

Chapter 2

A Policy Sciences View on Policy Analysis

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Let's pretend there's a way of getting through into it, somehow, Kitty. Let's pretend the glass has got all soft like gauze, so that we can get through. Why, it's turning into a sort of mist now, I declare! It'll be easy enough to get through... In another moment Alice was through the glass, and had jumped lightly down into the Looking-glass room. The very first thing she did was to look whether there was a fire in the fireplace, and she was quite pleased to find that there was a real one, blazing away as brightly as the one she had left behind. 'So I shall be as warm here as I was in the old room,' thought Alice: 'warmer, in fact, because there'll be no one here to scold me away from the fire. Oh, what fun it'll be, when they see me through the glass in here, and can't get at me!'

Lewis Carroll (1871), "Through the Looking Glass and What Alice Found There", illustration by John Tenniel.

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2.1 Introduction

The quintessence of abstractions like ‘public policymaking’ and ‘policy analysis’ (PA) readily escape human perception. To give meaning to such notions, we construct and use ‘frames’, which in the policy sciences are often called ‘conceptual models’ or sometimes ‘(policy) paradigms’, ‘lenses’ or ‘belief systems’ (Rein and Schön 1986, 1993, 1994; Kuhn 1970; Allison 1971; Sabatier 1987; Hall 1993). Through conceptual models, we ‘make sense’ of ambiguity and superimpose structure and logic onto chaos; in constant recognition however, that our conceptual models are fairly limited and should be under constant scrutiny and subject to revision. The purpose of this chapter is to examine several such models or frames of policymaking in order to understand the course of policy processes. The main objective is to examine their implications for PA.

In the policy sciences, there are many different ways of looking at public policymaking—for instance in terms of phases, cycles, rounds, or streams. Also, policymaking is sometimes viewed as an arena, a garbage can, a routine, a policy discourse, etc. (for an overview on policymaking and policy models, see for instance: Teisman 2000; Hill 1997; Sabatier 2006; Howlett et al. 2009; Hill 2009). Some influential authors have argued that more than one model should be used to shed light on the same sequence of events (Allison 1971). In the same fashion, we assume that various models of public policymaking can act as ‘lenses’ for looking at PA. By changing lenses, we may get alternative answers to the question of what PA can and cannot do. Like Alice, therefore, we propose to step through the mirror and wonder about the strange reflections that the various models of policymaking have on the requirements for effective PA.

The outline of this chapter is as follows. First (to familiarize the reader), we present PA in a nutshell. We then argue that one’s perception of what PA is, or what it should be, very much depends on one’s view toward public policymaking in general: whether it is ‘neat and rational’ or ‘chaotic and messy’. We refine this simple dichotomy, to position five ‘models’ in the policy sciences that view policymaking as: (1) a rational decisionmaking process; (2) a political game; (3) a discourse; (4) a garbage can; or (5) an institutional process. We examine how these five models give meaning to the notion of ‘PA’ and how they define the function, the ambitions, and the strategies of PA. Although, we may have a personal or scholarly preference for one model over another, we assume that each model can add significant meaning to the understanding of PA.

2.2 Policy Analysis in a Nutshell

2.2.1 *The Two Meanings of Policy Analysis*

Policy analysis is a rather ambiguous notion. First, it refers to the analysis *of* public policy, i.e., the study of public policy in an academic (e.g. descriptive, interpretative, or explanatory) fashion. By and large, this form of PA aims to achieve a generic understanding of public policymaking by means of social–scientific–political–historic research, as in the example of ‘foreign PA’ (see, for instance, Hudson 2006). At the same time, we witness daily in the media that scientific analysis of a policy issue—e.g., analysis that can inform or improve the Obama or Bush administration’s foreign policy—can have a profound impact on the public debate and policymakers’ way of thinking and actions.

This first type of PA can be referred to as ‘public policy (case) studies’ or simply ‘policy research studies’. Good examples are Graham Allison’s (1971) threefold analysis of the Cuban missile crises (see also Allison and Halperin 1972) and Flyvbjerg et al.’s (2003) comparative analysis of infrastructure decisionmaking. In rough terms, this is what political and policy scientists do: find and analyze the rationality that underlies and explains public policymaking and reformulate or try to understand it in generic theories and models about policy processes, policy networks, institutions, etc. In many cases, the results of these studies can also be used indirectly to draw up policy recommendations and lessons for the future. But, for many academic policy analysts, day-to-day impact in the policymaking process and having an influence on policymakers is a side effect, and not an intentionally designed activity. In this fashion, science and policymaking are ‘loosely connected’.

The second type of PA refers to analysis *for* public policymaking; in other words, to the activities, methodology, and tools that are used to give aid and advice in a context of public policymaking (Dunn 1994; Brewer and DeLeon 1983; Hogwood and Gunn 1984; Miser and Quade 1985; Patton and Sawicki 1986; Quade 1989; House and Shull 1991; Parsons 1996; Mayer 1997; Radin 2002; Mayer et al. 2004; Fischer et al. 2007). This type of PA can best be seen as the ‘interventionist’ or ‘prescriptive’ branch that stems from the policy sciences tree. Much like an ‘art’ or ‘craft’, it is assumed that significant parts of the PA discipline can be taught to and learned by professionals working in, for, or with the public sector (Wildavsky 1979). This book is primarily concerned with this, the second type of PA—analysis for public policymaking.

2.2.2 *Accommodating Science and Action*

Wise men advising policymakers can be traced back to Aristotle (384 BC), who educated Alexander the Great, and to Machiavelli (1469–1527), who ‘flattered’ and ‘advised’ Lorenzo II di Medici (see, *The Prince*, 1513, 2003 edition).

Giving science-based or expert advice to policymakers is a main part of what policy analysts do. But underlying contemporary PA is the notion of a distinguishable, professional discipline with emphasis on tools, scientific methods, tricks of the trade, professional ethics, training, and reflection (Dror 1967).

Like all interventionist disciplines, PA needs to bridge the gap between science and action (Latour 1987)—in our case, political action or policymaking. This of course can be done in different ways; roughly by ‘accommodating policymaking to science’ or, vice versa, by ‘accommodating science to policymaking’. The first way is associated with ‘scientism’, ‘technocracy’, and ‘expertism’. It aims to establish firm scientific, technological, and rational foundations for decisionmaking and policymaking. The experiments with Planning Programming Budgeting Systems (PPBS) in the US (in the mid 1960s) and with COBA in the Netherlands (in the 1970s) are classic examples of this type of accommodation (see Mayer 2007). The second way of accommodation is based upon ‘constructivism’, ‘pragmatism’, or even ‘relativism’. It significantly loosens the scientific straight jacket of objectivity, validity, and generalizability, etc., in order to gain more useable, temporal, action-oriented knowledge.

2.2.3 *Evolution*

The historical development of PA in the US, and in countries such as the Netherlands, Canada, Germany, New Zealand, and India, has been told in quite a few publications on public PA (see, for instance, Dunn 1994; deLeon 1988; Walker and Fisher 2001; Radin 2002; Stone and Denham 2004; Mayer 2007; Fischer et al. 2007). We will not repeat what has been recounted elsewhere. It is important to understand, however, that the emergence of PA is part of a much wider rationalization process in public administration that goes back to the work of Max Weber and others on modernization, rationalization, and bureaucracy. This rationalization process found fertile ground in the US after World War II, and culminated in the emergence of what came to be known as the decision sciences: Operations Research (OR), Systems Analysis (SA), and PA.

