Bureaucrats Make Policy, Policy Shapes Politics:

Toward a research agenda on bureaucratic policy feedback dynamics

Devin Judge-Lord

This paper attempts to integrate two major theoretical advances political science has made on the topic of public policy. One is that bureaucrats make policy and that they do so in a rich political context. The other is that policies shape politics. With the rise of the administrative state, it is estimated that ninety percent of U.S. laws are made by agencies rather than by Congress (West and Raso 2013). If policies affect politics, then the massive amount of policymaking that takes place in the bureaucracy likely plays a large, if underappreciated, role in shaping the U.S. political landscape. Yet scholarship on bureaucratic politics tends to see agency policy as an effect rather than a cause, and scholarship on how policies affect the politics of future policymaking (i.e. "policy feedback") underappreciates the distinctiveness of bureaucratic policymaking.

I argue that assumptions about what bureaucrats ought to do has thus far hindered scholars in integrating these two ideas—that half a century after Norton E. Long, Charles Lindblom, James Q. Wilson, and others called our attention to bureaucratic politics, we have yet to fully appreciate bureaucrats as political actors. This paper aims to (1) identify how assumptions about what the bureaucracy ought to do have limited the scope of scholarship, and (2) suggest when we are likely to see policy feedback effects, given what we now know about how bureaucratic policy is made and how policy feedback mechanisms operate. I also examine the conditions under which policy feedback effects are likely to result in incremental, paradigmatic (i.e. "punctuated"), or thermostatic policy change. The result is a set of hypotheses that recast factors often seen as exogenous determinants of bureaucratic policy as endogenous relationships with expectations for the magnitude and direction of their effects on policy over time.

Compared to legislative, executive, and judicial institutions, the administrative state is a recent development in American government and remains under-theorized in political science. Unimaginable to the country's founders (Robertson 2005), the modern bureaucracy blurs lines between executive, legislative, and judicial functions (Rosenbloom 1983). While much of the bureaucracy is hierarchically organized under the president, there are practical limits on presidential control and normative reasons why imperfect

control may be desirable (Whittington and Carpenter 2003). Members of Congress also speak directly to agencies—through grants of and restrictions on agency authority, through budgeting, through hearings and reports, and through direct policy and constituent requests. Additionally, courts review policies and set policymaking deadlines—a process in which the president's solicitor general may or may not participate. In addition to (or perhaps because of) this multitude of relationships, agencies have achieved varying degrees of autonomy as legitimate policymaking institutions in their own right (Carpenter 2001, 2010).

Existing work on policy feedback focuses on how legislated entitlements or regulations affect either public support or lobbying coalitions and thus shape future legislation. Some findings from this literature are more applicable to bureaucratic policymaking than others. For example, Suzanne Mettler's (Mettler 2011) work on program implementation and the visibility of benefits is likely highly relevant. Indeed, her independent variable—the visibility of the entitlements—is a function of both congressional and bureaucratic decisions. On the other hand, if bureaucrats are less sensitive to public opinion than members of Congress, Mettler's dependent variables—individual support for specific policies and government in general—may be less relevant. Research on how policies give rise to and affect organized groups and lobbying coalitions (e.g. Mettler 1998, Hacker 2001, Baumgartner 2002, Mettler 2005, Soss, et al. 2007, Mettler, et al. 2012, Skocpol, et al. 2012) is highly relevant to bureaucratic policymaking. For example, when the Environmental Protection Agency establishes classes of power plants subject to different pollution standards, it creates distinct (and perhaps oppositional) groups of utilities and corporations with common interests who may lobby differently as a result.

I argue that the conceptual frames used to study bureaucratic policymaking (i.e. viewing agencies as agents, managers, or gatekeepers) has led scholars to focus on the effects of other actors on agencies rather than the effect of agency policy on other political actors. The dominant idea that unelected bureaucrats lack a legitimate basis to exert independent *agency* has led most scholarship to focus on constraints, "objective" goals, and mechanisms of control. Scholarship that does address bureaucratic autonomy focuses more on the ways agencies avoid control than on how they shape the political and policy terrain around them. Of this latter vein of scholarship, Carpenter (2001, 2010) offers the most complete treatment of agency policy as both effect and cause of policy and politics elsewhere, but this type of scholarship is rare and has yet to be fully integrated with macro-theories of policy feedback.

I proceed in the following steps: Section 2 builds on James Q. Wilson's "The Bureaucracy Problem" (1967) and subsequent work on the cross pressures bureaucrats face to show how different ideas about what agencies ought to do have led to several lines of research with distinct research questions.

The next section traces four strands of scholarship that I argue remained distinct due to different sets of assumptions about the role of the bureaucracy in American democracy.

Section 4 examines the various dependent and independent variables that have been used in models of agency policymaking. First, I review the work of Charles Lindblom and others on the practical constraints and the path dependence (or endogeneity) of bureaucratic policymaking—essentially how agency action depends on previous agency actions. Second, I review findings about the president, Congress, interest groups, the public, and courts as both independent and dependent (though usually independent and assumed to be exogenous) variables.

A penultimate section links bureaucratic policymaking to recent scholarship on policy feedback. I organize the literature on policy feedback by the scope of inquiry (single policy—policymaking environment) and mechanism of feedback (individual behavior, public support, group pressure, or elite support). This classification combined with the above analysis of literature on bureaucratic policymaking leads to hypotheses about which mechanisms of policy feedback are most likely to operate with which elements of agencies' political context and to what effect.

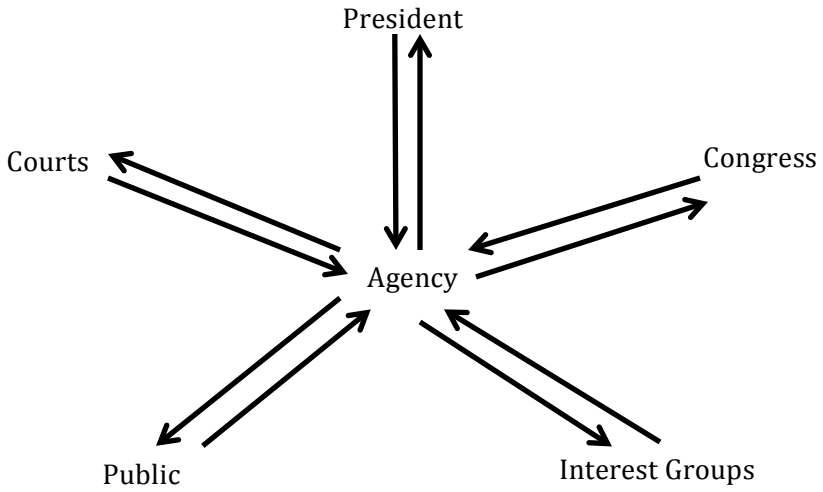
A final section discusses theoretical gaps and potential research agendas that emerge from this exercise.

