PSJ

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Public Policy Yearbook 2018

Aims and Scope

The primary focus of the Policy Studies Journal (PSJ) is the study of public policy. Published on behalf of the Policy Studies Organization and the American Political Science Association's Public Policy Section, PSJ publishes individually submitted articles and symposia of exceptional quality by social scientists and other public policy researchers and leaders. The journal addresses a wide range of public policy issues at all levels of government, and welcomes a comparative approach. We accept a variety of manuscript types.

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The 2018 Public Policy Yearbook: Recent Trends in Public Policy Research

Hank Jenkins-Smith, Julie Krutz, Nina Carlson, and Christopher Weible

The articles presented in this supplemental issue mark the 10th edition of the Policy Studies Journal's *Public Policy Yearbook. This issue includes three retrospective review articles summarizing recent developments in public policy research across the following focus areas: public opinion, policy learning and international relations.*

此增刊中呈现的文章标志《政策研究期刊之公共政策年鉴》成立十周年。本刊包括三篇回顾性评论文章，总结了公共政策研究在以下焦点领域的近期发展：公共舆论、政策学习和国际关系。

Los artículos presentados en esta edición suplementaria marcan la décima edición de Public Policy Yearbook de Policy Studies Journal. Esta edición incluye tres artículos de reseña retrospectiva que resumen desarrollos recientes en la investigación de políticas públicas dentro de las siguientes áreas de enfoque: opinión pública, aprendizaje político y relaciones internacionales.

Public Policy Yearbook Editors

The articles presented in this supplemental issue mark the 10th edition of the *Policy Studies Journal's Public Policy Yearbook*. This issue includes three retrospective review articles summarizing recent developments in public policy research across the following focus areas: public opinion, policy learning and international relations. We provide a brief description of these articles below. You can also find the main content of the 2018 *Yearbook* online at: www.psjyearbook.com.

In addition to the annual publication of retrospective review articles in various policy subfields, a significant portion of our efforts with the *PSJ Yearbook* is providing avenues for readers to make connections with public policy scholars from around the world. The *Public Policy Yearbook* is an international listing of experts in various public policy domains, working on public policy problems all over the globe. Each year, we collect information from public policy scholars about their fields of study, research focus areas, published works, and contact information.[1] This information is then published as part of a directory of individual profiles on the *Yearbook*'s website. The multidisciplinary nature of public policy research can make it

challenging to identify the experts studying various policy problems, and the *Yearbook* provides users with an easier way to do so. Our intent is to provide a convenient tool for policy scholars to increase and broaden the visibility of their work, as well as to provide a means to network (and collaborate) with other scholars. By using the website, readers can search for a scholar through a range of search criteria options, which include: a scholar's first or last name, geographic location, institution, or primary research interests. By visiting the *Yearbook*'s website, www.psjyearbook.com, users can utilize a free web-based interface to easily search for various policy scholars' contact information, as well as up-to-date summaries describing listed scholars' self-reported descriptions of current and future research ideas and projects.

In this introduction, we provide a brief snapshot of current developments in public policy research. We also briefly introduce the analytical review articles included in this supplemental issue. For more detailed information on the *Yearbook* website, 30 previously published retrospective review articles, and 2 previously published special topic articles, we welcome readers to visit and explore the site. Each year, we also present information on the demographics and research interests of *Yearbook* members and detailed information on the functionality of the *Yearbook* website. An updated version of those discussions is presented below, but we invite readers to look back at previous articles for more detail about how developments identified within the *Yearbook* have evolved over time.

Characteristics of Yearbook Participants and New Developments in Policy Scholarship

As we do each year, in Fall 2017 we reached out to the *Yearbook*'s current listing of policy scholars, asking each member to update the information published on his or her profile.[2] This annual updating process allows us to verify the accuracy of listed scholars' contact information and to encourage members to list recently published articles and/or their research in progress. As is evident in Figure 1, our most recent update shows that the *Yearbook* continues to represent a broad cross-section of policy scholars from around the world; the 2018 *Yearbook* has 911 members, working in 52 different countries. Approximately 71 percent of *Yearbook* members work within the United States and the remaining 29 percent of members work in 51 countries around the globe.

The *Yearbook* is inclusive of scholars at a wide variety of institutions globally. Figure 2 shows the distribution of *Yearbook* members working across six continents. While the largest concentrations of Yearbook scholars are in North America and Europe, growing numbers are located in Asia, Latin America, Australia and New Zealand, and Africa.

For those unfamiliar with the *Yearbook*, each year we use the self-reported content of *Yearbook* scholars' profiles to develop indicators for public policy scholars' evolving research agendas. The following discussion shows recent developments and patterns in the research foci of 911 scholars included in the 2018 *Yearbook*. We use several descriptive indicators that summarize and characterize scholars' evolving research agendas, including scholars' self-reported descriptions of their "current and

2018 Yearbook
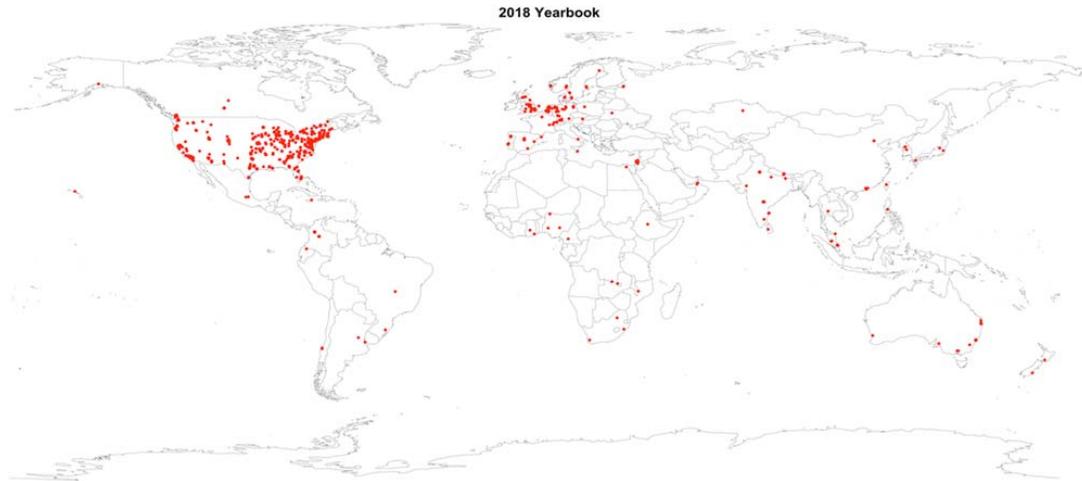
Figure 1. The *Yearbook's* Geographic Representation Spans 52 Different Countries.
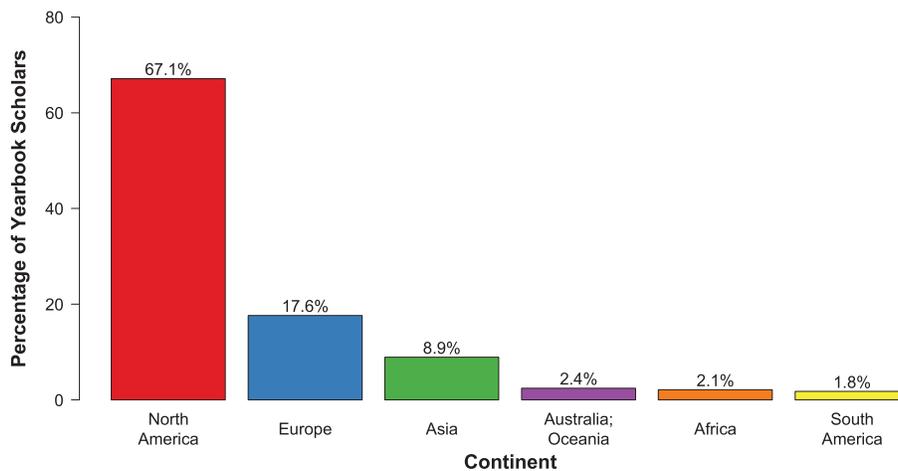
Figure 2. The *Yearbook's* Geographic Representation Spans Six Continents.

future research expectations" and scholars' self-placement within 18 theoretical and substantive focus subfields of public policy.[3]

First, *Yearbook* scholars are asked to provide a paragraph describing their current and ongoing research agendas. When writing this paragraph, scholars may be as brief or as detailed as they choose. By scanning the content in the 2018 current research summary paragraphs, we can illustrate current trends among scholars' work by creating a word cloud populated by frequently used terms (see Figure 3). The word cloud provides a graphical representation of the aggregate foci of scholars' substantive and theoretical work, and provides us with a comparative perspective of the evolution of research agendas. Figure 3 presents the 100 terms that appeared most frequently in the "Current and Future Research Expectations" section of scholars' profiles and any additional keyword tags that scholars supplied to describe their research agendas. In 2018, the prominent research interests, characterized by the 10 most frequently appearing terms, include the following: political; environmental; social; governance; management;

Figure 3. The Relative Size of Each Term Denotes the Frequency With Which Key Terms Appear in Scholars' Listing of Their "Current and Future Research Expectations."

science; health; analysis; policies; and development. When comparing this word cloud with those from recent years (Jenkins-Smith, Krutz, Carlson, & Weible, 2017; Jenkins-Smith & Trousset, 2010, 2011; Jenkins-Smith, Trousset, & Weible, 2012, 2013; Trousset, Jenkins-Smith, & Weible, 2014; Trousset, Jenkins-Smith, Carlson, & Weible, 2015, 2016), it appears that the proportion of research trends among *Yearbook* members has remained stable over time.

The trends identified within the "Current and Future Research Expectations" section of scholars' profiles are consistent with *Yearbook* members' self-identifications in the *Yearbook*'s listed public policy focus areas. When scholars are asked to update the information listed on their profiles, they are presented with a list of 18 categories that represent a broad spectrum of subfields in public policy scholarship. They are first asked to check as many of the categories as they choose to describe their research agendas. In addition, for the last several years, we asked scholars to indicate which category best describes their primary theoretical focus area and which best describes their primary substantive focus area. The five theoretical focus areas include: agenda-setting, adoption and implementation; policy analysis; policy history; policy process theory; and public opinion. The 13 substantive focus areas include: comparative public policy; defense and security policy; economic policy; education policy; energy and natural resource policy; environmental policy; governance; health policy; international relations and policy; law and policy; science and technology policy; social policy; and urban public policy.

Figure 4. Scholars' Primary Theoretical Focus Area.

Figure 5. Scholars' Primary Substantive Focus Area.

Figures 4 and 5 show the proportion of scholars indicating one of the theoretical and substantive specializations as their *primary* focus area. As shown in Figure 4, the most prominent theoretical focus area for 2018 Yearbook members was policy analysis and evaluation. The second and third most common areas were policy process theory and agenda-setting, adoption, and implementation. As shown in Figure 5, across the substantive focus areas, the largest proportions of 2018 Yearbook scholars study issues in governance, environmental policy, and social policy. These have consistently been the most prominent focus areas over the past 5 years.

Public Policy Research Retrospective Review Articles

In addition to the *Yearbook*'s listing of experts in various public policy domains, each year we also publish a set of peer-reviewed analytical review

articles that summarize recent developments in public policy research. We have included three new retrospective review articles in this special issue. These review articles offer readers quick access to recent developments in various policy subfields, because they can provide both a basic introduction and a coherent current perspective on the field to emerging scholars interested in understanding various policy problems. To write these review articles, each year we solicit recommendations for advanced graduate students working under the guidance of leading public policy scholars. This year, as part of this supplemental issue of the *Policy Studies Journal*, we are including review articles on the topics of comparative public policy, governance, and policy analysis and evaluation. These articles contain key developments in the following areas.