At the very root of the decision sciences, we find applied mathematics and a variety of engineering sciences. These were used in a rather experimental fashion to support military operational planning during World War II, typically for things like the planning of convoys and bombing raids. This practice caused the emergence of a discipline named OR in the late 1940s and 1950s (see, for instance, Hillier and Lieberman 2005). In general, OR aims to develop optimal solutions for relatively well-structured operational and logistical problems, especially in the area of (military and business) planning and management. OR generally uses methods derived from mathematics—formal modeling, game theory, decision analysis, computer simulation, etc. In due course, OR evolved into a related discipline called SA (Quade and Boucher 1968). While OR mainly looked at the optimization of relatively well-structured operational planning problems, SA took

up a broader, socio-technical perspective. In general terms, it looks at the more complex behavior of systems mainly through the analysis of its interacting entities or components. SA was highly influential in the 1960s. It was implemented by Robert McNamara (US Secretary of Defense, 1961–1968) to make military decisionmaking more rational by, for example, promoting institutions like the SA Office and the use of quasi-formal methods for the *ex-ante* evaluation of proposed weapon systems (Adams 1982; Enserink 1993). In retrospect, it can be viewed, in part, as an attempt to depoliticize complex and highly political decisions.

During the 1950s and 1960s, the goal of making public decisionmaking more rational spread throughout the US Federal Government in the form of another branch of the same tree, called public PA (PA)—the use of analytical methods derived from the social sciences to support public policymaking and public policymakers in non-defense policy domains (cf. Brewer and deLeon 1983; Hogwood and Gunn 1984; Dunn 1994; Parsons 1996; Mayer et al. 2004). A flourishing industry of ‘think tanks’ emerged, with leading corporations such as RAND conducting significant policy and SA studies and constantly innovating methods for PA (Williams and Palmatier 1992; Abelson 2004). Graduate programs teaching PA to students and bureaucrats were established at universities. By the late 1960s and early 1970s, a profession of PA had come into existence (Dror 1967; Radin 2002). PA became somewhat discredited due to the hard-felt failure of Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System (PPBS) introduced into the Federal government in the mid 1960s. During the late 1960s and the 1970s, PA was taken up by the whirlwind of (revolutionary) changes that were challenging vested authorities and values in society, politics, and science (Bachrach and Baratz 1962; Baumgartner and Jones 1993; Cobb and Elder 1983). PA itself became criticized for its strong bias to economic efficiency, value maximization, and ‘technocracy’, and its perceived neglect of democratic and moral values (deLeon 1988; Ellis 1998; Williams 1998). Gradually, the PA discipline and methodology opened up (Lynn 1999). This contributed to more self-reflection, disciplinary debate, and a greater variety of PA theories, approaches, and methods, such as participatory, critical, narrative, and argumentative PA (Fischer and Forrester 1993; Dryzek 1990; deLeon 1990, 1994; Roe 1994; Mayer 1997; van de Riet 2003).

2.2.4 *The Science–Policy Interface*

Policy analysis is now an established professional discipline in North America and Europe. But the science–policy interface itself has become the subject of social-scientific research (Caplan 1979; Dunn 1980; Weiss 1977; Weiss and Bucuvalas 1980; Jasanoff 1990; Stone and Denham 2004). The interface between the decision sciences and policymaking is full of tensions, e.g., regarding the (ir)relevance and (ab)use of methods and analysts in the policymaking process. The evolution of PA can be seen as a ‘dialectic process—swinging back and forth between the two forms of accommodation, trying to find some form of balance between ‘truth’

(scientific rationality) and ‘power’ (political rationality). During the last five decades, this dialectical process has produced different disciplinary views on what PA is, or what it should be (see also Mayer et al. 2004).

The evolution of PA, for instance in the US or the Netherlands, has been influenced by an intricate blend of change factors on both the demand side and the supply side (deLeon 1988; Mayer 2007). Changes in the demand side generally relate to changes in the ‘belief systems’ of policymakers. This presents itself to policy analysts as minor or major shifts in knowledge demands, policy priorities, and issues on the political agenda. But such changes may be an indication that more fundamental views on things like democracy, civil rights, the role of science and technology, and the effectiveness of public or stakeholder participation are in flux. Furthermore, societies at large go through altering periods of consensus and dissensus on political issues, such as immigration, flood control, healthcare, financial regulation, and environmental policies. Science and PA play their part in the policy debate and are triggers for change. But not only does a paradigm shift in policymaking influence the kind of policy questions that policy analysts are requested to answer, it also has an effect on the paradigm of PA itself, e.g., in its core beliefs about the science–politics interface, about professional ethics and democracy, and about methodology.

Changes in the supply side of PA generally relate to changes in policy sciences theories, and especially the methods and tools for research and analysis. The interpretation of what PA is and how it should be conducted very much depends on one’s view toward public policymaking in general: whether it is ‘neat and rational’ or ‘chaotic and messy’. Let us explore this simple dichotomy a little further.

2.2.5 ‘Neat and Rational’ Versus ‘Chaotic and Messy’

If policymaking is viewed to be ‘neat and rational’—or at the least, that it should be—we can very much rely on the methods and rational-analytic tools derived from ‘science’ to support policymakers. Advisors to policymakers should use the best available scientific knowledge and analytic methods derived from mathematics, computer sciences, economics, social sciences, in order to provide ‘optimal’ answers to complex societal problems. For an interventionist discipline like PA, it implies that ‘political rationality’ must be accommodated to ‘scientific’ or ‘technical’ rationality. In fact, over the years the discipline of PA has provided us with many rational-analytic tools—the PA toolbox—by which we can reduce uncertainty or optimize solutions to policy problems. Typical examples are cost–benefit analysis (CBA), impact analysis, trend extrapolation, linear programming, discrete event simulation, etc. (Dunn 1994).

But on the other hand, if we assume that policymaking is inherently ‘chaotic and messy’, such approaches and methods have a serious handicap: they are unable to cope with the unpredictable and seemingly irrational behavior displayed by real people and organizations. Or, when they do try to incorporate human

behavior, human actors are reduced to factors like variables or agents that can be put into a statistical analysis or computer model.