Section 2: The Bureaucracy Problem

Early studies of public administration in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries assumed that problems could be solved rationally. Administration was a science with objective methods to design and carry out administrative tasks. The principles of good administration were discoverable, generalizable, and neutral (Long 1949).

In the mid-twentieth century, a wave of scholarship responded to the contrary that "the lifeblood of administration is power" and that bureaucratic decision-making is saturated with "forces on whose support, acquiescence, or temporary impotence the power to act depends" (Long 1949, pg. 1). Rather than simply being constrained by hierarchy, bureaucratic decisions are functions of a multitude of relationships with the other political institutions in which they are embedded. "Administrative organizations, however much they may appear to be the creations of art, are institutions produced in history and woven in the web of social relationships that give them life" (ibid. pg. 6). Figure 1 illustrates several possible political relationships inspired by Rosenbloom's (1983) observation that the academic study of public adminstration as "managerial," "political," and "legal" reflects the constitutional division of powers—each tradition recognizing different values and promoting different types of institutinal organization. Figure 1 adds potential relationships with interest groups and mass politics. In section 3, I argue that, within what Rosenbloom calls "political" scholarship, there are additional scholarly divisions, also based in different values. In section 4, I argue that scholars have focused on the inward facing arrows at the expense of the outward facing arrows.

Figure 1: Relationships of influence



This section addresses the above relationships within the cross cutting pressures on bureaucrats identified by James Q. Wilson (1967). Wilson argues that the bureaucracy is expected to optimize a variety of conflicting goals—each the concern of different constituents (and, I argue, scholars). He calls these goals Accountability, Efficiency, Responsiveness, Equity, and Fiscal Integrity. The remainder of this section reviews the assumptions and scholarly concerns associated with each goal except the last, which is characterized by broad general agreement but specific definitions of fiscal integrity fully depend on one's orientation to the other goals.

2.1 Accountability

Accountability for Wilson means serving the national interest as defined by the president. If we take Congress as the body responsible for legislating the national interest, accountability to Congress may be equally important, implying multiple political principals. Principal-agent scholarship tends to focus on Congress and the president (e.g. Wildavsky 1964, Niskanen 1975, McCubbins and Schwartz 1984, McCubbins, et al. 1987). However, courts also arbitrate between congressional and presidential control by reviewing bureaucratic policy for congressional intent and adding additional procedural requirements to policymaking (Bueno de Mesquita 2007).

The assumption that bureaucrats are to be accountable leads to questions about control. Under what conditions do agencies do what Congress or the president demand? Under what conditions do different structural incentives and enforcement mechanisms operate? For example, McCubbins and Schwartz (1984) argue that measures of overt control fail to capture "fire alarm" means of control that only kick in when agencies diverge from principals' preferences. Indeed there is empirical support that bureaucratic decision-making varies more from president to president than the use of direct mechanisms of control would suggest (Yackee and Yackee 2009b).

Recently, and especially relevant to the present exercise, scholarship has begun to explore the effects of "presidential pork"—bureaucratic spending as political currency—(Brady 2016) and direct requests made by Congress (Mills n.d., Waggoner n.d.).

2.2 Efficiency

Efficiency—"minimizing expenditures for a given output" (Wilson 1967, pg. 409)—is prioritized by economists and proponents of "rational" forms of policymaking like cost-benefit analysis. This concern is raised most pointedly by certain professional organizations, and think tanks. When paired with accountability it is often a certain elected officials. As will be shown in the next section, separate strands of research tend to see accountability and efficiency as either linked or in opposition. Though much more sophisticated than studies of public administration from the 19th century, scholars focusing on efficiency tend to share the view that the role of politics is to set goals and the role of administration is to mechanically optimize how goals are achieved. For example, in his influential work on public administration, Simon (1957) argues that administrative decisions ought to be judged by how well they achieved their stated objectives and the efficiency these results were obtained.

A focus on efficiency leads to questions about performance, cost, and output. Scholars view the public as consumers and want to know what the public is getting for its money and if the same results could be achieved at lower cost. Politics and power are distortionary and institutions are to be designed to optimize policy and policy output regardless of political agreement. For example, Bendor (1995) develops a formal model aimed at testing the "effectiveness of muddling through"—deriving results suggesting that it is not the most effective way to make policy in the presence of conflict. Yet contrary to claims that agency policymaking is "ossified," Yackee and Yackee (Yackee and Yackee 2010) find that that procedural constraints aimed at accountability and characterizing muddling through may actually speed up the promulgation of rules. Regardless of the empirical debate about the relationship between accountability and efficiency, in principle, mechanisms by which political a principal's control agencies may be good or bad for efficiency. A focus on efficiency simply asks what forms of accountability properly align agency incentives with maximizing output and minimizing cost and which kinds of accountability distort efficient production and delivery of public goods.

2.3 Responsiveness

Responsiveness takes several different meanings and "rarely has been defined precisely" (Verba and Nie 1972). First, it is used by principal-agent scholars to describe faithful compliance with direct orders (e.g. Chaney and Saltzstein 1998).

Second, responsiveness is sometimes used with respect to policymaking as broader version of accountability—not only to elected officials, but also to public

opinion and constituent groups. This definition has led to research questions regarding the timeliness of response to citizen requests (e.g. Lewis n.d.).

Third, an agency may be responsive to unique specific requests, perhaps from members of Congress, but more commonly from the members of the public. Wilson (1967) uses such a definition—"to meet, with alacrity and compassion, those cases which can never be brought under a single national rule and which, by common human standards of justice or benevolence, seem to require that an exception be made or a rule stretched." Wilson notes that responsiveness to individual requests and accountability to principals may conflict and Lewis and Wood (n.d.) find empirical support for this proposition. Individual responsiveness may also stand in sharp contrast with some definitions of equity. Yet courts may still support agencies when they bend the law in individual cases if they agree with the bureaucrat's concept of justice.