International Relations

Kasey Barr and Alex Mintz (2018) discuss the lack of interaction between research on decision making in foreign policy and national security within the field of public policy, and in their review connect the two fields. They utilize a venerable public policy concept, the policy cycle, to provide a framework for their review of group decision-making dynamics in national security and foreign policy. They describe key stages of the policy cycle followed by a review of the leading models of group decision-making dynamics. They then construct a bridge between the two, demonstrating how specific stages of the policy cycle are typically associated with specific group decision-making dynamics. To illustrate this link, they provide an example of decision-making dynamics within the Obama administration throughout policy stages of the 2016 campaign against the Islamic State in Raqqa, Syria.

Public Opinion

Daniela Beyer and Miriam Hänni (2018) discuss the persistent controversy about how the public opinion–policy link actually works. Despite more than 50 years of political science research on linkages between public opinion and public policy, consensus remains elusive. They provide overviews of two related but distinct conceptual strands that have formed in the literature—one focusing on responsiveness, the other on congruence. While both of these strands are ultimately interested in the link between public opinion and representatives' position or behavior, they pursue two different strategies leading to confusion over the concepts and measurement in question. The authors then provide a mutually exclusive conceptualization of congruence and responsiveness and structure their review of the extensive literature accordingly. The result is a more coherent theoretical and empirical conceptualization, providing a basis for further development in the field that deliberately combines not only the two concepts but also the distinctive research approaches that have accompanied them. They conclude with this call for a more integrated research agenda, and introduce a novel concept of "congruent responsiveness."

Policy Learning

Claire A. Dunlop and Claudio M. Radaelli (2018) discuss whether "policy learning" meets the standards of an analytical framework of the policy process. They write that various applications of the concept of policy learning are commonplace in the public policy literature, but the question of whether they qualify as an analytical framework for study of the policy process has yet to be addressed systematically. They therefore appraise learning as an analytical framework in relation to four standards: assumptions and microfoundations, conceptual apparatus, observable implications, and normative applications. They find that policy learning meets the four standards, although its theoretical leverage varies across them. They conclude that policy learning fares reasonably well and is worthy of investment of intellectual resources in this field.

We hope that scholars continue to utilize these review articles as efficient and stimulating resources for updating themselves on the current state of research within specific focus areas. We invite you to read previously published review articles, which can be found on the *Yearbook*'s website or within previous volumes of the *PSJ*. We also encourage you to recommend outstanding graduate students to author future iterations of retrospective reviews.

Final Remarks

Our goal is to make the *Yearbook* a convenient and accessible tool for scholars, practitioners, students, or laypersons to find the right scholars, articles, and networks working on the full range of public policy questions. The *Yearbook* is intended to be a continuously updated resource for networking and collaboration among scholars, as well as an accessible and open platform for scholars to publicize their research accomplishments and active projects. The *Yearbook* is also a valuable resource for students of public policy and public management who need to dig deeper into policy questions and seek ready access to the current state of research in their policy domain of interest.

If you are interested in updating your existing profile, or if you are not currently listed but are interested in becoming a member of the *Yearbook*, we have made several improvements to our system to ease the process of creating a profile. Scholars can access their profiles at any time and make direct changes to their listings. Users can select from two different updating options by visiting the *Yearbook* website at: http://www.psjyearbook.com/person/update.

The first option is for scholars who already have a listed profile. On the webpage listed above, under the tab "Current Members," scholars can submit the email address they currently have on file with the *Yearbook*. Our system will then immediately send a personalized link via email that the scholar can use to access their current profile information. By visiting that personalized link, scholars can submit changes to their profile listings and these changes will be updated on the *Yearbook* website immediately.

The second option is for policy scholars who do not yet have a listed profile, but who would like to become a member of the *Yearbook*. Scholars can list their profile at no charge. By visiting webpage listed above, scholars can click the tab labeled "Submit Your Information," or can go directly to our easy-to-use form at: http://psjyearbook.com/entry/addme. Once scholars submit their profile information, our system will await approval by an editor to list that profile on the website.[4] Once that initial profile has been approved, scholars can log in and edit their profiles immediately, as described in the previous paragraph. If you have any questions about this process, we welcome you to contact us at: psjyearbook@gmail.com.

Although scholars are able to access their profiles at any time and make direct changes to their listings, we will continue running an annual fall recruitment and updating campaign. In the annual fall campaign, we send invitations to both current and potential new policy scholars to update their entries in the *Yearbook*. We do this to ensure that the *Yearbook* content stays as up to date as possible. We will continue our efforts to include faculty from public policy and public management schools and departments around the globe, as well as reaching out to graduate students, post-docs, and practitioners in public policy that make up the next generation of leaders in public policy research, analysis, and practice. We ask that current members assist in this effort by forwarding our invitations to affiliate policy scholars, practitioners, and graduate students.

Finally, the production and operation of the *Yearbook* could not have been accomplished without the help of many hands. We would like to recognize Matthew Henderson for the design and implementation of the online website, web-tools, and data graphics. Additionally, we are thankful for the support and help we receive from the Policy Studies Organization and Wiley-Blackwell. Finally, we would like to thank Dr. Paul Rich, President of the Policy Studies Organization, for his financial support and encouragement for the *Yearbook*.

We hope that you will find the *Yearbook* to be a valuable resource in your work on public policy.

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Nina Carlson
Christopher Weible
Yearbook Editors

Notes

1. *Yearbook* membership is free of charge and open to all policy scholars and practitioners worldwide. Since the *Yearbook's* inception in 2009, we have sought to broaden the participation of public policy scholars across disciplines, organizations, and nations. The challenge is that, given the nature of public policy research, the domain of public policy scholars and practitioners is highly varied. Public policy research is multidisciplinary in nature, and policy scholars and practitioners inhabit a wide range of institutional settings (universities, governmental agencies, research labs, nonprofit organizations, think tanks, and many others). Initially our invitations were sent to the listed members of the Public

Policy Section of the American Political Science Association, as well as members of the Policy Studies Organization. We worked with editors of public policy journals to reach policy scholars globally. We have also sent electronic and printed invitations to public policy and public administration departments across the United States and Europe, asking each department to forward the invitation to their public policy faculty members, graduate students, and affiliates. Last, our online member updating system allows for current and new members to offer contact information for colleagues and graduate students who should be included. We will continue to undertake an active recruitment and update effort in the fall of each year to be sure our content is up to date and as broadly inclusive as possible.

2. Although we undertake a systematic recruitment effort once a year, it is important to note that scholars can update their profiles or join the *Yearbook* at any time. The website allows scholars to easily access their profiles by submitting their email address on the website profile management portal. The *Yearbook's* website also allows for new members to join, at no cost, through the use of a short online form.

3. When updating their profiles, scholars are asked to check off as many categories as are applicable to describe their research agendas.

4. This initial approval is necessary to avoid publishing "spam."

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Two Sides of the Same Coin? Congruence and Responsiveness as Representative Democracy's Currencies

Daniela Beyer and Miriam Hänni

The public opinion–policy linkage has received scholarly attention for a long time. After all, this linkage is not only a key characteristic of democracy, but one of the most important aspects and quality criteria of a functioning representative democracy. Despite more than 50 years of political science research, there is still a lot of controversy about how the linkage between public opinion and policy actually works. Two related but distinct strands have formed in the literature—one focusing on responsiveness, the other on congruence. While both schools of thought are ultimately interested in the link between public opinion and representatives' position or behavior they pursue two different strategies leading to confusion over the concepts and measurement in question. We provide a mutually exclusive conceptualization of congruence and responsiveness and structure the review of the extensive literature accordingly. In addition to providing greater theoretical coherence, our conceptualization fosters further development in the field by deliberately combining the two concepts with the research strands on public policy and representation. We conclude with a call for a more integrated research agenda and introduce a novel concept of "congruent responsiveness."

KEY WORDS: congruence, responsiveness, representation, public opinion, public policy

一枚硬币的正反面?一致性和响应性作为代议制民主的货币

公共舆论和政策之间的联系长期以来都受到学术关注。毕竟这样的联系不仅是民主的关键特征, 还是一个正常运作的代议制民主最重要的一个方面和质量标准。尽管已有超过50年的政治科学研究, 但（关于）公共舆论和政策间的联系是如何进行的, 还存在许多争议。本文呈现了两种相关的鲜明观点—其中一个聚焦于响应性（*responsiveness*）, 另一个聚焦于一致性（*congruence*）。尽管这两种思想学派最终都关心的是舆论和代表立场/行为之间的联系,　但两派使用的策略不同, 这导致了概念的不确定以及衡量方式受到质疑。本文将一致性和响应性进行概念化, 两种概念相互排斥, 同时本文相应地组织了广泛性文献评论。除了加强理论的连贯性, 本文形成的概念化还专门将两种概念和关于公共政策及其代表的研究观点进行结合,　进而为此领域作出进一步发展。本文结论呼吁研究议程的进一步统一,　同时引入了新的概念"一致的响应性"（*congruent responsiveness*）。

关键词：一致性；响应性；代表；公共舆论；公共政策

Dos Caras de la Misma Moneda? La Congruencia y la Respuesta Como Monedas de una Democracia Representativa

El vínculo entre las políticas y la opinión pública ha recibido poca atención de los académicos por un largo tiempo. Después de todo, este vínculo no solo es una característica clave de la democracia, sino también uno de los aspectos más importantes y criterios de calidad de una democracia representativa que funciona. A pesar de que haya más de 50 años de investigación de ciencias políticas, todavía hay mucha controversia acerca de cómo el vínculo entre opinión pública y las políticas funciona realmente. Dos Corrientes relacionadas, pero distintas se han formado en la literatura—una que se enfoca en la respuesta, y la otra en la congruencia. Mientras ambas corrientes se interesan realmente en el vínculo entre la opinión pública y la posición o comportamiento de los representantes, también utilizan dos estrategias diferentes, lo que lleva a la confusión acerca de los conceptos y medidas en cuestión. Proporcionamos una conceptualización mutuamente exclusiva de la congruencia y la respuesta y estructuramos la reseña de una literatura de gran tamaño acordemente. Además de proporcionar una coherencia teórica mayor, nuestra conceptualización fomenta el desarrollo del campo al deliberadamente combinar los dos conceptos con las corrientes de investigación acerca de las políticas públicas y la representación. Concluimos con un llamado a que haya una agenda de investigación más integrada y presentamos un nuevo concepto de 'congruent responsiveness' (respuesta congruente).

PALABRAS CLAVE: congruencia, respuesta, representación, opinión pública, políticas públicas

1. Introduction

A key characteristic of a democracy is the continuing responsiveness of the government to the preferences of its citizens

— Dahl (1971, p. 1)

The foundational idea of representative democracy is that elected political elites represent citizens by responding to their preferences and concerns. We do not need elections if not for giving citizens the chance to elect those representatives who are closest to their viewpoints. We do not need parties if not for interest aggregation and organization of the political process. Most importantly, we do not need representatives if not to ensure that public opinion is transmitted into public policy.

Even after 50 years of political science research on representation, there is still a lot of controversy about how citizens and their representatives are linked in terms of preferences, priorities, opinion, and policies. Over the years, two related but often distinct strands have formed in the literature—one focusing on congruence between citizens and representatives, the other on responsiveness of representatives to citizens. While both schools of thought are ultimately interested in the link between public opinion and representatives' position or behavior in parliament, they pursue two different strategies. This divergence has often led to imprecision and confusion over the concepts in question and their measurement.

In this review we distinguish between congruence and responsiveness and divide the literature accordingly. We disentangle the two concepts empirically and

conceptually and thereby offer a reference for scholars in the field. This endeavor is not only important for scholars of representation but also of public policy. We reconnect public policy ideas which deal with processes of policymaking and the evolution of laws with the voters as the backbone of representative democracy. Despite the significance of the public in public policy theories they rarely deal with public opinion explicitly.

We first discuss the concept of congruence that statically examines the overlap between citizens and their representatives' ideologies, policy positions, or issue priorities. The literature does often not consider where this linkage comes from nor does it discuss a causal direction. We then focus on responsiveness, which we define as a dynamic and causal relationship between representatives and their constituents. Responsiveness requires that (shifting) constituent preferences change representatives' preferences; behavior; or, ultimately, policy outputs. Hence, responsiveness comes closer to the theoretical idea of representation while congruence is more successful in assessing whether the majority gets what it wants. As such, both concepts are crucial for the evaluation of representative democracy; both require scholarly attention; and, while cautioning against unclear conceptualizations, stronger interactions between the research strands would be desirable.

