

# Punctuated Equilibrium Theory

- General idea
  - Policy change occurs in bursts
  - Policy change is followed by long periods of stability
  - Policy change is driven by external events
  - Policy change is driven by policy-oriented learning

# Punctuated Equilibrium Theory

- The balance of political power between groups is relatively stable over long periods of time.
- Sudden shifts **punctuate** this balance of power due to changes in
  - public understanding of policy problems or
  - the balance of power between groups seeking to fight for or against policy change.