All three versions of responsiveness are concerns of scholars who see the proper role of agencies as faithful and neutral managers. The first type desires responsiveness to the goals of political principals. The second type assumes there exists a discernable public interest, either from public mood or through group advocacy and representation. The third presumes universal standards of justice and proper relationships between citizens and government that can be applied to individual cases and that these standards of conduct must sometimes trump, or at least shape the application of formal policy. The subfield of representative bureaucracy is based on the assumption that bureaucracy should mirror and engage the population it serves.

2.4 Equity

Wilson sees equity as the goal to "treat like cases alike and on the basis of clear rules known in advance" (Wilson 1967 pg. 409). Equity is often the concern of groups or segments of the public who feel bureaucratic policy or its implementation is biased. Demands for equity come both from those who feel discriminated against (for example due to race) and from those who resent policies they view as serving "undeserving" groups (Mettler 1998, Soss, et al. 2007, Mettler 2011, Cramer 2016). Both kinds of demands (and thus scholarship) are rooted in conceptions of fairness and broader notions of what kinds of difference require different treatment under the law. Enforcement of equity comes largely from the courts on standards that policy should not discriminate nor be arbitrary and capricious.

The frame of equity focuses scholarship on who is systematically advantaged or disadvantaged by bureaucratic processes as well as non-systematic distortions of an equitable system. Scholarship on representative bureaucracy and disparities in service delivery and policing are two lines of research using this frame.

The next section identifies four lines of research, each presuming that bureaucrats ought to pursue different combinations of the above goals.

3. Four lines of inquiry

Four main lines of research emerged from the early writings on the bureaucratic politics (e.g. Long 1949, Simon 1957, Wildavsky 1964, Lindblom 1968, Wilson 1967, Allison 1969, Niskanen 1975, Wilson 1994). Each is explicitly or implicitly rooted in different assumptions about what bureaucracy ought to do and appropriate kinds of interaction with other political actors. Scholars in the law and economics tradition build on rational choice theory. Scholars of organizational behavior take a more sociological approach, focusing on how bureaucracy structures decision-making. This group sees balancing group pressures as key to what bureaucracy does and they implicitly view autonomy from principals as a neutral if not positive development. A third line, what I call the pluralist approach, is related to the second but more focused on the structure of group politics outside government and exogenous shocks to the policy process. Even more than the sociological approach, this approach sees agencies more as a site of conflict than as actors. Finally, unlike the above three (especially principal agent and organizational behavior research) the policy feedback literature, has, since Lindblom, tended to lump bureaucracy and other governmental institutions. This section reviews the development of each approach and its organizing questions. The next section pulls out key variables identified by these literatures.

Accountability has been a primary concern of law and economics scholars who have developed and tested models of agencies as agents of the president or Congress that may be "captured" by interest groups. Efficiency is a shared concern of both economic and pluralist-oriented scholars despite very different ideas of the source of these goals. Law and economics see policy goals defined by government hierarchy whereas pluralists look for group coalitions and consensus. While scholars from all camps claim to study responsiveness, scholars of organizational behavior use the concept most closely to the way Wilson did. Equity is a primary concern of scholars of social policy that have most advanced theories of policy feedback but their hypotheses tend not to be formulated

specifically with respect to bureaucratic policymaking. Fiscal integrity, as Wilson notes, is one goal on which nearly everyone can agree and a motivating force behind scholarship on regulatory capture among a diverse array of scholars. However, beyond obvious corruption, definitions of fiscal integrity depend on one's other assumptions about what bureaucrats ought to be doing.

3.1 Law and Economics

The law and economics camp has focused on formal models to explore the implications of institutional choice, transaction costs (Horn 1995), delegation, and the separation of powers. A primary concern is the principal agent problem—that bureaucrats will act in their own policy interests rather than those articulated by elected representatives. Wildavsky (1964) proposed a model of the budgeting process relating to how much agencies ask for and how much Congress allocates, and the strategies actors employ to get what they want. More rigorous modeling in the law and economics tradition takes seriously that bureaucrats may have political objectives as well as resource objectives. McCubbins et al. (1987) offer a framework with two general types of control—oversight and administrative procedures. Bendor, et al. 2001) suggest rational principals will delegate to agents with similar goals, repeated interactions, and when they are able to overcome commitment and information problems.

This camp continues to develop principal agent theory. It has gone beyond budgets to include regulatory authority, integrating observations about the power of interest groups through models of "regulatory capture." Current work continues to ask how institutional design and incentives can increase political control over administrative institutions.

3.2 Organizational Behavior and New Institutionalism

Scholars of organizational behavior, building on the work of Long, Lindblom, Allison, Wilson, as well as many sociologists and management scholars, helped give rise to the New Institutionalism. These scholars explore logics of decision-making, and institutional factors that affect norms and processes around things like problem-definitions, collaboration, and learning (March and Olsen 1984). Unlike some in the law and economics and pluralist camps, they do not tend to believe that it is possible to fully clarify public values in the context of public administration. It may, however, be possible for decision-makers to agree on policy without agreeing on means or ends (Lindblom 1980).

Lindblom claims that administrators cannot make policy rationally and must restrict their attention to a limited number of values and alternatives at a time. Building on this, Cohen et al. (1972) introduced a model where policymaker aims are ambigous and bureaucrats are under pressure to produce solutions quickly. Sometimes policy ideas linger until some problem arrises to wich they might be supplied as a ready-made solution. In sharp contrast to principal-agent models, this "garbage can" model suggests that problems, solutions, and choices are collected non-strategically by administrators or policymakers. This work informed Kingdon's (1995) ideas of "policy streams" and "policy windows." Howlett et al. (2015) articulate a research agenda based on the trend of more complex policy design where multiple policy tools are combined into baskets that address multiple goals.

New institutionalist scholars critiqued the assumptions of rationality in pluralist, elite, and principal-agent models suggesting that a self-oriented "logic of consequences" or a other-oriented reasoning—either altruism or a "logic of appropriateness"—were each insuficient to explain policy decisions and must be considered in tandem. These logics operate under different conditions and stages of policy development, adoption, and entrenchment (Bernstein and Cashore 2000).