We depart from the premise that congruence neither implies responsiveness nor responsiveness necessarily guarantees congruence. A perfect situation in a representative democracy, however, would see both fulfilled. In this context both congruence and responsiveness were high, corresponding in terms of direction, and related to majority will. In this ideal state, responsiveness is sufficient for high levels of congruence and congruence is necessary for responsiveness. This is not meant to say that we should not consider both concepts individually but that their combination defines the full extent of successful representation of citizens' will.

Scholars of the two concepts address different research questions. When congruence is used as a dependent variable, we find a strong emphasis on the effect of electoral systems and parties/partisanship (e.g., Blais & Bodet, 2006; Powell, 2009). When acting as the independent variable, scholars often explain democratic satisfaction with the level of congruence (e.g., Ezrow & Xezonakis, 2011; Mayne & Hakhverdian, 2017). Since responsiveness, on the other hand, examines the more dynamic link between public opinion and policy, an overwhelming majority studies the effect of public opinion on policy outputs. Among others, scholars engage in conditional explanations (e.g., Hobolt & Klemmensen, 2008; Wlezien & Soroka, 2012), issues of causality (Hakhverdian, 2012), and differences between population subgroups (e.g., Grimes & Esaiasson, 2014). A smaller and more recent share of the literature uses responsiveness as an independent variable to predict democratic support (e.g., Esaiasson, Gilljam, & Persson, 2017) or tries to explain varying levels of responsiveness with institutional designs or the composition of parliaments (e.g., Bird, Saalfeld, & Wüst, 2011).

In the following, we review the literature out of which we build clear, mutually exclusive definitions and illustrate them graphically. This task entails a combined literature review of the two concepts, a discussion of their use, and an outlook to the relationship between public opinion and public policy research strands.

2. Basic Set-Up

2.1. Conceptualizations

Both responsiveness and congruence are forms of (. . .) representation, but they capture different dimensions of democratic performance.

—Lax and Phillips (2012, p. 148)

Policy responsiveness is a goal of democratic government—that government action responds to the preferences of its citizens. It is conceptually distinct from "representation," whereby government actions mirror the preferences of public opinion.

—Erikson (2013, p. 1)

Despite (or due to) the sheer amount of literature on congruence and responsiveness the two concepts are still not clear. While researchers increasingly differentiate between responsiveness to public opinion and their congruence (Wlezien, 2017b, p. 562), the definitions are often ambiguous and vary from study to study. In this section we provide a conceptualization that follows the current state of the art but provides clearly distinguishable definitions along the following dimensions[1]: static vs. dynamic, overlap vs. causal relationship, representation of the majority will vs. responsive behavior. For this purpose, it is important to differentiate between the theoretical constructs and their measurement. We are aware that measurement difficulties at times prevent scholars from mutually exclusively delimiting and identifying the concepts empirically. Nonetheless, the precision of the theoretical constructs is decisive for further development of the literature.

In essence, the major theoretical difference between the two concepts lies in their dynamics (see for instance Weissberg's [1976] distinction between majoritarian and covariational congruence, or Erikson's [2013] definition of responsiveness). While congruence refers to the static accordance between citizens and elites at a given point in time, responsiveness suggests a dynamic relationship that relates preferences for policy changes (or public opinion change) to changes in policies. Responsiveness, thus, includes a *causal* element which is absent from the notion of congruence. For congruence, the movements of public opinion and policy/opinion are not necessarily related, but responsiveness includes the idea of *responding* elites. In *empirical* research on responsiveness, however, it has often been difficult to establish causality.[2]

Congruence and responsiveness can be further distinguished through how they emerge. Congruence results mostly from electoral competition and is part of the responsible party model where representatives are expected to transform citizens' mandate into policies that match their preferences. Responsiveness, by contrast, happens due to rational anticipation of future elections when representatives try to please voters ahead of elections by enacting policies that are in line with their preferences (see also Arnold & Franklin, 2012; Stimson, Mackuen, & Erikson, 1995). Wlezien and Soroka (2016) refer to this distinction as post-election and between-election representation.[3] We now discuss each of the concepts in more detail.

One–to–One Relationship

Many–to–One Relationship

Many–to–Many Relationship
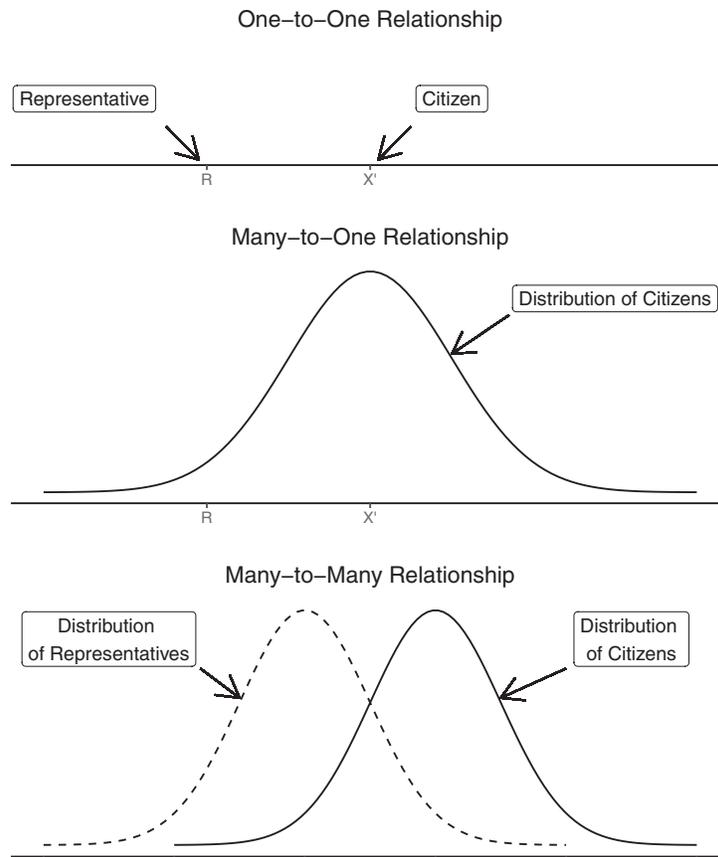
Figure 1. Different Approaches to Congruence.

2.1.1. The Concept of Congruence. The relationship between citizens' ideologies, attitudes, preferences, and opinions and those of their elected representatives as well as policy outputs is covered in the concept of congruence. Ideologies in this context are usually expressed as left-right self-placement, attitudes define people's standpoint on an issue, preferences imply a rank ordering, and opinions are the more abstract concept. Accounts on congruence use all four approaches to examine the overlap between citizens' and (their) elites' viewpoints. More recently, scholars started to analyze congruence between citizens' viewpoints and actual policy outputs. The extent of overlap presents a key component of every representative democracy and influences citizens' evaluation of the functioning of democracy.

Congruence can be conceptualized in three different ways, pictured according to Golder and Stramski's (2010) approach in Figure 1. In the original framework, the axis defines left-right ideology, but it can also be applied to the comparison of other positions. The simplest one-to-one relationship compares the position of an individual citizen to his or her elected representative—i.e., dyadic representation. Such matching is most useful in political systems with a strong representational link between legislators and their constituents (i.e., in single member districts). The relationship is generalizable to other systems when a citizen's position is compared to a particular party or government instead of an individual legislator. As a result of increasing interest in collective representation (e.g., Weissberg, 1978), the next step

was a many-to-one relationship that compares priorities, positions, or preferences of citizens to those of their representative (party/government). Finally, Golder and Stramski (2010) introduced the many-to-many relationship that matches the distribution of citizens' to the distribution of representatives' preferences. Depending on the research question not all approaches are equally appropriate. They have to be applied carefully to the respective dependent variable.

While the unidimensional concept of ideological congruence was the dominant approach for a long time, more recently, the literature increasingly engages with congruence of policy preferences and priorities, and considers policy outputs. It often moves beyond the comparison of citizens' and elites' standpoints and applies it as a dependent variable to study the effect of electoral institutions, institutional contexts, and party strategies (see section 3.1).

2.1.2. The Concept of Responsiveness. In contrast to congruence, responsiveness typically analyzes the effect of public opinion or preferences on policy outputs. It introduces a dynamic component which is absent from the concept of congruence. When political actors are responsive to their citizens they react (respond) to opinion changes during the policymaking process. Responsiveness requires that if public opinion moves in a certain direction, policymakers adapt policy outputs in the same direction (e.g., Erikson, 2013; Eulau & Karps, 1977). As a result of the new policy, citizens readjust their preferences about policy change—i.e., the gap between preferred and actual policy lessens. Policy responsiveness thus requires an action on behalf of the political actors and at least conceptually implies a causal relation between public opinion and public policy. In empirical applications, however, it is often difficult to establish if it is really public opinion affecting policy change or if a third factor influences both simultaneously.[4]

Policy responsiveness can be specified in two ways. On the one hand (1), policy responsiveness is defined as a correlation between *prior* public opinion and policy outputs. In this view, responsiveness is achieved if public preferences at time t affect policy outputs at time t + 1. This also includes the case when a new government changes policies in response to pre-existing public opinion—i.e., a change in public opinion is not always necessary. In contrast to many empirical applications, however, we oppose the definition of responsiveness as a mere correlation between opinion and policy at the same point in time. We subsume a simple correlation without a dynamic temporal relationship under congruence and not responsiveness because it only measures how opinion and policy overlap at a given point in time and not if elites *respond* to public opinion (see section 2.1.3). On the other hand (2), responsiveness can be measured as first-differences in public opinion and policy outputs. In this case, policy responsiveness is achieved if *changes* in public opinion lead to *changes* in policy in the same direction. While most studies apply the first approach (1) (correlation with lagged public opinion) we believe that the second approach (2) corresponds better to the theoretical concept of responsiveness as outlined by Pitkin (1967) or Dahl (1971). Regressing changes on changes comes closer to the idea of political elites responding to their citizens' changing opinions.

Congruence

Policy Responsiveness
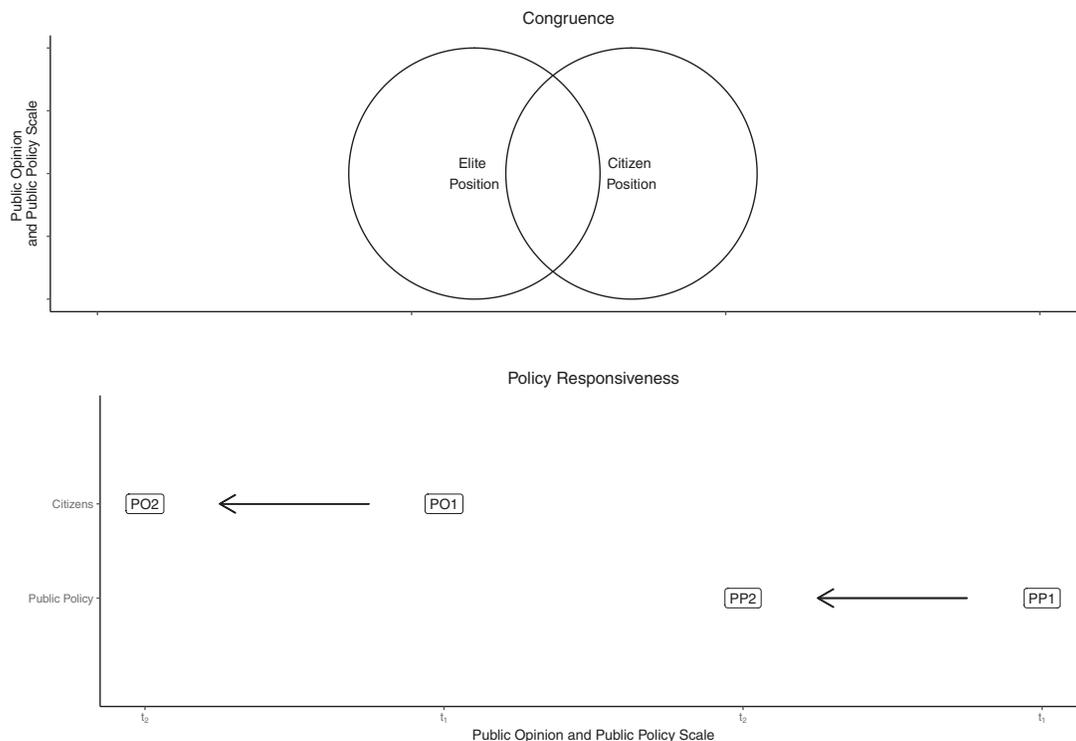
Figure 2. Congruence vs. Responsiveness.

