

Policy frameworks and public health influence

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Presentation overview

- Definitions
 - Policy
 - Evidence-based policy
 - Advocacy
 - The knowledge needed to take action
- The use of evidence by policy-makers
 - Public Policy frameworks and decision-making
 - The types of problems
- In summary
- Some examples
 - Types of problem
 - Agenda setting
 - Policy cycles
 - Focusing events
 - Framing and causal stories



Some crude working definitions

- ❑ In general, “Policy sets priorities and guides resource allocation”
- ❑ “Public policy is a policy, at any level of government” (Milio 2001)
- ❑ But the implementation of a policy often uses (and is defined by) other actors outside of the governmental traditional authority base.
- ❑ Decision on a policy option can be:
 - Positive
 - Negative
 - Non-decision (not on the agenda)(Howlett and Ramesh 2003)



A movement for Evidence-based policy

- ❑ “The integration of experience, judgement and expertise with the best available external evidence from systematic research” (Davies 1999)
- ❑ An extension of evidence-based medicine.
- ❑ In the Blair UK government, “Doing what works.”
- ❑ Recommended in CSDOH

« How research and evaluation evidence contributes to policy making »

http://www.nationalschool.gov.uk/policyhub/evaluating_policy/how_res_eval_evid.asp accessed July 28 2008 citing Davies, P.T. 1999. 'What is Evidence-Based Education?', British Journal of Educational Studies, **47**, 2, 108-121.



Advocacy

- ❑ Public health advocacy is advocacy that is intended to reduce death or disability in groups of people
- ❑ Advocacy is “The application of information and resources (including human resources, finances and votes) to effect systemic changes that shapes the way people in a community live.”

(Kaufer-Christofel, 2000)

Kaufer Christofel, K Public Health advocacy: process and product, American Journal of Public Health, 2000 90 (5) 722-726



Advocacy

□ It involves

- “creating and maintaining effective coalitions”
- “the strategic use of news media to advance a public policy initiative, often in the face of opposition”
- “the application of information and resources to effect systemic changes that change the way people in a community live”

(Kaufer-Christofell, 2000)



Evidence-based policy or Advocacy

- Both of these perspectives are informed by a question:
- What does it take to put evidence into policy?



The 7 KNOWledges in Policy

- **Know-about** the problem
- **Know-what works**
- **Know-how to** put it into practice
- **Know-who** to involve
- **Know-when** to act
- **Know-where** to distribute resources
- **Know-why** people act: symbolism, values, politics, ethics

(Adapted from Ekblom 2001 and Nutley, Walter and Davies 2002)



This presentation

- ❑ How can public policy frameworks help inform some of these knowledges?
- ❑ Not a policy analysis course.
- ❑ The goal: identify some tools.



Policy frameworks and evidence use

A journey from two extremes: from the self-acting evidence to the almighty role of actors.

- Rationality
- Incrementalism
- Garbage can and non-rationality
- Agenda setting and the three streams
- Policy network-Advocacy Coalition Framework
- Constructivist theories: Policy as paradox



The rational paradigm

- Decision maker, a rational person, in the economic sense
 - Tends to maximize the efficiency and efficacy of its policy option
- Evidence is used if available



The rational paradigm

- Policy Analysis is linear:
 1. Goal Establish problem to solve
 2. Strategies: All alternatives are expressed and listed
 3. Consequence: Predicted and all probability assessed
 4. Choice Strategy that which solves it most probably and solves it at the lowest cost is chosen.

- The policy cycle is also a sequence



The stages model

1. Agenda Setting
2. Policy Formulation
3. Policy Adoption
4. Policy Implementation
5. Policy Assessment



The stages model

- Agenda Setting
 - Problems are recognized and discussed
- Policy Formulation
 - Policy options (alternatives) are considered and evaluated
- Policy Adoption
 - A decision is made
- Policy Implementation
 - Rules and procedures are set out
- Policy Assessment
 - Policy is evaluated, revised or even terminated



A first tool for public health

Evidence and the stages model

□ Agenda Setting

□ Policy Formulation

□ Policy Adoption

Public Health-Researcher Role

- **Problem Structuring:** Challenges the assumptions underlying the definition of problems. Stone also adds that researchers could also have some input as to what kind of evidence is used to look at the problem
- **Forecasting:** Determines the consequences of existing or proposed policies.
- **Recommendation:** Reveals information and identifies future benefits and costs under all policy scenarios through information generated via forecasting.