The organizational behavior tradition has spun off two lines of research—studies of bureaucratic autonomy and theories of delegation. Bureaucratic autonomy scholarship asks to what extent agencies have independent power and from where it arises (usually historically). For example, Carpenter 2001, 2014) examines the politics by which agencies secure independent political power and thus autonomy. Rooted in organizational theory, but relevant for scholarship on interest groups and principal-agent dynamics, Carpenter concludes that bureaucracies form symbiotic relationships with constituent groups (Carpenter 2002, Carpenter 2014). Interestingly, similar to Long's analysis, Carpenter finds that agencies, with the help of their constituents, often drive congressional policymaking. Delegation theory is a key part of scholarship on federalism and empirically, delegation has implictions for which kinds of ideas are implimented by government (Elmore 1978).

3.3 Pluralism

Pluralist scholars and their descendants see interest group coalitions, more than organizational factors, as the core of politics. For these scholars, policy tends to emerge from groups outside the agency. Bureaucrats may play a

gatekeeping role or take sides in broader political coalition-making. This line of scholarship is focused on groups and coalitions of groups, which may "include" agencies or "capture" agencies depending on a scholar's normative orientation (Carpenter and Moss 2014).

Lowi (1967) suggests that the theory of pluralism arose from a need to justify the New Deal and rise of the administrative state, which lacked legitimacy due to the abdication of power from Congress to the President. Interest group pluralism offers a justification for deferring and delegating. With the assumption that groups are representative, the consensus of interest group coalitions can be a legitimate basis of government policy (Lowi 1967).

Studies of agency capture and influence ofen rest on implicit notions of the public interest (Carpenter and Moss 2014). In a pluralist world where group advocacy is not just acceptable but necessary, defining capture is a tricky line-drawing exercise between desirable and non-desirable groups and appropriate and inappropriate influence. This often leads to estimation of relative influence among groups and stated intent of policymaking procedures. For example, Yackee (2014) defines capture as "control" reather than "influence" and Yackee and Yackee (2006) investigate procedural mechanisms intended to make agencies responsive to the public and finds that primarily coalitions of regulated buisnesses, not public interest groups, are able to affect change through this process.

Some pluralist work focuses on the role of individuals in organizing group action and affecting policy change. However, because the impulse for change is, often implicitly, assumed to come from outside the agency, scholarship has focused on elites outside agencies as policy entrepreneurs and their advocacy in legislatures (e.g. Mintrom 1997) rather than on bureaucrats or direct advocacy.

For forty years, scholars of policymaking rested on Lindblom's theory of incrementalism. More recently, scholars have focused on the mechanics of agenda-setting, the likelihood of non-incremental policy change, and how policymaking processes vary in different institutions, issues, or political contexts (Gormley 2007). In the 1990s, punctuated equilibrium theory (Baumgartner and Jones 1991) launched research agendas focused on explaining policy stability and rapid change. It expanded on scholarship of incrementalism, but did not replace it. Indeed many scholars, including Cashore and Howlett (Cashore and Howlett 2007) showed that incrementalism was not inconsistent with punctuated equilibrium theory and indeed incremental policy decisions could themselves lead to paradigmatic policy change over time.

3.4 Historical Institutionalism and Policy Feedback

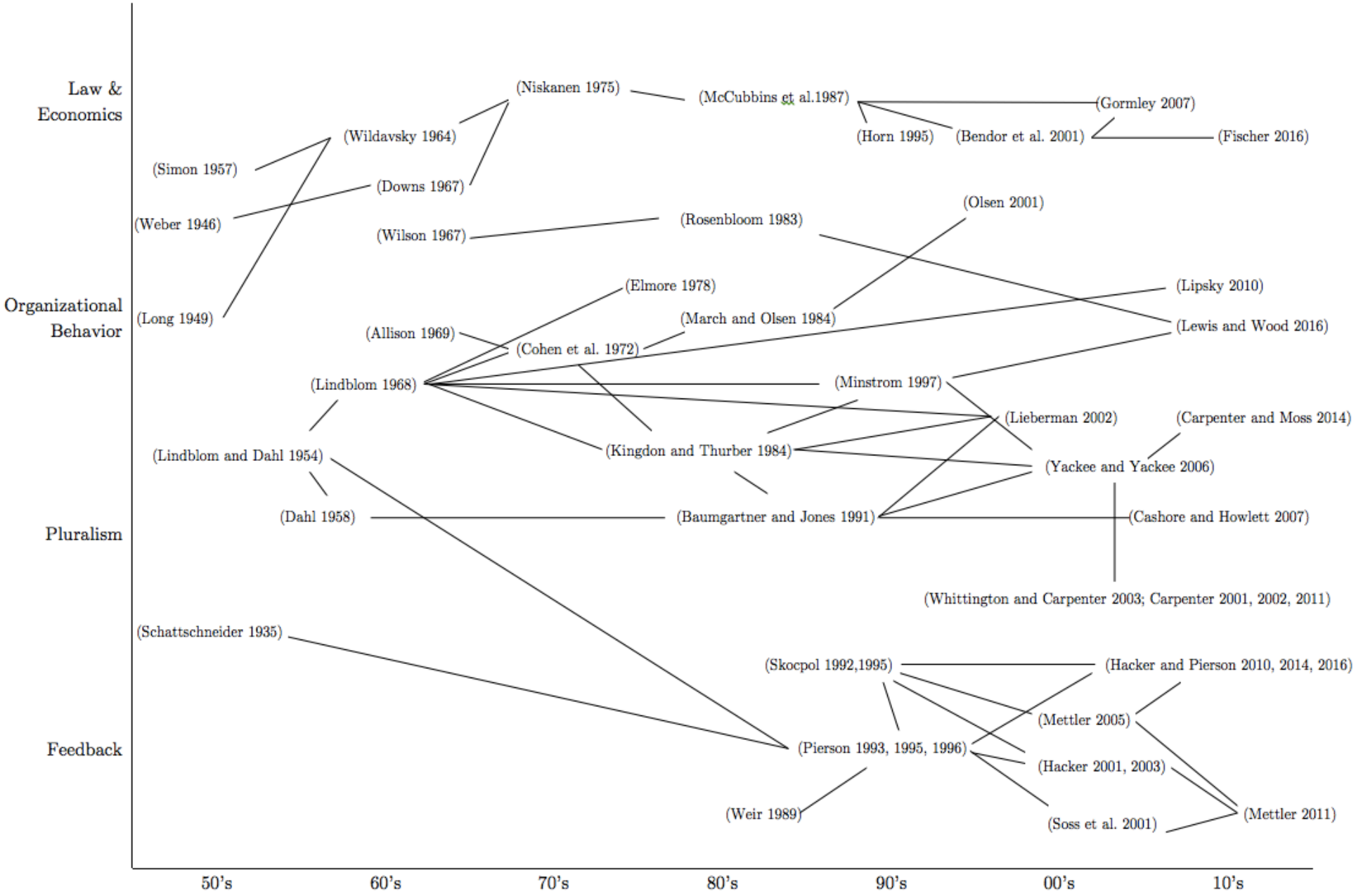
Finally, the observation that administration was deeply embedded in power and politics (Long, Allison, Wilson, but especially Lindblom) played a significant role in modern scholarship on interest groups and policy feedback between policy design and politics. This tradition begins with Schattschneider's observation that "new policies create politics" (Schattschneider 1935).

