

STUDIES IN GOVERNMENT
AND PUBLIC POLICY

Neopluralism

The Evolution of
Political Process Theory

Andrew S. McFarland



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applied research might not be pathbreaking in terms of the discipline as a whole, but it can be very illuminating for thousands of persons amidst the policy networks in some issue area.

The consolidation of theory and research, tied to the view of research as cumulative, can enhance the morale of those who want to do research about issue formation but may be using methodological tools that are not considered sophisticated. The development of new issues in the process of political interaction might involve the application of frame analysis or symbolic interaction theory, implying direct observation of actors and counting the number of statements, or perhaps counting the number of statements from congressional hearings and other records. Upon the initial publication of Rogan Kersh's direct observation of lobbyists' activities in 2002, some political scientists were startled to realize that there had been very little such observation by scholars. No one had ever followed lobbyists through their daily activities and simply charted who they talked to and what they talked about. Such research does not involve surveys, statistics, or rational choice models, and it has been avoided by younger political scientists because it is not prestigious. However, a consolidated theory of the political process can bolster the prestige of such straightforward research, because such work is more meaningful within the context of a theory that summarizes much excellent research and writing.

CONCLUSION

Finally, let me state an assumption implied earlier. Political process theory is defined as the answers to these questions: Who has power here? How is policy made in this area? What are the activities of interest groups in this area? This obviously implies that there are other major political science theories to answer other major questions. For example, some will ask: how do authoritarian states change to democracies? This implies some type of structural theory focusing on the nature of civil society, judicial institutions, military organization, and so forth. Or one might ask: how are individuals related to political systems? Theoretical answers to this question are likely to be based on attitudinal research, theories of personality, understanding of the structuring of perception, and so forth. Rational choice theory is an attempt to use one mode of theory throughout the discipline to answer as many questions as possible. But it is the only such broad-gauged effort in our generation of research. For most, political science constitutes several different types of theory, all existing and developing simultaneously. Political process theory is one such theory, developing simultaneously with the others.

2 Basic Ideas of Pluralism

The works of Bentley, Truman, Dahl, Polsby, and Wildavsky and the earlier work of Lindblom have been styled "pluralist theory," in that such research normally found that power in the policymaking process was fragmented, or "plural," thereby disproving the results of research claiming that power was concentrated in a power elite. Although the term *pluralism* has other uses in political philosophy and comparative politics, its use in reference to these scholars is still the more common application. However, such pluralist scholarship is now widely in disrepute, and its defenders normally expect great resistance to positive observations about pluralism. These pluralists are regarded as arguing that all individuals know their own interests and that, in the American political system, all interests are capable of organizing in politics and influencing the political process in one forum or another. Pluralists are also regarded as believing that the policymaking process is a sum or aggregate of the influence pressures of the various interest groups and that such public policy is adequately representative and effective. It has been common practice to begin research publications with negative references to the pluralist model and then to demonstrate the superiority of a newer model of policymaking (Schmitter, 1974; Krasner, 1978, 26-30; Skocpol, 1985, 4).

Herein it is argued that the centrality of this interest aggregation model in pluralist theory is generally overemphasized and that more attention should be paid to other aspects of the pluralist theory. It is probably true to say that Bentley, Truman, and the associated "group theory" scholars left this notion of interest aggregation as a reasonable inference from their work. Bentley stresses group formation around economic interests as the central, driving force in the process of politics. He also stresses that political outcomes result from the interactions of numerous groups affecting one another's actions. Truman never directly states the interest aggregation model, which is supposedly central to pluralism, but it is a reasonable inference from his stress on the prevalence of the countervailing organization of groups: corporate organization will be followed by the counterorganizing of labor unions, McCarthyite organizations to attack civil liberties will be followed by counterorganizations to protect civil liberties, and so forth (Truman, 1951, chaps. 2, 4, 16).

But later pluralism rejected group theory. The most influential pluralist book, Dahl's *Who Governs?* (1961b), explicitly rejects the idea that groups are

central in the political process. Thus, in the first chapter, Dahl poses the question: who governs in New Haven? He states that political scientists have nominated four types of answers: political parties, interest groups, a single ruling elite, or unattached masses, as in the mass society idea. He observes, "A superficial familiarity with New Haven (or for that matter with almost any American city) would permit one to argue persuasively that each one of these [four] theories really explains the inner workings of the city's political life" (7). But then Dahl implies that all four theories are simplistic, because each addresses few of the sixteen questions he sees as posed by the general question, who governs? In the subsequent analysis, interest groups play only a minor role, chiefly in the discussion of an ad hoc neighborhood group organized to prevent the construction of cheap housing in its area (192-97). As such, the volume *Who Governs?* clearly implies that interest groups are only a secondary element in the urban polity.

After the publication of *Who Governs?* in 1961, pluralist writers paid little attention to interest groups; pluralists instead concentrated on researching the validity of the Schumpeterian model of competing political parties restraining elected political elites. Pluralists now studied parties and elections, not interest groups. It was not surprising that the 1964 Woodrow Wilson Prize for best book in political science went to Bauer, Pool, and Dexter's *American Business and Public Policy* (1963), whose central conclusion was that interest groups have little influence on Congress. After Dahl's rejection of the general claims of group theory in 1961, no pluralist argued for the policymaking model of all interests being organized and struggling to influence public policy, shaped by the pushes and pulls of interest group forces.

Even the present-day critics of pluralism seem to agree that the uses of the power elite model to describe policymaking in the United States as a whole, or in cities and local communities, are very limited. Instead, social scientists study networks of interaction among elites (Laumann and Knoke, 1987; Heinz, Laumann, Nelson, and Salisbury, 1993). Others apply various theories of hegemony to the study of power (Miliband, 1969; Offe, 1984).

But more central to our purpose, the pluralists contributed four interrelated ideas to the study of policymaking: the process of politics, a definition of power, the concern with separate policy areas, and self-knowledge of interests. These four are closely related to the ideas of partisan mutual adjustment and incremental policy change, which, however, are not basic assumptions. My argument is that pluralist theory provided a group of assumptions and related observations that facilitated research procedures for studying the nature of policymaking. This can be understood in the context of a brief discussion of the pluralist definition of *political power*.

POWER AS SOCIAL CAUSATION

Relying on work by Herbert Simon (1953), Dahl (1957) set forth the definition of *power* for pluralist researchers. Dahl's definition relied on observations that an individual caused changes in a process of social action. Such an individual is said to have power. Of course, social action processes are typically complex; consequently, observations of power tend to be observations of complex causation for those using Dahl's definition.

From 1953 to 1975, several political scientists developed the view of power as social causation, converging with an earlier viewpoint of Max Weber (M. Weber, 1946; McFarland, 1969, 14; 2001; Orum, 2001, chap. 3). After rejecting alternative definitions, Simon (1953) cited a definition of *power* by Lasswell and Kaplan (1950): "The exercise of influence (influence process) consists in affecting policies of others than the self." In the formulation best known to political scientists, Dahl (1957, 203) stated: "My intuitive idea of power, then, is something like this: A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B otherwise would not do." James G. March (1955, 437) stated: "The set of all influence relations is here defined to be that subset of all causal relations such that the behavior of an individual appears as the terminal point in the causal linkage. Alternatively, we can say that two individuals are in an influence relation if their behaviors are linked causally."

This leads to distinctions among different types of causal relations as they relate to power. For instance, *political power* refers to causal relations among humans, not to inanimate forces that change human behavior, such as a hurricane. A second distinction, producing much confusion, is the need to distinguish situations in which the changed behavior reflects the intentions of the powerful actor. One might change the behavior of another in a way that was not intended, as when an incompetent lobbyist changes a legislator's vote to one different from that favored by the lobbyist. As noted in chapter 1, pluralist political scientists became more comfortable using the term *power* to denote the causing of change in the direction intended by the powerful actor and referring to the more general category of causing any change as *influence*.

Other examples of causal relations include power-as-suggestion: when A proposes a behavior change, B adopts the change without resistance. Another category of causal relations occurs when B resists, and A uses rewards, sanctions, or perhaps even force to get B to change his or her behavior. This is power-as-coercion (McFarland, 1969; M. Weber, 1947, 152).

Ordinary language usage blurs the clear-cut distinction between power as intended causation and influence as causation in general. English speakers sometimes distinguish between power that involves the use of force or other harsh measures and power that involves lighter measures such as persuasion or petitioning, calling the latter influence. English speakers would say that "the constituent influenced the legislator's vote by means of a technical presentation,"

rather than "the constituent wielded power over the legislature by a technical presentation." Since neither the political science definition of *power* nor ordinary language can be eliminated, we must be clear about such overlapping usages.

With regard to power as coercive causation, John Harsanyi (1962) emphasized the costs of exercising power and also the costs of compliance with the exercise of power. For instance, a lobbyist might change a legislator's vote with little cost if all it takes is arranging a meeting with one of the legislator's staff. Conversely, the cost is high if the lobbyist must mobilize hundreds of persons to petition the recalcitrant legislator. From the standpoint of the legislator, a vote may be "cheap," offending almost no one, or it may endanger his or her victory in the next election.

Still another causal situation occurs when A's preferences cause changes in B's preferences, causing B to act differently. This is widely known as "anticipated reactions," in which B, perhaps to please A and to avoid A's exercise of sanctions, changes his or her behavior in anticipation of what A wants, even though A did not explicitly state such preferences (Nagel, 1975).

An important, implicit aspect of defining power as causation is its link to empiricism. A statement of power then implies observations of A changing B's behavior. It rules out defining power in terms of resources (e.g., wealth or force) used to get B to comply. One first has to observe the causal relationship; then one analyzes how power was wielded.

Such resources were called by Dahl (1957) a "power base," and both he and Simon (1953) warned that the power base should not be confused with power itself. In addition, Dahl stated that power-as-causation, to be an empirically useful concept, has to be used with four concomitant dimensions of power: base, amount, domain, and scope. *Base* refers to the resources or means that A uses to cause changes in others' behavior. *Amount* denotes the idea that some instances of power produce greater changes in behavior than others. A lobbyist exercises more power when he or she changes the legislator's vote from no to yes, for instance, than if the change is only from abstain to yes. The *domain* of an actor's power consists of those persons subject to the actor's power. The *scope* of power consists of the matters subject to the actor's power.

Dahl's major contribution to the study of political power is his insistence that the domain and scope always be clearly stated in discussions of power. Or, to put it another way, an actor's power in one situation should not be generalized to postulate an equivalent power over other persons in other situations. A pharmaceutical lobbyist may have power over just one legislator or over a score of legislators regarding the regulation of generic drugs. The same lobbyist might not have equivalent power over votes about Medicare payments for prescriptions, and he or she might have no power at all over any legislators with regard to civil rights or gun control.

Scope and domain of power were key issues in the still widely remembered community power debate of the 1960s. Following the example set by Dahl in

Who Governs? (1961b), political scientists studied political power in localities by conducting case studies of public policymaking and charting which persons changed the course of events. Such studies normally found that the domain and scope of power were fragmented; different persons had power in different areas of policy. Other social scientists—mostly sociologists—followed a different conception of power, conceiving power to be the possession of wealth or high social status. Such observers usually described inequalities of wealth and status and stated this as a finding of power in a community.

In contrast, political scientists, for the most part, did not consider wealth and status to be power itself, but instead to be resources that could be used to win political power, if such wealthy or high-status persons intended to do so. But such intentions are an empirical question, in this view, and must be observed in case studies.

This famous (or notorious) controversy extended for at least a decade and was expressed in scores of books and hundreds of journal articles before the frustrated debate participants, unable to persuade one another, went on to study questions other than community power (Polsby, 1980).

A RADICAL BROOM

Using the definition of power as social causation, as well as their other basic assumptions, the pluralists attacked other forms of theorizing and perspectives on political reform. If accepted, the arguments of the pluralists would sweep aside most of the work of political scientists before their time. Although such criticism sometimes produced an impression of arrogance, one could also be impressed by the almost revolutionary inclination to "clean house" of worn-out theory.

Of course, elite theory goes out the window if the same small group of individuals does not cause behavior to change in intended directions on important political issues. It seems virtually impossible to show such a change pattern in a local community, let alone a larger political unit. Elite theory is partially saved by multiple elitism, arguing that a discrete coalition (probably a governmental agency, an interest group, and a legislative committee) controls a specific policy area, such as distributing the right to graze livestock on federal land. However, because of their turn toward the study of parties and elections, the pluralists did not go far in the study of interest groups and thus did not address the problem of subgovernments.