A first tool for public health

Evidence and the stages model

□ **Policy**

Implementation

Here the work is mostly technical and public health expertise will be called upon. Stone notes however that through the process, the goal might have been changed during the process. So might the research from that used at the problem definition

□ **Policy Assessment**

□ **Monitoring:** Provides information about the consequences of previously adopted policies.

□ **Evaluation:** Reveals discrepancies between expected and actual policy performance.

Babu, Brown, McCalfferty(1997), adapted from Dunn(1994) Nutley, Walter and Davies(2007)

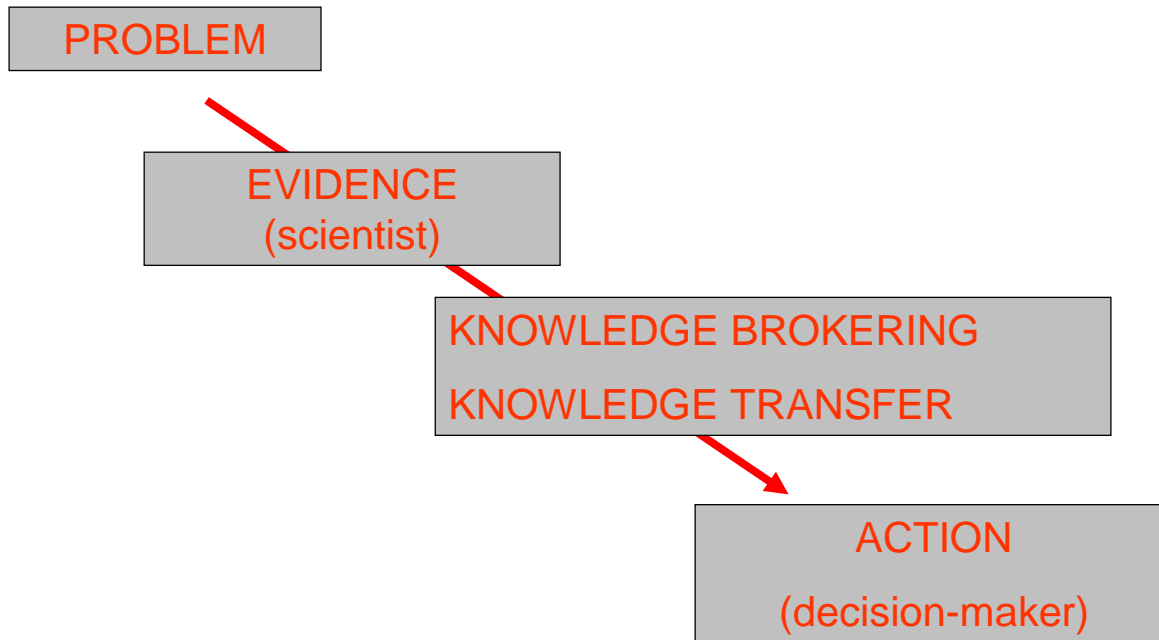


The rational shortcomings

- Criticism on the reality of the process.
 - The reality is not linear : Goal assessment does not necessarily precede policy formulation.
 - Policy process is not linear, either
 - The premise of a rational person does not seem to represent the total reality of the decision-maker.
 - This a universalist view of a very contextual and time-dependent process
 - It is positivist: Evidence exists by itself and the decision maker is in search of the best science.