While administrative actions are often key to their analysis, the broad scope often including mass politics and group politics over long time periods has led policy feedback scholars to see government as government. Paul Pierson's (1993) essay "When Cause Becomes Effect" and book *Politics in Time: History, Institutions, and Social Analysis"* built on Lindblom and others for a historical institutional perspective on welfare state politics. Current research in this area asks about how things like the visibility of public programs and their administration affects public support and how policies can re-shape interest groups and policy coalitions.

Organized groups are critical to scholarship on policy feedback, but this vein of research departs significantly from the interest group pluralism perspective. Most importantly, policy feedback focuses on how policy affects organized groups (by restructuring their institutional incentives) as well as how groups affect policy (Thelen 1999). Policy feedback literature also tends to see ideas, movements, and public sentiments as causes (as well as effects) of policy change. Perceptions of policy are key. For example, in addition to which policies are formally linked, political support for a policy may depend on actors' experiences with previous policies and their perceived relationship to the policy in question (Weir 1989).

Figure 2 illustrates the segmented nature of select scholarship on bureaucratic policymaking.

Figure 2 Select Scholarship on Bureaucratic Policymaking Over Time



Section 4: Variables and Findings Thus Far

Beliefs about what agencies ought and ought not to do affect both the dependent and independent variables that scholars select. The understanding of the bureaucracy as agents of the president and Congress makes the demands of these actors a dominant set of independent variables. Another set emerges from pluralist understandings of agency policymaking as a balancing of organized interests as well as concerns that some groups are too influential and that some agencies are captured. Following Lindblom (1979), a significant body of work also investigates agency policy as endogenous to previous agency decisions.

The dependent variable is most often the policy's attributes, rarely a policy's political effects. Scholars have begun to look in earnest at how agencies affect the broader political landscape only recently, and when scholars have, the variables chosen tend to emerge from understandings of what agency policy should not to do. I argue that this dominant view that the political effects of agency policy are undesirable derives from the limited view of agencies as agents. Such scholarship includes how regulatory capture entrenches interest groups and how agency spending affects electoral politics. Recent exceptions to this trend include research on the effects of policy design on public support and of agency reputation on policymaker, expert, and interest-group support (Carpenter 2014).

4.1. Endogenous policymaking

In response to critics suggesting that effective decision-making required going beyond incrementalism, Lindblom (1979) agues that incrementalism is inevitable but could be done more skillfully. As complete analysis is impossible, "designed incompleteness" is supiorior. Indeed, Lindblom finds advantages in incrimental and redundent policy processes where multiple decision-makers attack a problem over time. Practitoiners expect to repeat the policy process endlessly, albiet under changing conditions. Incrimentalism is not necessairly slow-moving, and thus not necessairly conservative. This article forshadows work on policy feedback, suggesting that "To a disjointed incrementalist, there is never a last word."

Kingdon (1995) builds on Lindblom and Cohen et al.'s theories of the policy process. He explores when issues get attention and when policy action occures (i.e. in Cohen et al.'s language, when problems and solutions make it out of the garbage can). Kingdon's work on agenda-setting made explicit an implication of Lindblom's theory of successive limited comparisons—that who sets the agenda

has a large influence over the result. This has inspired a large body of work on the formulation of policy agendas and the politics of attention.

Baumgartner and Jones (1991) substantially modified Linblom's incrementailst understanding of policymakng. The authors observed that policy tends to be relativly stable for long periods and then undergo periods of relativly rapid change. This was attributed to the stability of policy coalitions in equalibrium until that equilibrium was "punctuated"—generally by some force exogenous to the policy system. This line of scholarship has generally seen policy change to be contingent on the stability of the instituital arrangements of the supporting coalition. One implication of punctuated equalibrium theory is that policy change tends to coincide with institutional change (Baumgartner and Jones 2002). For example, Lieberman (2002) suggests that policy change arises out of friction between institutional patterns and ideas about what those institutions ought to be doing.

Howlett and Cashore (2007) critique the theory that insitutional change is needed for paradigmatic policy change. They find that incrimental policy change can be constant with both stable and rapidly changing policy. Policy equilibium can result from stability (i.e. no change), but also from incrimental *or* paradigmatnic change that is "thermostatic"—that is future policy changes tend to be in the oposite direction as previous changes, leading to a result similar to equlibiruum despite ongoing policymaking. In contrast, to Punctuated Equalibirum Theory, Howlett and Cashore (2007) find that paradigmatic changes can result if incrimental policy decisions tend to move in the same direction, perhaps toward a new equalibrium. This menas there are at least three different types of policy change—thermostatic, progressive incrimental, paradigmatic (i.e. punctuation).

