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(eds.)

Paradigms in Public Policy

Theory and Practice of Paradigm Shifts in the EU

LANG Carson / Tom R. Burns / Dolores Calvo (eds.) · Paradigms in Public Policy

Policy action is driven, shaped and regulated by the ways in which cognitive frames and interests shape and define issues and analyses – and the involvement of particular authorities, experts, problem-definitions and solutions. To understand these processes is particularly important in the realm of democratic policymaking, where agents driven by divergent interests and alternative principles struggle to preserve or reform policy, law, and institutions. This book analyzes continuity and change in EU policy and provides a systematic understanding of the interactions between ideas, organized actors, and institutions in political, administrative and related social processes. The EU policy studies make up a rich empirical territory, ranging from food security and chemicals to energy, climate change, and gender.

“This is a highly innovative book that offers a thorough appraisal of key EU public policy paradigms in a truly interdisciplinary way, combining theoretical analyses and empirical case studies.”

Alberto Martinelli (University of Milan)

“[This book provides] a new set of studies that apply the paradigm concept to multiple spheres of policy-making in the European Union.... this will be a valuable reference for all who are interested in understanding public policy-making.”

Peter A. Hall (Harvard University)

“This book breaks new theoretical ground in elaborating a dynamic cultural/institutionalist framework, improving our understanding of how cognitive and normative models interact with social institutions, actor configurations and contested ideas and policymaking frames.”

Barbara Hobson (Stockholm University)

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PARADIGMS IN PUBLIC POLICY:
THEORY AND PRACTICE OF PARADIGM
SHIFTS IN THE EU

Marcus Carson, Tom R. Burns, and Dolores Calvo

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Preface

Understanding continuity and change in society constitutes one of the fundamental challenges to social scientists, policymakers, and everyday citizens. Such an understanding is particularly important in the realm of democratic policymaking, where agents driven by divergent principles and alternative goals struggle to preserve or reform policy, law, and institutions. The works collected in this volume offer an approach to systematic and deeper understanding of stability and change in public policy.

One of the key elements in this collected work is that its investigations and theoretical analyses contribute to the understanding of how “ideas matter” in policy and institutional change. Policy action is driven, shaped and regulated by the ways in which cognitive perspectives frame problem situations and analyses – and also call for and legitimize the involvement of particular authorities, experts, problem – definitions and solutions.

Over the past twenty years a constellation of concepts, principles, and models has emerged which entail a promising new approach to capturing the interactions between ideas, organized actors, and institutions in political, administrative and related social processes. This work investigates and theorizes *public policy paradigms*, within which policy ideas are embedded and on the basis of which policies are framed, articulated, and implemented. To our knowledge, this book is the first comprehensive theoretical and empirical treatment of public policy paradigms. It considers theoretically the architecture of paradigms, their role in framing and organizing action, and the ways in which paradigm transformations are brought about. *The theory construction draws upon three major developments in the social sciences: institutional theory, cognitive sociology, and social movements theory.*

This book presents key early works that introduced and applied the concept of public policy paradigm, then seeks also to extend those efforts by specifying and analyzing processes of paradigm formation and development based on the “sociology” and “politics” of paradigms (innovation, competition, alliance formation, proselytizing, power and control processes, etc.). The paradigm concept itself is of course most often associated with Thomas Kuhn’s work. Kuhn’s paradigm was inherently political in nature, making it suitable for the examination of conceptual models that apply to the political sphere, as in this book. The broader conception of what may be referred to as “the socio-politics of paradigms” is

therefore particularly applicable to public policy processes such as those investigated in this book.

The general goal of this book is to develop and apply public policy paradigm theory in investigations and analyses of policy dynamics and developments. The theory might be characterized as “cultural-institutional”, in that it emphasizes the importance of socially transmitted cognitive-normative models, institutional rule-based structures that organize human activity, and ways in which organized actors mobilize and struggle to realize their ideals as well as to pursue more mundane interests. This approach is illustrated through a selection of a few classic studies relating back to the earliest applications of the paradigm concept to issues of public policy: Jane Jenson in 1989, Peter Hall in 1992, and William Coleman et al. in 1996. We include these together with Yves Surel’s systematic comparative overview of paradigm theory and other cognitive approaches to policymaking. We are very fortunate to be able to reproduce all of these key articles here and also provide additional case studies and analyses from our own EU research on policymaking. *These cases cover policy territory ranging from food security and chemicals to energy, climate change, and gender.*

The individual case studies identify the mechanisms linking ideas and cognitive frameworks to institutional arrangements and to policy outcomes and developments. The cases focus on the actors who formulate or bear ideas trying to exercise influence over policymaking; they also identify and analyze the conditions under which actors manage to exercise their influence – or fail to do so. Policy paradigms serve, among other things, as a conceptual structure within which public issues and problems can be framed and provide a type of modern totem around which supporters of the paradigm may collect and coordinate. But paradigms also constrain and bias policies that policymakers are likely to consider and select.