Pluralists insisted that the concentration of wealth or social status did not translate to political power, unless such winners in social stratification actually entered the political arena and caused changes in others' behavior. Thus, documenting a skewed pattern of control of wealth in a local community showed only that the wealthy had the potential for power, not that they actually had it, barring observations of political power as social causation (Dahl, 1961b; cf.

Lynd and Lynd, 1929, 1937; Warner and Lunt, 1941). And it seems that the wealthy are less politically active in the local community, according to many pluralist community power studies, than one might expect. Stratification theorists mostly insisted that skewed patterns of wealth and prestige constituted power, in spite of the pluralist criticism (Polsby, 1980). The more sophisticated of the stratification theorists argued that the wealthy did not need to act to cause changes in the system; they were already winners, and their position was not challenged because of the "anticipated reactions" of potential challengers, foreseeing a losing battle and a loss of resources. But the pluralist critique put stratification theory on the defensive.

Pluralists did not take Marxism very seriously as either a theory or a research procedure. Pluralists did not witness cases of owners of property and of the means of production acting together to change the course of the political process, especially in areas studied by pluralists, such as education, urban renewal, and control of party nominations. Using the subjective definition of *interest*, pluralists did not observe evidence of a widespread working-class opposition to an ownership class. Intellectual debate with the Marxists did not go very far; unfortunately, Marxists of the 1960s were still predominantly of the "original" variety, arguing that the state is epiphenomenal to the interests of the ownership class. By 1970, however, Ralph Miliband and others had put forth the neo-Marxist perspective, in which the state might sometimes act independently and the basic source of class control is in social hegemony, or the control of issues that reach the political agenda. This is the sophisticated challenge to pluralism (Miliband, 1969).

Following Bentley and Truman, the pluralists regarded constitutional rules and laws as part of the political process, thus showing a concern for political factors related to judicial appointments, for instance, but not emphasizing the study of laws as factors having a long-term stabilizing, causal impact on the political process (Dahl, 1972). Instead, the process of politics for the pluralists was the interaction of individuals, political parties, groups, and governmental agencies (including courts), in which units or individuals were seen to have more or less political power. Before the use of power as causation, Bentley and Truman regarded the group as the basic actor; after the definition, which is couched in terms of individual A affecting individual B, Dahl and others usually saw the basic actor as an individual rather than an organization (Krasner, 1978).

Thus, the pluralists regarded laws and constitutional rules as legal resources for individual actors to exhibit power in the political process. There was little point, then, in studying laws and constitutions outside the context of political process. Since such study had constituted a large part of political science before 1960, the pluralists discounted much of the previous work in the field. However, the pluralists affirmed the autonomy of institutions such as elections, legislatures, chief executives, and executive branch agencies, as discussed later in this chapter.

The pluralist broom swept out reform-oriented writing. In reply to those who wished to change the system of political parties, the system of electing presidents, participation by the poor, and participation in general in local politics or to introduce systems of administrative rationality and government planning, the pluralists cautioned that we did not yet properly understand the actual workings of American politics and policymaking. Many of the existing practices, though appearing irrational, might make sense in terms of a larger system of action. Wedded to the idea of before-and-after observation of the political process, as it is conventionally defined, the pluralists were quick to point to the lack of such observations in the writings of political reformers. And, from the basic assumptions of the pluralists, it was a double error not to study causes and effects in the political process and then to interpolate one's own values into the system, arguing that political actors would be better off if various reforms were made, even if the political actors were not advocating such reforms (Polsby, 1980).

One common type of political reform is administrative reform—advocacy of systems of planning, programming, budgeting, evaluation, administrative reorganization, systems analysis, and management by objective to make administration more rational. The Lindblom-Wildavsky criticism of such reform schemes was quite devastating (Braybrooke and Lindblom, 1963; Wildavsky, 1964b, 1979). Administration is a political process, such authors noted, with various individuals and administrative units bringing their own interests to the process. It is impossible for outside observers to state a rational outcome for the process, because the actors themselves define the values, and there is no way for the reformer to devise a system to aggregate the values of the participants in a just fashion. Instead, the pluralists argued a form of pragmatism. Let the process unfold, they argued, noting that government policy normally proceeds in step-by-step increments in sequence. The numerous participants are thus able to figure out their interests in light of the incremental development of policy. As part of this theory, policy proceeds in the direction preferred by a strong majority of the actors, and this is likely to be reasonably representative and effective policy. This is where pluralists come closest to favoring policy determined by the aggregate of interest group influences, but Lindblom and Wildavsky actually do not give much attention to interest groups and define the political process more in terms of individual politicians and leaders of administrative agencies.

Particularly at the hands of Aaron Wildavsky, this pluralist broom swept aside a multitude of proposals to reform the administrative process that were not related to the real world of administrative politics. In fact, Wildavsky and Lindblom generally believed that installing an administrative reform system would make administration less effective, since attempts to repress politics are doomed and are likely to produce unforeseen consequences.

From the pluralist point of view, elite theorists, stratification theorists, class theorists, legal scholars, government reformers, and especially administrative reformers could not relate their theories and models to observations of power in

the political process. In their view, such writers were not scientific and should be either opposed or ignored. The pluralist broom was radical in its sweep.

PLURALISM AS COMPLEX CAUSATION

What was left for pluralist analysis? Given the basic assumptions of pluralism, one can anticipate the usual conclusions of pluralist studies. If power is social causation, and since we normally expect social causation to be complex, then power (social causation) will be complex. It will be "plural" (McFarland, 1969).

This is foreshadowed in the four basic assumptions of pluralism. First, the process of politics is seen as a fluid, shifting interaction of politicians, groups, governmental agencies, and political parties, all affecting one another over time. Causation or power is complex, as opposed to a model in which an elite or state agency has a great deal of influence on events. Second, as noted, power is defined as social causation when one individual changes the behavior of another individual. The aggregate of such causes and effects is likely to be complex. Third, policymaking is reduced to a multitude of separate issue areas, with several hundred at the national level and perhaps ten or twelve important areas at the local level. Power as causation seems likely to vary among the separate issue areas. Fourth, the subjective definition of *interests* enhances the complexity of the model, because it rules out theoretical procedures by which the observer classifies interests as the same, relative to some objective criteria posited by the observer. Given a subjective definition of interests, the observer cannot posit interests beforehand but must observe the subjects' own definitions. Although in some situations there may be general tendencies of interest definition, normally we observe many individuals with unusual self-definitions: the poor who identify with the rich, the rich who identify with the poor, and so forth.

A fifth major pluralist idea—not one of the four basic assumptions—is *partisan mutual adjustment* as a characteristic of a political process having numerous actors interacting in a complex fashion. Dahl's theoretical collaborator, Charles E. Lindbloom, maintained that the goals of the actors within a pluralistic process are dependent on one another and are continually modified by the decision-making participants within political processes. Phrased differently, political actors do not seek to maximize their value in politics but follow "the politics of muddling through" as they modify goals, after taking into consideration the goals of others and the political feasibility of attaining their goals in politics. This is partisan mutual adjustment, with political partisans mutually adjusting their goals in light of the goals of others. In a famous derivative of Lindbloom's model, the policy process exhibits incremental change—policy outputs normally change only slowly over time, because the goals and the political resources of those participating in partisan mutual adjustment are unlikely

to change suddenly. Lindbloom's theory of partisan mutual adjustment provided dynamics commonly described by pluralists in their studies. Later researchers in the political process tradition often found that policy systems do not exhibit incremental dynamics. Instead, they found that the policy process becomes "stuck" in multiple-elitist models (see chapter 3) or that there are decided policy "jumps" or quick changes, and that Lindbloom overemphasized the frequency of incremental change (Lindbloom, 1965; Hochschild, 1984; Baumgartner and Jones, 1993; see chapters 4 and 8 of this book).

Partisan mutual adjustment and incrementalism were common pluralist findings, but not basic assumptions of the pluralist model. The basic pluralist book *Who Governs?* analyzes a major, nonincremental policy change—the introduction of a massive urban renewal program by the chief executive of New Haven, Connecticut (Dahl, 1961b). Dahl stated in his American politics textbook: "Incremental change, then, can be a powerful means for transforming a society—and has been so in the United States. However, comprehensive changes also occur at times; in fact comprehensive changes are . . . associated with some of the most dramatic events in American political history" (Dahl, 1972, 297–98). Lindbloom apparently expected a continuous process of incremental goal changes among actors in the policy process, and such a relatively slow modification of goals by political actors is also consistent with the pluralist model (Lindbloom, 1965; Kingdon, 1984; Baumgartner, Berry, Hojnacki, Kimball, and Leech, 2000).

A pluralist political system is a complex political system having complex causation. It has a great number and variety of components, such as individuals, groups, or roles. As pluralist theorist Nelson Polsby noted: "Pluralists, who see American society as fractured into a congeries of hundreds of small special interest groups, with incompletely overlapping memberships, widely differing power bases, and a multitude of techniques for exercising influence on decisions salient to them, are not surprised at the low priority Americans give to their class memberships as a basis for social action" (Polsby, 1980, 118).

A large number of component units in the pluralist political system exercise power, defined as causing changes in the behavior of other component units. In other words, many component variables are affecting many other component variables much of the time. This is another aspect of pluralism as complex causation.

Pluralist findings generally state the variability of systemic components and their relationships through time. Again, Polsby put this very well: "Another presumption of the pluralist approach runs directly counter to stratification theory's presumption that power distributions are a more or less permanent part of the social structure. Pluralists hold that power may be tied to issues, and issues can be fleeting or persistent, provoking coalitions among interested groups and citizens ranging in their duration from momentary to semi-permanent" (Polsby, 1980, 115). Thus, within the pluralist political

system, power and coalitional relationships among systemic components vary considerably over time relative to specific situations. Again we see that a pluralist political system is a complex political system.

In contrast, an elitist system has concentrated power and causation. An elitist power structure is a simple power structure: few components have causal impact on the system; power relationships are not interdependent, but spring from the action of one or few components that act as independent variables; and relationships among actors remain relatively constant over time. An elitist system is asymmetrical, being dominated by one-way action. Such systems are centralized structures, in power analysis terms.

Pluralists usually generalize that power in the American system is dispersed, widely shared, and fragmented into kaleidoscopic bits and pieces. C. Wright Mills and others (often political radicals of the Left and the Right) see power as concentrated, shared by few, and consolidated into large lumps. For instance, there is Mills's (1956) "power elite" and the detached, unrepresentative governmental elite of Senator Barry Goldwater's *The Conscience of a Conservative* (1961).

In studying American government, pluralists in the 1960s generally contrasted their observations of complex causation with some simpler model relying on an elite or with some image of concentrated causation of policy. Pluralists thus criticized the thesis that the Senate is directed by an "inner club." They pointed out that the president is at the center of a complex system of interaction within the executive branch and cannot fully control some federal agencies. Applying Lindblom's incremental theory, Wildavsky (1964b) argued that the federal budgetary process is characterized by decentralized complex power (causation), a finding agreed to by all, but he added that the budgetary process should not be centralized, because decentralized incrementalism is a valid measure of the participants' interests. Thus, finding complex causation, pluralists often argued that its replacement with centralized, simpler causation (power) might do more harm than good in achieving representativeness and effectiveness (McFarland, 1969, chaps. 1, 2).

A RESEARCH PROCEDURE

While the pluralist theory embodied the idea of complex causation within the political process, it also offered a reasonably clear research procedure that could be used by political scientists studying a variety of policies and institutions. This helps explain why pluralist theory spread so rapidly in the 1960s. Thus, for the study of American politics, there was a good basis for calling pluralism "the paradigm" or "the orthodoxy." Straightforward research procedures and results acquired the academic imprint of cutting-edge research techniques

because that research was linked to impressive theorizing by leaders in the field, such as Herbert Simon, Robert Dahl, and Charles E. Lindblom.

The pluralist research procedure was based on the four basic assumptions of pluralism. These ideas implied the importance of empirical case studies of the political process. As noted, politics was defined according to the definitions of those being studied. Power was defined as an individual (possibly a unit, such as a governmental agency) causing changes in the behavior of another individual or unit. This implied the necessity of observing a flow of events. Power was seen as divisible by issue area and so could not be generalized from one issue area without empirical confirmation.

The techniques for case studies of politics were straightforward. Essentially, the scholar assembled a history of a sequence of political events. To do a history, one interviewed participants, collected documents issued by political participants, read newspapers and official records, and, if possible, directly observed political meetings and other events that were part of the history. The concern for causation did not rule out the communication of the ambience of political events; good writing and readability were valued skills.