Linear-rational research use



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Revision to rationality

Bounded rationality (Simon, 1958)

Pure Rationality

- Decision-makers are thought of as technicians interested in collecting the information, to achieve the most efficient solution

Bounded-rationality

- But a decision maker can not know and assess all the alternatives. Pre-decisional screening is done on ideological, professional cultural bases, if not randomly (Fernandes and Simon 1999, cited by Howlett and Ramesh, 2003)
- The search tends to satisfy the criteria set out by the decision maker



Bounded rationality

As rational as possible given

- Limited information
- Limited time
- Limited human ability to recognize every aspect of every problem



Rationality

□ Pure rationality

■ Will maximize

- Will choose an option that maximizes the benefits and minimize the costs

□ Bounded rationality

■ Will satisfy

- Will choose the option that will receive the best feedback from the policy maker.



Incrementalism

- ❑ Building on bounded-rationality Lindblom : “The science of muddling through”
- ❑ Decision makers limit themselves to the analysis of a few, often already known, familiar options, “differing marginally from the status quo”
- ❑ Policy goals and values are not separated
- ❑ Focus on ills to be remedied and not on goals to attain.
- ❑ The decision maker proceeds by trial and error
- ❑ Analysis of only some (not all) alternatives
- ❑ Fragmentation of the analytical work to many partisan participants

Two stages mixed scanning (Etzioni)

- ❑ A third attempt to reconcile the rational and incrementalism.
- ❑ In the pre-decisional mode (assessing and framing a problem), policy is an incremental process
- ❑ In the analytical mode: A process is done the rational way.



Incrementalism Legacy

- ❑ Incrementalism brings attention to the limitation of the decision maker and shows the impact of values, time constraints.
- ❑ Incrementalism is what policy is and rational is what we want the policy process to be.



The irrationality

- Garbage can (Cohen, Marsh, Olsen)
 - Policies are, by definition, irrational
 - Decisions depend on the propositions made, on the set of problems that are grouped together, as if tossed in a garbage can.
 - Policy is thus organized anarchy
 - Solutions are not tied to problems but coexist independently until some policy entrepreneur ties them up.



Agenda setting (Kingdon)

- ❑ Following Marsh, Cohen and Olsen's garbage can model Kingdon reasserts that problem, solution, and policy are disjointed processes.
- ❑ His empirical work: longitudinal surveys in the health and transport sector
- ❑ His question: How do we know an idea's time has come?



Agenda

- ❑ A two-level agenda (Cobb and Elder, 1983)
- ❑ Systemic agenda :
 - “all issues that are commonly perceived by members of the political community as meriting public attention and as involving matters within the legitimate jurisdiction of existing governmental authority”
 - The agenda for discussion
- ❑ Institutional agenda
 - The list of items explicitly up for the active and serious consideration of an authoritative decision-maker
 - The agenda for action



Agenda setting (Kingdon)

- Agenda is determined by three streams:
 - Policy
 - Politics
 - Problem
- Windows of opportunity
 - Open when all three streams are coupled
 - Not a guaranteed decision
 - Limited in time



Agenda

- Policy entrepreneurs link solutions to problem (Kingdon)
- They are defined as actors in the policy process who engage in significant action to initiate policy change



Windows Type

- Routine Windows
- Spillover Windows
- Discretionary Windows
- Random Window



Howlett M Ramesh, *M Stdying ublic Policy*, p.137



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Kingdon legacy

- The role of timing: read your context
- The distinct roles of problem recognition, option formulation, political mood
- The vital link of entrepreneur



Another Model of decision-making

Howlett and Ramesh (2003)

	Complexity of the policy sub-system		
Severity of constraints		High	Low
	High	Garbage can	Satisfying (Incremental)
	Low	Multiple rounds	Rational search



Policy network

- ❑ Policy is done by policy network (iron triangle, then extended)
- ❑ Policy is marked by period of long stability punctuated by radical changes (Punctuated Equilibrium, Baumgartner and Jones)
- ❑ Multiple arenas, multiple rounds
- ❑ Advocacy coalition framework (Sabatier & Jenkins-Smith, Sabatier)



Advocacy Coalition Framework (Sabatier –Jenkins 1999)