Policymaking is endogenous to past policies made one the same issue or by the same agency. The nature of these effects my vary depending on the stability of the enacting policy coalition and the long term trajectory of change. While to Schattschneider and Lindblom helpfuly observed that future policies are edogenous to past policy decisions (especially in the bureaucracy, where decisions are made through successive limited comparisons), they did not provide very much guidance on how to predict the direction in which policy will move. Theories of both puctuated equilibrium and thermostatic policy rest on a concept of equilibrium, but as Cashore and Howlett have shown, we cannot infer equilibrium from policy coalition stability. The next section aims to bring in

theories of policy feedback that have thusfar focused more on mass politics and legislatures than bureauctacy. But first, I review the factors thusfar generally considered exogenous influences on bureaucratic politics in order to guide the search for possible feedback effects.

4.2. "Exogenous" policymaking variables: president, Congress, interest groups, public opinion, and courts

The extensive research on the relationship between the president, Congress, and the bureaucracy identify many potential variables. Much more sophisticated estimates exist of the preferences of presidents, Congress and even courts, than for agencies. The absolute or relative effect principals have on agencies depends on the distribution of power among principals. Long (1949) suggests that Congress, congressmen, committees, courts, other agencies, presidential advisors, and the President all affect agency policymaking, but the effect of these more official demands "varies with the political strength of the group demand embodied in it" (Long 1949). That is, the effect of official demands is conditional on the power of the coalition supporting it. One can model this as the effect of principals mediated by their level of political support or as the effect of groups, mediated by their access to formal levers of power. Yackee and Yackee (2009a) find that divided government leads to agencies issuing fewer rules and fewer substantively significant rules than they do during periods of unified government.

The ability to exercise this power depends, in part, on the tools available for control, such as the share of an agency's budget that is discretionary rather than fixed in the budgeting process or the share of politically appointed top managers and how many of them must be confirmed by Congress. Networks of groups and agencies not only resist control but also efforts at reform to systems of control (Rhodes 1996). Because agencies have some degree of autonomy, the agency to which authority is delegated affects which types of policies are implemented (Elmore 1978).

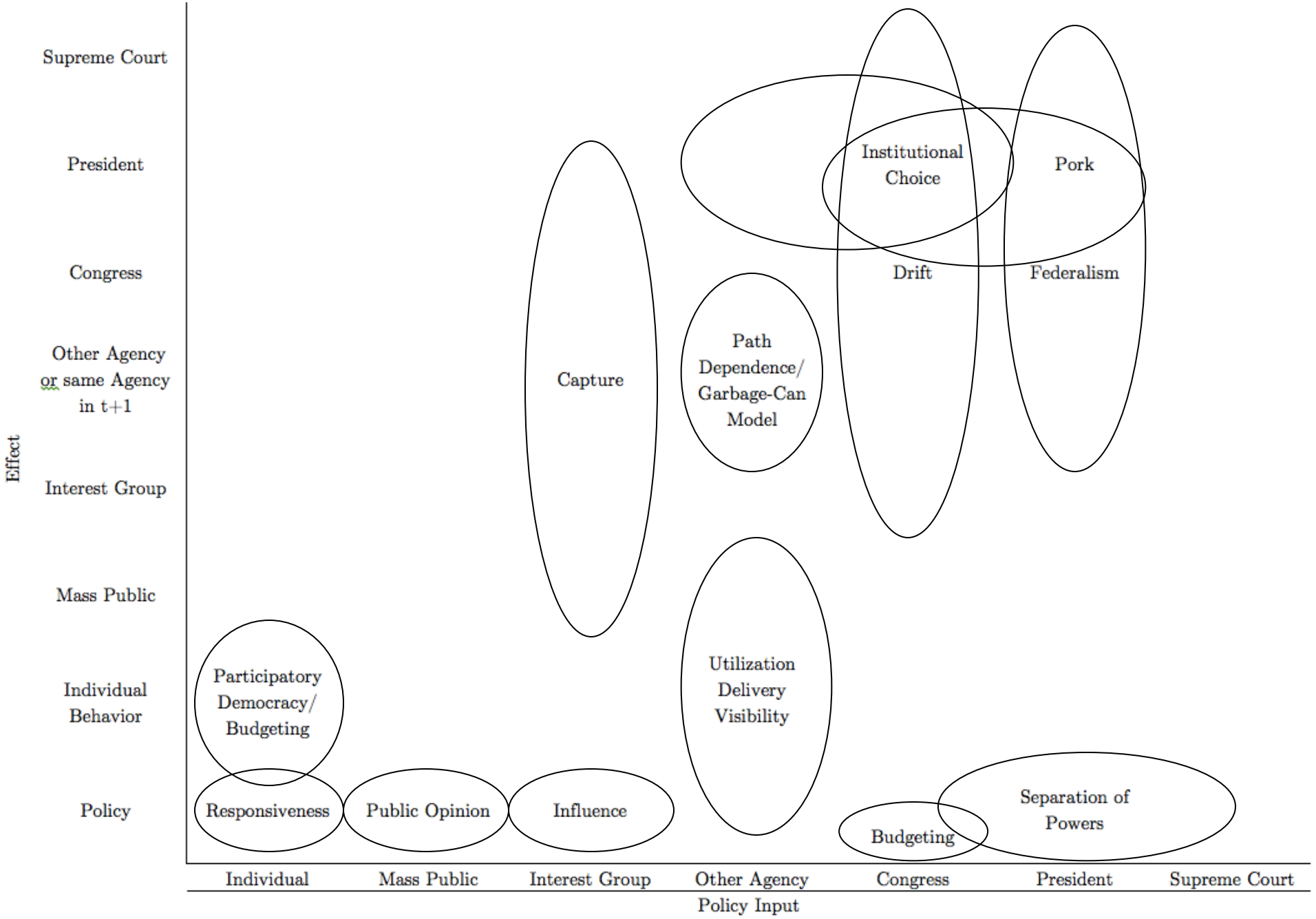
Pluralist scholarship similarly identifies the importance of the distribution of power and access among pressure groups. Hacker and Pierson (2005) build on Lindblom's critique of his earlier work as well as Dahl and pluralists optimistic that the institutions of Madisonian democracy would allow a large number of

interest groups to participate. They argue that power and access to policy institutions is not egalitatian nor are the resulting policies.

Important for theorizing, many of the variables held to be critical for different scholarly traditions may work in opposite directions. For example, Lewis and Wood (Lewis n.d.) find that agencies designed to be more accountable to political principals are less responsive to citizen FOIA requests.

Figure 3 organizes themes the scholarship reviewed above by the nature of their independent and dependent variables selected.