2.1.3. Contrasting Congruence and Responsiveness. The discussion of congruence and responsiveness underlines that while the two concepts are closely related, they are conceptually and empirically distinct. Responsiveness does not necessarily lead to congruence but congruence can be a result of responsiveness. When the ideal of representative democracy is fully achieved, we should see both fulfilled (Lax & Phillips, 2012, p. 148). In the absence of this ideal, however, congruence and responsiveness may be at odds. Especially when conceptualized as a correlation, policy can move in the same direction as public opinion (responsiveness) without being in line with majority will (congruence) (Canes-Wrone, 2015, p. 148). More specifically, responsiveness would already be achieved when citizens shift in a more liberal (conservative) direction which results in more liberal (conservative) policies. This shift does not result in a congruent decision, however, when policies remain more conservative (liberal) than the individual-or mean/median/majority prefers (see also Wlezien, 2017b). The ultimate distinction is whether the majority gets what it wants (Wlezien, 2017b, p. 562).

Therefore, one could argue that congruence is more important for representative democracy than responsiveness, although it measures the much simpler concept. Responsiveness tries to draw the link between preferences and outputs, whereas congruence only recently moved into a similar direction. One of the main reasons is that assessing the public's preferred level of policy is hardly possible due to a lack of adequate individual-level data. In many policy areas, it is difficult to determine what and how much the public wants (Wlezien, 2017b, p. 562).

We graphically distinguish the concepts in Figure 2. Congruence, the upper part of the figure, defines the overlap between citizens and elites' ideologies, policy

positions or priorities, or policy outputs, at a given point in time. Policy responsiveness, on the other hand, pictured in the lower part of the figure, examines (the change in) public opinion and the resulting adaption of public policy. As a result, it can move on different scales (e.g., public preferences influencing policy outputs) and not necessarily in full accordance. For policy change to be characterized as responsive, it needs to move in the same/preferred direction, but not parallel.

The difference between the two concepts can be formalized in the following way, where P refers to policy and P* to public preferences (adapted from Soroka & Wlezien, 2010, p. 36 and Wlezien, 2017b, pp. 562–63):

$$\Delta P = f\left\{P_{t-1}^*\right\}; \qquad \Delta P_t = f\left\{\Delta P_t^*\right\}$$
$$P = a + BP^* + e$$

The first line displays policy responsiveness. On the left, responsiveness is conceptualized as the effect of past preferences on policy change or implementation, respectively. Scholars in this tradition conceptualize responsiveness as a correlation. On the right, we include a change-oriented design of responsiveness. Here, changes in policy outputs are a function of changes in public preferences. The second line represents the concept of congruence. We understand congruence as a continuum. If there is perfect congruence we observe a slope of $B = 1$ and a constant of $a = 0$, i.e., a congruent decision. This implies that the level of preferred and actual policy is identical. If the slope of $B \neq 1$ one can interpret it as a certain degree of congruence. A continuous understanding of congruence is relevant, for instance, in studies assessing which electoral systems achieve more or less congruence.

The difficulties of previous studies with the two concepts illustrate the need for clearer conceptualizations. The colloquial use of language often complicates distinguishing the two concepts and contributes to the ambiguities observed in the literature. Responsiveness for example is often explained as congruent changes of public opinion and public policy, which, however, must not be confused with the concept of congruence. The confusion that the lax use of language causes can be nicely illustrated in path breaking Page and Shapiro (1983, p. 177) who conclude that: "there has been a great deal of congruence between changes in policy and changes in opinion (...)". While the authors make use of the word "congruence" they do not refer to congruence in public opinion and public policy but to changes in the same direction—i.e., responsiveness.

More problematic is the resulting confusion of concepts such as in Brettschneider (1996, p. 293), where congruence is used as a defining criteria of responsiveness: "policy responsiveness is defined as the congruence of collective attitudes towards political issues with the legislative behavior of representatives, parties, and the government." Here, the confusion does not stem from the choice of words, but from the intermingling in the definition.

Another type of conceptual confusion occurs when scholars talk about one concept but measure the other. Sometimes this mismatch occurs without clarifying the measurement concept, in other cases the difference between concept and measurement is made explicit. An example for the latter is Canes-Wrone and Shotts's (2004) article in which the authors talk about presidential responsiveness while measuring

congruence between public opinion and the respective president's proposed budgetary authority.

Powell pursues a different approach to circumvent the issue of measuring responsiveness and combining it with congruence. He defines responsiveness as the replacement or continuation of incumbent policymakers in a way that is responsive to citizens' votes (Powell, 2000, pp. 15–16). The underlying argument is that we only know about citizens' preferences through what they reveal in their vote choice (Powell, 2000, p. 15). Congruence, on the other hand, is conceptualized and measured as ideological congruence, which Powell labels representational congruence (Powell, 2000, pp. 16 & 159ff).

The literature is full of examples to underline such conceptual imprecision, which emphasizes the importance of more careful conceptualizations in future research. This call for clearer distinctions does not imply that the concepts should be studied separately. Quite to the contrary, for a comprehensive view on representation a combination can be useful. Some early examples of this include Achen (1978) and Brettschneider (1996). The combination became more pronounced and gained momentum in recent years (e.g., Lax & Phillips, 2009, 2012; Matsusaka, 2010), probably also because the two literatures study different dependent variables. Those studying representation of elected officials often focus more congruence, those interested in policy decisions on responsiveness.

2.2. Measurement

In addition to the conceptual difficulties, the operationalization and measurement of congruence and responsiveness presents major challenges (see e.g., Powell, 2000). Both approaches relate data on public input to some form of output:

public inputs → policymakers' preferences/priorities/outputs

Whether we consider congruence or responsiveness, the data for the left-hand side of the equation, the public input, is the same. Survey data plays the most important role—for public opinion, preferences, priorities, and ideologies. Some authors use survey questions on specific policies to examine whether citizens want more or less of a certain policy (e.g., Page & Shapiro, 1983) or whether they support a given policy proposal (e.g., Lax & Phillips, 2009, 2012). An alternative approach that has mostly been introduced by Wlezien and Soroka (2012) is to use citizens' spending preferences. Identifying adequate survey data on policy preferences is often very difficult and involves unresolved challenges about how to measure what the public actually wants (Wlezien, 2017b).

Particularly popular among scholars interested in comparisons across time or space, citizens' left-right self-placement is sometimes used as a proxy for public preferences. While it may at times be the only available source (e.g., Hakhverdian, 2012) it is certainly not ideal to measure responsiveness as it does not cover opinion or preferences, but broad ideological stances. It is, therefore, usually better suited to measure congruence.

For the earlier stages in the decision-making process, scholars use priority or most-important problem questions (MIP) to assess issue priorities of the population (e.g., Bevan & Jennings, 2014; Flavin & Franko, 2017; Jones & Baumgartner, 2004; Jones, Larsen-Price, & Wilkerson, 2009; Spoon & Klüver, 2014). In the case of policy positions and preferences the literature deals with distributions whereas for priorities scholars apply more macro-oriented, aggregate measures such as percentages.

What mostly differentiates congruence and responsiveness in terms of measurement is the elite's side (the right-hand side of the equation) and especially the lag structure.

The measurement of congruence depends on the definition of who is congruent to whom. In a one-to-one relationship, a small absolute distance between a citizen and a representative implies high congruence. For the more common many-to-one relationship, scholars are either interested in the absolute distance between the median citizen or citizens' aggregated priority position and the representative (party/government), in the average absolute difference, or in the absolute distance relative to the dispersion of citizens' preferences (Golder & Stramski, 2010, pp. 92–93). More recently, research increasingly studies preferences of particular subgroups in the society (e.g., Bartels, 2008; Branham, Soroka, & Wlezien, 2017; Giger, Rosset, & Bernauer 2012; Gilens, 2011, 2012). In Golder and Stramski's (2010) proposed many-to-many relationship, the authors compare the distribution of citizen and representative preferences. Focusing on ideological congruence on a 0–10 left-right scale, probability distribution functions show the overlap of preference distributions, the area between the cumulative distribution functions are the actual measure of congruence. This approach shows that while the probability distributions' location can be identical, differing shapes (e.g., representatives' uniform vs. citizens' normal distributions of preferences) can lead to very different levels of overlap (Golder & Stramski, 2010, p. 97).

Citizens' positions are combined with elites' positions by assessing either citizens' perceptions of parties' (representatives/governments) positions on the same scale (e g., Golder & Stramski, 2010), experts' or elites' assessments of the latter (e.g., Powell, 2006), or data from comparative data collection efforts like the comparative manifestos project or the comparative agendas project (e.g., McDonald, Mendes, & Budge, 2004). Studies on congruent issue priorities or policy congruence are more likely to rely on such comparative data collections, which code manifestos or documents from the legislative process (questions, speeches, bills, laws) into policy areas. They enable a comparable overview over the policy attention of parties, governments, and legislators.

The measurement of policy responsiveness depends on whether it is conceptualized as a correlation or first difference. The first requires the comparison of levels with a time lag, the second a comparison of first differences. Both approaches, however, predominantly rely on two types of sources. They use survey data to assess public input and derive information about legislators' or governments' behavior in office (through laws, speeches, roll-calls) from official documents.

In addition to the above-presented survey approaches, the concept of policy mood enjoys high popularity among scholars in the United States as a measure of public opinion. The concept and measurement was first introduced by Stimson (1991). It only recently travelled beyond the United States when Guinaudeau and

Schnatterer (2017) applied it to the European Union. Public mood is defined as follows and measured through a series of repeated survey questions:

Mood is the major dimension underlying expressed preferences over policy alternatives in the survey research record. It is properly interpreted as left versus right—more specifically, as global preferences for a larger, more active federal government as opposed to a smaller, more passive one across the sphere of all domestic policy controversies. Thus our public opinion measure represents the public's sense of whether the political "temperature" is too hot or too cold, whether government is too active or not active enough (Stimson et al., 1995, p. 548).

With regard to the dependent variable, the right-hand side of the equation, three main strategies have emerged. Some scholars analyze actual policy outputs by examining the introduction of laws or the voting behavior of individual Members of Parliament (MPs) (e.g., Lax & Phillips, 2012; Page & Shapiro, 1983). Others focus on the symbolic behavior and analyze government speeches or parliamentary questions (e.g., Hakhverdian, 2012). A third tradition studies legislative output on a more global level by analyzing the liberalism or conservatism of a particular parliament by applying policy rating scales[5] to roll-call votes (e.g., Stimson et al., 1995). Only recently, a fourth tradition has developed which departs from studying the link between citizens and the political elite through survey data and some political output and resorts to experimental designs. Most popular are field experiments which study the reaction of MPs to letters or emails by (mostly fake) constituents (e.g., Butler, 2014; Butler & Nickerson, 2011; Butler & Broockman, 2011; Butler, Karpowitz, & Pope, 2012), but also survey experiments with political elites gain importance (e.g., Arnesen & Peters, 2017; Butler, 2014; Öhberg & Naurin, 2016).