- Policy subsystem
 - A substantive component (e.g. agriculture policy)
 - A territorial (e.g. Alberta)
- Members
 - Legislators, agency officials, interest group leader but also researchers and journalists.
- Number of coalitions (1-5)
 - All subsystems have a dominant coalition and a few minority ones (up to four)



Advocacy Coalition Framework (Sabatier –Jenkins 1999)

□ Three pillars

- All policy making occurs among specialists of a policy subsystem
- Actors want to transform their belief in policy through their resources
- Best way to discern among the multiplicity of actors is to group them into coalitions



Advocacy Coalition Framework (Sabatier –Jenkins-Smith 1999)

Three levels of belief

- Core beliefs (subsystem wide)
 - Assumptions about Human nature, hierarchy between value (liberty, equity), role of government and market
 - Left/right,
- Core policy beliefs (Subsystem wide)
 - Relative seriousness of policy problems, relative role of general public, elected officials, etc.
- Secondary beliefs (more narrow)
 - E.g. Detailed rules and budgetary applications within a specific program, for a specific locality



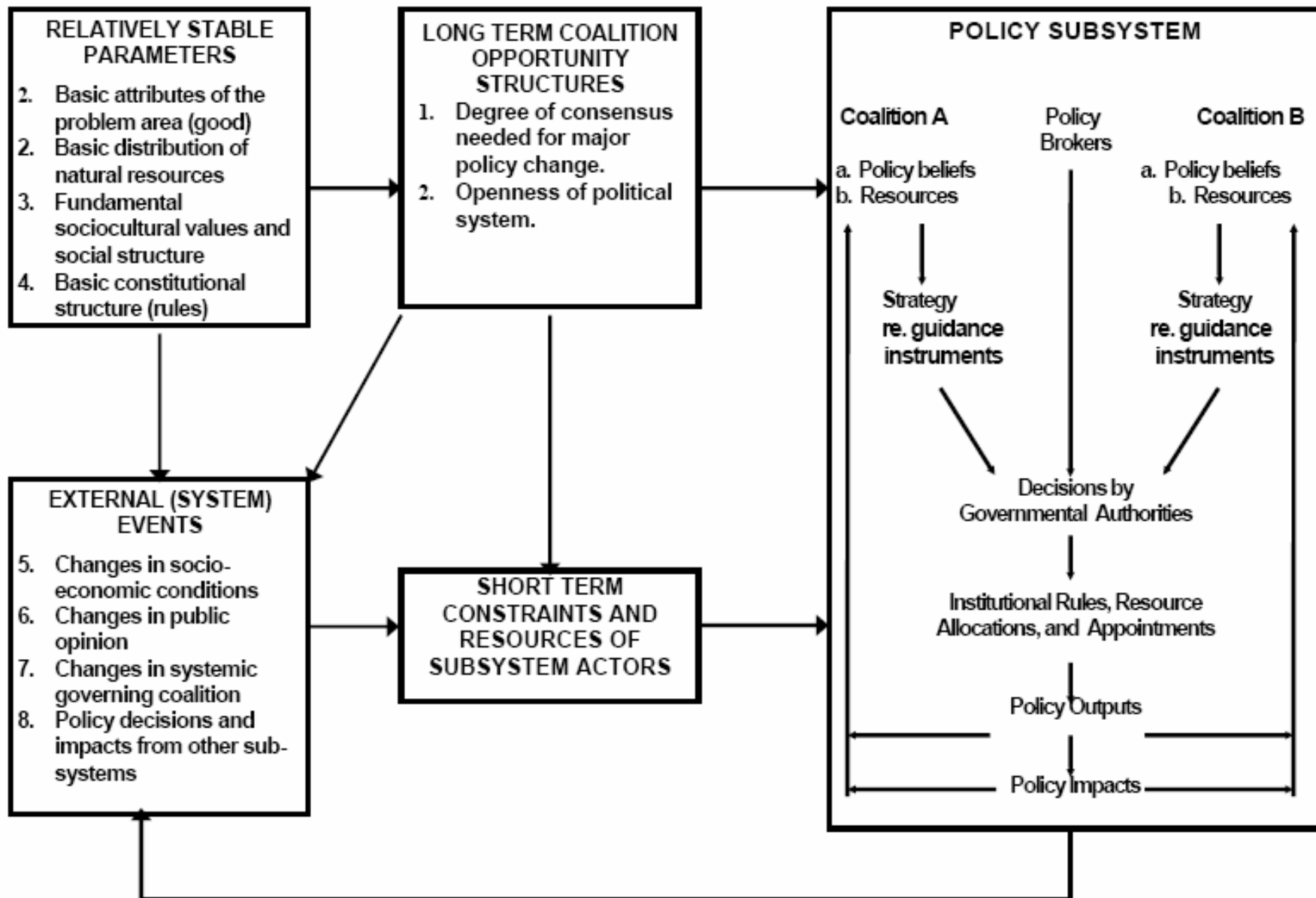


Figure 7-2: 2005 Diagram of the Advocacy Coalition Framework



Advocacy Coalition Framework (Sabatier –Jenkins 1999)

- All change takes place over a decade
- Four paths to policy changes
 - Policy-oriented learning
 - External shocks
 - Internal shocks
 - Hurting stalemate



Advocacy Coalition Framework (Sabatier –Jenkins-Smith 1999)

- Policy-oriented learning
 - “relatively enduring alterations of thought or behavioral intentions which result from experience and which are concerned with the attainment (or revision) of policy objectives” (Sabatier—Jenkins-Smith 1999:133)
- Secondary belief is more susceptible to policy-learning
- Core and policy core belief are normative and less susceptible to change



Advocacy Coalition Framework (Sabatier –Jenkins 1999)

- Policy oriented-learning
 - Influencing secondary belief through special forums.
- External shock
 - Shocks to the external environment and policy spillover
- Internal Shock
