, wet meadows, playa lakes, or natural ponds, the use, degradation or destruction of which could affect interstate or foreign commerce including any such waters:
 - ① Which are or could be used by interstate or foreign travelers for recreational or other purposes;
 - ② From which fish or shellfish are or could be taken and sold in interstate or foreign commerce;
 - ③ Which are used or could be used for industrial purposes by industries in interstate commerce;
- ④ All impoundments of waters otherwise defined as waters of the United States under this definition;
- ⑤ Tributaries of waters identified in paragraphs (s)(1) through (4) of this section;
- ⑥ The territorial sea;
- ⑦ Wetlands adjacent to waters (other than waters that are themselves wetlands) identified in paragraphs (s)(1) through (6) of this section; waste treatment systems, including treatment ponds or lagoons designed to meet the requirements of CWA (other than cooling ponds as defined in 40 CFR 423.11(m) which also meet the criteria of this definition) are not waters of the United States.

What do rules do and how do they work?

- A rule may:
 - Mandate behavior (e.g. contracts, wills, lawsuits);
 - Confer power (e.g. rules that agencies and local governments must follow to make policy);
- Rules require judgements of the form: these things are **like** the context of the rule so the action applies;
 - To judge things as like or different requires selecting some features and ignoring others;
 - e.g. people by age or location;
- Why do we follow rules?
 - Sanctions befall us if we do not;
 - Rules are **legitimate** – perceived as good and right by those who behavior they are meant to control.

Choices: role of discretion

- A good rule should be precise enough to accomplish its purpose and prevent people from manipulating it in ways that undermine its intent (no discretion):
 - Like cases treated alike;
 - Insulate citizens from the whims, prejudices, or personal predilections of officials;
 - Predictability;
 - Drawbacks: insensitive to individual/contextual differences, stifle creative responses to new situations, are easily outdated;
- A good rule should be flexible enough to be useful (yes discretion):
 - Allow sensitivity to individual/contextual differences;
 - Empowers creative responses to new situations;
 - Allows for tacit knowledge (e.g. “I can’t define it, but I know it when I see it” – Justice Potter Stewart);
 - Symbolizes ideals and aspirations (e.g. the evolution of the 14th amendment);

Choices: enforcement

- Enforcement requires monitoring:
 - Police patrol model = enforcers look for violations;
 - Fire alarm model = enforcers rely on individuals to report violations;
 - Under certain circumstances fire alarm model is more efficient;
 - May depend on details of information environment;
- Rules foster democracy and democracy fosters rules.

Why should we care?

Rules generate practical metaphors – they create consequences for likeness and are how incentives are operationalized.

Problems : Facts

The currency of persuasion

An experiment: which do you think is right?

- “Civil government, so far as it is instituted for the security of property, is in reality instituted for the defense of the rich against the poor, or of those who have some property against those who have none at all.” (Karl Marx, *The Communist Manifesto*)
- “Society does not consist of individuals but expresses the sum of interrelations, the relations within which these individuals stand.” (John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*)
- “The laws of property have made property of things which never ought to be property, and absolute property where only a qualified property ought to exist. They have not held the balance fairly between human beings, but have heaped impediments upon some, to give advantage to others; they have purposely fostered inequalities, and prevented all from starting fair in the race.” (Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*)

An experiment: which do you think is right? Turns out I lied... did the speaker matter?

- “Civil government, so far as it is instituted for the security of property, is in reality instituted for the defense of the rich against the poor, or of those who have some property against those who have none at all.” (Adam Smith)
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Making Facts in the Polis

- There is no such thing as a fact! Facts don't exist independent of interpretive lenses:
 - Words (e.g. classification as gaming or gambling);
 - Statistical choices in science (e.g. how to count, model specification);
 - POV (e.g. unreliable witnesses – indeed facts themselves are under dispute in a trial);
- The doubt strategy: Industry science-based challenges to research ⇒ “flaws mean that finding is no more than an unproven hypothesis” (e.g. tobacco industry);



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Essay

Why Most Published Research Findings Are False

John P. A. Ioannidis

Summary

There is increasing concern that most current published research findings are false. The probability that a research claim is true may depend on study power and bias, the number of other studies on the same question, and, importantly, the ratio of true to no relationships among the multiple relationships probed in each scientific field. In this framework, a research finding is less likely to be true when the studies conducted in a field are smaller; when effect sizes are smaller; when there is a greater number and lesser preselection of tested relationships, where there is greater use of exploratory data analysis, outcomes, and analytical models; when there is greater financial and other interest and prejudice; and when more teams are involved in a scientific field in chase of statistical significance.