In sum, we see the emergence of a systematic theory and body of empirical knowledge of what are referred to as *public policy paradigms*. The theory combines cognitive-normative models, institutional analysis, and strategic interactions in which organized actors seek both to realize their ideals and pursue their interests. An important goal of this book has been to set out the foundations of the theory and provide a range of applications. The book also identifies several of the methodological principles and rules of method that characterize public policy paradigm research. Finally, in a more general sense, the book illustrates the usefulness and potentialities of public policy paradigm research program(s).

Marcus Carson, Tom R. Burns, and Dolores Calvo
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Contents

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Preface..... | 5 |
| Contents..... | 7 |
| Abbreviations..... | 9 |

Part One: Introduction

| | |
|--|----|
| Chapter 1. Introduction | 11 |
| Chapter 2. Yves Surel: The Role of Cognitive and Normative Frames in Policymaking | 29 |

Part Two: Selected Classic Studies of Public Policy Paradigm Shifts

| | |
|---|----|
| Chapter 3. Jane Jenson: Paradigms and Political Discourse: Protective Legislation in France and the United States before 1914 | 45 |
| Chapter 4. Peter A. Hall: Policy Paradigms, Social Learning, and the State. The Case of Economic Policymaking in Britain | 67 |
| Chapter 5. William D. Coleman, Grace D. Skogstad, and Michael M. Atkinson: Paradigm Shifts and Policy Networks: Cumulative Change in Agriculture | 93 |

Part Three: EU Policy Paradigms, Their Applications, and Shifts

| | |
|--|-----|
| Chapter 6. EU Institutions and Policymaking: A Brief Overview | 117 |
| Chapter 7. Theoretical Framework and Methods for Conducting the EU Research on Paradigms and Paradigm Transformations | 141 |
| Chapter 8. Marcus Carson: Mad Cows, Polluted Poultry, and the Transformation of EU Food Policy ... | 171 |
| Chapter 9. Marcus Carson: From Freely Traded to Product-non-grata: Banning Asbestos in the European Union | 201 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Chapter 10. Tom R. Burns, Dolores Calvo, and Marcus Carson: The “REACH” Saga: A Revolution in Regulating Chemicals | 225 |
| Chapter 11. Svein S. Andersen: The Emergence of an EU Energy Policy Paradigm | 261 |
| Chapter 12. Tom R. Burns: The Irony of the EU Climate Policy: A Crooked Path to a Paradigm Shift | 285 |
| Chapter 13. Dolores Calvo, Tom R. Burns and Marcus Carson: Toward a New Social Order? Mainstreaming Gender Equality in EU Policymaking | 311 |
| Chapter 14. Paradigm Shift and Regime Change: Case Comparisons and Analysis | 359 |

Part Four: Extensions and Conclusions

| | |
|---|-----|
| Chapter 15. Elaborating Public Policy Paradigm Theory | 377 |
| Chapter 16. Conclusions | 409 |
| Bibliography | 413 |
| Index | 441 |

The papers in this series, *New paradigms in public policy*, to be published throughout 2011 and 2012, review some particularly difficult issues in public policy: climate change, recession and recovery, population ageing, neighbourhood problems and the Third Sector, rebuilding democratic engagement and managing the demands of an increasingly assertive public. The series reviews current understanding of the issues, situated within academic theory-building. Peter Taylor-Gooby FBA University of Kent and Chair of the New paradigms in public policy project November 2011. Key messages. 9. 24. Paradigm 3: Public Administration as a Political Science, 1950-1970. Political scientists have begun to resist the growing independence of PA rather than advocating a public service and an executive preparatory program, the began calling for "intellectualized understanding" of the executive branch rather than "knowledgeable action" on the part of public administrators. The emergence of TECHNOBUREAUCRATIC dimensions (science, technology and public policy, relationship between knowledge and power, bureaucracy and democracy, technology and management). A "policy paradigm"™ constitutes a theoretical tool to specify and understand the guiding principles, or ideas, for creating public policy, why the various actors involved are involved, and why they pursue the strategies they do. The book provides unique and varied insights into the current state of the art regarding how a range of scholars understand such paradigms, and public policy ideas, both conceptually and empirically. It does this by drawing together contributions from leading political science and social science researchers, to provide a multidimensional set of perspectives on how para...