Pluralists sometimes conducted relatively simple surveys about political participation and elections in local communities. Following Dahl, pluralists tended to pay special attention to individual politicians, their motivations, and their political strategies. Presidents, mayors, members of the U.S. Congress, state legislators, and bureaucrats were studied as political entrepreneurs assembling political resources to gain power, often to please constituents and thus to keep their jobs. City and town political organizations were another favorite topic of study; these were regarded as organizational entrepreneurs assembling resources to gain support and to win elections, sometimes thereby representing the working classes and assimilating immigrants into the American political system (Polsby, 1963, 1971; Wildavsky, 1964a, 1964b).

Such methods and concepts could be applied to most sectors of political life in America. Thus we have referred to pluralist studies of cities, local communities, and different issue areas both nationally and locally. We have seen that the president and mayors can be viewed as powerful, yet within a pluralistic system of bureaucratic politics. Political party organization can be studied in pluralistic terms. Congress and other legislatures can be studied in terms of centralization or decentralization of power. In studying federalism, one may assume a political process, divided into issue areas, and conduct empirical study of the relative power (causation) of the central government versus state and local governments (Grodzins, 1960). One can study attempts to centralize power in administrative management systems: planning, budgeting, management by objective, government reorganization, and so forth.

This pluralist political theory did achieve some success. For the next thirty years, political scientists eschewed elitist or power elite explanations of political

processes. Power elite theories of community power have been supplanted. Those interested in social elites started in the 1970s to analyze elites in terms of network theory, based on aggregating the frequency of communications among individuals or units, and then depicting such communications networks as a mathematical theory of social structure (Laumann and Knoke, 1987).

The supplanting of elitist theories should not be dismissed as not significant. It seems natural for the human mind to suppose, at least initially, that complex events have simple causation, perhaps in the shape of a small group of persons. And if it has explanatory power, a simple theory is better than a complex theory—the idea of Occam's razor. Analytical discourse naturally starts with something like an elitist theory, a theory of simple causation. Demonstrating the limits of simple causal models is a contribution of lasting value to political theory.

LIMITATIONS OF PLURALIST THEORY

A first limitation of pluralist theory, one not much commented on, is that the theory has rather limited explanatory value. Even as the Simon-Dahl definition of political power was being set forth, friendly observers James G. March (1955, 1966) and William H. Riker (1964) introduced the question of "the power of power." Social causation is ordinarily very complex, and case studies are not easy to do; power as causation is thus ordinarily complex, requiring a great deal of effort to study. In contrast to an elitist model, we can be satisfied with a study demonstrating complex causation. But as elitist models lose significance, most observers want more information than that events are caused by numerous actors with reciprocal, interactive relationships that change with the issue and with time. We need new models for understanding the policymaking process.

To be fair to Dahl and to Lindblom, two important models were put forth. Following a line of thought associated with Joseph Schumpeter (1950) and Anthony Downs (1957), Dahl (1961b) asserted the importance of competition among elites to hold political power, with voters choosing among the elites. In practice, this meant an assertion of the importance of competing political parties for the maintenance of representative government; otherwise, political leaders were likely to go unchecked.

Lindblom put forth the concept of incremental political change, which he developed into a multifaceted model. This model proved very useful in understanding American budgetary processes. As mentioned earlier, incrementalism assumed that actors in the decentralized, pluralistic political process considered policy change in step-by-step increments, a process that facilitated the calculation of individual or group interests, because incremental change is relatively easy to understand. Resulting policy changes often embodied the support of a

large majority of individuals and acting units and could be viewed as part of a process of representative and effective policymaking.

Pluralists could not deal with the criticism of hegemony theorists, who inquired about power as the capacity to control the political agenda or, much the same thing, the capacity to define what is political. This is discussed in chapter 8, but we can note here that pluralists, assuming the centrality of observing causal relationships, were unable to relate to hegemony theorists' assertions about "nonissues," because such assertions sprang from another theoretical paradigm that was antithetical to pluralism.

Because pluralists assumed the subjective definition of interests, and because they could not deal with the criticism of hegemony theorists, pluralism became regarded in some quarters as a status quo supporting theory. Because of the nature of their assumptions, pluralists could not criticize the current social definition of politics or suggest that other issues might be equally important as those under observable political contention. It should not be necessary to select certain leaders of pluralist thought and enumerate their own support for political reform. Suffice it to say, many viewed pluralist publications as accepting the political status quo, and in the late 1960s, this meant rejection of pluralist theory by many political scientists (see chapter 9).

The next point is surprising. Pluralists stopped studying interest groups. One of the aims of Dahl's *Who Governs?* was to show that David Truman and other group theorists exaggerated the role of interest groups in American politics. One might have thought that interest groups would be added to the extensive list of political institutions and actors studied by pluralists, using the method of finding an elitist theory and then criticizing it by constructing a case study of power and political action. But this was not done.

Relying on my own observations during the 1960s, after *Who Governs?* the pluralist view of interest groups was something like the following: (1) no interest in Bentley, rejection of the idea of group theory as central to politics, but a regard for Truman's *The Governmental Process* (1951) for its good descriptions of the political process, if the group theory aspect were ignored; (2) agreement that ordinary citizens could form ad hoc protest coalitions that could have power at the local level; (3) reliance on *American Business and Public Policy* to state that the power of interest groups over national policy was greatly exaggerated and that, in many policymaking situations, interest groups had no real power (Bauer, Pool, and Dexter, 1963); (4) an assumption in incrementalist theory that some of the interacting forces might be interest groups, somewhat in contradiction of the third point.

The pluralist theory of policymaking turned out not to be a theory of interest groups, as the viewpoint of Dahl and Lindblom supplanted the viewpoint of Truman. Certainly pluralist theory was not based on the idea that public policy is basically a struggle among interest groups, with the eventual policy being the result or vector of the pushes and pulls of interest groups.

THE PLURALISTS' VIEW OF INSTITUTIONS

With the evolution of pluralist studies in the work of Dahl, Lindblom, Wildavsky, Polsby, and others, the idea that interest groups dominated the political process was rejected. Such scholars apparently assumed that Truman and his students had conducted sufficient basic research on interest groups, so they were no longer studied by pluralists. Interest groups were, however, considered to be a routine part of the political process, although this was questioned by Bauer, Pool, and Dexter (1963).

Consequently, the pluralists considered that political institutions are one variable that influences the political process, contrary to straw-man arguments used to differentiate statist theory from pluralism. However, in discussing institutions, Dahl and his associates used a language that became obsolescent. In relation to their perspective on the behavioral revolution in the study of politics, Dahl and the pluralists discussed executive branch institutions in terms of the head of the institution, or possibly other leaders of the institution. Behaviorism focused on the study of individuals; power elite theory defined individuals as the unit, so its countertheory also defined individuals as a unit. The pluralists, of course, were reacting against a political science that seemed to describe laws and rules in textbook fashion, without investigating how laws and rules worked in practice. Therefore, as "behaviorists," the pluralists saw their task as observing how institutional roles were actually carried out, or observing individual behavior within the context of institutions (Dahl, 1961a).

In rejecting the idea that groups dominate, the pluralists considered this to be a sufficient statement about political institutions; they are important but should be studied in the context of how actors behave in relation to institutions, not in the context of how laws and rules develop over time, as is the penchant of statist theory (Skowronek, 1982). The central pluralist statement *Who Governs?* focuses on the study of power in three issue areas. The first of these is the initiation and implementation of an urban renewal program by New Haven mayor Richard Lee, believing this to be a popular program for gaining reelection. In relation to the local polity, Lee expanded the executive bureaucracy by founding a powerful urban renewal agency, and Lee himself succeeded in co-opting most civic leaders to support his "statist" urban renewal effort. In current terms, Dahl's leading case study is an example of statism, the initiation and implementation of policy change by a powerful state institution headed by a strong leader. Dahl's associate, Nelson W. Polsby, uses the language of institutionalism to describe such findings:

The invention of the office of Development Administrator . . . was the device Mayor Lee used to focus his entire city administration upon redevelopment. The job was created for Edward Logue, an energetic, aggressive, and able lawyer-administrator. . . . In New Haven . . . the Development Ad-

ministrator enjoyed unique powers because of the Mayor's commitment to urban redevelopment. . . . The major substantive decisions on urban redevelopment were made by Logue, Lee, and H. Ralph Turner, executive director of the Redevelopment Agency. Most of these decisions were made in secret. . . . One of the most striking things about Mayor Lee's urban redevelopment program was his ability to induce economic and status leaders of top rank in the community to "front" for the activities of the professional development staff. . . . In this case, the people behind the scenes were professionals in City Hall, who formulated their extensive programs largely in secret. (Polsby, 1980, 73, 89)

In the language of a later generation, we would say that this is action by "the local state," which in turn is constrained by laws and rules of the national state: "First, rather strict rules and regulations were prescribed by the Housing and Home Finance Agency which granted the federal share of the costs of redevelopment programs. These regulations covered items such as [the five aspects of renewal policy listed]" (Polsby, 1980, 74).

The second area for the study of power is education policymaking. Again, political institutions are found to be important, although they are acting within the context of interest groups and political officials:

Most decisions in public education, then, were made by educational administrators, more or less hierarchically. A set of particularly significant decisions was made in a process of negotiation in which the Mayor was a central figure. Other sets of significant decisions were made by means of negotiations within the Board of Education, among a cohesive group on the Board, and the superintendent and miscellaneous interest groups, and between the Board and the superintendent, and still other decisions were made by negotiation between party leaders and educational administrators. (Polsby, 1980, 79)

This passage typifies pluralist thought: political institutions are important, although there are other causal factors in policymaking.

The third of the three areas studied in *Who Governs?* is political nominations. I would say that elections are a political institution. This idea is certainly central to the treatment of institutions in rational choice theory, but it seems to be avoided in the historical statism sort of institutionalism (Riker, 1982).

Dahl's other major pluralist work, *Preface to Democratic Theory* (1956), also treats institutions as a major variable, and not just a dependent variable. In particular, the existence of the U.S. Senate, with its allocation of voting by state, is seen as a central factor in influencing policy outcomes. Throughout this work Dahl is concerned with the questions of how laws and rules regulating elections affect political outcomes.

Another important branch of pluralism is the incrementalist theory of the policy process, developed by Lindblom and applied by Wildavsky in his

pathbreaking study of budgeting and appropriations. In such studies, institutions are seen as important, although they are usually concretized in terms of interacting individual decision-makers, often representing governmental agencies and their policies. Again, these were studies of role behavior (incremental decision-making) in the context of institutions. Implicitly dismissing group theory, Lindblom, Wildavsky, and such writers felt no need to state that institutions, with their rules and laws, are an important variable in the political process. Wildavsky's budgeting study assumes that the framework of the organization of Congress and the rules of the appropriations process are important. When Wildavsky became disappointed with changes in the budgeting process that led to deficit spending, he proposed fixing the situation with an institutional change—a constitutional amendment to balance the budget (Braybrooke and Lindblom, 1963; Lindblom, 1965; Wildavsky, 1964b, 1980). Of course, Wildavsky thought that the rules of institutions are an important factor in policy outcomes.

Nelson W. Polsby is normally regarded as a leading spokesman for the pluralist point of view, a role that he accepted (Polsby, 1980). This pluralist actually devoted most of his career to the study of institutions, particularly the U.S. Congress. Polsby is quite adamant that institutions are important and basic to the understanding of politics. In 1971 he wrote:

It is a remarkable fact that American political institutions have survived—indeed flourished—through the strenuous challenges attending the birth of our nation. . . . The constitutional order under which these institutions operate has now remained intact for 175 years, longer than virtually any other government in the world. American political institutions are, by any modern standard, impressively venerable. They are also enormously interesting. (Polsby, 1971, ix)

Polsby affirmed the importance of political institutions and expressed his frustration at those who think otherwise:

Radicals, in common with many other American intellectuals, betray little interest in how political institutions actually work. They are more concerned with what they conceive to be the outcomes in society than with the complexly interrelated institutions and processes that produce outcomes. The focus here, for better or worse, is on institutions and processes. For the most part, these are real. They exist in time and space, create, spend, and redirect resources, and affect people's lives. They should not be ignored. (Polsby, 1971, vii)

Polsby is certainly an institutionalist.

The pluralists had a time-bound view of the role of law, in the sense that they were reacting to the constitutional and legal study of politics, which might produce compendia of laws and rules without studying how they actually

worked in practice. Accordingly, pluralists did not see fit to make statements about the importance of law as ideas influencing the political process; nor did the pluralists give priority to the study of law. Instead, the pluralists were concerned with "the legal process," that is, political aspects of policymaking by the judicial branch and other legal institutions (Eisenstein, 1973). Such study is useful, but soon the discipline moved to study "law and society," that is, legal ideas as a social influence, working within the context of other variables.

