

# Teaching Public Policy: Linking Policy and Politics

Lawrence M. Mead  
*New York University*

## **ABSTRACT**

Policy makers constantly struggle to reconcile policy and politics—to square what they want to do on the merits with what consent requires. Academic research and teaching on public policy, however, have typically separated policy argument from political analysis. Some authors recommend solutions to public problems, whereas others examine the politics of actual policies. I propose a combined conception of policy research and teaching that joins policy analysis and political analysis. This approach links elements of economics and political science to approximate the actual process of statecraft. I also describe how I built courses on public policy for undergraduates and graduate students using this conception and the implications for pedagogy. Unfortunately, academic trends are against such breadth. Research on policy is becoming more specialized and methodological, remote from actual government. Involvement in policy making, however, may draw some scholars toward research and teaching that combines policy and political perspectives.

*Keywords:* policy analysis, political analysis, economics, political science

---

The study of public policy has the potential both to improve policy and teach us more about government itself. Aristotle alluded to both potentials when he treated politics as the master science—the pursuit by which a community might achieve the good life (Aristotle, 1962). Leaders were to use governance to realize the good society, but to achieve that they must seriously study the workings of government and politics. In principle, the science of policy and the science of politics were one and the same.

As it has recently developed in America, however, the professional study of policy and the study of politics have diverged. Bringing them back together is the main challenge faced in teaching public policy in the universities. In this paper, I describe why the estrangement has occurred, how it could be overcome, and how to cope with it in the teaching of public policy. The chief obstacle to change is academic over-specialization. I speak on the basis of personal experience teaching in several policy programs,<sup>1</sup> and I often illustrate from the policy field I know best—welfare reform.

## THE SEPARATION OF POLICY AND POLITICS

Political leaders constantly struggle to reconcile policy and politics. That is, they must somehow square what they want to do with what the political system will allow them to do. What they think is desirable “on the merits” must be reconciled with what they can get accepted by other politicians and then implemented by administrators. Squaring that circle is what statecraft is all about. The past leaders we honor are those who, despite these constraints, managed to institute some major new policy or program, or to surmount some great crisis such as war or depression.

Public policy as an academic field arose in the 1960s because of widespread dissatisfaction with the performance of government, especially at the national level. Washington seemed to cope poorly with recurrent challenges such as military procurement and the regulation of the economy, while the domestic budget was riddled with subsidies that seemed unjustified. Economists wielding new analytic tools believed that they could do better, and the national planning offices hired them. Ever since, policy analysis rooted in economics has become a common language for policy argument in Washington (Radin, 1997). Programs to teach these skills arose at leading universities, and today the faculties of those schools comprise much of the membership of the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management, the leading organization of policy scholars.

As they have developed, however, these programs seldom teach statecraft as officeholders experience it, with policy and politics in constant tension. Rather, research and teaching in the two subjects are largely separate. Policy analysis, or the study of what government should do about public problems, is done and taught mostly by economists; the subjects here include microeconomics and statistics. Studies about politics are done and taught largely by political scientists; the subjects here include the legislative process, implementation, and administration. The first group focuses largely on policy, the second mostly on politics, and neither says much about the other. Thus, ironically, economics tells government what to do while ignoring it, while political science does focus on government but will not tell it what to do. Neither achieves that union of policy and politics that Aristotle imagined.

Each side makes assumptions that effectively exclude the other subject. When discussing policy argument, economists often make the “Model 1” assumption (Allison, 1971), the idea that government consists of a single decision maker, thus eliminating politics as a constraint. That leader’s problem is then entirely one of choice rather than power. Political scientists, for their part, usually disclaim any authority to say what policy should be. To do that would be to second-guess the democratic political process, which they refuse to do. So rather than reason about policy independent of politics, they often assume that the outcome of a democratic process is by definition optimal (Nelson, 1977). In practice, each discipline admits the need for the other. Economists, after dominating the early curricula of the policy schools, came to accept the need for more courses about politics and implementation, because these subjects were so important in the real world.

But in theory, policy and politics are still approached differently and usually taught by different scholars.