3. Literature Review

The two seminal works on congruence and responsiveness—Miller and Stokes (1963) and Page and Shapiro (1983)—both pursued a similar goal: testing the ties between representatives and their citizens. Yet, while the underlying idea is similar, the authors follow different strategies. Should there just be congruence (no matter how it evolves) or should representatives take a more active role and respond to their constituents' opinion changes?[6]

Searching for *Congruence* or *Responsiveness* in publication titles listed in the "Web of Science"[7] lets us reliably portray the literature's evolution in the field. In total, 346 congruence- and 374 responsiveness-related scholarly books and articles have been published since the 1900s (annual data is available since the 1970s). This shows the importance of the two concepts.

As Figure 3 depicts, publication numbers and thus scholarly attention are rising for both concepts since the 1990s. Congruence experienced initial peaks around 2005, responsiveness some years later. Since 2010, publications on responsiveness outnumber those on congruence. Despite the seemingly higher scholarly attention for responsiveness, the line for congruence is smoother. Overall, the attention for both concepts clearly increased over time. Representation—which can be seen as the overlying concept—experienced an even stronger but parallel increase in scholarly

Evolution of the Congruence and Responsiveness Literature

Congruence — Responsiveness

Evolution of the Representation Literature

Representation

Evolution of the Combination of Research Strands



Congruence and Responsiveness
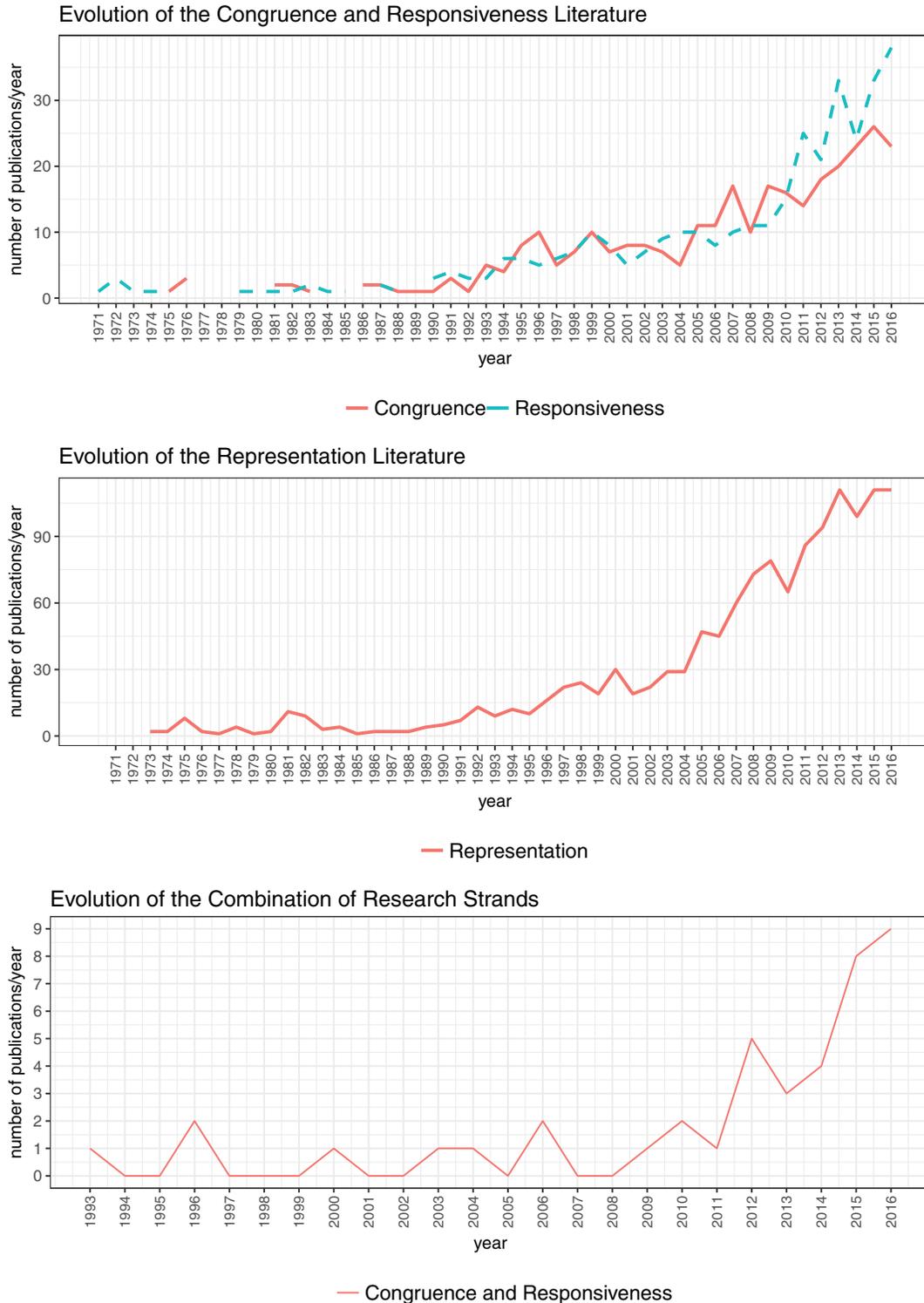
Figure 3. The Evolution of the Literature.

attention and consequently publication numbers. Publications dealing with both concepts (such as Lax & Phillips, 2009, 2012), however, are rare. There are no findings in the Web of Science before the 1990s and only 45 publications in total. Only the last 5

years marked a sharp increase, which underlines our claim for a better conceptualization and subsequent combination of the two research strands.

We now move into the individual literature reviews for both congruence and responsiveness. Many excellent reviews on congruence and responsiveness cover the vast literature in the field (e.g., Burstein, 2003, 2010; Canes-Wrone, 2015; Esaiasson & Wlezien, 2017; Manza & Cook, 2002a; Shapiro, 2011; Wlezien, 2017b; Wlezien & Soroka, 2016). In contrast to most other reviews, however, we pay attention to include not only studies from the United States, but also from other world regions when appropriate. We provide an overview of the literature in Table A1 in the Appendix.

3.1. Literature on Congruence

Citizens' perceptions of representation is often "shaped by the degree of congruence between their own views and those of political elites" (Greene & Reher, 2017, p. 1). The degree of overlap that congruence measures can take very different forms. Existing studies therefore have to be distinguished along two lines. First, it matters who is congruent to whom as elaborated in the measurement section. Secondly, and this is what structures the following depiction of the state of the art, we have to distinguish ideological congruence that often focuses on electoral consequences, attentional congruence that occurs at the earliest stage of the policymaking process and analyzes shared priorities, and policy congruence defining the actual similarity in various policy fields.

Miller and Stokes's (1963) seminal article on "Constituency Influence in Congress" is a good example for how congruence entered the research on representation. Analyzing interviews with incumbents, nonincumbent opponents, and a sample of constituents in the context of the 1958 congressional election as well as roll-call votes, the authors provide an account of the ties between representatives and their constituents. They find that representatives' policy views and their perceptions of constituents' attitudes successfully predict roll call behavior (Miller & Stokes, 1963, p. 51).

Descriptive studies on congruence show that mass-elite congruence varies across time and space (Lupu, Selios, & Warner, 2017; Miller & Stokes, 1963, p. 282), but that even in relatively recent democracies in Latin America and Eastern Europe considerable levels of congruence emerge (Lupu et al., 2017, p. 282). Yet, the heterogeneity between countries is striking. Among Latin American democracies, for instance, countries like Uruguay and Chile show much higher levels of congruence than Bolivia and Ecuador at the other end of the scale (Luna & Zechmeister, 2005, p. 413). Scholars explain the variation with different political institutions and electoral systems, party differences and political majorities, voters' characteristics and other context factors. Congruence is thereby often understood as a "quantified measure of the level of political representation" (Luna & Zechmeister, 2005, p. 413).

3.1.1. Ideological Congruence. Starting in the 1960s studies on ideological congruence—namely the one-dimensional left-right proximity of citizens and their representatives—dominated the first generation of congruence studies (e.g., Miller & Stokes, 1963). The contradicting findings of this generation spurred two debates. The so-

called "ideological congruence controversy" (Powell, 2009) arose in response to diverging results about electoral systems' effects. Some scholars found that proportional representation was particularly conducive to ideological mass-elite congruence (Huber & Powell, 1994; Powell, 2009) whereas others reported no differences between electoral systems (Blais & Bodet, 2006; Golder & Lloyd, 2014; Golder & Stramski, 2010; Lupu et al., 2017).

Powell (2009) steps into the "ideological congruence controversy" arguing that the different findings in congruence studies stem not from measurement but time period differences. He claims that the relationship between electoral rules and ideological congruence is robust to different measurements, but effects have declined in recent years as a consequence of parties' convergence toward the center in first-past-the post systems.

Golder and Stramski (2010), who introduce the many-to-many conceptualization, in turn, provide evidence that legislatures in countries with proportional representation are more likely to be congruent with voters' ideological preferences than countries with majoritarian electoral systems (Golder & Stramski, 2010, p. 104). Congruence between citizens and their governments, however, does not differ between electoral systems. This challenges the prevailing idea of a trade-off between majoritarian systems with high accountability and proportional systems with an advantage in terms of ideological congruence.

Rohrschneider and Whitefield (2012) also examine the impact of electoral institutions on congruence, finding that it is conditional on voters' characteristics and the level of partisanship within the electorate. In contexts of highly partisan electorates, majoritarian institutions increase ideological distances between parties and voters since voters are spread across the whole ideological spectrum while parties converge toward the center. De-aligned voters, by contrast, also tend to converge more toward the center. As a result the distances remain smaller. Majoritarian systems are thus more congruent when partisanship is weaker; the opposite is true for proportional systems.

Besides the examination of the level of congruence, the concept has been used as an explanatory variable. Studying citizens' satisfaction with democracy. Ezrow and Xezonakis (2011) find in a cross-national analysis of 12 countries between 1976 and 2003 that when parties' policy choices are more congruent to the mean voter's ideological position overall citizen satisfaction with democracy increases. In one of the most recent accounts, ideological congruence is approached from a different angle. Mayne and Hakhverdian (2017) are interested in the effect of sociotropic and egocentric judgments of congruence on democratic satisfaction. The authors show that only egocentric congruence boosts satisfaction with democracy. These findings clearly indicate that conclusions for the functioning of representation, citizens' evaluation thereof, and electoral consequences heavily depend on how congruence is measured.

Wlezien (2017a) recently links this research to electoral success of U.S. presidents. Studying the costs of ruling, he shows that U.S. presidents tend to lose more votes the longer they are in power. He associates the costs of ruling with an increasing misrepresentation of voters.

3.1.2. Attentional Congruence. Jones and Baumgartner (2004) were the first to define congruence as shared priorities between representatives and the public. They compare Congress' attention allocation, measured with topic coded congressional hearings and laws, with citizens' issue priorities as observable in MIP survey responses. Finding an "impressive congruence between the priorities of the public and the priorities of Congress across time" (Jones & Baumgartner, 2004, p. 1) and also evidence for congruence between citizens' priorities and law-making, the authors conclude that the public is "seriously involved in the agenda-setting process, not an ignored bystander" (Jones & Baumgartner, 2004, p. 20). The only difference is that the public "lumps" concerns while Congress "splits" issues, dealing with a broader variety of policies.

In a more recent account, Reher (2015) combines voter surveys from the European Election Study with candidate survey data to examine whether congruence in priorities has a similar effect on democratic satisfaction as ideological congruence. The results indicate that the linkage is the same and that the effect increases with democratic experience.

With a focus on the proclaimed democratic deficit in the European Union, Beyer (2017) finds that European Council Conclusions are just as congruent to citizens' concerns as the individual member states who move between 30 and 60 percent of MIP-relevant agenda shares.

Flavin and Franko's (2017) focus on unequal representation during the agenda-setting phase adds to the literature on inequality (see below) by showing that differences are already present at earlier stages of the policymaking process.