 - Shocks to the subsystem, policy learning
- Hurting stalemate
 - Status quo is not possible



Constructivist approach (Stone 2002)

- Policy is a paradox:
 - A policy may mean different things for different people
- The importance of causal stories
- The importance of frame



Framing: What's in a name?

- Difference between
 - Gay/homosexual
 - User-fee/tax
 - Sex-worker/prostitute
 - Vagrants/homeless
 - Climate change/Global warming



Framing

- ❑ Construct causal stories in an effort to shift public perceptions to accepted if regrettable conditions to policy problems
- ❑ More likely to be successful if that framing is the dominant belief or guiding assumptions of the policy-maker, if the theory accords with the widespread and deeply held cultural values (Stone, 2002)



Causal stories effect

- ❑ Challenge or protect the social order
- ❑ Identify causal agents hence assign responsibility to a particular actors so they can
 - Stop the activity
 - Do it differently
 - Compensate the victim
 - Possibly be punished
- ❑ Legitimate and empower certain actors as fixers of the problem
- ❑ Create new alliance among people who are shown to stand in the same victim relationship to the causal agent.

(Stone 2002: 295, cited by Howlett and Ramesh 2003)



Social construction of target groups

		Perceived Social Image	
		POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
Perceived Power	HIGH	Advantaged Elderly Business Veterans Scientists	Contenders Very wealthy Big unions Minorities "Moral Majority"
	LOW	Dependents Children Mothers Disabled	Deviants Criminals Drug Addicts Gangs

Adapted from Schneider & Ingram, 1993 24

James Emery, MPH and Carolyn Crump, PhD UNC School of Public Health, June 2006

Emery and Crump, adapted from Schneider and Ingram, Oliver 2006

Example

- ***Three definitions used in disability policymaking***
 - ***Medical***
 - ***Economic***
 - ***Socio-political***

Yongjoo Jeon Haider-Markel and Donald P. (2001) "Tracing Issue Definition and Policy Change: An Analysis of Disability Issue Images and Policy Response", Policy Studies Journal, Vol. 29, No. 2, 2001 (215-231)