The thing is that the ‘chaotic and messy’ perspective on governance and public policymaking has recently found common ground. Its models and theories—such as bureaucratic politics, garbage can model, stream model, and network theory—are considered to be more in line with political reality. Policy scientists increasingly have come to realize that government is not a unitary body that seeks to optimize solutions to well-defined problems. Instead government, like society, is fragmented into many loosely coupled agencies, departments, and individuals, which in many cases have their own interests in mind (e.g. departmental budgets or personal careers). The many stakeholders that operate in the public arena often have different and conflicting views on the causes and consequences of societal problems. Facts are often disputed, knowledge is negotiated, and scientists often are stakeholders—‘hired guns’—in the policy arena (Jasanoff 1990). Furthermore, there are many societal actors that are largely unresponsive toward deliberate government interventions—e.g., by regulations, subsidies, or taxes. And these stakeholders deliberately attempt to influence the outcome of the political process to their own advantage, e.g., by lobbying, by going to court, by hiring consultants, by presenting counter evidence, and most of all by making strategic use of their resources (money, authorities, information) upon which government bodies depend for the implementation of their policies. In this perspective, public policymaking takes place in a dynamic arena where policy issues come and go and where stakeholders enter and leave as they will. Thus, there are no ‘optimal’ or ‘best’ solutions; only politically negotiated, acceptable, and feasible solutions. For an interventionist discipline like PA, this implies that ‘technical-scientific rationality’ must accommodate to ‘political rationality’. The analyst’s role changes significantly as she becomes an advisor, stakeholder, or mediator in the policy arena.¹

2.2.6 *Five Models*

The dichotomous perspective on policymaking—‘neat’ versus ‘messy’—is, of course, a gross simplification of the richness and variety of theories about policymaking. The messy view for instance, does not say anything about what constitutes and causes the ‘messiness’ and the erratic and volatile nature of policymaking. The dichotomy also does not say much on how to find a balance between ‘science’ and ‘action’. In order to refine our understanding of the relationship between policymaking and PA, we therefore examine five ‘models’ that view policymaking as:

¹ Throughout the book, to make functional use of gender, the policy analyst is referred to as “she”, all other actors as “he”.

1. A rational decisionmaking process.
2. A political game.
3. A discourse.
4. A garbage can.
5. An institutional process.

These five models will act as our lenses to look at PA. For each model, we will look at their core assumptions on policymaking, their normative implications (good or bad policymaking), and their implications for PA.

2.3 Five Models of Policymaking

2.3.1 *Policymaking as a Rational Decisionmaking Process*

The classic understanding of policymaking is that of decisionmaking by a rational, unitary, actor (see also Allison 1971). At the same time, it is commonly acknowledged that the rational model of policymaking is an ‘ideal type’ and does not exist in reality. The model has been reconstructed out of several theories and common practices in US defense and military decisionmaking after World War II. In textbooks on public policymaking, the prevalence of the rational model is often exaggerated mainly to serve as a ‘straw man’—a focal point of criticism and a rhetorical way of presenting alternative models. The rational policymaking model, however, constitutes an important frame of reference for many public policymakers. It is straightforward, easily applicable, and, most important in the context of this book, has had a marked influence on PA.

2.3.1.1 Assumptions

By and large, the rational model rests upon three pillars:

1. **Policies:** rational, intelligent decisions based on synoptic information.
2. **The policymaking process:** evolves in a few (chrono)logical steps, phases, or cycles.
3. **The institutional context:** closed, unicentric, hierarchical, authoritative.

According to this model, policymaking is (or should be) regarded as an intellectual activity in which a key actor decides upon alternatives in a rational way, using objective knowledge (Simon 1957a, 1977, 1981). Core to the rational model are assumptions about ‘comprehensive’ or ‘synoptic rationality’. Frequently, synoptic rationality is portrayed as following a number of analytic steps, such as (Lindblom 1959; Hogwood and Gunn 1984; Walker 2000):

1. Define and rank governing values.
2. Specify objectives compatible with these values.

3. Identify all relevant options or means of achieving these objectives.
4. Calculate all the consequences of these options and compare them.
5. Choose the option or combination of options that would maximize the values earlier defined as being most important.

The above model of rational decisionmaking has many similarities with the linear or cyclical process model of policymaking.

'Policy is assembled in stages, as if on a conveyor belt (agenda formulation, policy formulation, adoption, implementation, and evaluation). So conceived, the policymaking process parallels the cognitive steps of the rational model of decisionmaking' (Stone 1988, cited and discussed in Fischer 1989, p. 944).

In order to organize policymaking as a rational process, activities should be structured according to this set of ordered steps. By adding a step for evaluation and iteration, the process gets a cyclical nature, thus including a feedback mechanism and opportunities to learn. The rational model also assumes that policies are made by a unitary actor (e.g. government) and that they are implemented hierarchically, through command and control in the bureaucracy.

2.3.1.2 Normative Implications

Policy failures or ineffective policymaking are seen to be caused by errors in 'intelligence' and 'order' in the policy process. One or more steps in the linear policy process may have gone wrong: there was insufficient information or understanding, not all alternatives were examined, important steps were skipped, actors were not aligned, etc. Remedies for these failures are, for instance:

1. Produce more/better information. Improve the 'evidence' on which policy decisions are based, e.g., through (independent) analysis and research.
2. Better specify the set of objectives that are being pursued and prioritize among them.
3. Restructure the policy process, according to above mentioned steps, building in checks that have to be met before activities pass onto the next step.
4. Strengthen the position of the key decisionmaker by making more resources available and by reducing the number of actors involved in the process of policymaking.
5. Improve the administration of the process of implementing the policy.

2.3.1.3 Amendments

The many points of criticism to synoptic (comprehensive) rationality are well known. Milder forms of criticism have led to what has been called the 'classical amendments' to the rational model. These are attempts to modify the rational

model in such a way that the characteristics of real-world policymaking are acknowledged, while simultaneously articulating or seeking to enhance the rationality of these processes.

1. Simon (1957b) emphasized the ‘bounded rationality’ of decisionmakers due to limited information processing capacity and involvement in various issues at the same time. As a result, decisionmakers will not ‘optimize’, but will ‘satisfy’ their objectives (*satisficing*).
2. Lindblom (1959) argued that policymaking evolves in an incremental fashion, because of ‘risk avoidance’ (among other reasons). Incremental decisionmaking is ‘rational’ because it provides more gradual feedback on the impact of decisions and allows for adaptations and revisions along the way.
3. Etzioni (1967) introduced ‘mixed scanning’ as an attempt to reconcile ‘bounded rationality’ and the ‘rational model’. It argues that the problem environment or solution space is scanned, and a limited number of solutions (alternatives) are explored in a synoptic fashion.
4. Dror (1968) argued that policy problems of a repetitive nature can be dealt with by meta-decisions that establish the routines to deal with these problems. Rational comprehensive policymaking is reserved for unknown, complex problems that cannot be dealt with in a routine-like fashion.

2.3.1.4 Implications for PA

The ‘rational model’ of policymaking has been very influential for the common understanding of PA. Rational policymaking and rational PA are isomorphic (see Chap. 3). They are based upon the same core assumptions about the role of intelligence in policymaking, the linearity of the policy process, and hierarchical, unitary decisionmaking. Below we elaborate the implications of this isomorphism.