Given that many current research designs and settings, it is more likely for a research claim to be false than true. Moreover, for many current scientific fields, claimed research findings may often be simply accurate measures of the prevailing bias. In this essay, I discuss the implications of these problems for the conduct and interpretation of research.

Modeling the Framework for False Positive Findings

Several methodologies have pointed out [1–4] that the high rate of nonreplication (lack of confirmation) of research discoveries is a consequence of the convenient, yet ill-founded strategy of claiming conclusive research findings solely on the basis of a single study assessed by modern statistical methods, typically for a p -value less than 0.05. Research is not most appropriately represented and summarized by p -values, but, unfortunately, there is a widespread notion that medical research articles

factors that influence this problem and some corollaries thereof.

is characteristic of the field and can vary a lot depending on whether the field targets highly likely relationships or searches for only one or a few true relationships among thousands and millions of hypotheses that may be probed simultaneously, or, for computational simplicity, in circumscribed fields where either there is only one true relationship (among many that can be hypothesized) or the power is similar to find any of the several existing true relationships. The probability of a single study being true is $R/(R+1)$. The probability of finding a true relationship reflects the power $1 - \beta$ (one minus the Type II error rate). The probability of claiming a relationship when none truly exists reflects the Type I error rate α . Assuming that all relationships are being probed in the field, the expected values of the 2×2 table are given in Table 1. After a research finding has been claimed based on achieving formal statistical significance, the probability that it is true is the positive predictive value, PPV . The PPV is also the complementary probability of what *Ioannidis et al.* have called the false positive report probability [10]. According to the 2×2 table, one gets $PPV = (1 - \beta)R/(R + \betaR + \alpha)$. A research finding is thus

Citation: Ioannidis JP (2005) Why most published research findings are false. *J Clin Med* 2(8):e124.
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Acknowledgments: PPV, positive predictive value
John P. A. Ioannidis is in the Department of Hygiene and Epidemiology, University of Ioannina School of Medicine, Ioannina, Greece; Department of Clinical Research and Health Policy Studies, Department of Medicine, Tufts New England Medical Center, Tufts University School of Medicine, Boston, Massachusetts, United States of America. E-mail: joannidis@tufts.edu
Competing interests: The author has declared that no competing interests exist.
DOI: [10.1371/journal.pmed.0020124](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.0020124)

Two faces of persuasion

- **Persuasion can be enlightenment:** science, evidence, logic, reason, rationality obviate the need for violence... NOT emotion, biases, loyalty, or passion;
- **Persuasion can be propaganda or indoctrination:** manipulation via appeals to fear and anxiety ⇒ stymies capacity for independent thought.

Challenges to becoming informed

- How do we distinguish **information** and **education** from **propaganda** and **indoctrination**?
- Factors that divert us from rational consideration of information:
 - source (race/looks/manners/reputation);
 - emotion;
 - composition of group;
- Example – Are statements doubting human-caused climate change propaganda? Always? Sometimes? Never?

Indoctrination

- Definition:
 - A regime in which dominant elites shape people's beliefs and knowledge...
 - ...in a manipulative and self-interested way...
 - ...that deprives them of the capacity for independent thinking;
- The power of business to persuade:
 - pivotal position in capitalist economies;
 - overwhelming financial and organizational resources to shape political culture and influence elections;
 - manipulation of scientific information to serve its economic interests;
 - control of the media;
- The power of government to persuade:
 - Supplying information (e.g. Iraq war former military officer commentators);
 - Withholding information (e.g. casualty counts);
 - Low level bureaucrat action (e.g. voter registration in the south).

Why should we care?

We have treated peer reviewed publications as facts – they are not.

Problems : Rights

Formalized political demands

Traditions of Rights

- **Realist:** rights are citizens' claims backed by the power of the state;
 - Expectations realized by invoking government;
 - Rights do not exist outside the laws of particular political systems;
- **Normative:** rights are moral principles;
 - Found in natural law, religious texts, rational thought, public opinion, social practices and institutions, and the idea of universal human rights;
 - Derived from some source other than the power of enforcement;
 - Rights can exist without being actively claimed or backed by the state;
- These two forms of rights are unified in the polis:
 - Aggrieved groups organize to claim new rights not yet legally recognized (normative);
 - They also act to ensure that rights formalized in law are applied (realist);
- Were the founders realists or normativists in terms of rights?