Thus pluralism moved from the Truman group theory approach to the Dahl power and policy approach. The Dahl approach regarded political institutions as having a major influence on policy outcomes. It is an extraordinary misreading of this work to say otherwise.

CONCLUSION

The pluralists were criticized for an inadequate treatment of how issues get onto the political agenda and for seeming to legitimate the political status quo. Although the Truman school of group theorists minimized the role of institutions in shaping policy, this was not case with Dahl and his cohort of pluralists, even if Dahl was fuzzy on exactly how institutions fit into the total political picture.

Yet I argue that the pluralists of the 1960s provided a very good start for the evolution of a political process paradigm. The idea of political process as complex causation, the definition of power as causation, the particularity of issue domains, and the subjective definition of interests were four basic assumptions of Dahl's that were implicitly accepted by later generations of political process researchers. Though perhaps adding statistical data analysis, later researchers relied on the research methods of Dahl and his cohort, such as the analysis of case studies of separate issues, the study of press accounts and of documents produced by participants, interviews of participants, sample surveys, and direct observation of events. Such work can be applied to many arenas of politics, not only to hundreds of issue areas but also to events within various institutions, such as legislatures and state and local governments.

However, Dahl and the 1960s pluralists in general did not study interest groups and lobbying because, in their view, too much emphasis had been given to these topics by the group theorists. Therefore, the 1960s pluralists did not do research directed toward another major criticism of their work: their lack of consideration of oligarchical control tendencies in particular issue areas, sometimes called subgovernments or policy subsystems. Nor did these pluralists consider a major reason for such oligarchical control: the logic of collective action. However, much research shortly appeared to fill this lacuna left by the pluralists. I refer to the research focusing on subgovernments and the logic of collective action as "multiple-elite theory," which is treated in the next chapter.

describing oligarchical control of a policy area: subgovernments, little governments, clientelism, interest group liberalism, interest group capture, whirlpools of power, even sometimes using the popular term *iron triangles* (Cater, 1964; Griffith, 1939; Lowi, 1979; Walker, 1991).

The difference between pluralism and multiple elitism can be seen by comparing two research efforts emanating from Yale in the 1950s, when it seems that Yale had the most influential political science department. Robert Dahl's study of power in New Haven, *Who Governs?* (1961b), found that that city's policymaking power was generally dispersed but somewhat concentrated in the hands of the mayor, though he was constrained by the need to please voters to obtain reelection. Herbert Kaufman of Yale joined Wallace Sayre of Columbia, along with research assistant Theodore Lowi, to study policymaking in New York City, publishing *Governing New York City* in 1960. These authors observed islands of power within the city's policy processes, meaning that the Board of Education and the Port Authority had great power within their respective issue areas and that the mayor had little control over these semiautonomous bodies. Sayre, Kaufman, and Lowi (1964b), however, used the same research procedures as the pluralists.

In a classic article, Lowi (1964a) argued that pluralism-elitism varied with the type of policy process in a discrete area. Pluralism might indeed be descriptive, Lowi argued, in policy areas focused on regulation, such as when the federal government regulates working conditions, producing an interest group politics of countervailing business and labor groups. But, Lowi argued, other policy areas might ordinarily be controlled by a narrow coalition seeking to control the distribution of discrete benefits by government, such as the purchase of expensive military aircraft.

Alternative interest group theorists emphasized the finding that oligarchical coalitions tend to control a particular area of policymaking. For instance, one might say that a coalition of trucking companies, the teamsters' union, and sympathetic Interstate Commerce Commission personnel controlled the regulation of interstate trucking. This is an example of what is here termed an "island of oligarchy." Rule by the few exists, but it is limited to an "island," a single policy area consisting of the regulation of trucking.

Such alternative interest group writers found islands of oligarchy in many areas: federal public works construction (pork barrel); the Port Authority in New York City; the anti-monopoly policy of the Federal Trade Commission; and the regulation of airlines, trucking, local and long-distance telephone carriers, nuclear power plants, and railroads before their defeat by trucking interests (Bernstein, 1955; Maass, 1951; Redford, 1969; Sayre and Kaufman, 1960; Stigler, 1975). Defense contracting was another area in which collaboration among defense industries, the Pentagon, and members of Congress with relevant constituencies seemed to be common. Agriculture was seen as rife with islands of oligarchy: the Farm Bureau (the center of many little governments), tobacco

3 The Multiple-Elite Theory

The pluralists may have stopped studying interest groups by 1963, but of course other scholars had been studying groups and continued to study them during the 1960s. Such scholars rejected the idea of a single power elite in America and documented the control of specific policymaking processes by narrowly based elites. In particular, Grant McConnell (1966) and Philip Selznick (1953) argued that various aspects of agricultural policy and public lands management were so controlled. Henry Kariel (1961) made the same argument about agricultural labor policy. Emmette Redford (1969) and Marver Bernstein (1955) studied the capture of federal regulatory agencies. Murray Edelman (1964) argued that such elites could mislead the public through the control of information and symbols. E. E. Schattschneider (1960) provided a theory for the possible dynamics of elite control of a single area, arguing that controlling the range of participants was central to political power. If viewed in combination, Edelman and Schattschneider produced an argument that an issue-area elite could misinform the public, so that it would not be interested in political action to change some particular policy.

Such scholars actually accepted many of the pluralists' theoretical assumptions and research procedures. They studied particular political processes and rejected the power elite idea as it applied to the American polity as a whole. They were concerned about causation in the political process. Furthermore, they viewed American politics in terms of discrete issue areas of policymaking. But these alternative writers did not take as strong a position as the pluralists in eliminating from empirical study all interests that were not known to the participants themselves.

The alternative interest group theorists generally used "fuzzy" versions of the pluralists' research procedures. These scholars accepted the idea of doing case studies within particular policy areas. More than the pluralists, they tended to use the methods of historians, reading histories and commentary by other scholars and gathering documents. Some interviewed participants and observed meetings and governmental decision-making. These scholars were also concerned with who caused what to happen in a policy area, but they were less likely to list participants and specifically enumerate the victories of participants in the manner of behavioral science. Often such writers took themselves out of the theoretical traditions of social science and coined their own concepts for

production, sugar production, orange production by the Sunkist cooperative, peanut production, the distribution of cheap grazing rights on federal lands, the distribution of subsidies for conservation projects such as farm ponds, the regulation of water sales from federal irrigation projects, and the distribution of the benefits of the multipurpose Tennessee Valley Authority's economic development program (Cater, 1964; Foss, 1960; Lowi, 1969; McConnell, 1966; Selznick, 1953). The regulation of the insurance industry by state-level governments was seen as another example (Orren, 1974).

At the time, most political scientists did not realize that a group of economists, influenced by Milton Friedman and George Stigler, was making a parallel argument, bolstered by quantitative analysis. Such economists argued that government regulation led to the formation of business interest groups, which subsequently captured the government regulatory agencies, thereby controlling the regulations themselves and leading to a form of policy ownership in which "rents" were charged to the general public (Stigler, 1975).

The multiple-elite theorists were not interested in making elaborate arguments about hegemonic domination (an exception being Edelman's [1964] theory of dominance through the manipulation of symbols). They simply dropped the extreme insistence on the self-knowledge of interests. They needed only weak assumptions about the lack of benefits in price fixing and the elimination of competition. Or if a clique of local, wealthy farmers distributed agricultural subsidies among themselves, alternative researchers saw no need to observe the clique defeating the larger number of farmers to prove oligarchy. As realized by most political scientists by 1980, the assumptions of the alternative interest group researchers were similar to the assumptions generally held by economists. Thus, economists might analyze oligopoly or monopolistic competition in terms of raising prices and leading to economic inefficiencies and not worry about whether it was the subjectively understood interest of everyone to use scarce resources most productively.

Economists might talk about the capture of regulatory agencies leading to "deadweight losses," that is, economic waste detrimental to almost everyone. An economist could refer to "market failure" leading to the imposition of costs on those external to the production process, as in the case of severe pollution from factory emissions. The economist does not worry that some of the citizenry might have no opinion about instituting government policies to "internalize" the externalized costs of production (Becker, 1985).

Besides islands of oligarchy, another major new idea put forth by multiple-elite theory was Olson's (1965) logic of collective action. Olson's theory was the best single theory to explain the existence of islands of oligarchy. Olson based collective action theory on the sort of economic theory just considered. Oligopolies produce a collective benefit for constituent units (although not for the public), as a few units cooperate to restrict production and raise prices. But as the number of producer units increases, it becomes more difficult to collude to

restrict production, because some firms will leave production restriction to others and produce more to obtain higher profits for themselves in the short run. Similarly, Olson reasoned, a few units will contribute to support a political lobby, but as the number of units increases, they will all try to be free-riders, and the lobby will get no contributions. Olson concluded that a lobby with a large number of units could exist only if an interest group offered selective benefits that were restricted to its members—to make membership worthwhile for the member units—and then put some of the group's resources to work in lobbying.

The logic of collective action therefore predicted that lobbies for consumers, victims of pollution, and other constituencies of perhaps a hundred or more units would not exist unless they provided members with selective benefits worth more than the cost of joining. Collective action theory predicted, in contrast, that small groups of producers would collude to form lobbies to work in their interests, and therefore "the few would defeat the many," in Olson's terminology.

The few would defeat the many by controlling particular policy areas of regulation, for instance, through lobbying and forming a dominant coalition, while the more numerous constituents on the public side would be unable to organize. Such an argument would apply to much government regulation of business, such as the regulation of prices, pollution, service, and safety. It could also be applied to agricultural policy, especially insofar as local farm elites captured policy administration. It could be applied to public works construction, as beneficiaries of construction form political coalitions to maintain spending. The logic of collective action was a persuasive argument on behalf of multiple-elite theory.

Thus, by adhering to weak assumptions about the nature of "interests," similar to those routinely held by economists, the multiple-elite theorists could use pluralist methods and assumptions to develop a policymaking theory that was different in its conclusions about the nature of power and policy.

Unfortunately, the multiple elitists were not conscious of themselves as a school of theory, so that in retrospect, the impact of their work may dwindle. Instead, these writers tended to write separate books about power and policymaking, not citing one another very much, and in general came to be viewed as mainstream critics of pluralism, as opposed to statist (also mainstream) or politically radical critics of pluralism.

SUBGOVERNMENTS AND STASIS

Multiple elitism admitted the absence of a single power elite but viewed public policy as fragmented into hundreds of separate political arenas, many of them under the control of particularistic elites. In this view, in American public administration, the few defeat the many through the mechanism of the *subgovernment*. This is a coalition of interest groups, public administrators, and members

of Congress serving on the relevant committees that control the administration of public policy for the benefit of those within the subgovernment. Such policies usually benefit established economic interests. A subgovernment tries to destroy executive agencies working within the same policy area but outside of the subgovernmental coalition. These agencies, which compete with subgovernments, include a disproportionate number that represent the general interests of the poor. Subgovernmental elites normally prevent the implementation of policies set by decision-makers representing widespread constituencies, as when Congress or the president acts in this capacity (McConnell, 1953, 1966; Lowi, 1969, 1979; Catter, 1964).

Multiple-elite politics provides a framework for Schattschneider's (1960) classic dictum that manipulating the scope of conflict is a basic variable in political action. In this sense, the subgovernmental elites seek to act in such a way as to prevent representatives of broad constituencies from acting and exercising power within that elite's area of policy concern.

Multiple-elite theorists do see challenges to the rule of subgovernments. They see that American politics is subject to reform cycles, when the scope of conflict regarding a subgovernmental policy is expanded, in spite of the actions of that area's elite. These theorists tend to think in terms of reform cycles within some area of public policy. At times, general-interest coalitions defeat the subgovernmental coalitions and enact reform legislation in specific areas of public policy, but subgovernments eventually reestablish their control (Lowi, 1971; McConnell, 1966; Edelman, 1964; Bernstein, 1955; see chapters 4, 6, and 8 of this book for further discussion of reform cycles).

Other writers state that even if reformers establish new policy-oriented government institutions, such institutions must compromise major reform goals to fend off the powerful coalition that once constituted a subgovernment, as Selznick (1953) observed about the Tennessee Valley Authority. The more pessimistic McConnell (1953, 1966) seemed to conclude that any reform policy-oriented institution in the agricultural or natural resources domains would be destroyed or captured by powerful subgovernments. Selznick and McConnell argued that many such federal government programs are co-opted by locally oriented subgovernments, which undermine effective policy implementation by diverting the distribution of benefits to local elites (the wealthy farmers get almost everything, the sharecroppers get nothing).

