

Issue Definition and Agenda Setting Reading Course
Instructor: Frank R. Baumgartner
Penn State University
Summer, 2003

Assignments: Students are expected to write a one-page single spaced reaction paper to the readings each week to be distributed to all other students and the instructor by noon on Thursdays, or by 4 hours before our class meeting if we are meeting at some other time. Each student will also write a substantial term paper designed based on student interests and stage in the graduate program, in consultation with the instructor. Grades will be based on the quality of the written work, regular distribution of weekly reaction papers (on time, no late papers accepted) your participation in the discussions, and on your term paper. Given travel schedules and summer duties, weekly meetings may be adjusted as necessary. Normally, however, we will meet on Thursdays at 3PM for two hours. Note that because of difficulties in scheduling meetings, dates and times are sometimes irregular in the schedule listed below. Also note that we double-up on several occasions, covering two weeks in one 3-hour meeting. This will allow us to finish all the meetings by August 8, 2003. You can use the last couple weeks of the summer to finish your term papers.

Weekly topics and reading assignments

WEEK 1 (June 19)

Classics of agenda-setting:

- Schattschneider, E. E. 1960. *The Semi-Sovereign People*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston. Ch. 1, 2, 3, 4, 8.
- Cobb, Roger W., and Charles D. Elder. 1983. *Participation in American Politics: The Dynamics of Agenda-Building*. 2d ed. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press. Ch. 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, Epilogue
- Bachrach, Peter and Morton Baratz. 1962. The Two Faces of Power. *American Political Science Review* 56: 947–52.
- Downs, Anthony. 1972. Up and Down with Ecology: The Issue Attention Cycle. *Public Interest* 28: 38–50.
- Cobb, Roger W., Jeannie Keith-Ross, and Marc Howard Ross. 1976. Agenda Building as a Comparative Political Process. *American Political Science Review* 70: 126–38.
- Walker, Jack L., Jr. 1977. Setting the Agenda in the U.S. Senate: A Theory of Problem Selection. *British Journal of Political Science* 7: 423–45.
- Elder, Charles D., and Roger W. Cobb. 1983. *The Political Uses of Symbols*. New York: Longman. (Skim)
- Edelman, Murray. 1964. *The Symbolic Uses of Politics*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press. (Skim)

WEEK 2 (June 26)

More recent work on issue-definition and its consequences:

- Riker, William H. 1986. *The Art of Political Manipulation*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Preface, Ch. 1, 2, 3, 7, 10, 11.
- Baumgartner, Frank R. 1989. *Conflict and Rhetoric in French Policymaking*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press. Ch. 1, 7, 8, 10

- Rocheftort, David A. and Roger C. Cobb, eds. 1994 *The Politics of Problem Definition*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas. Ch. 1, 4, 5.
- Schneider, Anne, and Helen Ingram. 1993. Social Construction of Target Populations: Implications for Politics and Policy. *American Political Science Review* 87: 334–47.
- Lieberman, Robert C. 2002. Ideas, Institutions, and Political Order: Explaining Political Change. *American Political Science Review* 96 (4): 697–712.
- Lieberman, Robert, Helen Ingram, and Anne Schneider. 1995. “Social Constructions.” *American Political Science Review* 89 (2): 437–46.

WEEK 3 (July 1, 10AM)

John Kingdon’s theory:

- Kingdon, John W. 1995. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*. 2d. ed. New York: HarperCollins.
- Cohen, Michael, James G. March, and Johan P. Olsen. 1972. A Garbage Can Theory of Organizational Choice. *Administrative Science Quarterly* 17: 1–25.

WEEK 4 (July 10)

The punctuated equilibrium model and its application to agenda-setting:

- Baumgartner, Frank R., and Bryan D. Jones. 1993. *Agendas and Instability in American Politics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Gould, Stephen, and Niles Eldredge. 1972. Punctuated Equilibria: An Alternative to Phyletic Gradualism. In: Thomas J. M. Shopf, ed., *Models in Paleobiology*. San Francisco: Freeman, Cooper and Co., 1972. Pp. 82–115. (Also reprinted as an appendix in the book listed below:) (Skim)
- Eldredge, Niles. 1985. *Time Frames: The Evolution of Punctuated Equilibrium*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. (Skim; optional)

More on the punctuated equilibrium model:

- Baumgartner, Frank R., Bryan D. Jones, and Michael C. MacLeod. 2000. The Evolution of Legislative Jurisdictions. *Journal of Politics* 62: 321–49.
- Jones, Bryan D., Frank R. Baumgartner, and Jeffery C. Talbert. 1993. The Destruction of Issue Monopolies in Congress. *American Political Science Review* 87: 657–71.
- Shepsle, Kenneth A. 1979. Institutional Arrangements and Equilibrium in Multidimensional Voting Models. *American Journal of Political Science* 23: 27–60.
- Baumgartner, Frank R., and Bryan D. Jones, eds. 2002. *Policy Dynamics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Skim)
- Jones, Bryan D., James L. True and Frank R. Baumgartner. 1997. Does Incrementalism Stem from Political Consensus or Institutional Gridlock? *American Journal of Political Science* 41, 4 (October): 1319–39.
- Jones, Bryan D., Frank R. Baumgartner, and James L. True. 1998. Policy Punctuations: US Budget Authority, 1947–95. *Journal of Politics* 60, 1 (February): 1–33.

WEEK 5 (July 16, 11 AM)

Strategic manipulation and instability:

- Riker, William H. 1982. *Liberalism against Populism*. Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland Press.
- Riker, William H. 1996. *The Strategy of Rhetoric: Campaigning for the American Constitution*. New Haven: Yale University Press (Skim)

WEEK 6 (July 24)**Rational and cognitive approaches to human decision-making:**

- Simon, Herbert A. 1985. Human Nature in Politics: The Dialogue of Psychology with Political Science. *American Political Science Review* 79: 293–304.
- Kahneman, Daniel, and Amos Tversky. 1984. Choices, Values, and Frames. *American Psychologist* 4: 341–50.
- Tversky, Amos., and Daniel Kahneman. 1986. Rational Choice and the Framing of Decisions. *Journal of Business* 59: 251–84.
- Quattrone, G., and Amos Tversky. 1988. Contrasting Rational and Psychological Analyses of Political Choice. *American Political Science Review* 83: 719–36.
- Jones, Bryan. 1999. Bounded Rationality. *Annual Review of Political Science* 2: 297–321.

Issues of Framing:

- Stone, Deborah A. 1988. *Policy Paradox and Political Reason*. Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman.
- Stone, Deborah. 1989. Causal Stories and the Formation of Policy Agendas. *Political Science Quarterly* 104 (Summer): 281–300.

WEEK 7 (July 31)**Dealing with multidimensional issues:**

- Jones, Bryan D. 1994. *Reconceiving Decision Making in Democratic Politics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

More on multidimensional issues:

- Jones, Bryan D. 2001. *Politics and the Architecture of Choice: Bounded Rationality and Governance*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

WEEK 8 (August 7)**The social nature of political change; threshold models:**

- Schelling, Thomas C. 1972. A Process of Residential Segregation: Neighborhood Tipping. In A. Pascal, ed. *Discrimination in Economic Life*. Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath. Pp. 157–84.
- Granovetter, Mark. 1978. Threshold Models of Collective Behavior. *American Journal of Sociology* 83: 1420–43.
- Crenson, Matthew A. 1987. The Private Stake in Public Goods: Overcoming the Illogic of Collective Action. *Policy Sciences* 20: 259–76.
- Kuran, Timur. 1989. Sparks and Prairie Fires: A Theory of Unanticipated Political Revolution. *Public Choice* 61: 41–74.
- Chong, Dennis. 1991. *Collective Action and the Civil Rights Movement*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press Ch. 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 10.
- Becker, Gary S. 1991. A Note on Restaurant Pricing and Other Examples of Social Influences on Price. *Journal of Political Economy* 99, 5: 1109–16.
- Bikhchandani, Sushil, David Hirshleifer, and Ivo Welch. 1992. A Theory of Fads, Fashion, Custom, and Cultural Change as Informational Cascades. *Journal of Political Economy* 100: 992–1026.
- Kirman, Alan. 1993. Ants, Rationality, and Recruitment. *Quarterly Journal of Economics* (February): 137–56.

Media studies:

- McCombs, Maxwell, and Donald Shaw. 1972. The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 36: 176–87.
- Hilgartner, Steven, and Charles Bosk. 1988. The Rise and Fall of Social Problems: A Public Arenas Model. *American Journal of Sociology* 94: 53–78.
- Neuman, W. Russell. 1990. The Threshold of Public Attention. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 54: 179–76.
- Zhu, Jian-Hua. 1992. Issue Competition and Attention Distraction: A Zero-Sum Theory of Agenda-Setting. *Journalism Quarterly* 69: 825–36.
- Iyengar, Shanto. 1993. Agenda Setting and Beyond: Television News and the Strength of political Issues. In William H. Riker, ed., *Agenda Formation*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, pp. 211–29.