Some will say that policy analysis and political analysis are not really separate. Don't texts in public policy cover both? True, general texts about policy say something about both subjects, but the relative emphasis differs sharply depending on authorship.<sup>2</sup> Texts written by economists focus mostly on how to optimize policy using such tools as cost-benefit analysis or program evaluation. The policy process is treated as secondary, to be modeled with other economic concepts such as rational choice or the Arrow paradox (e.g., Munger, 2000; Wheelan, 2011). Conversely, texts written by political scientists chiefly describe the evolution of policy in areas such as economic management, education, or social welfare. Policy analysis either gets limited attention or is treated as part of the policy process (e.g., Cochran et al., 2011; Dye, 2011).<sup>3</sup> Texts focused on just analysis or just process are, of course, even more specialized.

The separation of policy and politics weakens the public policy field. Arguments for best policy that ignore institutional constraints are often stillborn: Congress ignores them, or the bureaucracy cannot implement them. That, for instance, was the fate of the early proposals for welfare reform that economists drafted in the 1960s and 1970s. These plans would have guaranteed all poor a minimum income. However, Congress focused instead on getting welfare recipients to work, and this was the goal that dominated welfare reform in the 1980s and 1990s. One reason many economists opposed enforcing work in welfare was that they did not appreciate how popular this was, and they knew little about how work programs operate. Work-based reform succeeded because it cut with the grain of the institutions, as the earlier proposals had not (Mead, 2005a, 2005b).

Equally, research on the politics of policy lacks a wide audience because it usually makes no argument for best policy. Few other than academic specialists will be interested in the political analysis of issues unless it is linked to some serious proposal for change. Only then are policy and politics joined in the way that successful statecraft requires. Only then does the researcher sit in the same seat as the policy maker, seeking to reconcile the optimal with the politic.

### **POLICY AND POLITICS: A COMBINED APPROACH**

Far better would be a combined approach to public policy research and teaching that brings policy and politics together. Scholars should first argue how to solve a public problem "on the merits," that is, on a policy analytic basis and without concessions to politics. They should then *go on* to discuss impediments that might arise from the legislative or administrative process, and how these might be handled. In fact, they should forecast the tension between policy argument and politics that policy makers would face if they espoused these proposals in office (Mead, 1995).

But are not policy and politics separate subjects? I think not, and here is why. Policy and politics each provides a critical perspective on the other. When we talk

about any policy issue, we may discuss either the merits or the politics of what to do. These subjects can seem to be distinct, but they are really different facets of the same problem (Mead, 1983, 1985). Consider the following model:



In analyzing policy, one makes an argument for a preferred course of action initially on the merits, without attention to the politics. But having done that, one should *go on* to consider whether the political system can approve and implement such a policy. Those factors begin as elements of policy analytic arguments for or against various options, but they also generate a different perspective. If government cannot “do the right thing,” as is often the case, that may suggest that the political process be changed, so that outcomes improve.

As one example, changes in congressional procedure were essential to the balancing of the budget that was achieved—all too briefly—in the late 1990s. In the 1980s, partisan disagreements made it difficult to agree on spending cuts or tax increases to cut the deficit. But because public pressure to reduce the red ink was strong, the parties finally did agree on procedures that at least forced spending and revenues into better alignment. Under the Budget Enforcement Act of 1990, limits were placed on discretionary spending, and changes in entitlements or taxes required offsets so that the deficit did not expand. Here policy analysis provides arguments to change politics.

Equally, political analysis can provide perspective on policy. Goals that are sufficiently difficult to achieve politically may finally call policy argument into question. If there is no way to do what we want, then we must choose something more feasible. Aaron Wildavsky argued that we often do not choose ends and then go looking for means, as classical economic policy analysis supposes. Rather, we first see what things government can do and then choose our ends from among them (Wildavsky, 1979). So political analysis reshapes policy analysis:



As one example, welfare reform focused on putting welfare mothers to work because evaluations showed that this was something government could achieve. Another goal that reform might have had—restoring marriage so that fewer families became headed by females—was deemphasized because it was much less popular than enforcing work, and programs able to achieve it had not appeared. Rhetorically, welfare reformers lauded marriage as the solution to poverty, but they made no serious attempt to enforce it as they did work. Government could handle the work goal, whereas marriage was beyond it.

Academically, the study of policy and the study of politics can seem like ships passing in the night. But in the actual practice of government, they are as closely tied as brothers. It is too simple to say that a policy argument succeeds or not, or that the politics prefers one option or another. Either studied in isolation misses the crucial interaction between them. Policy argument and actual politics are not separate but merged in a high-level systems analysis. Faced with any serious

problem, policy makers keep trying out various courses of action to see what works but also what has support. Whatever they do has to be justifiable to them on the merits, but it also has to be persuasive to other actors. Statecraft requires that policy satisfy both priorities.