One elite theorist, Murray Edelman, differed from the others in stressing the symbolic element in politics in a work that was widely influential not only in political science but throughout social science: *The Symbolic Uses of Politics* (1964). Edelman stressed that the few defeat the many through the manipulation of political symbols. He saw that widespread but unorganized publics are prone to irrational perceptions of political reality. Such publics confuse symbols with substance—that is, elites manipulate public opinion by creating political forms that give the impression that some problem is being solved or some

policy is being followed when this is not the case. In contrast, political groups consisting of a few corporations do not usually confuse symbol with substance. Such small groups, following rational political strategies, frequently defeat the interests of very large publics that are confused by political symbols and following irrational political strategies. Edelman published before Olson and was thus unaware of the logic of collective action, but Edelman provided a very different theory that came to the same conclusion as the logic of collective action: the few defeat the many, and multiple elites rule.

Multiple-elite theorists drew the conclusion that America is subject to economic stasis because of the power of special-interest subgovernments. Congeries of subgovernmental coalitions introduce inefficient policies, which produce economic decay. As Olson (1965, 1982) argued, within pluralistic societies, interest groups are free to organize without significant governmental restriction. But because of the logic of collective action, groups with specific economic interests will defeat groups representing the general public. Over time, this leads to inefficient governmental regulation, subsidies, and oligarchical economic organization, which eventually eliminate economic growth.

Writing before Olson made this argument fully apparent, Lowi (1969, 1979) observed that, beginning in the 1960s, the federal government instituted vast programs of subsidies (especially through subsidized loans) for established interest groups. This, in his view, freezes the political system in the status quo, retards policy innovation, and lessens the influence of newly emerging interests. The pervasive politics of the distribution of benefits renders unattainable other policy goals, such as economic regulation or the redistribution of wealth.

Nobel Prize-winning economist George Stigler (1975) argued in a similar fashion to Olson, but he was more specifically concerned with the effects of lobbying and government regulation on economic policy. Stigler argued that government regulation usually benefits special economic interests. He observed that it is a normal process in industrial society for particularistic businesses or professional lobbies to mobilize political resources to gain legislation or regulations that principally benefit that business or profession. Such regulations typically limit entry into a business or profession, retard the rate of growth of new firms, eliminate substitute products or services, establish protective tariffs, fix prices, and gain subsidies from public funds.

The more conservative version of multiple-elite theory argued that the special-interest politics of governmental expenditures can lead to a continual increase in such spending, which is, in the long run, economically inefficient (Wildavsky, 1980; Niskanen, 1971). These writers viewed overall government spending as the most pressing problem associated with multiple-elite power, more pressing than the long-term economic degradation indicated in the conclusions of Olson and Stigler. The spending theorists argued that if cultural norms restricting governmental spending break down, collusion among interest groups, governmental agencies, and legislators produces spending increases in

numerous areas of public policy. A contributing factor is that the size of governmental bureaucracies will continually expand as each governmental agency collaborates with its allies to increase its budget (Wildavsky, 1980; Niskanen, 1971).

CONCLUSION

The general conclusion of multiple elitism can be summarized in the phrase *interest group stasis*. Both political and economic innovation is unstable and quickly dissipates into the relatively simple organization of political-economic oligopoly. The main thrust of politics becomes negotiations among the various policy area elites in a massive system of logrolling. These elites trade political support to maintain one another's subsidies: California defense contractors and their representatives might agree to support subsidies for public housing construction in the Northeast, and vice versa. Dairy farmers trade support for industry trucking regulation for votes for higher milk price supports and so forth. A minority of citizens, aided by well-organized lobbies, gains in the short run, but everyone loses in the long run. Government spends more and more; budget deficits increase as special-interest lobbies gain exceptions in the tax code. The economy deteriorates.

In the real world of political behavior, the "citizens" victimized by interest group stasis would presumably overthrow it, substituting some form of political-economic organization with greater promise for fulfillment of the public interest. One powerful stimulus to such an overthrow would be the maintenance of national political and economic sovereignty in an environment of heightening international economic competition. Indeed, in the real world of American politics, one would expect anti-stasis politics to appear before the whole system came close to economic collapse. This is the politics of countervailing power described in the next chapter.

Multiple-elite theory has contributed the ideas of islands of oligarchy and the logic of collective action to the study of political power, policymaking, and interest groups. The general concepts of the centrality of scope of conflict and the uses of symbolic politics also enhance multiple-elite theory. Multiple-elite theory is further enhanced by such concepts as reform cycles, political and economic stasis, and co-optation. Such ideas are of enduring value and provide guiding questions whenever we study power, policymaking, and interest groups.

Multiple-elite theory should be viewed in a broader context. Much of this theory consists of separate writers, most of whom seem unaware of other writers of this ilk. It is thus incumbent on later scholars to show the relationships among their ideas. Their work can thus be seen as an intermediate point in the development of political process theory. In logic, and usually in research time, the multiple-elite school came after the pluralist school of the 1960s but before

the neopluralist school of the 1980s. As the concepts of multiple elitism provide a perspective on the 1960s pluralists, they also provide a perspective on the 1980s neopluralists. The questions posed by multiple-elite theory will always be worth asking. Whether this theory is confirmed or disconfirmed in a particular policy situation depends on a variety of empirical circumstances. In recent years, neopluralist systems of policy have been observed more frequently than the subgovernments of multiple-elite theory (Walker, 1991).

enforced in the implementation phase. Jones recognizes that policy can be captured by industry, but that countervailing political power can forestall this (C. O. Jones, 1975, 272-75).

Other "neopluralist" scholarship was more concerned about criticizing the multiple-elite school than Jones was, but like Jones, it was most interested in certain substantive questions. One of these was the nature of regulation by the federal government, regulation that had greatly increased with new environmental, civil rights, worker health and safety, and other laws, especially in the early 1970s. Other scholars were particularly interested in the nature and impact of new participants in the policymaking process—the public interest groups and new social movements of the time.

In the area of air pollution, for example, in addition to Jones, studies by Bruce Ackerman and William T. Hassler (1981), Norman Ornstein and Shirley Elder (1978), and Lettie M. Wenner (1982) all found that environmentalist groups have significant effects on public policy. Jeffrey M. Berry (1977), Andrew S. McFarland (1976, 1984), Robert C. Mitchell (1984), Mark V. Nadel (1971), and David Vogel (1980-1981), among others, chronicled the significant strength of public interest lobbies. Jo Freeman (1975), Anne N. Costain and W. Douglas Costain (1983), Ethel Klein (1984), and Joyce Gelb and Marian Lief Palley (1982), among others, found women's lobbies to be important. John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald (1977) generalized from such observations to develop the *resource mobilization theory of social movements*, which implies that movements frequently create lobbying organizations. Samuel Beer (1976), Donald Haider (1974), and others described the phenomenon of governments lobbying other governments—associations of cities, counties, and so forth lobbying in Washington and elsewhere. Walker (1983) and his collaborators (Gais, Peterson, and Walker, 1984) found a great increase in lobbying by nonprofit organizations (e.g., churches, hospitals, and colleges); by professions, especially groups of government employees; and by ideological cause groups. Kay Lehman Schlozman and John T. Tierney (1986, 55-57) found a great increase in government lobbies since 1960, although they argue that this has not substantially decreased the business domination of other lobbies.

A new picture of interest groups was presented. A complex welter of group participation in policymaking was often observed (Jordan, 1981; Jordan and Maloney, 1996; Gray and Lowery, 2000; Lowery and Brasher, in press). True, this had been the case with Truman's *The Governmental Process* and policy process studies of the 1950s. But after 1961, such studies lost prestige as the pluralists preferred to study community power or American national institutions. Meanwhile, the multiple elitists concentrated their research on cases in which a particular policy area was dominated by a single coalition.

The neopluralists invariably observed that a complexity of interest groups did not imply a fair or effective policymaking process. But they often found a large number of different groups at work in a single issue area. Air pollution

4 Neopluralism

After multiple elitism, four new ideas were added to the policymaking sequence: neopluralism, interest group sustainers, social movement theory (discussed in chapter 5), and state autonomy, emphasizing the state and countervailing power. In this chapter, neopluralism is first discussed as the finding of numerous competing groups in a policy area and as the determination not to equate competing groups with just or fair policymaking in that area. After discussions of interest group sustainers and the state and countervailing power, I return to neopluralism, indicating some of the more recent concepts and research findings that have become part of the neopluralist synthesis. The addition of these ideas produced a theoretical synthesis about policymaking, a sort of stopping point, but one that seemed to be "only halfway there" in terms of a conclusive statement of a policymaking theory within the boundaries of social causation, political process, particular policy sectors, and somewhat relaxed assumptions about the self-knowledge of interests.

During the 1970s and 1980s, political scientists put considerable effort into studies of the American political process, including policymaking and the role of interest groups. Such studies typically did not relate primarily to the elitism versus pluralism controversy, now of less interest to scholars bored with the lack of progress in community power studies of elitism versus pluralism. One such scholar was Charles O. Jones, who later emerged as a disciplinary leader in the study of Congress and the presidency. In his *Introduction to the Study of Public Policy* (1970), a theoretical work, Jones accepts the three pluralist concepts of the political process model, the subjective definition of interests, and the idea of varying research according to issue area, but he shows little interest in pluralism versus elitism or the causal definition of power. Jones affirms that interest groups have importance in the policy process, but not to the degree theorized by David Truman. Accordingly, Jones presumes that Congress and executive branch agencies often have the capability of initiating public policy (C. O. Jones, 1970, 27-32, 56-65, 97). In 1975, Jones published a book that embodies his theoretical conceptions, *Clean Air: The Policies and Politics of Pollution Control*. There, he studies a political process in which many governmental agencies at various levels of federalism and many interest groups all have power, as well as politicians responding to the public. Jones assumes that clean air legislation needs political support, including from interest groups, to be effectively

regulation is one such instance. To begin with, national environmental groups had influence, particularly through litigation, but also through lobbying Congress and contacting the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Such groups included the Sierra Club, the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, and the air pollution specialist the Natural Resources Defense Council. In addition, locally based environmentalist groups might initiate litigation and contact political officials, such as members of Congress.

As argued in traditional group theory works by John Kenneth Galbraith (1952) and David Truman (1951), business interests often were not monolithic, but divided. In the case of air pollution, for example, the interests of Appalachian coal mining, producing relatively high-sulfur coal, were different from the interests of Wyoming coal mining, producing lower-sulfur coal. (The question was whether regulations should emphasize the use of low-sulfur coal and give lower priority to equipment to take sulfur out of emissions.) Northeastern vacation and recreational businesses, hurt by pollution drifting in from the Midwest, had different interests from those of power companies in Ohio. Producers of emissions-scrubbing machinery would advance the use of their technology, as opposed to the mandated use of low-sulfur coal. The nuclear power industry, both utilities and producers of nuclear reactors, might advance the position that nuclear power does not emit air pollution. Railroads might advance the cause of low-sulfur coal, which, if mandated for use in the Midwest, would need to be transported by rail.

In the realm of air pollution policy, charitable associations such as the American Lung Association and the American Public Health Association would lobby. Not only the EPA but also units of the Department of Energy would be involved in the lobbying process. The President's Council on Environmental Quality might be heard from, and the Office of Management and Budget would conduct cost studies of proposed regulations, putting it in a position to influence policymaking.

Units of the federal system might lobby Congress or federal agencies. The state of Ohio might lobby for scrubbing systems rather than restricting the use of Ohio-mined coal. The state of New York and the city of New York might lobby for tight controls on the use of sulfur, which otherwise is wind-borne to the Northeast. The National Governors' Association, backed by state environmental protection agencies, might lobby for significant state government participation in air pollution policymaking. And the list goes on.

We see that citizens groups, a welter of different types of business groups, charitable organizations, state and local governments, and national associations of state and local governments are frequently involved in air pollution policymaking. Because public health is involved, medical doctors and public health officials have some appreciable role, as do various professional groups in most areas of public policymaking. Different units of the federal government may become involved, sometimes with opposing viewpoints; the Department of

Energy may seek to keep energy prices down, while the EPA emphasizes the restriction of pollution.

In this example, we see that units of the state might participate in policymaking as autonomous actors, not largely controlled by some particular interest group. We see that the existence of a social movement—environmentalism—has spun off interest groups that participate in policymaking. And, in general, we see a complex variety of interest groups at work (Ackerman and Hassler, 1981; C. O. Jones, 1975).