Example

□ *Medical :*

- **Definition** limitations on physical functioning by treating disabilities as separate diagnostic categories
- **Policy response:** increased expenditures for health care research and private philanthropic activities

□ *Economic*

- **Definition** “health-related inability” or a person’s functional limitation on the amount or kind of work that disabled people can perform
- **Policy response:** income stabilization and job training



Example

□ ***Socio-political***

- ***Definition*** failure of a structured social environment to adjust to the needs and aspirations of disabled citizens rather than from the inability of a disabled individual to adapt to the demands of society
- ***Policy response:*** extension of civil rights to disabled persons and from policy changes that affect the physical environment



Changing venue (Baumgartner and Jones)

Multiple venues:

- ❑ USA: Congress Committees (from agriculture to environment)
- ❑ The court
- ❑ The media



Venue shopping : the court

- The McLaw suits
- Pesticides in Canada



Example: The McLawsuits

- Class action
 - The *Pelman* plaintiffs claimed that McDonald's had engaged in deceptive advertising, sales, and promotion; produced food that was unreasonably unsafe; and failed to warn consumers of the dangers of its products. The complaint alleged that McDonald's knew or should have known that its actions would exacerbate obesity and its associated health problems in millions of American children.
- Initially greeted with amusement and derision: could it be useful?

Mello, Michelle M Rimm Eric B., and Studdert David M. (2003)
"The McLawsuit: The Fast-Food Industry And Legal
Accountability For Obesity" *Health Affairs* 22(6) pp207-216



Example

- ❑ The difficult test of the law
 - The plaintiff must prove that (1) the danger was not apparent to the average consumer; (2) the product is unreasonably dangerous for its intended use; (3) the plaintiff's obesity was caused by the food in question; and (4) the harm would not have occurred had an adequate warning been given
- ❑ Court testimony and research unveils data that can help advocacy:
 - "In addition, the plaintiffs unearthed prior testimony by a McDonald's marketing executive that the company's advertising specifically targets "Heavy Users," with the goal of having them visit McDonald's twenty times per month."



Example: Venue shopping : the court

- Pesticide use in Canada
 - Before 1991, majority of activity on the federal level
 - In 1991, the municipality of Hudson passes a by-law prohibiting uses of lawn and garden pesticide
 - Contested in court by companies: court upheld Hudson decision
 - Focal event for all municipalities in Canada,
 - The role of networks (Toronto environmental Alliance, Sierra Club, World Wildlife, Citizen.)

Pralle, Sarah(2006) "The mouse that roared : agenda setting in Canadian Pesticides Politics" Policy Studies, pp 171-194



Evidence and policy

- ❑ The Rational paradigm use of evidence optimal
- ❑ Incrementalism recognizes the constraints of the decision-maker and negotiations.
- ❑ Agenda setting and the three streams recognize the role of research, notably in the problem and policy streams
- ❑ Advocacy Coalition framework puts an emphasis on the role and the outcomes of research
- ❑ Policy as paradox does not address the issue of research but explains the importance of causal stories.



Example

- ❑ Between 1987 and 1989, the North American media framed the solid waste problem as a landfill crisis (Kiser 1989).
- ❑ At the local and provincial level in Nova Scotia, solid waste was framed primarily as an environmental and public health problem resulting from substandard disposal practices.
- ❑ It was subsequently reframed as a resource.

Wagner, Travis (2007) Reframing Garbage: Solid Waste Policy Formulation in Nova Scotia. *Canadian Public Policy*, vol 33(4) 459-475



In summary: Public policy and public health influencing process

- ❑ Qualify your problem:
- ❑ Read your policy
 - Stages model
 - Where are we? What is the next phase?
 - What kind of evidence should we prepare/disseminate?
- ❑ Read your context
 - Level of uncertainty and constraints
 - Kingdon streams
 - Look for the coalitions, networks
- ❑ Try to influence the process
 - Frame the problem (causal stories)
 - Participate in policy learning
 - Evaluate new venue
- ❑ And then follow up



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