Rights as policies

- Typology:
 - Procedural – decision must be made in a certain way, outcome not guaranteed (e.g. trial by jury of peers);
 - Negative substantive – specific entitlements of non-interference (no second party required)
 - Positive substantive – specific entitlements expressed duties required of a second party;
 - All define relationships;
- Step 1) Official statement of the right:
 - Statutory/Administrative law/Precedential (Common) law;
- Step 2) Grievance process:
 - two parties—one claiming a right denied, the other alleged to have denied the right—air their dispute via reasoned argument before a neutral third party;
 - Decision comes through application of preexisting rules to the facts of the particular dispute;
- Step 3) Enforcement – threat of force.

Creating rights in the polis

- **Normative** – disjunction between perceptions of moral rights and lived experiences in political practice drives rights-claiming (e.g. Brown v Board of Education);
- **Sociological** – sociological arguments often used to characterize change to justify a break from precedent – these are always interpreted through political and ideological lenses (e.g. the lifespan of the Voting Rights Act);
- **Political:**
 - Ideal: identity should not change access to courts or probability of victory therein;
 - Polis: differing social positions that give the more or less power w.r.t courts;
 - Repeat players – low value for any one case, interested in general declaration of rights that will manage future cases;
 - One shot players – high value on tangible outcome of current case;
 - Power and resources disparities between repeat players and one shotters implies they are not equal before the law;
 - Strategic manipulation via test cases – seeking plaintiffs with a high probability of winning;

Why should we care?

Rights work by dramatizing power relationships as personal stories, by legitimizing political demands, by mobilizing new political alliances, and, eventually, by transforming social institutions.

Problems : Powers

The structure of decision-making institutions

What is power?

- **Power = authority** and **capacity** to act;
 - Authority = making policy decisions;
 - Capacity = carrying out policy decisions;
 - For us, this is determined by the constitution;
- In the polis, policies that reform decision-making processes are the most consequential political strategy;
 - Process changes = changing who makes the decision = reallocations of power;
 - Attempts by someone who is not winning in one arena to shift decision making to a different arena where they might prevail;
 - The framers understood the consequentialism which is why constitutional amendments are hard to do;
- Two perspectives on process changes:
 - Does this change solve the nominal problem?
 - Who gains the right to participate in decisions about the problem?

Variations of institutional reform

- Membership – voting and citizenship:
 - Paradox: government controlled by the people, yet can choose their citizens;
 - Balance benefits for membership with costs to democracy for exclusion;
- Representation – selecting leaders:
 - Substantive representation = shared goals;
 - Descriptive representation = shared characteristics (e.g. Voting Rights Act);
 - Delegation;
- Centralizing and decentralizing power:
 - Federalism: combine autonomy of members with uniform policymaking by central authority;
 - Organization of authority is always a struggle over power – who benefits (e.g. income redistribution);
- Accountability:
 - Paradox: people choose leaders who subsequently control people – accountability is intended to resolve this;
- Privatization:
 - “outsourcing sovereignty” (e.g. prison management, deregulation, govt procurement);

Articles of Confederation (1776)

unicameralism

1 state 1 vote

power distributed across states

No universal citizen rights

Support from 9/13 states required
to enforce law everywhere

Constitution (1789)

bicameralism

1 rep 1 vote

Federalism (superior/subordinates)

Citizens = in all states, rights formalized (BoR)
Passage by Congress/President
to enforce law everywhere

Why should we care?

The audience for your policy can only take actions circumscribed by the powers delegated to them... though they may be able to propose changes in institutional makeup.

Birkland+ Model of Policy, goals, problems

- Policy Domain: what substantive problems are under consideration? This specifies:
 - The actors involved, official actors who can make decisions + **stakeholders**;
 - **Distribution of benefits/costs** ⇒ actor organization, e.g. iron triangle, policy community;
 - The systemic agenda;
- Input-output Model;
 - Actors: legislature, executive, bureaucrats, justices and the available levers;
 - Inputs: **agenda setting (application of power/social construction, focusing events, indicator change driven esp by unofficial actors) sets goals, determines the causal model**, which specifies the institutional agenda, and leads to the policies on the decision agenda;
 - Black box **decision making, timing (incrementalism, punctuated eq) driven by indicators/focusing events**, choice driven by e.g. median voter thm, Arrow's thm;
 - Round 1: works on decision agenda, leads to outputs (e.g. statute laws, rules, court decisions);
 - Round 2: Implementation, leads to outcomes;
- Outcomes: **Feedback from failure and success**, learning leads to iteration and updates.

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