INTEREST GROUP SUSTAINERS

Political process research before 1960 usually assumed that persons or organizations would pursue their political interests by forming interest groups, but the traditional research did not pay systematic attention to barriers to organizing groups. The multiple-elite school concentrated its attention on situations in which interest group organization was almost entirely on one side of a policy issue. When Olson published his work on collective action, the multiple-elite writers could then bolster their case by referring to an impressive theory based on rational choice assumptions. But when researchers began finding numerous organized groups active in the policymaking process, they were at a loss to explain why such groups existed in light of collective action theory.

A scholar outside the social sciences might simply object: if Olson's theory does not work, then throw it out. But Olson's theory could not be easily dispensed with. First, it was a general statement based on rational choice assumptions, the very type of theory becoming increasingly popular in political science. Second, it provided the best explanation of why persons did not join interest groups, or why previous members quit. In a number of areas, such as support for environmental policy or regulation of money in elections, surveys showed a much greater support for the platforms of citizens groups than the number actually contributing (Shaiko, 1999, 30). Third, Olson explained the lack of group countervailing power in situations of islands of oligarchy, which even neopluralists agreed sometimes existed. Fourth, Olson's focus on the utility of offering selective benefits to only contributing members proved useful in understanding the dynamics of many interest groups. (For instance, the benefits offered to members of the American Association of Retired Persons are so useful that the majority of persons over age fifty have joined.) In particular, the closed shop is beneficial to unions, since the job becomes a selective benefit to union members. In addition, the selective benefits offered by many professional associations go a long way toward explaining the existence of more than a thousand groups of this nature.

In the mid-1980s, interest group theory faced a puzzle of almost amusing irony. Researchers had an excellent theory to explain why groups should not

exist, but there was no widespread agreement on a theory to explain why groups do exist, especially in light of the occurrence of a multitude of groups. By the year 2004, there is still no single textbook answer to this question, although by now, many researchers would point to the action of one or several interest group sustainers, as cited later. Indeed, perhaps social science is such that one cannot develop a single theory to respond to Olson's logic of collective action. Perhaps it is possible only to cite one or a few of the several dozen theories responding to Olson and to indicate a few concepts that have wide usefulness for research (Lichbach, 1995).

First, some groups are started or maintained by political entrepreneurs, to use the rational choice language. One or more individuals take it upon themselves to start a group and to bear the time costs of organizing and doing the necessary fund-raising. There is evidence from Walker's surveys that about half the interest groups responding had been organized by such political entrepreneurs. The general public is aware of the careers of Ralph Nader, John Gardner of Common Cause, Ethel Andrus of the Retired Teachers Association, and Samuel Gompers and others in the labor movement (Berry, 1978; Walker, 1991).

The idea of the political entrepreneur was adopted by sociological theorists John McCarthy and Mayer Zald (1977), who took a new look at the phenomenon of social movement behavior and organizations in light of collective action theory. They then took the idea one step further by concentrating their analysis on the nature of the resources used by movement leaders to start and maintain a movement. What institutions helped the movement? Where did the money come from? This approach was then adopted by Walker (1991) for the study of political interest groups and lobbies. Surveys found that political entrepreneurs often did the organizing, but where did such entrepreneurs get the money and other resources for organizing? Were there outside sources?

Walker argued that *patrons* played a key role in organizing interest groups and were particularly helpful in understanding the organizing of citizens groups, in which members pursued public policy issues even when such policies did not have a great impact on the members' own pocketbooks. Patrons included wealthy individuals, foundations, other organizations (which might offer management knowledge, for instance), and governments, particularly the federal government. Walker observed that many nonprofit groups, oriented to influencing policy, received grants for research and other activities from the federal government. Walker also focused on the history of group organizing, in which federally sponsored conferences, committees, and organizations provided the impetus for organizing the National Association of Manufacturers, the U.S. Chambers of Commerce, the Farm Bureau, the Business Roundtable, and the National Organization of Women. In addition, there are the various associations of governments themselves: the National Governors' Association, the Mayors' Roundtable, the League of Cities, the National Association of Counties, and so forth. Government provides employees with jobs, which then

become the basis for organizing groups: police and firefighters at the local level; the National Education Association; the American Federation of Teachers; the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees; associations of prison guards; and so forth. The national association of state attorneys general recently played a prominent political role in attacking the tobacco industry.

Walker emphasized government as a patron because, in American society, it is probably the most important group patron, and also because it contradicts the conventional image of groups organizing to lobby government. Instead, government organizes groups to lobby itself.

In addition to government, foundations were important patrons to environmental lobbies during their great upsurge from 1968 to 1975. The most important of these, the Ford Foundation, backed off from large-scale funding of environmental protest groups in the mid-1970s, but such efforts left behind a flourishing lobbying sector. In addition, lobbies occasionally benefit from grants by wealthy individuals. Such grants usually need not be publicly reported and may not be publicized by a lobby, seeking to maintain a public image of independence from its donors (Walker, 1991).

Another source of the proliferation of groups is social movements (Costain and McFarland, 1998). In America, movements against established institutions and policies use noninstitutionalized tactics, almost by definition. But eventually, movements develop a lobbying arm, using established influence tactics. There was an upsurge of social movements in the 1960s and early 1970s, producing a number of new interest groups, such as those in the environmental, civil rights, women's, government reform, and, later, Christian fundamentalist areas. Social movements and their relationship to interest groups and public policy are the topic of chapter 5.

Another theory addressing the proliferation of interest groups was provided by policy theorist Hugh Heclo, whose concept of "issue networks" found immediate, widespread acceptance among political scientists. Heclo observed that although the structures of multiple-elite theory could be observed in a study, they were frequently countermanded by communications and ad hoc organizing by others in an issue area. For instance, in the case of air pollution policy, there is a tendency for eastern coal mining businesses, eastern miners, legislators representing Ohio, Kentucky, and West Virginia; and the Department of Energy to favor the use of high-sulfur coal scrubbed with expensive equipment. But there are also coal mining, air pollution, and electric utility issue networks filled with persons who communicate about politics and economics. For instance, the air pollution network contains leaders of the EPA and state agencies concerned with the issue. In addition, university researchers, environmental group personnel, recreation industry organization personnel, Lung Association staff, and journalists regularly communicate about policy in this area. Federal and state legislators specializing in environmental legislation, and the staffs of such legislators, are part of the issue network as well. Constant professional

communication thus provides sources of policy information different from that provided by the potential "iron triangle" of coal-burning electric utilities, pro-utility state regulatory commissioners, and allied state legislators. The links among the issue network lower the costs of contacting persons and groups to organize a lobby to counteract the power of the high-sulfur coal producers and users (Berry, 1989b; Heclo, 1978).

The concept of issue networks provided another reason why interest groups and coalitions of groups might organize. It also led observers to note communications among agents in a policy area, and how such communications might lessen the tendency to develop oligarchical control of the policy area. The idea of issue networks applies to almost all the separate areas of public policy. With the increasing technical complexity of many public areas, issue networks become more extensive and complex, embodying various types of interests and experts. Professionals, researchers, and publicists become part of the network, as in the case of air pollution. Executive and legislative staffs expand, including many with professional expertise who are incorporated into the network. The groups sustained by entrepreneurs, patrons, and social movements become part of the issue network.

The logic of collective action implies the absence of many large groups having many members. But this is not the case. Entrepreneurs, patrons, social movements, and issue network collectivities organize and maintain such groups. The students of policymaking understand some of the reasons for the proliferation of interest groups in America, so they have turned to other questions.

THE STATE AND COUNTERVAILING POWER

In chapter 2, we noted that Bentley and Truman's pluralist model centered on political groups controlling political institutions, but this view was clearly rejected by Dahl and others of the next generation of pluralist theorists. Such scholars as Dahl, Lindblom, Polsby, and Wildavsky described political institutions as frequently acting autonomously, not controlled by political groups or by some extragovernmental power elite. Such pluralists preferred to refer to separate institutions, such as the Senate, the House of Representatives, the New Haven urban renewal authority, and so forth. Analogous to their preference for studying policy areas separately, these scholars referred to political institutions separately and did not aggregate institutions into a theoretical construct of "the state." This term appears almost nowhere in the writings of this school of pluralists.

This has led to confusion. Pluralists are frequently thought to believe either that the state has next to no power in policymaking, because interest groups control everything, or that the state is only equivalent to the rules of the game of governmental decision-making. For instance, in the fourth and fifth sentences of an important book, sentences not footnoted and apparently

judged to represent a scholarly consensus, Stephen Krasner (1978, 5) states: "The governing liberal paradigm does not view the state as an independent entity. At best it is seen as a referee among competing social groups, at worst as a cipher." (Krasner regards pluralist political science as part of the paradigm of liberalism.) The point is that Dahl's generation described political institutions as "independent" entities but did not generalize to descriptions of "the state."

Another confusing factor is that the term *pluralism* was originally descriptive of an early-twentieth-century political philosophy that took the position that others had placed too much value in the concept of sovereignty and the state instead of in social groups and organizations (Laski, 1921). Thus, *pluralism* originally denoted beliefs about the importance of groups in relation to the state and was thus applicable to Bentley and Truman, but not especially applicable to Dahl. To confuse matters further, during the heyday of the pluralist study of American politics, many accepted the conclusion of *American Business and Public Policy* that interest groups did not play an important role in the policy process of the federal government (Bauer, Pool, and Dexter, 1963; Goldstein, 1993).

The bottom line is that the pluralists assumed that political institutions (state agencies) had autonomy, but they never addressed the questions posed by the multiple-elite theorists: the question of subgovernments controlling the state piece by piece, and the question of collective action paradoxes leading to the existence of subgovernments, or the few controlling the many. Thus, another group of writers had to come along to deal with these questions and to show why the institutional independence assumed by the Dahl generation of pluralists was often the case.

The research of the multiple-elite scholars showed numerous cases in which groups controlled state agencies or, more precisely, in which administrative agencies broke off from central control to join in an "iron triangle" coalition with interest groups and legislators to control some particular area of public policy. Some multiple-elite writers implied that administrative agencies and the state could be autonomous, not much influenced by interest groups, if major reforms were enacted. Thus, Lowi's (1969) juridical democracy would put agencies under the control of Congress and remove the control of interest groups. McConnell (1966), in effect, proposed to revive and strengthen the New Deal state, with a powerful president and a supportive Supreme Court and national political party. Schattschneider (1960) proposed to expand conflict, taking it out of narrow interest definitions in particular policy areas and making it the subject of national debates between centralized national political parties that would clearly take different positions on the issues. Schattschneider saw interest groups as having too much power and proposed to strengthen political parties to centralize decision-making in the federal government. As it turned out, it was the multiple-elite school, more than Dahl and Polsby, that argued that interest groups dominated government.

A new step was taken, however, by James Q. Wilson and other neopluralist researchers. Such research found that political processes led to a proliferation of interest groups on two or more sides of an issue. In addition, such research almost always found that administrative agencies sometimes acted in a relatively autonomous fashion, with control by interest groups largely lacking (J. Q. Wilson, 1980). Another strand of research, what might be called the "realist" school of the study of public policy, had already emphasized the basic importance of interest group support for the effective implementation of legislative policy by an agency and had observed that such support enabled agencies to act autonomously (C. O. Jones, 1970, 89-106, 124-32; Rourke, 1968).

In terms of the policymaking theory, why would state agencies act autonomously? The answer was clear. Unlike situations described by the multiple-elite model, no single interest group or type of interest group was observed to dominate the policymaking process in an area. Instead, a variety of groups with different interests was observed. Such groups did not have equal resources or power, and the power of business groups would probably exceed that of citizens groups, such as environmentalists. Still, the power of producer groups (business or professional groups) was often checked, at least somewhat, by the power of countervailing groups, such as citizens groups or business groups with different interests. The power of producer groups was thereby lessened, so that a producer group could not form a subgovernment, that is, a controlling coalition in some policy area (J. Q. Wilson, 1980).

I call this situation a *power triad*, in which the producer groups are checked by the countervailing power groups in a policy area, leading to the possibility of autonomous actions by governmental agencies. Groups on both sides of the environmental issue let the EPA act independently; opposing coalitions of the cable industry versus the telephone industry eliminate the possibility of capture of the Federal Communications Commission; civil rights lobbies oppose the pressures of local governments in the administration of voting rights legislation by the Department of Justice. Thus, within the unfolding logic of the policymaking paradigm, because there are interest group sustainers, there is a proliferation of groups acting in a policy area. And with a proliferation of groups comes the possibility of relatively autonomous actions by governmental agencies (McFarland, 1992).

