Public Policy (and Animals)

Key terms and related ideas: the/a **public interest**, electoral systems and **electoral reform**, positive and **negative externalities**, **social capital** (and trust and the **prisoner's dilemma**, from **game theory**), **social movements**

How would you define public policy? (There are many options here)
- is it "how politicians make a difference"? Is it "whatever a government chooses to do or not to do"? Is it more than this? Less than this? Is it really closer to "public morals"?

The **policy** cycle (can be phrased many ways, but generally looks something like this): agenda setting, formulation, implementation, budgeting, evaluation [a similar shorthand to this is **DFIE**: define or describe the problem, formulate a proposal to solve the problem, implement the proposed solution, and evaluate the solution
- What are the benefits of such an approach? The dangers?

The language of **public choice**: the self-interested rational actor ('homo economicus'), the Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA)—what are the pros and cons of the 'marketization' of pretty much everything?

"Traditional Analyses of the ESA":
- Five lenses: **pluralism**, **policy sciences**, **policy specialism**, **public choice theory**, and **critical theory**
  - Does your 'preferred model' of policymaking fit into one of these definitions? If not, what is it?
- Under pluralism, "the logic of the legislative process assumes that if there is a valid interest, then someone will rise up to advocate it's position." What might be problematic about this statement?

Stone, "Causal Stories and the Formation of Policy Agendas" [see chart on 285]
- Literature to date on agenda setting: studying the nature of the actors, the nature of the problem, and the nature of the language/symbols used. How is Stone's typology distinct?
- What does it mean when Stone says she's a **social constructionist**? (282)
- **Causal stories** as "fights about the possibility of control and the assignment of responsibility" (283)
  - Example of **inadvertent cause**: (two versions of) 'blaming the victim' (286)
  - Example of **mechanical cause**: the concept of 'planned obsolescence'
  - Example of **accidental cause**: nature (how might this typology be changing?)
  - Example of **intentional cause**: either positive or negative...
- Three models to explain policy problems
  - **Complex systems**
  - **Institutional**
  - **Historical/structural** (see, for example, C. Wright Mill's *The Power Elite*)
- The two constraining social influences of **law** and **science**. Can you think of others?
- What are some of the 'causal strategies' Stone lays out? (the cases of Detroit, hookworm, and abortion...)
- MADD and the question of *who* or *what* to blame (296-7)
- "People with pet solutions often march around looking for problems that need their solutions." (298)
- But all of this is only the *first* (or in some cases the '0th') step of the policy cycle...

McDonalds, PETA, and the McCruelty Campaign
- What are some of the various different ways that activist NGOs can effect change?
- What is PETA's view of why McDonald's changed their egg-laying hen standards?
  - McDonald's view?   (two options – responding to activist pressure or internal experts)
- Are PETA's "shock tactics" effective?
- **CSR**'s 'reputational risk management' and 3 benefits: reputational benefits, new markets, cost-saving
- Four 'context indicators': activist pressure, McLibel, CSR, animal welfare science
- What's the point of having 'extreme' organizations within any interest group?