Figure 3: Themes of Bureaucratic Policymaking Scholarship by DV and IV Actor Types



5. Bureaucratic Policy Feedback

This section briefly reviews some of the important developments in literature on policy feedback effects. To ease the exercise of integrating this research with research on bureaucratic policymaking, I distinguish among the scale and mechanism of effects. Some scales of feedback effects may be more relevant than others. For example, research that focuses on how policy empowers, disempowers, or mobilizes groups is more relevant than that focused on effects of individual opinions.

5.1 Policy Feedback: Scope and Mechanism

Theories of policy feedback have emerged from studies of historical institutionalism and path dependency. Much of this scholarship is indebted to Schattschneider's work on how tariff policy created vested interests that helped to maintain it (Schattschneider 1935). Not only did tariff policy create new and different types of coalitions from whole cloth but "a policy that is so hospitable and catholic as the protective tariff disorganizes the opposition" (Schattschneider 1935). This has led to both economic theories of "endogenous" dynamics of policy "demand and supply" (Nelson 1988) as well as historical instructional accounts focused on how policy shapes the "political terrain" for future policymaking (e.g. Pierson 2000, 2004).

It should be noted that policy feedback generally means something distinct from path dependency. While path dependency implies that a certain path is the inevitable result of certain decisions at key junctures, feedback is more about that nature of a dynamic among multiple political actors. As noted, Lindblom and scholars of organizational behavior have long recognized forms of path dependency, but they focus on the more direct possibilities and constraints of past actions rather than more circuitous dynamics involving other political actors. Policy feedback is explicitly focused on the way policies shape politics and the behavior of actors beyond the institution in which the policy was made.

Most policy feedback scholarship involves the study of bureaucratic decisions, but rarely addresses how the distinctive nature of bureaucratic policymaking may affect policy feedback dynamics. Weir (1989) focuses on how administrative arrangements and decisions shaped the policy ideas that politicians considered and less on the distinctive role of bureaucrats. Pierson, in is influential review essay "When Cause Becomes Effect" (1993), identifies how policy affects "government elites, interest groups, and mass public"—and proceeding scholarship

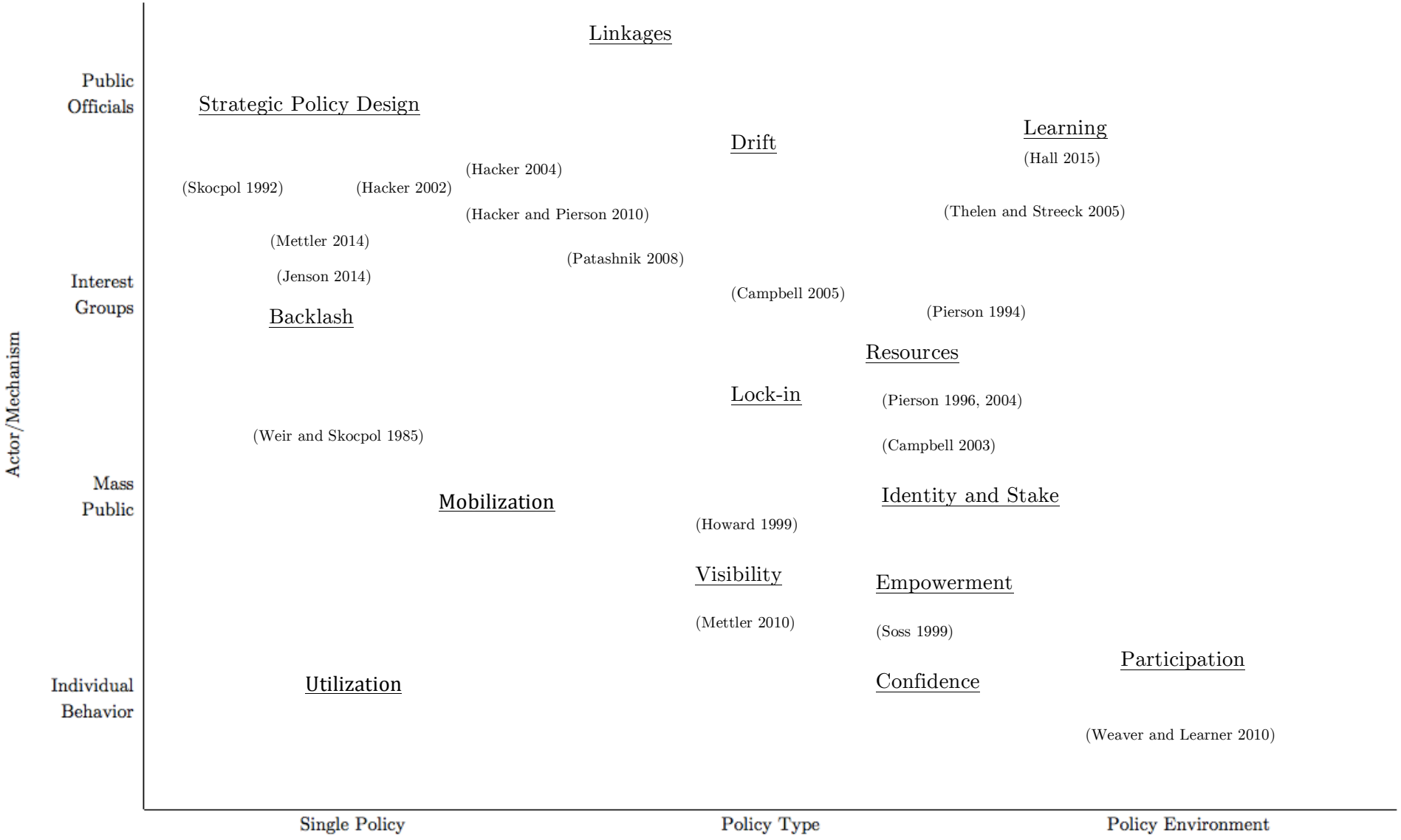
has tended to focus on either interest groups or mass publics and lump government actors together as being similarly affected by groups and the public.

Policies can empower or mobilize some groups, disempower or disorganize others. Mettler and Soss (2004) built on the work of Pierson (1996) to further illustrate how policies play a critical role in politics—both on interest restructuring group power and mobilization and public opinion.