Note that the political side of policy reasoning extends beyond the legislative arena to include implementation. Bureaucracy and federalism are among the constraints on what policy makers may choose to do. In recent decades, public administration has often been a forgotten subject in political science (Frederickson, 1999). One good effect of linking policy and political analysis more closely is to restore administration as a central subject of policy research.

The history of any policy area shows a constant jockeying between innovative ideas and a search for consent, between ends and means. In the welfare area, policy making went through several stages of controversy, enactment, implementation, and renewed controversy from the 1960s through the 1990s, each cycle generating the issues for the next (Mead, 2002). Policy and the politics must be made consistent, and only when they are does the ferment cease. That is the process that public policy research and teaching should seek to capture, and only the combined conception can do it.

Another way to put this is that policies are not really chosen in isolation from the institutions, as orthodox policy analysis assumes. Rather, options and the arrangements for them must be chosen together. To be effective, programs must have a persuasive rationale *and* be embedded in a supportive legislative and administrative setting (Baumgartner & Jones, 2009). In choosing some new policy, one also chooses a regime for that program, and perhaps others. That is especially true of major structural changes. Reforms in bureaucratic organization or in intergovernmental relations, for instance, will affect policies in many areas. Such restructuring amounts to “metapolicymaking” (Dror, 1968; Gormley, 1987).

Even where texts in public policy devote attention to both policy analysis and political analysis, they fail to capture the intimate connection between them. The two subjects appear as separate worlds, when they are really two sides of the same coin. The texts do not consider that political constraints should really be part of policy argument or that the policy-making process can sharply limit what best policy means. And in research on public policy, there is even less sense of policy and politics shaping and reshaping each other. Typically, the usual division prevails where economists recommend best policy while political scientists explain what government actually does. In class, I use as exemplars the few authors who manage to reason in both ways (see below), but they are rare.

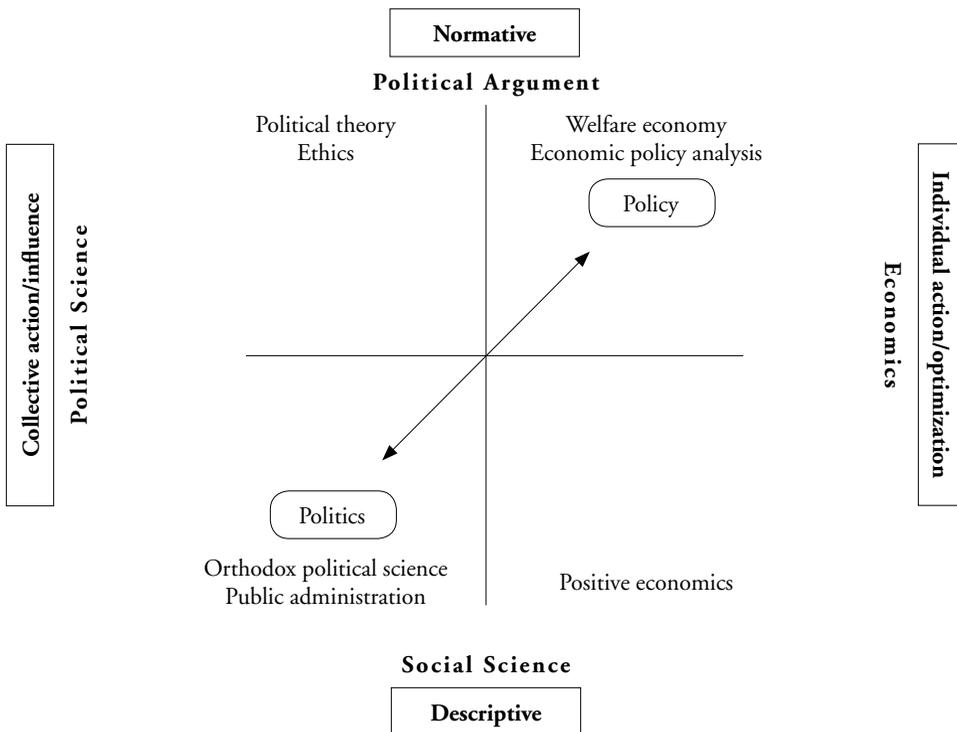
## **DIMENSIONS OF POLICY AND POLITICAL ANALYSIS**

To encompass both policy and politics, scholars of public policy can draw on the complexity of their own disciplines, which is greater than many perceive. Both economics and political science have normative elements that support arguments for policies on the merits, and each has descriptive or “positive” elements that help