- *The mission of PA.* In line with the rational view of policymaking, the mission of PA is to reduce the complexities and uncertainties that public policymakers are faced with.
- *The role of the policy analyst.* The role of PA is to underpin the (scientific) evidence base of public policy. To fulfill this role, the policy analyst intervenes by doing systematic analysis, providing information, and enclosing the scientific insights needed to make informed decisions and to go through the various steps of the policy cycle. Working for or within bureaucracy is not considered problematic, because the institutional setting is not identified as fragmented in values or interests, and analytical activities are assumed to uncover an unambiguous truth, in accordance with the neo-positivistic approach to science that underlies the rational model.
- *The policy analyst’s toolbox.* The toolbox of the policy analyst has been grouped and ordered to support the above described roles, e.g., into methods and

techniques (M&T) for collecting policy relevant information on current problem situations and underlying causes, for monitoring (e.g. surveys, trend extrapolation), for developing and ranking options or alternatives (e.g. Cross Impact Analysis, CIA), for comparing costs and benefits (e.g. Cost-Benefit Analysis, CBA), for *ex-ante* and *ex-post* evaluation (e.g. program evaluation, scenarios of possible futures), etc. And these methods and techniques of the policy analyst—e.g., computer models (see Chap. 7)—can and should be developed, sharpened, and renewed constantly, to reach more validity, fidelity, comprehensiveness, etc (Walker 2000, Rosenhead 1989).

- *The skills of the policy analyst.* The role of the policy analyst in the policy process is viewed as a trained professional, fully skilled, and equipped to operate the methods and techniques of science and analysis and to communicate the results and outcomes. This implies living up to the requirements of what is considered the state of the art of good (scientific) analysis by the professional (scientific) community of policy analysts.

2.3.2 Policymaking as a Political Game

Instead of a rational process, policymaking can be seen as a political game between interdependent stakeholders (see Chap. 6 and 8). In this view, policymaking comes about in a ‘polycentric’ context, or interorganizational arena, in which the underlying political rationalities of many actors need to be understood and managed.

2.3.2.1 Assumptions

By and large, the ‘political game’ model rests upon three pillars:

1. **Policies:** political compromises between autonomous, but interdependent stakeholders.
2. **The policymaking process:** a ‘power play’ or ‘bargaining game’ between stakeholders.
3. **The institutional context:** a pluri-centric, elitist, interorganizational arena with restricted access.

This perspective on policymaking can be found in the work of Lindblom, who rejected the idea of comprehensive planning by the state on empirical and normative considerations. According to Lindblom, policymaking is rife with partisan interest representation in policy arenas and is a bargaining process among (especially the elites of) different powerful interest groups (Lindblom 1965; Dahl 1994).

Policymaking as a political power game is well represented in the Bureaucratic Politics model, first introduced by Allison (1971) and Allison and Halperin (1972)

to understand the course of events that became ‘the Cuban Missile crisis’. According to Allison, ‘where you sit, is where you stand’. Decisionmakers identify strongly with organizational and personal interests, like budgets, competencies, and careers. They ‘push and pull’ to reach decisions that suit their own interests and try to prevent solutions that are unfavorable to them. Outcomes of policy processes are largely a result of the formation of winning coalitions or compromises.

‘Bureaucratic Politics’ originally referred to the internal power game among the politicians and directors that are heading the different governmental agencies, departments, and bureaus. But, with some adjustments, the notion can also be used for interorganizational decisionmaking in non-hierarchical arenas of public, private, and non-governmental actors (Crozier and Friedberg 1980; Scharpf 1978, 1997; Kickert et al. 1997; Jenkins-Smith 1990). These are typical policy situations in which there is no single dominant actor who can enforce or implement policy decisions, but there are multiple interdependent actors. This makes policymaking very much like a strategic game, with player-roles, rounds, stakes, stalemates, opportunism, foul play, and many strategies for cooperation, winning, and blocking opponents (Allison 1971; Teisman 1992). To make it even more complicated, policy problems are sometimes dealt with in different loosely coupled policy arenas at the same time. Different ‘strategic games’ may be linked to each other, because the problems interrelate or because actors play different games at the same time. Such linkages may further complicate the effective solution of a problem, but they can also provide possibilities for agenda coupling, package deals, and tradeoffs (Axelrod 1984; Koppenjan and Klijn 2004).

2.3.2.2 Normative Implications

In order to solve problems, actors need to reach a common understanding on the problem and share resources to solve it. If actors succeed in developing collaborative strategies, they may arrive at integrated solutions that do justice to the various preferences and perceptions involved. Huxham speaks of ‘collaborative advantages’—win-win situations that none of the parties involved could have achieved on its own (Huxham 2000; Dery 1984; Ury and Fischer 1983; Axelrod 1984). However, this is far from easy; strategic games may result in blockages, caused by conflicting strategies of actors not being able or willing to agree, ‘poor’ compromises resulting in lose-lose outcomes, and imposition of one-sided policy measures with high implementation costs and loss of trust.

Recommendations based on the political game perspective recognize that actors do not easily succeed in working together, due to diverging and conflicting preferences and perceptions, and the fact that collaboration is costly and vulnerable for opportunistic behavior. In order to enhance interaction, there is a need for facilitation, brokerage, arbitration, and the creation of supportive arrangements to increase commitment, such as letters of intent, covenants, and platforms for interactions (O’Toole 1988; Gage and Mandell 1990; Kickert et al. 1997; Teisman 2000). Recent ideas on process design and process management build upon these insights (De Bruijn et al. 2002; de Bruijn and Porter 2004).

2.3.2.3 Implications for PA

What are the implications of the political game perspective for PA? Once we accept that policymaking can best be viewed as a political-strategic game, it must be acknowledged that, in reality, policymaking does not live up to the ideal of the rational model. Ideological prejudices and seduction of power may make policy-makers disregard research outcomes and scientific insights, and instead base policies upon their political preferences.

- *The mission of PA.* In this light, the mission of the policy analyst has traditionally been formulated as ‘speaking truth to power’ (Wildavsky 1979), contributing to the rationalization of policies and policymaking processes. PA should accommodate technical–scientific rationality to political rationality and prevent policy advocacy and report wars.
- *The role of the policy analyst.* The fulfillment of this mission may result in various roles or interventions. First, PA may be aimed at systemic analysis and the use of scientific evidence, thus strengthening the evidence base of the public policies. This role implies that PA systematically ‘doubts’ proposed problem formulations and solutions, and looks at the problem from a large number of different sources and perspectives (Mason and Mitroff 1981, p. 14). However, the literature is full of accounts of how attempts to speak truth to power result in the non-use of analysis by policymakers. To counteract this, the role of PA may be redefined as user-focused, producing usable knowledge. The analyst should ensure that results are aligned with the knowledge demands of practitioners, and are presented and communicated in an understandable and attractive way (Patton and Sawicki 1986). However PA can be (mis)used for all kinds of strategic purposes: e.g., to postpone a decision, stall a controversial issue, get ammunition for attacking opponents, put issues on the agenda, or break stalemates. Policy analysts sometimes serve as ‘hired guns’. Well-organized advocacy groups and lobbyists may use and produce scientific knowledge and various forms of PA to back their own arguments or refute those of others. This sometimes leads to a ‘reports war’, with piles of contradictory facts and findings (Radin 2002, p. 36). In such a way, PA contributes to uncertainty instead of reducing it. To overcome these strategic uses of PA, other roles may be necessary. Policy analysts may take up the role of process manager by arranging the interface between the political bargaining process and analytical activities. Arranging the involvement of stakeholders in research activities may increase the usefulness and authoritativeness of PA. It may also contribute to the rationality and evidence base of compromises actors in the power game agree upon. De Bruijn and Ten Heuvelhof (2002) speak in this respect of the need to prevent the development of negotiated nonsense, and of the possibility of generating negotiated knowledge. The political game perspective suggests another role for the policy analyst: that of facilitator or mediator of interaction processes—helping stakeholders to develop a joint course of action by answering knowledge questions and organizing processes of joint fact finding and joint image building (see Chap. 3).