Compared to studies of ideology or policy positions studies on priorities often take a more aggregated view on representation and compare percentages in the population and the elite. They seldom make references to priorities of the median voter or take the priority distribution directly into account. Of course, this is also due to unresolved methodological challenges when using priority data.

3.1.3. Policy Congruence. Although the literature on attentional congruence offers the advantage of distinguishing between important and less important issues when measuring the quality of representation, scholars have focused more on congruence in specific policy areas.

Monroe (1998) provides one of the first and most detailed over-time comparisons of policy congruence. Comparing public opinion and public policy between 1960–1979 and 1980–1993 in the United States, he finds that although policy outputs are consistent with policy preferences in 55 percent of the cases, a decline of 8 percent occurred toward the end of the period. Issues that are more salient to the public are more likely to be congruent.

More recent scholarship focuses on explanations for and consequences of policy congruence. Louwerse (2012), for example, examines the extent of parties which fulfill their collective mandate with the responsible party model. The comparison of a majoritarian and a consensus democracy, the UK and the Netherlands, yields similar, reasonable levels of congruence. Levels of mandate fulfillment are higher in absolute terms for majoritarian systems and in proportional terms for proportional

systems. His findings again go back to and should be connected more closely with the "ideological congruence controversy."

De Sio and Franklin (2012) developed the issue yield model that focuses on parties' campaign issue choices. According to these authors, parties act strategically to minimize electoral risk, using issue congruence to make themselves more attractive to voters.

In the United States another strand of literature has evolved around the question how voter characteristics affect levels of congruence. Bartels (2008) and Gilens (2005, 2011, 2012) argue that the rich are better represented than the poor. They show that the size of the gap between voters' preferences and representatives' policy choices depends on citizens' economic status. Flavin (2012) is one of the more recent examples in this tradition. He still finds that economically well situated constituents are advantaged in the political process. Policymaking is more congruent with the preferences of high-income than low-income citizens in the United States. This is the case both in state policies in general as well as in social issues like the death penalty and abortion. Flavin and Franko (2017) furthermore find that this pattern already evolves at the agenda-setting stage examining differences in issue priorities between rich and poor citizens and bill introduction. Studying unequal representation comparatively, Giger et al. (2012) come to similar conclusions regarding the inferior representation of the preferences of the less economically advantaged citizen although they reveal important cross-national differences. Bhatti and Erikson (2011), on the other hand, contradict these studies and report no significant differences in congruence to more affluent voters. Similarly, Branham et al. (2017) show that policy outcomes are only slightly more favorable toward the rich, also because the rich and middle-income groups often agree.

Beyond the focus on inequality, others focus on particular policy fields to draw a more detailed picture of congruence: Arnold, Sapir, and De Vries (2012) explain domestic parties' positions on European integration preferences with voters' preferences as well as party and electoral characteristics. Their results indicate that parties are in fact responsive to voters' preferences in the realm of European integration. Immigration policies and the proclaimed gap to more restrictive public preferences has also received attention, particularly resulting from the recent increase in salience among the publics in Europe. Morales, Pilet, and Ruedin (2015), for example, have comparatively examined the effect of politicization on congruence in this policy field. They show that the salience and intensity of the public debate as measured in extensive media coverage are conducive to policy congruence. The authors report cross-national variation both regarding the existence of the gap itself and the change in immigration policies as well as with respect to the elements of politicization (Morales et al., 2015, pp.1509 ff.). Likewise, Norrander and Wilcox (1999) find for abortion policies that grass-root activism and public opinion match and are reflected in state policy.

Vasilopoulou and Gattermann (2013) apply the question of "matching policy preferences" to the case of the European Union, finding that the level of congruence between MEPs and their voters varies across issues. It depends on the party family, the frequency of contacts, and MEPs' seniority. Euroscepticism, electoral systems, and EU membership length also play a role.

In the first comparative study to include multiple policy fields, Stecker and Tausendpfund (2016) not only analyze the similarities and differences of policy congruence between 45,000 citizens and 31 governments in 15 Western and Central Eastern European countries on six issue dimensions, but also focus on the consequences for satisfaction with democracy. Incongruence between citizens' and governments' views are associated with lower satisfaction with democracy. Also including ideological congruence, Stecker and Tausendpfund (2016, p. 506) show that citizens are not only interested in congruence on the left-right axis, but also on other issues, most importantly in the area of redistribution and European integration. However, ideological congruence remains the most important factor for satisfaction with democracy. Political interest acts as a moderator: the more politically interested citizens are, the more they suffer from "policy deviations" (Stecker & Tausendpfund, 2016, p. 506). The authors' argument that they bring a "multidimensional perspective to the study of policy congruence between citizens and governments in a time when the preference structure of parties and citizens has become increasingly complex" gives reason for the continuing academic interest on a topic that has its roots in the middle of the last century.

3.2. Literature on Responsiveness

The questions about whether political actors adhere to normative ideals and are responsive to their constituents when enacting policies have occupied political scientists for decades (e.g., Dahl, 1971). However, few believe that politicians are responsive due to a normative ideal. Rather, they act in line with citizens' wishes because it raises politician's re-election chances when they are responsive to citizens (Stimson, MacKuen, & Erikson, 1994).

3.2.1. Ideological and Aggregate Studies of Responsiveness. Empirically, many studies which analyzed politicians' responsiveness to public opinion report high overall levels of responsiveness (but see Jacobs & Shapiro, 2000). We first discuss aggregate studies of public opinion and policy before shifting to research on individual policy fields. Most of the initial work has focused on the United States and compared voters' preferences on the national, district, or state level with the behavior of political actors or policy outputs. They typically focus on how changes in public opinion lead to changes in public policy—ideally with time-series data, but to satisfy our definition at a minimum by measuring public opinion at time t and examining its effect on policy output at time $t + 1$.

Page and Shapiro (1983) are among the first to apply this approach, which has since developed into the state of the art in responsiveness research. The authors examine public opinion in the United States with survey data from the 1930s to the late 1970s and its relation to actual policy outputs (studying various policy fields and including time lags). In a nutshell, they study if policy moves in the same direction as public opinion. Due to the temporal ordering of policy they are able to show that opinion causes policy more frequently than vice versa (Page & Shapiro, 1983, pp. 185, 189).

Also using time-series data but studying the public opinion–policy link on an even more aggregate level, Stimson (1991) and Stimson et al. (1995) show that policy

outputs are mostly in line with the *public mood*. They argue that public opinion is often vague and uncrystallized but that politicians can derive information about public opinion from a broad public mood that moves in either a more liberal or conservative direction. Analyzing the relation between this public mood and legislation introduced by the U.S. Congress, the president, and the Supreme Court they find that policy generally reacts well to changes in public mood (Stimson et al., 1995, p. 557; see also Erikson, MacKuen, & Stimson, 2002, Stinsom, 1991). Studying the second dimension of public mood Nicholson-Crotty, Peterson, and Ramirez (2009) analyze if U.S. federal criminal justice policy responds to public mood for more or less punitive policies. They find that political actors respond to preferences about more or less punitive policies when enacting criminal justice legislation and not to preferences about spending.

Going one step further Wlezien and Soroka contributed in important ways to the development of the dynamic model of representation. With their seminal work on the thermostatic model of representation they teach us that responsiveness of political actors to public opinion and responsiveness of the public to policy changes go hand in hand. Political actors react to changes in public opinion, which leads to a change in the public's policy demands. If policy moves in the desired direction the demand for change declines (among others Soroka & Wlezien, 2010; Wlezien, 1995, 2004).[8]

Since then many studies have confirmed these findings. Developing more fine-grained theoretical models of responsiveness, they have increasingly turned toward *conditional* explanations of responsiveness (e.g., Canes-Wrone, Herron, & Shotts, 2001; Cohen, 1997; Wlezien & Soroka, 2012), variance in responsiveness toward specific subgroups (e.g., Druckman & Jacobs, 2011; Gilens & Page, 2014; Jacobs & Page, 2005; Rigby & Wright, 2011; Wlezien & Soroka, 2011),[9] responsiveness in specific policy fields (see section 3.2.2), or experimental approaches (e.g., Butler, 2014; Butler & Broockman, 2011; Butler & Nickerson, 2011). Studies on population subgroups focus for instance on inequality in representation across income groups (some on a more aggregate level, others regarding specific policy areas). We learn that policymakers are more responsive to the rich than the poor, organized business interests, and experts (Druckman & Jacobs, 2011; Gilens & Page, 2014; Jacobs & Page, 2005; Rigby & Wright, 2011). Wlezien and Soroka (2011) provide contradictory evidence. They show that policy preferences do not differ between groups in many areas (but see Page, Bartels, & Seawright, 2013, for an opposing argument). Thus, even if inequality in representation exists, it may not affect policy in most fields. Experimental approaches provide for the first time truly causal evidence of responsiveness. Butler and Nickerson (2011) for instance explicitly study how information about voters' preferences affects MPs' vote choice on a specific spending proposal. They show that MPs who were randomly selected to receive survey information about their district's preferences were more likely to vote in line with constituents' opinion than those who did not receive such information. Other experimental work is focused less directly on *policy* responsiveness,[10] but still presents important evidence about relationships between citizens and legislators. It shows that responsiveness depends on voter and MP characteristics such as race or socioeconomic background (e.g., Butler, 2014; Butler & Broockman, 2011).

Moving toward a more comparative approach researchers have studied responsiveness in the United States not only on the national, but also on the subnational level. These studies faced huge challenges in terms of data availability in the past (Shapiro, 2011). Nevertheless, by now there is little disagreement that public opinion also matters for policymaking in the states. Introducing an aggregate measure of state ideology that became similarly popular as public mood Erikson, Wright, and McIver (1993) showed that variation in state policies can be explained by the ideological orientation of state publics.

The U.S. political system is of course extraordinary in that it encourages a particularly strong link between representatives and represented. One of the first studies outside the United States was conducted by Brettschneider (1996), who studied responsiveness (and congruence) in Germany. While he conceptualizes the concepts ambiguously (see above) he distinguishes them more clearly in the empirical analysis and provides evidence for both responsiveness and congruence in Germany. Since then studies on responsiveness have gained foothold in Europe as well: Hakhverdian (2012) follows Stimson et al. (1995) and uses time-series data to study how public opinion and policy outputs relate to each other. He addresses the challenges associated with time-series data by isolating left-right positions from annual budget speeches delivered by the Chancellor of the Exchequor to the House of Commons. Applying a similar research design as Page and Shapiro (1983) or Stimson et al. (1995) he finds strong support for the responsiveness hypotheses: public opinion change often leads to public policy changes (as expressed in speeches) in the subsequent year. Likewise, Wlezien and Soroka (2012) who study public spending and spending preferences across 17 OECD countries find that preferences for spending influence actual government spending significantly. They qualify their statement with the finding that the effect is conditioned by a country's institutional design.

Driven by the importance of parties in European democracies a growing literature analyses how *parties*—not governments or legislatures—respond to changes in citizen preferences or priorities. Using manifesto data and voters' left-right placements, these studies find that parties respond to shifts within the electorate if voters shift away from the parties' policy positions (Adams, Clark, Ezrow, & Glasgow, 2004). The effect appears to be more pronounced for center and right parties (Adams & Somer-Topcu, 2009), who primarily respond to shifts from the mean voter (Ezrow, De Vries, Steenbergen, & Edwards, 2011), whereas leftist parties' policy positions are more stable (Adams & Somer-Topcu, 2009), and only affected by shifts from their core supporters (Ezrow et al., 2011). Butler, Naurin, and Öhberg (2017) discuss a different pathway of party responsiveness. Linking the literature on European and U.S. systems they evaluate how individual MPs take up constituency preferences to lobby for policy changes within their own party. While MPs cannot as easily respond to voter preferences in strong party systems as in the United States they use voter cues to change the policy position within their own party.

Overall, the literature on responsiveness finds strong evidence that government, parliaments and individual political actors are responsive to public opinion—be it in the United States or beyond. Despite some differences between political systems, most studies conclude that public opinion influences public policy strongly.