to describe actual policy making. In each discipline, even the constructs that scholars take to be positive also have evaluative overtones. For example, economists use the construct of the competitive market to analyze the private sector, but that model also states an ideal that actual markets never perfectly achieve. Similarly, political scientists assume that countries with elected governments are democratic, but democracy is also an ideal that actual politics only approaches. Many of the ideas in social science are “ideal types” in Max Weber’s sense—conceptions that are simultaneously real and ideal. This normative content is underappreciated in today’s academe (MacRae, 1976).

Figure 1 displays the normative and empirical dimensions of political science and economics. Like social science in general, each discipline seeks to account for reality, but each also states a social ideal. The deepest difference between the two is that economics conceives of action in terms of individuals who optimize their utilities, while political science focuses chiefly on collective action aimed at a social good. That difference has endured even as economic or “rational choice” models of behavior have become prominent in political science, as in other social sciences (Stone, 2002).

*Figure 1.*  
Dimensions of Policy and Political Analysis



The combined conception, covering both policy and the politics of issues, draws mostly on the normative side of economics and the descriptive side of political science. These two poles, which are linked in Figure 1, form the chief basis for a combined study of public policy. These are the dimensions that, when yoked together, come the closest to capturing the actual process of statecraft—the struggle to square the optimal with the politic. Of course there will be issues where values other than economic maximization will state the goals of policy, and here political theory is of use. And there will be issues where the relevant behavior is market-oriented, and here the positive side of economics will come into play.

However, in general, public policy research should be based on *economic* policy analysis linked to the *political science* of policy making. The most convincing research will combine a persuasive argument for dealing with some important issue with a thorough discussion of the institutional context. The combined approach teaches us something about the issue, and it is also a contribution to the science of government. Analyzing policy-making capacity *against* the ideal of some desired policy teaches us something new about the nature and potential of our regime. Again to cite welfare, the difficulty of enforcing work in welfare highlighted the fixation of American political culture on freedom rather than order as a central value (Mead, 1986). The states that performed best at reform were those, like Wisconsin, where a moralistic culture made them able to enforce good behavior despite our freedom-loving politics (Mead, 2004).

### TEACHING UNDERGRADUATES

In teaching public policy to undergraduates, I follow this combined approach. I first describe the policy process, because first-level courses on American government typically focus on this. The subjects here include the legislative process in Congress but also bureaucracy and intergovernmental relations. I then discuss policy analysis, beginning with the economic theory of government's functions (based on the idea of market failure) and move on to the logic of choice—the idea of posing a policy problem, defining options for solving it, forecasting the consequences of each, and choosing the best. I cover budgeting because it combines elements of policy argument and process in a dramatic fashion. Lastly, I cover selected topics in federal domestic policy, such as education or health care, showing in each case how policy argument and political conditions have interacted to shape current programs.

On entering a course like this, undergraduates typically know more about politics than policy. Their earlier coursework in American government typically centered on elections and the policy-making process, not on policy outcomes. They have also been schooled in a cynical view of government by the media and the Web. Journalists typically interpret officeholders' behavior as a search for personal political advantage. To teach the combined conception, then, one must convince students that many decisions in Washington *aren't* political in this crass

sense. Our leaders do not always do what serves immediate interests, but what they genuinely believe is right on the merits. That their stances are sincere may not be apparent, especially in recent decades when the political parties have become more polarized, leading to recent impasses over the budget deficit and the national debt.

However, as close observers of national politics know, arguments on the merits still carry considerable weight inside the Beltway. Policy-making demands moral arguments, not just appeals to self-interest (Kelman, 1987). Even if party ideology sets the broad outlines of initiatives, some programs grow and flourish because a practical case can be made for them, rather than because they are orthodox ideologically. Examples in social policy include the expansion of early childhood programming and welfare work programs; in each case, positive evaluation findings suggested that clients gained in employment and income, among other good outcomes. Other programs were abolished or cut back because they did not evaluate well—such as the public jobs programs of the 1970s or voluntary training programs for adult workers. The movement in the 1970s and 1980s to deregulate the airlines and several other industries was led by economists who argued for decontrol on the merits. That idea triumphed despite the opposition of airline companies and labor unions (Breyer, 1982; Derthick & Quirk, 1985).