- *The policy analyst's toolbox*. In addition to the toolkit of 'traditional' PA discussed in the rational model, this perspective requires PA to provide methods and tools to analyze the political and multi-actor context, e.g., by conducting forms of stakeholder or strategic analysis for policymakers and clients (see for instance, Bryson 2004). Some of these methods and tools are discussed in Chap. 8 of this book. Another way to gear PA to a polycentric or political context is to make the analytical tools and methods more interactive; i.e., to involve the important stakeholders with different forms of expertise, values, and interests in the analytical process. 'Interactivity' takes off the 'sharp edges' of technocratic rationality. CBA, Goal-Means Analysis (GMA), or Cross Impact Analysis (CIA) can be done by one expert policy analyst for a single decisionmaker. But the policy analyst can also guide several stakeholders through the same process, turning the method into an interactive CBA, GMA, or CIA, so that the outcomes can be used by multiple decisionmakers and other actors (see for instance, Enserink and Monnikhof 2003). Arranging the interface between the processes of interaction and research activities may include involving stakeholders in the various steps of the analytical process: up front, by formulating the research question, the research methods, and the research assumptions used; during the analysis, by discussing intermediate results and formulating additional questions; at the end, by debating the outcomes of the analysis, their meaning and implications for further action (Koppenjan and Klijn 2004).
- *The skills of the policy analyst*. These additional roles have repercussions for the skills policy analysts need to possess. Besides the need for scientific methods and tools, PA comes to rely on the political skills and strategic insights of analysts (Wildavsky 1979). They must develop an awareness of the existence of multiple perceptions and the limitations and subjectivity of analysis, in line with a social constructivist orientation that follows from this policy perspective. Policy analysts must be aware that they operate in a political context and that PA is 'part of the strategic game'. They must capture the use of new analytical tools to analyze the strategic environment. They must develop sensitivity to understand the needs of clients and the interests and positions of stakeholders. For this, they require skills in the area of facilitation, mediation, and negotiation.

2.3.3 Policymaking as Discourse

The approach of policymaking as a political game has been criticized for its one-sided attention to strategic interaction—with great emphasis on power, stakeholder interests, and strategic behavior. Some authors have argued that 'power play' alone is insufficient to explain policymaking and policy change (Fischer and Forrester 1993; Hoppe 1999). The discourse model focuses on the (quality of) arguments that stakeholders use in a policy debate (see for instance, Fischer and Forrester 1993).

2.3.3.1 Assumptions

The discourse model of policymaking rests upon three pillars:

1. **Policies:** consist of constructed and shared meanings in a policy debate.
2. **The policymaking process:** an interactive learning process—an exchange of arguments and meanings.
3. **The institutional context:** a number of advocacy coalitions—policy communities with different belief systems or paradigms.

According to this perspective, policymaking processes are regarded as ‘conversations’ or ‘discourses’, in which actors exchange their arguments, aimed at influencing the perceptions of others and, eventually, the course and outcome of the overall debate. In trying to arrive at shared meanings or to impose their own interpretations on others, they will develop a consistent storyline or structured argumentation in order to convince or force others to adapt their perceptions (Hajer 1995). Rein and Schön (1993) refer to this process as ‘naming and framing’, and to the perception of actors of the reality that surrounds them as ‘frames’. Depending on character, values, and professional training, people have fundamentally different views of reality. They frame policy problems differently (Schön and Rein 1994). Usually, they apply a limited set of coherent ‘frames’ to a policy problem. Drug addiction for instance can be ‘framed’ as a medical, social, or justice problem. Different frames will lead to different policies. Due to different problem perceptions, some policy issues, like nuclear energy, genetic screening, or climate change, are highly controversial with fierce debate among a few antagonistic frames or ‘advocacy coalitions’.

Frames are also referred to as ‘belief systems’ (Sabatier 1987) or ‘policy paradigms’ (Hall 1993). The framing theory implies that actors are not inclined to change their frames, since they are part of a broader community in which these frames are nested. According to Sabatier, this is especially true for the policy core of a belief system, the norms and values of such a system being tightly connected to culture, identity, and ideology. Learning between what he calls ‘advocacy coalitions’—actors that share the same belief systems—will be restricted to the marginal parts of the system and leave the core unchanged (Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith 1993). As a result, fundamental policy changes will not easily occur. Rein and Schön (1994) seem to be more positive about the perspectives of what they call ‘frame reflective dialogues’—policy debates in which actors reflect upon their frames and engage in a mutual learning process.

Hall (1993) connects the concept of policy paradigms to that of policy discourses. A policy discourse is made up of ideas and values that are continuously maintained, reshaped, and discovered in an ongoing discussion among members of a policy community, producing a set of assumptions and discussion rules that fulfill the function of creating meaning and gatekeeping at the same time. It is a storyline that structures the debate, determining which arguments are valid and which are not. It is both a way by which actors try to arrive at shared meanings and a tool for the exercise of power by which actors try to impose their own interpretations of reality on others and exclude or silence countervailing voices (de la Bruhéze 1992; Hajer 1995; Hoppe 1999).

2.3.3.2 Normative Implications

According to the discourse perspective on policymaking, failure occurs when parties, notably policy coalitions, do not succeed in realizing a shared meaning that allows them to adequately address the problems they encounter. This perspective especially draws attention to ‘dialogues of the deaf’—enduring impasses about substantive views, in which parties talk past each other using reasonings that are plausible by themselves, but mutually exclusive (Wildavsky and Tenenbaum 1981; van Eeten 1999, 2001). Asymmetrical argumentation structures within the discourse may prohibit consensus building or participation of actors in the debate on an equal footing. When, in these situations, actors use PA to advocate their own arguments in attempts to convince, PA may result in a war of reports, contributing to information overload and ambiguity instead of reducing it (Koppenjan and Klijn 2004). Remedies that are characteristic for this perspective include the introduction of new agendas, frames, and parties in order to change the nature of the discourse by initiating frame reflection and enhancing cross-coalition learning processes. Not all parties have the same opportunities in this argumentation game. Experts, policymakers, institutionalized interest groups, and media will be most influential. Politicians and citizens are floored and outmaneuvered by information overload and an array of interpretations. Weakly organized interests will not be heard (Hoppe 1999; Mayer et al. 2005). Remedies may also be aimed at helping parties who tend to be outmaneuvered in the argumentation game to develop arguments and storylines that hold in the ongoing policy discourse (van Eeten 1999, 2001).