Policies also shape individual opinions. Soss et al. (2001) explore welfare state politics (in the vein of Pierson, Hacker, and Mettler) by looking at variation in state-level implementation of federal policies. They conclude that welfare programs are shaped by the racial composition of families who rely on them. Mettler (2010) similarly finds that individual support for specific policies and government in general depends on how those policies are designed, how visible they are, and the political standing of those who benefit from them.

Figure 3 organizes selected themes and scholarship on policy feedback by the scope of analysis and the mechanism of feedback (i.e. the political actors mobilized, demobilized, empowered, disempowered, or otherwise inspired to affect future policy).

Figure 3: Policy Feedback Scholarship and Topics by Scope and Mechanism/Actor



5.2 Hypotheses

General bureaucratic feedback hypotheses: (1) More polarized issues are more likely to have net thermostatic feedback effects (i.e. agency decisions are likely to mobilize opposition to reverse policy decisions). (2) When an agency has an adversarial relationship with a set of other political actors, policy feedback effects with these actors will be thermostatic. (3) More salient issues will see large magnitudes of feedback effects (though these effects may be thermostatic or moving toward a new equilibrium depending on polarization).

Decision-logic feedback hypothesis: bureaucrats account for feedback effects when operating under a logic of consequences but do not when operating under logic of appropriateness. Thus, strategic decisions are more likely to have positive feedback effects and those made based on norms are more likely to have negative feedback effects (e.g. March and Olsen 1984).

Anti-ossification hypotheses: positive policy feedback is more likely the more political principals are able to impose procedural requirements. These effects could be the result of other actors granting agencies more authority when they follow the procedures (e.g. courts granting deference when agencies go though notice-and-comment rulemaking), or it could result from competition among political principals granting authority for agency action in their preferred direction (e.g. Yackee and Yackee 2012).

Principal-agent feedback hypotheses: (1) *Positive* feedback is more likely when an agency has positive relationship (e.g. a reputation for expertise, partisan alignment) with (a) the congressional majority or (b) the president. (2) *Negative or thermostatic* policy feedback is more likely when an agency has oppositional relationship with (a) the congressional majority or (a) the president (partisan differences, reputation for corruption or inefficiency). (3) The *magnitude* of feedback effects depend on the strength of the agency's relationships with elected officials (e.g. discretionary share of budget, share of politically appointed leaders)(e.g. Yackee and Yackee 2009a).

Patterns of delegation hypotheses: Within a policy domain, multiple delegations of authority to the same agency indicate a positive or negative feedback dynamic (depending on the delegator's orientation to the status quo), whereas delegations of authority to a different agency indicates thermostatic feedback dynamic (Elmore 1978).

Judicial review feedback hypotheses: (1) For agencies with reputations for (a) substantive or (b) legal expertise, judicial review is more likely to be decided on procedural grounds. (2) Cases decided on procedural grounds are more likely to have direct feedback effects, as agencies will use more detailed procedures when more frequently reviewed on procedural grounds. (3) Agency policies made through (a) more detailed or (b) more participatory process are more likely to win. (4) When agencies have reputations for (a) substantive or (b) legal expertise or their decisions are aligned with the views of the Supreme Court, opponents are more likely to pursue political rather than legal recourse (e.g. Carpenter 2014).

Group-restructuring feedback hypotheses: When administrative policy creates new classifications, policy feedback is (a) more likely than when it uses existing classifications and (b) more often in the direction supported by the class that contains the most powerful groups (e.g. Schattschneider 1935, Pierson 1993, 1996, Hacker 2001, Mettler 2005, Ortiz and Mettler 2012).

Constituent-autonomy hypothesis: Agencies that directly deliver services to citizens (especially with budgets based on fees or appropriations on which constituents lobby (e.g. the farm bill) are more likely to see feedback effects between agency decisions and constituent preferences and mobilization than agencies with less direct effects (e.g. through regulations)(e.g. Carpenter 2001).

Agency-public feedback hypotheses: Visible policies aimed at those seen as "deserving" groups will have positive feedback while those aimed at "undeserving" groups will have negative feedback, conditional upon the strength of the agency's relationships with elected officials (as in *Principal Agent Feedback Hypothesis 3*). (e.g. Mettler 2011).

6. Theoretical Gaps and Potential Research Agendas

This paper is a first step at articulating a research agenda that unites two deep but thus far distinct traditions. An aversion to seeing bureaucrats as political actors rather than agents has hindered scholarship on bureaucratic politics from exploring the broader effects of bureaucratic policymaking on the U.S. political landscape. On the other side, scholars of policy feedback are aware that bureaucrats make policy, but rarely is bureaucratic policy differentiated from the legislation it builds upon. The institutional context of where policy is actually made matters. For example, when scholars study how policies affect

public opinion and mobilize interest groups, the extent to which these political phenomena feed back into policymaking depends on whether policymaking is taking place in legislatures or agencies.

The exercises above highlight key themes and gaps. We see that different lines of scholarship share different assumptions about what agencies ought to do that have shaped the questions they ask. This may explains divisions in bureaucratic policymaking literature, and why few of these scholars have integrated ideas of policy feedback. It does not explain why scholars of policy feedback have underappreciated the distinctive nature of bureaucratic policymaking. Rather this seems to be due to the broad scope of analysis and to comparing issues rather than policymaking venues.

The sets of hypotheses identified above draw from findings in a diverse range of studies. What they share is a focus on agency policy as a cause of broader political activity that could re-shape the context for future such decisions. Not only do bureaucrats expect to "repeat endlessly" the policymaking process (Lindblom 1967, 1979), they also anticipate that their actions will reshape their political environment. Yet the magnitude and direction of these effects may be difficult for any one practitioner to discern from her vantage point within the system. Thus, scholarship that systematically accounts for the multitude of possible political implications could help public servants make better politics as well as policy.

Compared to research on Congress, courts, and the presidency, scholarship on bureaucratic policymaking is fragmented and inconsistent. A potential upshot of the research agenda suggested by this paper is that focusing on how agency policy reshapes the surrounding political terrain will encourage explanations of agency policymaking that cover more of the "web of social relationships that bring them to life" (Long 1949). It is my hope that future research sees the agencies less as mechanical instruments that can be controlled, managed, or captured, and more as dynamic parts of the political system.

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