The current partisan polarization in Washington does not make policy making more political in the cynical sense of promoting payoffs to favored interests. In fact, due to the deficit and debt, pork barrel spending has been squeezed. Rather, the parties represent opposed visions for government that they pursue even at the expense of gridlock (Mann & Ornstein, 2006, 2012). Both sides are principled. Both give general rationales for these views. The long-term trend is toward a more intellectual politics where ideas matter more and material interests less (Landy and Levin, 1995; Wilson 1995, 2003).

The centerpiece of my undergraduate course is a special project where I challenge the class to solve some major national problem, such as Social Security reform or illegal immigration. Broken up into small groups, the students must go through the logic of choice—defining the problem, setting out options for addressing it, then arguing for their preference on the merits. They must then *go on* to address political and bureaucratic constraints, adjusting their plan to take account of them. In these steps, they make use of skills and concepts learned earlier in the course. Finally, they must communicate all this in a 30-minute presentation to the class. The exercise is demanding, but students say that it teaches them more about actual policy making than anything else in the course. It brings home to them the dilemmas faced in actual policy making.

### **TEACHING GRADUATE STUDENTS**

My graduate seminar on public policy serves Masters students in political science and PhD students in public policy. Like the undergraduate course, it follows the combined approach but is more theoretical and academic in tone. Here I begin with policy analysis because the assumptions of orthodox economic analysis also

are used in some of the theories of the policy process that follow. I also give more emphasis to debates among experts. On policy analysis, I contrast the orthodox treatments of economists such as Munger (2000) or Weimer and Vining (1999) with the criticism of Stone (2002), which comes out of political theory. On political process, I contrast interpretations that use rational choice assumptions, such as those of Olson (1971) or Moe (1984), with interpretations that assert a more complex psychology, such as those of Simon (1976) or Wilson (1995).

As so often happens in social science, theories differ mainly because of the divergent assumptions they make about human nature. One reason why Allison (1971) is so useful in teaching is that he applies different assumptions to the same case study—the Cuban missile crisis—and shows the difference this makes in one’s views of events. To assume that officials calculate what to do as individual optimizers leads to quite different expectations about policy making than if they are thought to follow bureaucratic routines or engage in internal power struggles.

Students’ resistance to the combined conception is quite different at the graduate level compared to the undergraduate. Many graduate students are working in government or nonprofit organizations where they already deal with policy professionally. They are often well versed in the arguments for or against the programs in which they are involved. But because they are relatively junior, they usually know less about the politics of these programs than senior officials who are more engaged in legislative or funding decisions. Or they may not accept that political or administrative constraints should set the limits on these programs that they do. The idea of trading off policy against political considerations is new.

The second half of the course features examples of research that illustrate the combined approach. The list is short, just because economics and political science treatment of issues have so often been separated. Among the authors I have assigned are Bok (2001) on government performance, Kosar (2005) on federal educational standards, Schick (2007) on federal budgeting, Tough (2008) on the Harlem Children’s Zone, and Whitman (2008) on charter schools. I also have assigned some of my own research when it was in draft (Mead, 2004, 2011). If practicable, I invite the authors of these studies to visit the class to explain how they did their research and answer questions. Often, what the authors discuss is the same tension between policy innovation and institutional constraint that pervades statecraft. Their accounts bring that process alive, and students are strongly appreciative.

Finally, students write papers on topics of their choice where they try to integrate policy and political analysis. Typically, they choose an issue they already know something about. Often, this is something in housing or health, because many students work in these fields in New York. But now they have to argue for their preferred course of action using both policy and political arguments, something they usually have never done before. Typically, they find it more difficult to get information on the politics of an issue than on the merits, where evaluations and academic studies are often available. Legislative hearings are often an excellent source, because these tend to bring out a variety of arguments for and against

proposals, both on the merits and politically. Given the other demands of the course—which also includes midterm and final examinations—I do not expect these papers to be exhaustive. However, for some students they have become the germ of their eventual MA theses or doctoral dissertations.