2.3.3.3 Implications for PA

What are the implications of the discourse perspective for PA? Actors or stakeholders form advocacy coalitions that share certain values, cognitions, and beliefs about policy problems and solutions. The discourse perspective argues that the core belief systems of policymakers or communities are relatively stable and persistent. This explains why it is difficult or almost impossible to convince antagonistic stakeholders merely by new research findings. Different belief systems are likely to produce different research outcomes. They also interpret the results differently. Scientific studies and PA are often used to corroborate or improve one’s own belief system and attack the belief systems of others. Over a longer period of time, however, the belief systems (paradigms) can change—not only as a result of external events, but mainly as a result of social or policy-oriented learning. Science and PA may play an important role in triggering learning and policy change.

- *The mission of PA.* Following the logic of the discourse perspective, PA is aimed at overcoming asymmetrical debates among advocacy coalitions and furthering a constructive dialog among them, by enhancing frame reflection and learning across advocacy coalitions with different belief systems.

- *The role of the policy analyst.* In this perspective, the policy analyst is engaged in discourse analysis, proposing argumentation strategies to overcome deadlocks in debates and acting as facilitator and mediator among different advocacy coalitions and belief systems.
- *The policy analyst's toolbox.* Policy analysts in this perspective analyze discourses, argumentation structures, and the belief systems that underlie them. They adapt and design storylines, create new tools of communication, and build new agendas to overcome asymmetrical debates and dialogs among the deaf. Policy analysts may facilitate interventions aimed at reframing perceptions, initiating cross-frame reflection, and learning across advocacy coalitions. They give feedback on the experiences and outcomes of existing policies. They pinpoint anomalies in belief systems that cannot be understood.
- *The skills of the policy analyst.* In order to perform these tasks and to master these methods, the policy analyst must be able to conduct discourse analysis, and develop sensitivity for understanding the various arguments and languages spoken and the perceptions and beliefs that underlie them. She has to be creative, coming up with ways to overcome deadlocks and capture skills for mediating and initiating cross frame learning among policy advocacy coalitions with diverging or conflicting belief systems.

2.3.4 Policymaking as a 'Garbage Can'

The garbage can model adds to the political game and discourse perspectives the idea that policymaking does not evolve in a stable environment. Due to the fragmented nature of the context in which policies come about, multi-actor problem solving is governed by disruptions, unexpected events, and coincidences to a far greater extent than in the previous perspectives.

2.3.4.1 Assumptions

The garbage can perspective rests upon three pillars:

1. **Policies:** coupling of problems, solutions, politics/participants at the right moment (window of opportunity).
2. **The policymaking process:** 'erratic' and 'volatile'—it progresses by 'fits and starts'.
3. **The institutional setting:** fragmented, with many actors and *ad-hoc* networks with little stability—an 'organized anarchy'.

Cohen et al. (1972) conceptualized the erratic character of decisionmaking in a metaphorical 'garbage can' model. A decision situation is like a garbage can into which participants deposit all sorts of problems and solutions. The outcome of the

decisionmaking process depends on the content of one garbage can at one moment, the availability of other garbage cans, and the speed at which the garbage can is emptied. The garbage can model was originally developed and used to understand decisionmaking in professional organizations, such as universities and hospitals. But the model applies generally to ‘organized anarchies’—complex situations in which there is no clear hierarchy of goals and values, routine procedures are absent, and participation in the decisionmaking process is not regulated. The main idea is that the important activities in policymaking, such as problem formulation, design of a solution, participation, and decisionmaking, seem to develop independently of each other. Cohen et al. (1972) refer to separate streams of problems, solutions, participants, and decision moments. The garbage can model turns the rational decisionmaking model upside down. There is no rational, linear process from problem analysis to policy. Beside problems looking for solutions, solutions can look for problems, participants can look for problems and/or solutions, and opportunities can look for participants.

With some modifications, Kingdon (1995) applied the garbage can model to public decisionmaking. He identified three streams: problems, policies, and political events. By replacing the participants from the garbage can model with political events, Kingdon incorporates political factors into his model. Political events for instance are a change in government or political climate that causes certain problems and solutions to gain and others to lose in political favor. Participants are not viewed as a separate ‘stream’; participants operate within and between the streams. Problems and solutions cannot be seen independently from participants; the participants articulate them. An important new element in the model is the metaphor of a ‘policy window’. A policy window occurs when there is an opportunity to couple (i.e. bring together) the three streams (see Fig. 2.1). At those moments, decisions can be taken and policies come about. Without a policy window, no policies will be decided upon, no matter how urgent the problem is. A policy window is temporal. It may open or close, due to developments in one of the streams. There may have been changes in government, certain actors may have left the arena, the salience of problems may have changed, or new technologies may have become available. Policy windows may appear or disappear coincidentally. Sometimes they are created by so-called policy entrepreneurs. These are actors looking for solutions to problems, or for problems that match a solution. Or they are looking for political support for a problem–solution combination.

The streams model may appear to make little sense at first sight, but closer examination will reveal numerous recognizable points. For instance, the criticism expressed about the policymaking process for a new Dutch rail freight line called the Betuwe line boils down to the Central government having put forward a solution—i.e., a ready-to-go design of a freight transport rail line between Rotterdam and the German border—instead of starting out with a problem it wanted to solve. This was not a unique, parochial peculiarity: starting policymaking with solutions instead of problems is a widely used practice in public administration.

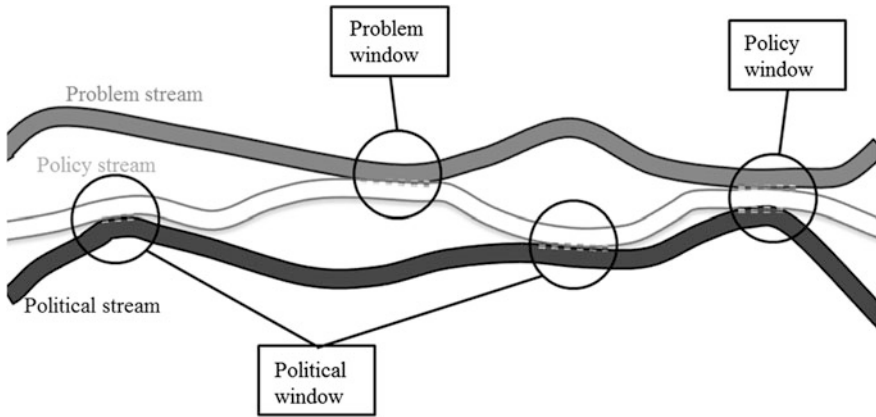


Fig. 2.1 Kingdon's 'streams' model (Source Pauli 2001)

The garbage can and streams models presented above have been modified and elaborated by different authors. In one of these elaborations, the 'rounds model', policymaking resembles a boxing contest. It takes place in rounds, not progressive steps, from problem to solution. In each round the players, the agenda, and the result can be different. The winner becomes known at the end. Complex decisionmaking processes are characterized by a zigzag course, fits and starts, and iterations. The activities of formulating the problem, designing the solution, and mustering support occur simultaneously and are interconnected in various ways (e.g. Teisman 1992).