More recently, scholars of responsiveness have followed the example of scholars on issue congruence and assess the consequences of policy responsiveness for democratic satisfaction or the acceptability of political decisions (e.g., Arnesen & Peters, 2017; Esaiasson & Wlezien, 2017; Esaiasson et al., 2017). Others examine under which circumstances citizens value and perceive responsiveness (Bowler, 2017; Rosset, Giger, & Bernauer, 2017), or responsiveness to particular subgroups in society (Grimes & Esaiasson, 2014).

3.2.2. Responsiveness in Specific Policy Domains. A sizable number of studies within and beyond the United States study responsiveness on a more disaggregated level and focus on responsiveness in specific policy domains. Compared to the more generalized or global studies using for example public mood or ideology scores these studies have the advantage of providing direct evidence of how public opinion in a certain policy field affects policy output in this field. This makes the proposed causal relationship more explicit, and uncovers differences in responsiveness between policy domains (Wlezien & Soroka, 2016). Unless they combine very diverse sets of issues, however, they come at the cost of a narrower picture of how policy works in a given context. Aggregate measures allow researchers to study the link between public opinion and policy in the absence of issue-specific public policy data (Burstein, 2010).

The field of foreign policy has attracted particular attention. One of the most studied questions is if public opinion influences defense spending (Manza & Cook, 2002b). Most of these studies find robust and quite sizable effects of public opinion on spending for security issues (e.g., Bartels, 1991; Hartley & Russett, 1992; Wlezien, 1996). For the time period 1965–1990 Hartley and Russett (1992), for instance, find that public opinion significantly influences governments' military spending level. Bartels (1991) even predicts the costs of public opinion: he estimates that the strong demand for higher defense spending increased the budget by 17 billion U.S. dollars, accounting for almost 10 percent of the total defense budget of 1982 (p. 464).

Also beyond the U.S. defense spending is one of the most popular issues for the study of responsiveness. Comparing the effect of public opinion on changes in defense budgets in five countries (United States, Great Britain, France, Germany, and Sweden) Eichenberg and Stoll (2003) find clear evidence that public policy responds to public opinion in all countries but Sweden.[11] These findings are corroborated for Great Britain by Soroka and Wlezien (2005).

Outside the field of foreign policy fewer studies analyze responsiveness in specific policy fields, probably also due to a lack of time-series public opinion data in other areas. An exception are Lax and Phillips (2009) who study the effect of public opinion on gay rights for public policy for both congruence and responsiveness on the state level—although as pointed out above, their operationalization of responsiveness lacks the temporal dimension that we deem necessary. In terms of responsiveness they find for all policies that more favorable public opinion increases the likelihood that a particular policy is adopted within a state. However, in terms of congruence the results are less encouraging: despite high responsiveness only 50 percent of the policies are congruent with public opinion. They extend their study in a

subsequent contribution where 39 policies in eight policy fields are analyzed. They find a positive effect of public opinion on public policy in all but four cases (significant for half of the policies), but again less optimistic results in terms of congruence (Lax & Phillips, 2012).

Other examples from the United States include studies on the effect of public opinion on abortion (Norrander & Wilcox, 1999), child labor, capital punishment, and women's rights (Erikson, 1976; Mooney & Lee, 2000). Many U.S. studies on specific policy domains are actually conducted on the state or county level. They often introduce institutional features such as direct democracy as conditional explanations of varying state-level responsiveness (see also Shapiro, 2011). While there is disagreement about the importance of institutional features, few question the importance of public opinion for state-level policy-making (among many others Gerber, 1999; Lupia, Krupnikov, Levine, Piston, & Von Hagen-Jamar, 2010; Matsusaka, 2008; Percival, Johnson, & Neiman, 2009).

Also comparative studies have extended their focus. Comparing the UK and the United States, Bevan and Jennings (2014) for instance find that legislative and executive agendas are responsive to citizens' priorities on a broad number of topics (such as education, environment, law). Others show that political actors generally respond to public opinion in such diverse fields as health (Soroka & Wlezien, 2005), same-sex marriage, EU membership, and economy (in the UK) (Hanretty, Lauderdale, & Vivyan, 2017), and social policy spending (Brooks & Manza, 2006). By contrast, Hobolt and Klemmensen (2008) report a more nuanced picture of responsiveness. They study responsiveness in six policy fields (defense, law and order, public health, housing, education, and social services) by comparing public priorities (measured through most important problem questions) to governments' policy priorities as expressed in speeches. They further analyze changes in public expenditure within each field as a proxy for policy behavior and find that responsiveness is not constant across time and space, but depends on the institutional and strategic context (Hobolt & Klemmensen, 2008, p. 332).

3.2.3. Sceptics of Responsiveness. Despite strong empirical evidence for responsiveness some remain skeptical and doubt that public opinion influences policy outputs in important ways. The debate evolves around two main topics. (1) Some question if the public even has a coherent "opinion" to which politics could be responsive. (2) Others, while not doubting a correlation between public opinion and public policy, challenge the direction of the relationship: they argue that politicians and policy outputs influence the public's view on policies rather than vice versa.

3.2.3.1. The Problem of Inconsistent Public Opinion. A first strand of literature which is critical of the link between public opinion and public policy questions whether the public has consistent and meaningful views which political actors can follow. Most famously Converse (1964) showed in the 1960s that survey respondents change their responses when they are interviewed repeatedly. He interpreted this phenomenon as "non-attitudes." If this is true it poses a great challenge to theories of responsiveness. How can political actors be considered responsive to public opinion, when public opinion does not exist (e.g., Ferejohn & Kuklinski, 1990, p. 3)? Consequently, some argue that we can only expect policy responsiveness on issues which the public

is greatly interested in over a prolonged period of time (e.g., Burstein, 2003, p. 30). Continuing and constant responsiveness, by contrast, would exceed the cognitive capacities of the public and political actors.

3.2.3.2. *The Problem of Reversed Causality*.[12]   The discussion evolving around the issue of reversed causality can be illustrated with Cohen (1997). Cohen discusses the dilemma of U.S. presidents who are caught between expectations of policy leadership and demands for responsiveness to public opinion. He argues that presidents should not only be required to respond to public opinion but that they also need to provide policy leadership (Cohen, 1997, p. 1). Cohen's core argument is that presidents are only responsive to the public if it does not interfere with their policy agenda (p. 32). Otherwise, presidents attempt to influence public opinion in a way favorable to their policy agenda through public speeches and other ways of public outreach. Similarly, Jacobs and Shapiro (2000) claim that political actors use polls and mass communication to influence public opinion and manipulate citizens to support or at least accept policy proposals that they would otherwise reject. Rather than actually changing public opinion (but see Page & Shapiro, 2010, chap. 8), presidents typically try to influence the *salience* of a topic and thus the problem awareness of the public. Presidents then appear responsive despite having "created" public opinion themselves by raising public's awareness to a particular issue (Beckett, 1999).

This somber view of policy responsiveness is contested by those who study both directions of causality within the same framework and use time-series data to control the temporal order. Already Page and Shapiro (1983) show that the effect of public policy on public opinion is weaker and less consistent than the effect of opinion on policymaking. In a methodologically more advanced study Hakhverdian (2012, pp. 1398–1399) finds three decades later that at least in the UK, policy does not affect public opinion in any statistically meaningful way.

By contrast, using an instrumental variable approach to solve some of the difficulties associated with measuring the effect of policy on public opinion,[13] Gabel and Scheve (2007) find that at least for the issue of European integration elites are able to influence public opinion—namely, more negative elite messages about European integration significantly reduce public support for Europe.

These conflicting findings are reconciled, for instance, by Steenbergen, Edwards, and De Vries (2007) who find that political elites both shape and respond to public opinion on the issue of European integration. In a similar way, Wlezien's (1995) thermostatic model also implies that public policy both shapes and responds to public opinion.

4. Discussion and Avenues for Future Research

Given this review, we conclude with a discussion of what we see as promising opportunities for future research in terms of concepts and empirics. We discuss the marginal role of public opinion in public policy research, how different visions of democracy affect levels of congruence and responsiveness, and finally propose a novel combined concept of congruence and responsiveness.

4.1. Public Opinion in Theories of Public Policy

The concepts of congruence and representation deal with the relationship between citizens' and elites' preferences and priorities and public policymaking. As such, it would be natural to find the link between public opinion and public policy also in public policy theories. Yet, although questions of congruence and responsiveness have attracted great attention among scholars of representation they have remained surprisingly absent from public policy research. Among the major public policy theories, we present the Punctuated Equilibrium Theory, Multiple Streams Theory, and the Advocacy Coalition Framework. Public opinion is often not directly integrated in tests of common public policy theories. They rarely consider which role their constructs play for representation.

The Punctuated Equilibrium Theory (PET) (Baumgartner & Jones, 1993), for example, is a theory of agenda-setting in the context of attention scarcity. Policy change on constrained agendas only happens when a certain threshold is reached. In this case, there is overreaction defined as *punctuations*. Venue shopping (overcoming the institutional limitations) or changing policy frames are major factors enabling a topic to make it to the agenda. Public opinion changes could affect policy frames. PET theory, however, does not explicitly incorporate the public and instead focuses more on external shocks and interest groups. With the side statement "public opinion reacts to public policy more than it causes it" Baumgartner and Jones (1993, p. 247) dismiss the role of public opinion for their theory of the agenda-setting process. Only very recently this appears to change. While measuring responsiveness indirectly due to data limitations, Fagan, Jones, and Wlezien (2017) for instance show that the extensiveness of punctuations differs in response to varying democratic responsiveness.

The Multiple Streams (MS) Theory (Kingdon, 1984) explains policy change and agenda setting with a process-oriented approach. In Kingdon's framework, agenda setting works through three independent but interdependent concepts that jointly create windows of opportunity for policy change: the problem stream, policy stream, and political stream. These streams run parallel most of the time. Policy change occurs when a window of opportunity opens which leads the streams to cross (Béland & Howlett, 2016). Kingdon (1984) discusses public opinion in the context of the media and its agenda-setting function. Public opinion thus potentially plays a role in the problem stream, which covers perceptions of public problems. According to the MS theory public problems reach awareness due to crisis or feedback effects that raise public attention. Nevertheless, in empirical applications of the theory public opinion plays a subordinate role.

Finally, the Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF) (Jenkins-Smith & Sabatier, 1993) was developed as a theory of the policy process that explains policy change through policy learning. Policy is introduced in subsystems (issue-specific networks) where coalitions compete over influence in policymaking. Most of the time policy change happens incrementally through policy learning. Coalitions learn through observing the effects of policies, comparing them to their secondary beliefs, and updating them when needed. In times of crisis external shocks may lead to

subsystem instability and provoke change. While public opinion is one of several external factors that may explain policy change (especially change in core beliefs) it has only recently been added as a factor that may play an internal role in policy change (Jones & Jenkins-Smith, 2009; Weible et al., 2011).

This short overview of public opinion in public policy theories underlines that the two research fields have developed mostly independently from each other since the 1980s. We believe that much could be learned if scholars of representation and public policy joined forces to fully understand the policy process in modern democracies. Scholars of representation probably overestimate the role of public opinion in policymaking and neglect other pressures on legislators such as attention scarcity, the influence of advocacy coalitions, or interest groups. Scholars of public policy by contrast have not yet incorporated the causal effect of public opinion in their models. Public policy theories do not seem to acknowledge the role of representation. Nor do they question how external shocks work and that they might only gain elites' attention through public opinion. The integration of representation and public policy theories into a common framework may therefore provide a fruitful endeavor for future research. Recent developments in the field might be interpreted as a sign that this movement is already starting (e.g., Bevan & John, 2016; Jones & Baumgartner, 2004; Fagan et al., 2017).