### **EFFECTS ON PEDAGOGY**

Programs of study in public policy should ideally reflect the combined conception. First-level courses should explicitly relate policy and political analysis, as in my courses. Not every course needs to do this. Upper-level courses might focus only on more advanced subjects in either policy analysis or institutions, such as cost-benefit analysis or public management. In existing policy programs, many courses already are specialized like this. To keep them is also realistic, in that many faculty members teaching these courses are already committed to economic or political approaches to their subjects.

An explicit linkage of policy and political reasoning, however, should return at the end of a program. Two ways to do this are to require a seminar for advanced students or a “capstone” project that students perform for outside clients. In the seminar, students should choose subjects for papers that require some trade-off between optimal outcomes and what the institutions can deliver, as in the last section of my graduate course. In capstone projects, students address some problem faced by a public or nonprofit agency, and in presenting options they will quite naturally have to blend substantive with political considerations. In these efforts, students would apply skills in policy or political argument that they have developed in earlier coursework.

By stressing the combined idea at the beginning and end of policy study, programs can be more integrated, giving students a better overview of the purpose and use of what they are learning. Instructors teaching the integrated courses should endorse that emphasis. Less change needs to be expected of faculty members teaching more specialized courses.

### **OBSTACLES IN ACADEME**

The main strength of this conception of public policy research is also its main weakness—breadth. The idea of bringing policy and political analysis closer together does make the academic study of policy making more realistic and useful in the real world. Such study is more likely to gain influence and contribute to the understanding of both policy and government.

However, it presumes that scholars can be proficient in both policy and political argument. They have to know something about the concepts and methods of each, which is a tall order. Moreover, in this conception, to know the institutional context of policy is so important that experience in government is also highly desirable. It is only by working in some policy area *in* or around government that one learns the program structure in that area in depth. A limitation of many of today’s policy scholars is that they have no government experience, nor does their research—

done largely on computers—bring them into contact with the actual government programs. Unusually, most of my own ideas for welfare reform came out of my own experience working in the federal government and then doing field research on welfare work programs in the 1970s.

So to do the sort of policy research I recommend, one really needs three educations—in policy analysis, in political analysis, and in government. That is so demanding that, perhaps, only fairly senior scholars will be able to do it. They will have learned one academic subject in graduate school, perhaps another on the job, and picked up government experience along the way. To seek such breadth is quite contrary to standard academic incentives. Junior academics typically have to specialize early in order to get through graduate school quickly and generate the publications needed to get an academic appointment and then tenure. Most such scholars will emerge too specialized to bring policy and politics together as I recommend. It is no accident that, among the authors mentioned above as having done combined policy research, none is an economist and only Kosar and Schick are political scientists. Two—Tough and Whitman—are journalists, and Bok was trained as a lawyer. Those backgrounds freed them to write more comprehensively about their issues than is now usually possible in academe.

Of course some economists and other academics serve for short periods as political appointees in government. Recent examples from the Obama administration include the economists Christina Romer or Lawrence Summers. But this experience promotes the combined conception only if scholars then build policy issues into their academic work. One case where service in Washington clearly promoted effective policy research is Steven Kelman's work on government procurement (Kelman, 1990, 2005). Both before and after their time in office, however, many professors continue to pursue academic subjects that have little connection to government.

Unfortunately, academic trends are toward more specialization rather than less. When the ambition to solve public problems with academic methods first arose in the postwar era, Harold Lasswell advocated a form of "policy sciences" in which scholars from various disciplines would adopt a "problem orientation" and advise government about its challenges (Lerner & Lasswell, 1951). But the concept was too amorphous to permit the rigor that academia was coming to demand, so it never caught on. Economics and political science went their separate ways, each operating on different assumptions. Although it is still possible to see the two disciplines as complementary, as I have suggested, to do this has become unorthodox in academe.

In recent decades, both disciplines have become still more fragmented and ingrown—what I call scholastic. They focus on academic specialties rather than making broad arguments about public problems. Economics has become noted for complex mathematical modeling. In political science, scholars pursue ever-narrower subjects, with much more attention to methodology and the academic literature than they did a generation ago. They are writing mostly for other specialists like themselves, not for political science in general, let alone policy makers

or the public. Their goal is to construct models that are sophisticated, and of which an exact account can be given, whether or not they are realistic. That usually requires that the evidence consulted be narrowed and simplified, often to a single database. The focus on rigor has leached much of the realism and empirical content out of research (Mead, 2010).