2.3.4.2 Normative Implications

Policy failure and success in the garbage can perspective depends on the extent to which the streams of problems, solutions, and political events are coupled, such that favorite combinations can be made and effective policies can come about. Explanations of success and failure emphasize the role of irrationality, dynamics, and coincidence, but also of entrepreneurship and political skills. The model suggests that possibilities to get a grip on the erratic nature of multi-actor problem solving are essentially restricted. Still, it provides us with a number of recommendations: actors can try to anticipate policy windows; they can use strategies to influence the content of policy streams or to create or maintain couplings. Entrepreneurship therefore should be encouraged. Creating a negotiated environment and careful management of political interfaces may reduce the risks of unexpected contextual disruptions. However, these efforts do not guarantee the occurrence or maintenance of couplings—at all times, strategies and attempts to manage policymaking may be disturbed by unexpected developments.

2.3.4.3 Implications for PA

What are the implications of the garbage can model for PA? The garbage can perspective shows that policymaking is erratic and volatile. It explains why, in many cases, nice ideas and good solutions never take off. And why ‘not-so-good ideas’ sometimes get funded. It explains why excellent research reports can disappear in a deep drawer. And why other studies or reports are able to attract unexpected levels of attention, e.g., in the media or in the political arena. For many rational policy analysts, such phenomena are incomprehensible and even frustrating. Policy analysts can play their part, create and seize opportunities, but can not control or rationalize the policymaking process.

- *The mission of PA.* In these circumstances, the challenges for PA may be to contribute to the development of good problem formulations, solutions, and lists of selection criteria in the various streams, to enhance the occurrence of policy windows, and to help realize good matches of problems, solutions, and political preferences (and prevent bad couplings) once policy windows occur.
- *The role of the policy analyst.* Like other participants, policy analysts can decide to go with the flow. Their analyses can help to develop problem formulations, solutions, and clarifications of criteria in the various streams, in order to have the gun loaded when an opportunity comes along (Kingdon 1995). In addition, they can take a more proactive role and signal problems, solutions, or political events, and act as advocates for them. But most importantly, policy analysts can act as entrepreneurs or as strategic advisors for entrepreneurs. In this role they engage in brokerage activities, trying to accomplish couplings.
- *The policy analyst's toolbox.* In this perspective, traditional PA methods are needed to support the activities in the various streams. These methods, however, need to be complemented with tools supporting the scanning of developments in the streams. In addition, policy analysts that engage in entrepreneurial activities will need to operate at the interfaces of social networks and scan the boundaries of organizations and institutions. This also implies that results of analysis and research reports should be communicated in the right way and at the right moment. As timing is everything, the effectiveness of large-scale, long-term PA studies may be questioned. The impact of quantitative modeling in the policy process is often limited due to development lead times. By the time the results of the model or project are available, the client may have other burning questions, the urgency of the matter may have disappeared, or the client himself may have been replaced.
- *The skills of the policy analyst.* A combination of analytical tools and political skills should make policy analysts professionally suitable to signal and couple problems, solutions, participants, and political events. For this, they must rely on a wide social and professional network, a good feeling for the political climate and timing, and a good understanding of the functioning of the media and the ability to anticipate this.

2.3.5 Policymaking as an Institutional Process

The institutional scenery of the ‘garbage can’ model is highly fragmented and disordered, with many actors and *ad-hoc* coalitions. The question may be raised whether things like formal and informal rules, norms, and cultures are more important determinants in policymaking than the garbage can and streams model seem to suggest. New institutionalism, which includes parts of policy network theory, argues that the role of institutional factors in policymaking has been neglected and that it is time to rediscover the role of institutions (March and Olsen 1984, 1989).

2.3.5.1 Assumptions

The (neo-)institutional perspective on public policy rests upon three pillars:

1. **Policies:** ‘reproductions’ of earlier solutions, shaped and constrained by norms, cultures, rules, etc.
2. **The policymaking process:** repeated interactions based upon institutional norms, cognitions, cultures, routines, etc.
3. **The institutional context:** sets of formal and informal rules with varying levels of stability at the organizational, network, system, and culture level, nested within each other.

‘Classic’ or ‘old’ institutionalism has a long history in economics, sociology, and political science. In rough terms, it aims to understand (the emergence) of formal organizations in a comparative fashion, like the various judicial, welfare, or educational systems, political parties, international or transnational organizations, or the organization of governmental departments and agencies.

In the 1980s, the importance of institutions was rediscovered. However, the neo- or new institutionalism defined institutions in a much broader sense than ‘old’ institutionalism. It primarily focuses on informal institutions, such as rules, norms, cognitive perceptions, routines, and culture, and is particularly interested in the way such factors constrain or shape behavior (March and Olsen 1984, 1989). New institutionalism has found its way into economics, sociology, political science, and policy sciences (Powell and DiMaggio 1991; Williamson 1996).

New institutionalism can be related to ideas on routine decisionmaking and organizational theories as far as they see organizational routines (standard operating procedures) as important determinants of behavior (Allison 1971; Morgan 1986; Scott 1995). But organizational routines are only one specimen of the set of institutions that simultaneously influence behavior. Williamson distinguishes four layers of institutions: 1. organizations; 2. interorganizational arrangements; 3. formal institutions, like laws and regulations; and 4. informal institutions, like culture. Due to processes of coevolution, these institutions have a certain extent of coherence and are nested within each other (Williamson 1996; Goodin 1996).

Through repeated interactions, interdependent actors develop cultures, rules, shared perceptions, standard operating procedures, a common language, and trust. These stabilize the interactions among actors into patterns that make it easier for them to deal with new policy problems. Institutions reduce the transaction costs and the risk of opportunistic behavior by providing routines, stability, and predictability (Williamson 1979; Olson 1965; Ostrom 1990; Giddens 1984).

In the policy sciences, patterns of repeated interactions among autonomous but interdependent actors are called policy networks (Rhodes 1986; Kickert et al. 1997). The policy network literature builds upon concepts of policy communities, subgovernments, iron triangles, and neo-corporatism (Adams 1982; Rourke 1984; Jordan 1990; de la Bruhéze 1992; Blom-Hansen 1997). According to Rhodes (1988, p. 78), policy networks are “characterized by stability of relationships, continuity of a highly restrictive membership, vertical interdependencies based on shared service delivery, responsibility and insulation from other networks and invariably from the general public (including parliament)”.

Like institutions in general, policy networks may be considered a form of social capital, facilitating interactions among these interdependent actors by reducing transaction costs and risks of opportunistic behavior. Policy networks, like all institutions, develop a somewhat closed and exclusive nature. This may lead to excluding salient problems, neglecting the interests of under-represented or non-represented actors, and producing unwanted outcomes (Marin and Mayntz 1991; Marsh and Rhodes 1992; Monnikhof 2006). In the literature on agenda building, these phenomena are known as ‘mobilization of bias’ and non-decisionmaking (Schattschneider 1960; Bachrach and Baratz 1962). Networks may become closed and non-transparent settings, not open to democratic accountability mechanisms, resisting change, and prohibiting innovation (Klijn and Koppenjan 2006). Policies designed and decided upon in this setting are based on a narrow sectoral view, thus limiting the possibilities for more integral or holistic approaches to problems.

On the other hand, Heclo (1978) considers policy networks to be far from closed or stable. They have vague boundaries, an *ad-hoc* character, and participants move in and out constantly (Heclo 1978; see also Kenis and Schneider 1991). Apparently, networks may vary in the extent to which they are institutionalized. Heclo refers to ‘issue networks’, which have a low level of institutionalization and in fact are equal to the arenas of the political game approach and the garbage can-like processes of Kingdon (see above).