This conclusion is straightforward, but its acceptance is somewhat obscured by the connotations of the idea of *countervailing power*. This term became associated with the naive assumption that when one type of interest is mobilized in the political system, opposing interests can be expected to mobilize in opposition to protect their own interests, thereby providing countervailing power to the earlier mobilized interests. To many, this seemed to imply that all interests were equally capable of effective political organization and that the results of the struggle among interest groups to control policy might seem relatively fair—a conclusion supportive of the political status quo. However, the

neopluralist writers who found a multitude of active groups and governmental agencies certainly did not subscribe to the idea that such observed mobilization implied an equality of mobilization on all sides of an issue. Nor do neopluralist writers ever argue that all interests pertaining to an issue are organized; it is impossible to argue this after *The Logic of Collective Action*. Political scientists no longer publish models that affirm the old idea of the equality of countervailing power. So, since the term is useful and descriptive, perhaps it can be used again in the context of the power triad, indicating an observation of active groups countermanning the influence of leading producer groups (McFarland, 1992).

Countervailing power occurs with some frequency because it is not limited to situations in which producer groups are all on one side of an issue and well-organized citizens groups, such as environmentalists, are on the other side. Certain business groups may join public interest groups, professional associations, local property holders, and so on to form countervailing coalitions to producer interests on specific policy issues. For instance, domestic sugar producers have been opposed by a coalition of soft-drink bottlers, cookie manufacturers, and consumer groups on the issue of imposing import quotas for sugar (Berry, 1985; Nadel, 1971; Vogel, 1989; Nadel and Vogel, 1977).

Countervailing power enhances the effect of professional norms on public policy. Countervailing power also enhances agency autonomy, so that professionals within the governmental agency have a greater tendency to influence policy. For instance, scientists in the EPA can have some effect on policy formulation because the EPA has some autonomy, due to the countervailing power among environmentalists and business interests. In some instances, especially at the local level, no interest groups are sufficiently organized to influence executive branch policymaking, leading to a situation of enhanced agency autonomy in which professional values have greater impact (J. Q. Wilson, 1980; Peterson, Rabe, and Wong, 1986).

Countervailing power enhances legality in administration because it provides agency autonomy, increasing the sphere of action for legal professionals. This increases the impact of legal norms, as opposed to decision-making controlled by self-serving interests that reinterpret or ignore statutes and regulations on the books. Countervailing power thus enhances the enforcement of general legal standards. This view, derived from Wilson's research, contradicts the work of Lowi (1969, 1979), who emphasizes multiple elitism and the situation of agencies in alignment with special interests that control the interpretation of the law, much of it based on vaguely written statutes in the first place.

ISSUE NETWORKS AND COUNTERVAILING POWER

Through a series of examples, Heclio indicates how issue networks provide countervailing power to attempts to establish oligarchical control of an issue

area: "The overlay of networks and issue politics not only confronts but also seeps down into the formerly well-established politics of particular policies and programs. Social security, which for a generation had been quietly managed by a small circle of insiders, becomes controversial and politicized. The Army Corps of Engineers, once the picture book example of control by subgovernments, is dragged into the brawl on environmental politics" (Heclo, 1978, 105). Further examples indicate that developing issue networks that include many technical experts frequently circulate information contradicting the outlook of the various plural elites. This is an important instance of countervailing power, for a basic strategy of a policy area elite is to restrict public information about that policy. If the decision-makers of high politics do not know what is going on, they will have little incentive to challenge the control of a policy elite, thereby letting routine politics run its course.

Heclo mentions, but does not develop, a second aspect of countervailing power: "Knowledge does not necessarily produce agreement. Issue networks may or may not, therefore, be mobilized into . . . a conventional interest organization" (Heclo, 1978, 104). He neglects an obvious implication here, namely, that portions of issue networks may be mobilized into interest groups if appropriately stimulated. One may hypothesize that governmental agencies or independent political entrepreneurs will organize interests from the newer issue networks. Or previously existing groups will tend to expand into issue networks upon contacting sympathetic persons. Because an issue network, by definition, implies the existence of a communications network, the costs of organizing an interest group are lowered by having access to preexisting information about which participants in the network care about what. An issue network performs the same function for group organizing that a mailing list does and, in the case of some technical policy journals, amounts to much the same thing.

Extending Walker's analysis of patrons, we can expect that patrons and issue networks will act together to facilitate group organization. The meetings, journals, and mailing lists of issue networks cut the costs of organizing. The patron is likely to finance one or more political entrepreneurs arising out of an issue network to organize the group. Such entrepreneurs are likely to have acquired years of experience with the personalities and opinions of those within an issue network.

Most of those in an issue network are in that position because of jobs financed by business, government, academic institutions, nonprofit organizations, and newspapers. The network facilitates group organization, and other institutions finance the network. In addition, patrons finance the entrepreneurs, who organize portions of the network into an interest group.

Social movements, upon achieving success in public policy, can lead to the creation or enhancement of an issue network, which in turn may become a foundation for additional interest group organization. For instance, the women's movement led to the creation of a policy network concerned with health issues

pertaining to women, and this network could serve as a resource for organizing women's lobbies.

The issue network is not a panacea for the problems of plural elitism. Issue networks are diverse. They contain persons critical of a policy, such as *laissez-faire* conservatives or personnel of regulated businesses. Some people in an issue network are supportive of emergent subgovernments. Further, top policymakers may ignore issue networks, out of either principle or ideology, depending on one's point of view. During the Reagan administration, for instance, most members of issue networks in arms control, acid rain, and toxic waste disposal were ignored.

SUBSYSTEM CYCLES

Neopluralist theory describes policy systems as going through cycles, from routine politics to high politics and back to routine politics. *Routine politics* is defined as normal, day-to-day decision-making and administration in a policy area. *High politics* is defined as the politics of making general decisions that have an impact on changing policies or the structure of participation in a policy area. Congressional committee or subcommittee members are frequent participants in routine decisions and are then added to the structure of the triad. High politics involves one or more of these participants: presidential policymakers, major sectors of Congress in addition to routine participants, federal appeals courts, and the Supreme Court (Redford, 1969; Selznick, 1957; Ripley and Franklin, 1984).

During high politics, presidential policymakers (most commonly), Congress, or the courts may significantly reduce agency autonomy. Presidential policymakers may side with either producers or countervailing power holders. During high politics, then, the president, in coalition with either producers or countervailing power holders, attempts to restructure policy and participation.

James Q. Wilson (1980, 389-90) argued that the president ordinarily is not part of the politics of regulation. This accurately described the 1970s but does not describe Ronald Reagan's effective intervention into the policymaking of the Federal Trade Commission, the EPA, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. One hallmark of the Reagan administration was the conversion of routine regulation and administration into high politics. Congress may be the initiator of high politics in some particular policy area when it takes the initiative to pass legislation, as was frequently the case in the early 1970s (Orfield, 1975). The federal courts also have the capacity to initiate high politics in a policy area, such as by abolishing agencies for their unconstitutional abridgment of the separation of powers and by limiting affirmative action policies in the civil rights area. Consequently, "split high politics coalitions" may form, for example,

when Congress, with countervailing power groups, opposes the president and producer groups, as sometimes happened during Reagan's first term.

A policy system may go through cycles from the triad stage to the sub-government stage. Thus, a space may be defined between triadic and sub-governmental power. The position of the policy area in this space changes with time. As countervailing power, agency autonomy, or both diminish, the policy area approaches the subgovernmental model; as they increase, policy approaches the triadic model. High politics may intervene to move policy through the definitional space.

For instance, A. Lee Fritschler's (1983) account of smoking and politics in America shows the movement away from agency co-optation by the industry and toward triadic power. As the Reagan administration attacked the autonomy of such agencies as the EPA, OSHA, and the Civil Rights Commission, there was movement away from triadic power toward the model of co-optation by business. Paul J. Culhane (1981) found movement away from the co-optation model in Bureau of Land Management policy in the 1970s, but this did not preclude movement back toward the co-optation model in the 1980s (see Clarke and McCool, 1985, 107-22; Miller, 1985; Davis and Davis, 1986). Policy need not be described as fully co-opted or fully triadic; there are obviously gradations. Similarly, it is a mistake to assume that policy always remains at some point; high politics may intervene to restructure any given policy area.

The reform cycle of plural elitist theory can be described as the movement of a policy area from subgovernment to triad and back to subgovernment. The reform cycles of plural elitism sometimes occur, but agency autonomy and countervailing power usually remain present to a lesser degree as the policy area moves back to subgovernmental relationships. One factor in the maintenance of some countervailing power in a policy area is the presence of advocacy coalitions within policy networks.

POLICY NETWORKS AND ADVOCACY COALITIONS

After considering a score of studies of policymaking in particular issue areas, we can conclude that countervailing power to producers frequently exists. Such power in policy systems can be referred to as triadic, as exhibiting a stable pattern of conflict and cooperation among producer groups, countervailing power groups, and agencies acting autonomously. But a more general and exact formulation of policy coalitions is needed, and this was framed by Paul Sabatier and Hank Jenkins-Smith (1993, 1999) as the *advocacy coalition*. This concept has proved useful in dozens of studies of policymaking, particularly in American energy and environmental policymaking. Many researchers have a similar formulation of this idea, even if they do not use the specific advocacy coalition concept.

Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith start with Heclo's idea of the issue network, a system of communications that includes interest group personnel, government administrators, legislators, academic policy specialists, and journalists. (In the following, I use the term *policy network*, since Heclo's *issue network* seems to imply the existence of political conflict.) A policy network is not an interest group but a system of communications among those interested in a specific policy. A definition of political actors can be built from the idea of a policy network, however. An advocacy coalition thus consists of a stable political coalition among the various types of constituents in a policy network. Of most significance are coalitions that are stable, existing for at least ten years. A policy network may have two or more advocacy coalitions, as in the case of a stable environmentalist coalition opposed by a stable coalition of developers and free-market advocates. Clearly, not all the participants in a policy network need be part of an advocacy coalition springing from the network; some persons just are not active in politics and lobbying (Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith, 1993, 1999).

The policy advocate idea seems quite simple and basic, but it states bluntly what hundreds of policy researches have been assuming. The Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith formulation stresses that advocacy coalition members represent both the executive and legislative branches of government and represent all levels of government. Their formulation also emphasizes that advocacy coalitions do not form only around material interests but are often based on agreement on core social and political values or on shared cognitive understandings of some public policy situation (e.g., cognitive views about the probability of global warming).

The Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith framework addresses a major stream of research in the fields of policy analysis, policy process, and public administration. Some leading studies of the policymaking process, addressing research in the areas of regulation, interest groups, and policymaking, implicitly include the idea of advocacy coalition. Martha Derthick and Paul Quirk's influential study, *The Politics of Deregulation* (1985), stresses the role of economists and the cognitive appeal of the deregulation idea as the basis of an advocacy coalition including presidents, legislators, agency leaders and independent commissioners, and interest groups. Gary Mucciaroni, in a parallel work, *Reversals of Fortune* (1995), shows that in certain contexts, advocacy coalitions that include executive branch leaders, legislators, and interest groups can defeat particularistic interests in the areas of regulation, international trade, and agriculture. Like Sabatier, Jenkins-Smith, Derthick, and Quirk, Mucciaroni finds that the general-interest coalitions are based in shared beliefs, as well as in common material interests.

Kevin Hula (1999), as well as Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith (1999), stresses that support for an advocacy coalition varies in depth, from support arising from commitment to a fundamental value to that arising from a relatively superficial congruence of common material interest. Hula divides supporters of

coalitions into three categories, depending on depth of commitment, as do Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith, who are interested only in coalitions lasting for ten years or more.

Network theory seems to be a promising tool for the analysis of policymaking, power, and interest groups. Advocacy coalitions spring from policy networks but are not equivalent to the policy network. There may be two or more advocacy coalitions in the same network; not all network participants reliably advocate some particular policy position, as would be the frequent case with researchers and journalists.

A policy network is defined in terms of those regularly communicating about the same set of policy events. *The Hollow Core*, a major research project published by John P. Heinz, Edward O. Laumann, Robert L. Nelson, and Robert H. Salisbury (1993), was based on a network analysis of interest groups and policymaking in the national agriculture, energy, health, and labor policy areas. This study is known for its demonstration that within each of these areas, virtually no group or person regularly communicates with others over the entire range of a policy area, such as agriculture or energy. Thus, a graphing of the communications network has a "hollow core"; no one is in the middle communicating with all those in the various sectors of the policy area. Initially, then, the network analysis indicates a fragmentation of action in such general policy areas. But hundreds of interviews with lobbyists and government officials do not demonstrate the pattern of multiple elitism. Instead, network theory finds that policymaking is fragmented into complex coalitions, with actors normally uncertain about whether the communications process might shift with changes in issues. Jeffrey Berry (1989b) found a similar pattern in the policymaking process in the telecommunications area.