“Policy” research by economists today typically involves statistical analysis of some database about social and economic conditions. In view of the findings, analysts then recommend some change in public policy. But the research is usually all about the conditions, not the policies. There is seldom much governmental content—meaning concrete information about government’s existing programs. Insight into how these programs work and how they might work better is scant. In fact, most “policy” research is no longer about government at all, but about society. Hence, policy makers are unlikely to give it much notice.

Especially, there is little institutional content—little sense of the political and administrative structures that in fact embody what public policy means in the real world. Largely, “policy” means some input to a model on a computer screen. Researchers seldom leave their computers to apprehend what a program means in its actual setting. To do that requires doing documentary research or field interviewing—what I call laying hands on the institutions. Such methods are realistic and robust. They are essential for building convincing arguments for programs, as the combined conception imagines. But they lack the precision and rigor possible with statistical models, so they have less standing in academe (Mead, 2005b).

Among political scientists, scholasticism has debased governmental content in a different way. Political scientists who specialize in “public policy” are actually little different from others who ignore policy. They study some dimension of the policy-making process, but not policy itself. Their ambition is to model that process as rigorously as possible, but they usually have nothing to say about the merits of policy, which is the outcome (e.g., Goggin, Bowman, Lester, & O’Toole, 1990; Sabatier, 1999). Research like this says too little about government performance to interest policy makers (Rogers, 1989; Palumbo, 1992). Political science, thus, is even further away from supporting serious policy arguments than it used to be. The promise of a discipline that could capture the process of statecraft has been lost.

## CONCLUSION

A combined form of research, linking policy and political analysis, should be the basis of university education in public policy. That approach conveys to students more of the actual nature of policy making than narrower, disciplinary perspectives. However, scholastic trends in the key disciplines discourage the breadth that this sort of reasoning requires. That may mean simply that little such work is done. Few scholars today may have the ability or the desire to do it.

A more hopeful outcome would be for policy research itself to counter trends toward narrowness in academe. Despite scholasticism, policy problems remain compelling to many academics. Some serve in government out of their desire to

address these issues. Although many who do so are little affected as scholars, that experience does tend to promote broader interests. Policy problems in their nature are many-sided. They demand attention from more perspectives than the more artificial questions nurtured in academe. The hope is that, after grappling with statecraft, scholars will take a broader agenda back to the university. Thus the hope for a master science endures.

## FOOTNOTES

- 1 These programs included the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard, the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton, and the La Follette Institute at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. At New York University, I teach in the Politics Department but draw many students from the Wagner School, NYU's policy program. I have found the difficulties in combining policy and political studies to be essentially the same in all these schools.
- 2 This informal survey is based on *general* texts in public policy that I know personally—that is, those purporting to cover the whole subject, rather than just policy analysis or just the policy-making process.
- 3 I have found only one general text that gives policy and process something like equal weight—Kraft and Furlong, 2013.

## REFERENCES

- Allison, G. T. (1971). *Essence of decision: Explaining the Cuban missile crisis*. New York, NY: Norton.
- Aristotle. *Politics* (trans. Earnest Barker, 1962). New York, NY: Oxford.
- Baumgartner, F. R., & Jones, B. D. (2009). *Agendas and instability in American politics* (2nd ed.). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Bok, D. (2001). *The trouble with government*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Breyer, S. (1982). *Regulation and its reform*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Cochran, C. E., Mayer, L. C., Carr, T. R., Cayer, N. J., McKenzie, M., and Peck, L. R. (2012). *American public policy: An introduction*. Boston, MA: Wadsworth.
- Derthick, M., & Quirk, P. J. (1985). *The politics of deregulation*. Washington, DC: Brookings.
- Dror, Y. (1968). *Public policymaking reexamined*. Scranton, PA: Chandler Publishing.
- Dye, T. R. (2011). *Understanding public policy* (13th ed.). Boston, MA: Longman.
- Frederickson, H. G. (1999). The repositioning of American public administration. *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 32(4), 701–711.
- Goggin, M., Bowman, A. O'M., Lester, J. P., & O'Toole, L. J., Jr. (1990). *Implementation theory and practice: Toward a third generation*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.