2.3.5.2 Normative Implications

Success or failure according to the neo-institutional approach is caused by a lack of shared institutional arrangements, due to either a lack of institutionalization or incompatibility of institutions. As a result, interactions may be hindered by high interaction costs, misunderstandings, and uncontrolled conflict. Also, closed institutional settings may exclude relevant interests and stakeholders, prohibiting integral and interdisciplinary solutions. Recommendations aimed at concrete

policy processes include enhancing reflection on the institutions that (implicitly) guide behavior, making explicit *ad-hoc* agreements on the set of rules that will guide future behavior, and laying these rules down in e.g., covenants, etc. Attempts to break through the mobilization of bias may require empowerment of stakeholders, building or supporting new advocacy coalitions, but also regulation aimed at safeguarding interests and institutional change. With regard to attempts at creating or changing institutions, the new institutional approach is reserved, acknowledging the ungovernability of institutional design processes and the risks of destroying the social capital accumulated in existing institutions based on long-term interaction and learning processes. On the other hand, in practice, institutions are created and restructured all the time, which makes it important to understand and formulate principles of good institutional design. Although some of these principles are identified and addressed in studies on institutional design, in general the theory on this subject is not very well developed and urgently needs further elaboration (Goodin 1996; Ostrom 1990; Klijn and Koppenjan 2006).

2.3.5.3 Implications for PA

One of the interesting implications of the (neo-)institutional perspective is that ‘PA’ itself is (part of) an institutionalization process. Institutionalization of PA takes place inside bureaucracy, but also through think tanks, science and advisory committees, consultancy and applied research organizations, and advocacy groups. Neo-institutionalism makes us aware that different PA communities constitute rules, norms, cognitions, and cultures that facilitate repeated interactions at the interface of science and politics. PA builds upon relatively stable and closed policy networks in which many issues, views, and values have been institutionalized. This creates efficiency and trust. This makes it easy for PA to become authoritative. But not all values and interests have been institutionalized with the same force. Institutionalization in networks easily turns into monopolization of knowledge and exclusion of less powerful parties from decisionmaking. Deinstitutionalization also happens, for instance, by outsourcing PA, resulting in the proliferation of a splintered consultancy market. This in turn may lead to a loss of in-house expertise on the side of policymaking organizations, enhancing trends toward policy advocacy, and weakening the existence and functioning of PA communities and their capability to safeguard quality and professionalism.

- *The mission of PA.* In addition to enhancing the evidence base of policies pursued in networks, the institutional perspective underpins the need for PA to support the development of integral, cross-sectoral, and interdisciplinary approaches to problem solving, to help overcome the problems of under-representation and exclusion, to bypass routines in order to arrive at fitting and innovative solutions, and to prevent or break through knowledge monopolies or mitigate the impacts of outsourcing and splintering of the PA.
- *The role of the policy analyst.* Policy analysts will, in addition to delivering traditional PA, focus on clarifying the role of institutions and their positive and

negative impacts in policymaking. Their role may be extended to (supporting) mediation activities to realize coordination among various policy sectors and disciplines, enhancing capacity building for deprived stakeholders, or taking up the role of solicitor for unrepresented interests. Lastly, policy analysts require a self-critical role, evaluating their entanglement with vested interests or the impacts of the way they operate in a fragmented, competitive consultancy market.

- *The policy analyst's toolbox.* To fulfill these roles, the traditional toolbox should be extended with research tools such as network and institutional analysis, stakeholder analysis, and agenda building research. Going beyond organizational routines requires methods that stimulate out-of-the-box thinking. Inter-sectoral and interdisciplinary methodologies are needed to support the pursuit of integral solutions. Furthermore, methods are needed to support capacity building activities.
- *The skills of the policy analyst.* The toolbox needs to be complemented with policy analysts possessing skills to engage in institutional analysis and design and to bridge the routines of various sectors and disciplines. Policy analysts, in the institutional perspective, require an awareness of how various stakeholders and interests are affected by policies. They should be able to understand and communicate with these stakeholders. Ultimately, policy analysts are needed that can self-critically reflect on the position of their own community within the wider institutional landscape, on the way this affects the conditions to realize the mission of PA, and on how these conditions, if necessary, can be accommodated.

2.4 Conclusion and Discussion

The objective of this chapter was twofold: (1) to familiarize the reader with the notion of PA, and (2) to examine the implications of five different policymaking models for PA. We have argued that policymaking and PA are isomorphic—mirror images of each other. We are aware that the scope of the chapter has been rather wide; nevertheless, even more questions about policymaking and PA can be raised. For reasons of space, we have left out many theories and notions as well as case illustrations. Some of these omissions will be filled in by later chapters. In particular, [Chap. 3](#) relates the five policymaking models to six styles of PA.

Table 2.1 summarizes the five models and their implications for PA. What is the overall image that it conveys? The main conclusion is that, in a pluralistic and open society that increasingly relies upon complex networks, our understanding of PA cannot be one-dimensional, linear, or based upon routines and simple recipes. PA constantly faces boundary tensions and dilemmas, where conflicting demands on the PA methods, the policy analyst, the outcomes, and the process need to be balanced. Therefore, PA should be multifaceted, varied, and pluralistic. Only in that way will the discipline of PA be able to cope with the wide variety of knowledge demands that need to be accommodated in policymaking in a complex, network society.

Table 2.1 Policy models and their implications for PA

Policy model	Policies	Policy process	Institutional context	Implications for policy analysis
1. Rational decisionmaking	Rational, intelligent decisions based upon synoptic information.	Evolves in a few (chrono)logical steps or phases.	Closed, unicentric, hierarchical, authoritative.	Producing knowledge to support decisions in policy phases.
2. Political game	Political compromises among autonomous, interdependent stakeholders.	Power play or bargaining game among stakeholders	Pluricentric, interorganizational arena with restricted access.	Speaking truth to power; producing usable and authoritative knowledge; rationalizing the policy process and enhancing evidence based compromises.
3. Discourse	Constructed and shared meanings in a policy debate.	An interactive learning process; an exchange of arguments and meanings.	Number of advocacy coalitions and policy communities with different belief systems or paradigms.	Overcoming asymmetrical debates, furthering frame reflection, and learning across policy coalitions.
4. Garbage can	Coupling of problems, solutions, politics/participants at the right moment (window of opportunity)	'Erratic' and 'volatile'; it progresses by 'fits and starts'.	Fragmented with many actors and <i>ad-hoc</i> networks with little stability.	Supporting policymaking activities within streams and entrepreneurial actions to realize policy windows; enhancing the realization of good problem–solution combinations.
5. Institutional process	'Reproductions' of earlier solutions, shaped and constrained by norms, cultures, rules, etc.	Repeated interactions based upon institutional norms, cognitions, cultures, routines, etc.	Networks with varying levels of stability, nested in a larger institutional environment.	Conducting institutional analysis to overcome dysfunctional routines and institutional barriers to integral problem solving; supporting capacity building for under represented stakeholders; reviewing and improving institutional embedding of policy analysis.

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