Network theory is now a significant part of the study of sociology, a field committed to depicting the nature of social structure. Political scientists, however, are most concerned about relating social structure to the exercise of influence over public policy and have generally not followed up on *The Hollow Core* study. However, it seems that network theory might be useful in predicting the formation and stability of advocacy coalitions, as well as indicating strains within a single coalition. For instance, even a stable lobbying coalition in the area of national disabilities policy tends to have a bifurcated network structure, accompanying internal conflict over the coalition's lobbying goals (Shapiro, forthcoming).

A second use of network theory might be to explore the function of a "filled-in" core, or what might be called the hub-and-spokes model of networks within a policy system. Two studies have found hubs within two different higher education policy systems. However, the peak association of higher education lobbies, the American Council of Education, though serving as a hub, was unable to broker agreement among such interest groups, except at a level too general to have much effect (Cook, 1998). In contrast, the Illinois Board of

Higher Education served as a hub within its policymaking network and was viewed by the governor and others as being influential in its coordination efforts (Knorowski, 2000). This situation indicates a link between neopluralist theory and the analysis of policy planning, in that organizations at the hub of a system of networks might design plans for public policy and be effective in coordinating the system of networks in the formulation and enactment of such plans (see chapter 7).

Analysis of political process into networks of interaction is a type of research that is likely to go much further. Networks indicate communication, and the substance of communication is information. Scott Ainsworth (1993) and Kenneth Kollman (1998) demonstrated the usefulness of defining lobbying in high politics situations as a process of signaling, communicating information to the subjects of lobbying. Such signals often include the intensity of a group's concern about some issue or whether an entire advocacy coalition of groups is concerned, and if not, which components of the group are intensely concerned. A basic choice in lobbying is whether to extend "insider lobbying" among Washingtonians to "outsider lobbying," whereby an advocacy coalition activates its networks to signal to decision-makers its intensity of concern. Outsider lobbying can involve significant organizational costs, but it can also clearly signal widespread opinion about some issue, and if that opinion is intense, it can have an impact on voting (Ainsworth, 1993; Kollman, 1998; McFarland, 1984).

Control of information is central to the maintenance of subgovernmental control. Narrowly based elites seek to block information about their pattern of control, but this strategy can be defeated by the appearance of scandal. A scandal within some public policy area indicates that a great deal of negative information is circulating about the situation in that policy area. Circulation of such negative information is at the core of the reform cycle, or of the punctuation of an equilibrium, when routine politics is redefined into high politics and reform measures may be passed. In general, countervailing advocacy coalitions and citizens groups seek to act as "watchdogs," which "bark" to signal the existence of some situation requiring the attention of the greater public and possible intervention in high politics.

PUNCTUATED EQUILIBRIUM AND POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

A major neopluralist theory, in contrast to the multiple-elite reform cycle, is punctuated equilibrium, as stated by Baumgartner and Jones in *Agendas and Instability in American Politics* (1993). Instead of the reform cycle, Baumgartner and Jones's theory of punctuated change in policy systems emphasizes that, most of the time, politics and policy do not change to a great extent, but such incrementalism is often followed by shorter periods of rapid policy change, which becomes institutionalized in laws and procedures (and presumably is

supported by an advocacy coalition), so that the policy system becomes qualitatively different. A major cause of rapid policy change is exogenous shocks to the system: war and other national security events, domestic riots, corruption, scandals, and so forth. Such exogenous factors hugely increase the amount of public attention to some policy area; who cared about the regulation of accounting before the Enron scandal? Like the reform cycle theorists cited earlier, Baumgartner and Jones see the degree of public attention toward a policy area as a major factor in the study of the political process. Broadcasting and focusing such public attention are major roles of the media in the policymaking process, and there is certainly a great increase in media attention accompanying major policy changes (McAdam, 1982; Costain, 1992; Baumgartner and Jones, 1993).

The theory of punctuated change incorporates the first part of reform cycle theory and is more specific in formulating the role of public attention, the media, and exogenous shocks in instigating relatively rapid changes in the system. But unlike reform cycle theory, punctuated change finds significant and lasting qualitative system change, as opposed to a reversion to subgovernmental control or some other preexisting state. Punctuated change also is opposed to Lindbloom's systems theory of partisan mutual adjustment among actors leading to incremental policy changes. According to Baumgartner and Jones (1993), research indicates that most American policy systems are incremental most of the time, but the researcher may be more interested in events that occur during the rapid changes that punctuate most policy systems (Hochschild, 1984). The main policy application of incrementalist theory is that of Aaron Wildavsky to the study of budgeting, but extended research indicates that although agency budgets normally exhibit incremental change, there are times when they change rapidly and nonincrementally, as in the case of national defense budgets (Wildavsky, 1964b; Davis, Dempster, and Wildavsky, 1966; True, Jones, and Baumgartner, 1999). The theory of punctuated change has a focus on agenda change and issue formation and is discussed further in chapter 9.

But what does it mean to say that policy change is stabilized by institutionalization? Does this mean that the problem of subgovernment formation no longer exists, because all subgovernments experience punctuated change and become neopluralistic? That is unlikely.

This is an area in which the policy process and interest group activity supplement institutional considerations. Here is where the considerable research on policy implementation is linked to neopluralist theory. Mazmanian and Sabatier (1989), among others, argue that the formation of advocacy coalitions is central if laws and rules are to be implemented in a fashion congruent with the original intentions of legislators and other decision-makers. According to such research, just because Congress and executive branch leaders set forth civil rights laws in the 1960s, that did not mean that such laws would be enforced as originally intended. A national advocacy coalition, led by the NAACP and liberal legislators, likely was a necessary condition for such enforcement, which,

for the most part, did occur. But here is where I wish to amend the punctuated change theory. Particularly in the area of regulating powerful businesses, unless a strong advocacy coalition is active in a policy system, change will be followed by backsliding. An example might be found in the regulation of accounting practices. At any rate, this aspect of the study of policy change will be clarified when researchers finish a thorough job of linking the implementation research with policy change research, as Sabatier has been doing.

The concepts of the reform cycle and that of punctuated change call attention to a different perspective on interest group activity. Is not interest group activity directed toward policy implementation roughly as important as interest group activity directed toward the passage of new laws and rules? New laws and institutions mean little if they come under the control of policy elites who control things both before and after the supposed policy change. True policy change is sometimes impossible unless it is supported by an advocacy coalition. This issue is inherent in the work of Virginia Gray and David Lowery (1996) and is implicit in their recent paper on neopluralist theory (2000). Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith (1999) have led a research effort encompassing thirty-four studies that shows the importance of advocacy coalitions in implementing policy, particularly in the environment and energy fields.

The theory of punctuated policy change is an important aspect of neopluralist theory. However, I would give greater emphasis to processes in which a system tends to revert to a former system of control. To me, it seems that reform or policy change frequently takes three steps forward and two steps backward in relation to the original state of the policy system. I do agree, however, that the professionalization and institutionalization of governmental agencies fluctuate but, on average, increase in the long run (Skowronek, 1982).

In any event, we see that the neopluralist theory of political process incorporates research that emphasizes the role of advocacy coalitions in policy implementation.

POLICY NICHES

Current researchers using the neopluralist model have discovered the "policy niche," a concept likely to make a big difference in the way political scientists view the policymaking process. In the 1990s, William Browne (1990) and Gray and Lowery (1996) began using the term *policy niche* to refer to a highly specific forum or type of public policy. Although a specific policy niche, such as the regulation of cesium waste or subsidies for honey production, might seem unimportant, the total of such policy niches apparently numbers in the thousands at the federal level. Since the 1950s, policy experts had been telling us that agriculture is fragmented into separate policy systems for major commodities: wheat, corn, soybeans, beef, pork, tobacco, and so forth, and even separate

systems for smaller sectors such as walnuts or almonds. Browne (1990), the leading academic expert on agricultural policymaking, states that there are more than 400 policy niches in national agricultural policymaking. I had previously thought that there might be about 40 such systems.

At about the same time, Gray and Lowery (1996) stressed the idea of "interest group niches" and "group niche behavior" in their data-rich study of interest group systems and lobbying at the level of fifty state governments. They put forth the ecological model of interest group systems. Because groups compete with one another in their mobilization of resources, it is rational, and "ecological," for interest groups to occupy a piece of the policymaking turf that has little or no competition from other groups trying to mobilize resources in the same policymaking space. In other words, rather than defining itself generally as an agricultural lobby or even as a fruit producers lobby, it will organize itself specifically as the kiwi-fruit producers lobby, an area with no competition. When the constituency becomes small, it can contribute to the maintenance of the interest group in a fashion that is stable and predictable. The research of Gray and Lowery is particularly stimulating in its finding, derived from ecological theory, that interest groups frequently disband or otherwise stop their activity. This is especially important in light of Salisbury's (1984) observation that much lobbying activity consists of the governmental relations function of organizations whose main goal is the achievement of some purpose other than political influence: corporations seeking profits, colleges and hospitals pursuing a nonprofit public service, or local governmental institutions lobbying higher-level governmental institutions on a particular issue. Such organizations may lobby only occasionally and may terminate their lobbying activity for years at a time.

Accordingly, Gray and Lowery (1996) found that much interest group behavior is niche behavior—groups defining relatively specific policies as their own areas of activity, or groups simply jumping in and out of politics due to the specificity and short-lived nature of their public policy concerns.

The broadest study of policy niches is one by Baumgartner and Leech (2000, 2001), who organized the most thorough study of lobbying of the U.S. Congress to date. In 1995, Congress passed the Lobbying Disclosure Act, which, for the first time, mandated that those lobbying Congress file full reports of their lobbying activity. (The previous law was so full of loopholes that lobbyists did not file accurate financial information or a true record of the issues they lobbied.) Baumgartner and Leech assembled all the reports filed for 1996, coded them to list all the issues lobbied, and then took a sample of the issue list, which included each mention of an issue, thereby weighting the list to measure multiple lobbying activity on the same issue. The 19,692 reports contained 49,518 mentions of issues (including the multiple mentions), from which Baumgartner and Leech sampled 137 issues. This research provides a clear-cut finding: on a few issues, there is a great amount of lobbying, but on

many issues, only a handful of groups lobby. Thus, on each of four issues, at least 500 interest groups lobbied: the Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations; the Small Business Job Protection Act; the Budget Reconciliation Act, which included the welfare reform of 1996; and Defense Department appropriations. "Similarly, an additional 13 issues attracted more than 200 interest groups, and nine more issues were of interest to 100 or more interest groups" (Baumgartner and Leech, 2001, 1200). There were 10,434 instances of group activity on the 137 issues in the sample, but the "top four issues accounted for more than a third of all interest group activity," or 34 percent (Baumgartner and Leech, 2001, 1200); the 26 issues involving more than 100 interest groups accounted for 81 percent of interest group activity. "Of course, the logical counterpart . . . is that a large number of issues saw only a few interest groups involved. The median issue was the object of lobbying by 15 interest groups. Only 2.6 percent of the interest groups were active in the 68 issues with fewer than the median number of interest groups involved. . . . Twenty-three cases were mentioned only by a single interest group" (Baumgartner and Leech, 2001, 1201). Sixteen of these had some significant breadth, such as the regulation of cesium waste and the establishment of wildlife refuges for non-game animals.

Baumgartner and Leech (2001, 1204) state that their data "show that business advantage, while great overall, is even more striking in the cases where the fewest interest groups are active. In the 32 cases where only one or two interest groups were involved in the issue, participation was almost wholly limited to business, trade associations, and the intergovernmental lobby. These data paint a striking picture of the lack of conflict that can often accompany the relatively secretive lobbying processes where few are involved." In contrast, participation by unions, nonprofits, and citizens groups tends to be limited to more conflictual issues with many groups involved. Because the research is just now being reported, Baumgartner, Leech, and other political scientists have yet to give a fully considered theoretical response to these findings.

But a first conclusion seems likely. The multiple elitists applied their findings to a middle level of policymaking; subgovernments controlled such issues as railroad regulation (before 1950), interstate trucking regulation, nuclear power plant regulation, the allocation of soil conservation money among farmers, the allocation of cheap grazing rights on federal land, and the more pecuniary policy toward the production of jet fighter aircraft. On many such issues, case studies indicated a neopluralist pattern of policymaking rather than subgovernmental control. But the issues chosen for such case studies were those seen to be important from the standpoint of either allocation of resources or democratic theory. However, Baumgartner and Leech have come up with a much broader sample of policy issues, extending Browne's (1990, 1995) extremely detailed observations of agricultural policy. And consideration of the whole population of issues shows that there are many more relatively specific issues than heretofore considered by researchers. These newly discovered issues, so to