L. M. Mead

- Gormley, W. T., Jr. (1987). Institutional policy analysis: A critical review. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 6(2), 153–169.
- Kelman, S. (1987). *Making public policy: A hopeful view of American government*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Kelman, S. (1990). *Procurement and public management: The fear of discretion and the quality of government performance*. Washington, DC: AEI Press.
- Kelman, S. (2005). *Unleashing change: A study of organizational renewal in government*. Washington, DC: Brookings.
- Kosar, K. R. (2005) *Failing grades: The federal politics of education standards*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Reiner.
- Kraft, M. E., & Furlong, S. R. (2013). *Public policy: Politics, analysis, and alternatives* (4th ed.) Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Landy, M. K., & Levin, M. A. (Eds.). (1995). *The new politics of public policy*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Lerner, D., & Lasswell, H. D. (1951). *The policy sciences*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- MacRae, D., Jr. (1976). *The social function of social science*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Mann, T. E., & Ornstein, N. J. (2006). *The broken branch: How Congress is failing America and how to get it back on track*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Mann, T. E., & Ornstein, N.J. (2012). *It's even worse than it looks: How the American constitutional system collided with the new politics of extremism*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Mead, L. M. (1983). A meaning for “public policy.” *Policy Studies Journal*, 12(2), 247–250.
- . (1985). Policy studies and political science. *Policy Studies Review*, 5(2), 319–335.
- . (1986). *Beyond entitlement: The social obligations of citizenship*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- . (1995). Public policy: Vision, potential, limits. *Policy Currents*, 5, 1–4.
- . (2002). Welfare reform: Recent policy and politics. *Review of Policy Research*, 19(1), 204–237.
- . (2004). *Government matters: Welfare reform in Wisconsin*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- . (2005a). Research and welfare reform. *Review of Policy Research*, 22(3), 401–421.
- . (2005b). Policy research: The field dimension. *Policy Studies Journal*, 33(4), 35–57.
- . (2010). Scholasticism in political science. *Perspectives on Politics*, 8(2), 453–464.
- . (2011). *Expanding work programs for poor men*. Washington, DC: AEI Press.
- Moe, T. M. (1984). The new economics of organization. *American Journal of Political Science*, 28(4), 739–777.
- Munger, M. C. (2000). *Analyzing policy: Choices, conflicts, and practices*. New York, NY: Norton.

- Nelson, R. R. (1977). *The moon and the ghetto*. New York, NY: Norton.
- Olson, M. (1971). *The logic of collective action: Public goods and the theory of groups*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Palumbo, D. J. (1992). Bucking the tide: Policy studies in political science, 1978–1988. In W. N. Dunn & R. M. Kelly (Eds.), *Policy studies review annual: Advances in policy studies since 1950* (Vol. 10, pp. 59–80). New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.
- Radin, B. A. (1997). Presidential address: The evolution of the policy analysis field: From conversation to conversations. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 16(2), 204–218.
- Rogers, J. M. (1989). Social science disciplines and policy research: The case of political science. *Policy Studies Review*, 9(1), 13–28.
- Sabatier, P. A. (Ed.). (1999). *Theories of the policy process*. Boulder, CO: Westview.
- Schick, A. (2007). *The federal budget: Politics, policy, process* (3rd ed.). Washington, DC: Brookings.
- Simon, H. A. (1976). *Administrative behavior: A study of decision-making processes in administrative organization* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Free Press.
- Stone, D. (2002). *Policy paradox: The art of political decision making* (rev. ed.). New York, NY: Norton.
- Tough, P. (2008). *Whatever it takes: Geoffrey Canada's quest to change Harlem and America*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.
- Weimer, D. L., & Vining, A. R. (1999). *Policy analysis: Concepts and practice* (3rd ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Wheelan, C. (2011). *Introduction to public policy*. New York, NY: Norton.
- Whitman, D. (2008). *Sweating the small stuff: Inner-city schools and the new paternalism*. Washington, DC: Thomas B. Fordham Institute.
- Wilson, J. Q. (1995). *Political organizations*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- . (2003). Reflections on the political context. In H. J. Aaron, J. M. Lindsay, & P. S. Nivola (Eds.), *Agenda for the nation* (pp. 527–549). Washington, DC: Brookings.
- Wildavsky, A. (1979). *Speaking truth to power: The art and craft of policy analysis*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown.

Lawrence M. Mead is professor of politics and public policy at New York University. He is an expert on the problems of poverty and welfare in the United States. Among academics, he was the principal exponent of work requirements in welfare, the approach that now dominates national policy. He is a leading scholar of the politics and implementation of welfare reform and also of work programs for men.