

PLSC 541, Fall 2008
Baumgartner

Questions for week 7

Readings: Budgeting, incrementalism, and bounded rationality

Questions:

1. In Chapter 3 of their book, Wildavsky and Caiden describe the process of budgeting. How much of this repeats Lindblom's analysis, explaining it with reference to the budgetary process? To what extent does it go beyond, conceptually?
2. Davis Dempster and Wildavsky (DDW) provide the first major analysis of the budget. Does it correspond with chapter 3 of Wildavsky and Caiden?
3. What is "incrementalism"? What should that term refer to?
4. Explain, if you can, Padgett. (This may be one of the most important articles least understood in political science.)
5. Jones and I have a theory focusing on thresholds. Could you construct an equivalent theory based on mimicry, or would such a model be inherently different? Build a model, verbally, that captures some of the same dynamics as our threshold model has, but based on cascades rather than thresholds.
6. Now you've read a small literature that has addressed similar questions over several decades. Is this literature cumulative? Has it progressed, or were the important things already there in Lindblom and DDW?