4.2. Majoritarian vs. Proportional Visions

As outlined in our conceptualization above, one could argue that responsiveness comes closer to the theoretical idea of representation while congruence is more successful in assessing whether the majority gets what it wants. Yet, the literature on the respective concepts introduces a puzzle: despite the generally agreed upon claim that congruence measures reflection of the majority's will, we learn that proportional systems are better (or at least as good) in enabling congruence between citizens and their representatives (see section 3.1.1).[14]

Surprisingly, the literature on responsiveness seldom deals with the effects of electoral systems on the level of responsiveness. The only exception are accounts on parties by Adams, Clark, Ezrow, and Glasgow (2006) or political contestation by Hobolt and Klemmensen (2005, 2008) and Ezrow (2007) who study responsiveness in the context of party competition. Also, Wlezien and Soroka (2016) offer a theoretical discussion of this point. All other articles that study policy responsiveness and electoral system-related concepts in fact measure congruence (e.g., Kang & Powell, 2010). What we learn from Adams et al. (2006) is that niche parties do not follow public opinion shifts in the way mainstream parties do and if they do moderate their position they are not electorally rewarded. Since niche parties as a phenomenon of proportional systems and mainstream parties seem to be more responsive, the overall responsiveness of parties might be higher in majoritarian systems. Hobolt and Klemmemsen (2005) analyze the effects of responsiveness for political contestation finding that public opinion drives policy due to the threat of electoral sanctions, which are more likely in proportional systems. Measuring executive policy priorities

in opening speeches, the authors argue that more party competition and vulnerability of the government make the executives in proportional systems more responsive to public opinion changes. In their subsequent article Hobolt and Klemmensen (2008, p. 313) claim that "directly elected executives are more responsive to public priorities than indirectly elected executives" but that "executives in plurality systems are less responsive to the public's priorities than executives in proportional systems." They find that rhetorical responsiveness (speeches) is highest in Denmark and the United States and lowest in the UK, but that American presidents show the highest level of effective responsiveness (budgets). Finally, Wlezien and Soroka (2016) argue that majoritarian systems are better in achieving responsiveness to public opinion change between elections, due to (1) their single-party governments and (2) higher electoral incentives. Proportional systems, by contrast, are better in achieving congruence via elections than majoritarian systems. This argument is corroborated by Ezrow (2007). He finds that the effect of changing variance in voters' policy preferences is stronger in majoritarian than proportional systems.

Considering the divergent views in the literature it remains up to future research to resolve the question of whether electoral systems have a similar effect on responsiveness as on congruence.

4.3. A New Combined Concept

The previous sections taught us that "congruence can be low even if responsiveness is relatively high" (Canes-Wrone, 2015, p. 148) but equally that congruence can be high while responsiveness is low. As such, the two concepts measure two distinct mechanisms: responsiveness being closer to the idea of representation and congruence measuring the output of representation, no matter how it evolved. Both concepts are thus important aspects of representation. Citizens expect their representatives to be responsive, but what they actually perceive is congruence. Methodologically, both concepts have advantages and disadvantages. While responsiveness does not require measuring the public's and policymakers' preferences on the same scale (Canes-Wrone, 2015, p. 150) it suffers from difficulties of empirically identifying the causal relationship. Congruence in turn allows us to establish if majority will and their representatives or policy outputs are in line, but the right survey questions are often difficult to come by.

This review illustrates that both concepts influence each other and at times require combined analysis in order to understand the fully understand representation. Policymakers' perceptions of the current level of congruence affect their responsiveness. If responsiveness moves policy to citizens' preferred point, the output leads to congruence. We argue that also the strong linkage of the two concepts requires further attention. Only the combination of both concepts gives us a complete picture of the functioning of representation. Moving beyond the existing literature, there are two possible ways to include both concepts into a combined analysis. One is to twist the idea of responsiveness in a way that responsiveness is only deemed to be
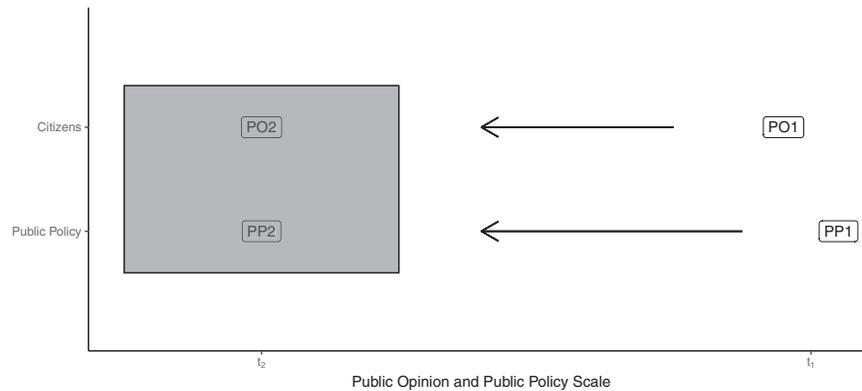
Figure 4. The Ideal Case of Congruent Responsiveness.

fulfilled if it is in line (congruent) with majority opinion, thus leading to congruence. We call this mechanism congruent responsiveness.

Figure 4 illustrates the idea of congruent responsiveness. Congruent responsiveness refers to all cases in which responsiveness leads to a congruent situation, thus a policy adaption that follows public opinion change from time *t* to *t + 1* in a way that then matches the majority's will at time *t + 1*. This is illustrated by the box at time 2 containing public opinion and public policy at the same level. At time 1 public opinion and public policy may or may not be in sync (in Figure 4 they are not). Congruent responsiveness occurs if policy change leads to an overlap of public opinion and public policy at time 2. We do not imply that studies of congruence and responsiveness are not meaningful in their own right. Rather, we want to propose an additional concept that allows researchers to combine the strength of both ideals and might further our understanding of representation. We are aware that the application of this concept is subject to huge data challenges.

A two-step process is the second option for integrating the two concepts better.[15] The first step analyzes how representatives respond to citizens' demands. The second step focuses on the consequences: namely on how responsiveness affects the overlap in public preferences and policy outputs (congruence).

5. Conclusion

> [The concepts of congruence and responsiveness are] slippery to conceptualize and difficult to observe. The last half-century of theoretical and empirical research in political science has taught that such essential concepts as citizens' preferences, political influence, and policy consequences are fraught with exquisitely complex problems for analysis.
>
> —Powell (2000, pp. 15–16)

Slippery concepts and difficulties associated with their operationalizations and measurement are related. The occurrence of both issues is even more problematic. Trying to circumvent one or the other issue, scholars oftentimes tweak

the concepts and their empirical application. As a result, we see a multitude of different approaches to a topic that has severe consequences for representative democracies. Not achieving congruence or responsiveness can lead to political disenchantment and the rise of populist parties who precisely promise to respond to all those demands that the incumbent political elites do not seem to hear. With this review, we provide a clear-cut, mutually exclusive definition of congruence and responsiveness and consider recent developments within the respective literatures. An important aim of the article was to establish new conceptual boundaries where necessary. While emphasizing both concepts' importance as currencies of representation, we show that congruence and responsiveness are two sides of the same coin that require clear conceptualizations and measurement strategies but are jointly required for the full picture of the functioning of representation in any modern democracy.

This literature review provides what we believe is necessary for scholarship to move forward: a clear distinction of the concepts, graphical and formal clarification, and an accordingly structured literature review on the most important contributions in the field. We not only cover the path-breaking U.S. literature, but also include contributions from other world regions which often qualify the relationship and introduce conditional explanations. The combined review which takes the specificities and commonalities of both concepts into account paves the way for more integrated research designs.

Our final discussion section develops on this vision. We suggest to strengthen the link between scholars of public policy and public opinion for a more complete understanding of the public policy process and stress the need to study congruence and responsiveness in a common framework. Responsiveness is not sufficiently informative about the quality of representation without knowing whether the majority gets the policies it wants. Congruence in turn is an incomplete evaluation criterion for the representational process as it may have little to do with legislators' actions in the policy process. Combining both allows a comprehensive study of the quality of representation. Especially in recent years the combination of both concepts has gained attraction and we hope that we encourage many to follow.

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Notes

1. Wlezien (2017b) also contributed to a better conceptualization, focusing more on congruence than responsiveness.

2. Research on congruence and responsiveness analyzes citizens' and elites' priorities, attitudes, preferences and public opinion. We are aware of the conceptual differences between these terms and acknowledge their respective importance. When we compare and summarize multiple contributions at the same time, however, it is not always possible to keep the distinctions for linguistic reasons. We try to be as precise as possible, but sometimes choose one of the concepts over the other to improve reader friendliness. To some extent the terms are thus used interchangeably although they have of course slightly different meanings.

3. We elaborate on the effect of electoral systems in section 4.2.

4. While responsiveness in the sense of responding to the public's wishes implies causality from a conceptual point of view—actors consider public opinion and respond to it when enacting policy, many researchers acknowledge that it is difficult to demonstrate empirical causality through regression type analyses (Wlezien & Soroka, 2016; Wlezien, 2017b). More recent experimental approaches also put the empirical focus on causality instead of correlations (Butler & Nickerson, 2011).

5. Groups such as Americans for Democratic Action (ADA), Americans for Constitutional Action (ACA), or the American Conservative Union (ACU) produce scales which intend to measure the policy behavior of members of the U.S. Congress.

6. This review is concerned with the relationship between public opinion and public policy or elected representatives and the public, respectively. We acknowledge that there is a similar debate about responsiveness of court decision making to public opinion, which lies beyond the scope of this review (e.g., Brace and Boyea, 2008; Giles, Blackstone, & Vininv, 2008).

7. And (Policy OR Representation OR "Public Opinion") as modifiers to exclude irrelevant literature.

8. A somewhat related literature studies when public policies produce changes in public opinion (Soss & Schram, 2007).

9. Not all of these studies fulfill the temporal ordering that we deem necessary. However, as long as they conceptually measure responsiveness we still discuss them here.

10. This research may be subsumed under Eulau and Karps' (1977) concept of service and Essaiasson and Wlezien's (2017) discussion about the importance of listening and explaining policy choices to voters.

11. They explain the null finding for Sweden by a lack of variance: Sweden's defense budget and public opinion remains almost stable over the period of investigation.

12. There is an extensive literature on framing (e.g., Chong & Druckman, 2007), priming (e.g., Ewoldsen, Klinger, & Boskos, 2007), and cueing (e.g., Gilens & Murakawa, 2002) studying how political actors influence public opinion which is directly related to the topic discussed here (see also Zaller, 1992). As the focus is on responsiveness and congruence rather than nonresponsiveness, however, the discussion is deliberately restricted to few influential contributions in the field of responsiveness.

13. For instance, time series data cannot solve the endogeneity problem of public opinion and public policy. If elites correctly anticipate public opinion they may be responsive despite enacting policies prior to the measurement of public opinion.

14. However, work by Warwick (2016, 2010) and Lupu and Pontusson (2011) may shed doubt on the mesaurement approaches of some of these studies. Warwick, for instance, criticize that representation of the median voter is much weaker than often assumed.

15. Wlezien (2017b) makes a similar point in his discussion on congruence and responsiveness.

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Appendix

Table A1. Categorization of the Relevant Literature.

Congruence	Responsiveness	Combined
Arnold et al. (2012)	Adams et al. (2004)	Achen (1978)
Bartels (2008)	Adams and Somer-Topcu (2009)	Brettschneider (1996)
Beyer (2017)	Arnesen and Peters (2017)	Lax and Phillips (2009)
Bhatti and Erikson (2011)	Bartels (1991)	Lax and Phillips (2012)
Blais and Bodet (2006)	Beckett (1999)	Wlezien (2017b)
Branham et al. (2017)	Bevan and Jennings (2014)	
Canes-Wrone and Shotts (2004)	Bowler (2017)	
De Sio and Franklin (2012)	Brooks and Manza (2006)	
Flavin (2012)	Butler (2014)	
Flavin and Franko (2017)	Butler et al. (2011, 2012, 2017)	
Gilens (2005, 2011, 2012)	Canes-Wrone et al. (2001)	
Golder and Lloyd (2014)	Cohen (1997)	
Golder and Stramski (2010)	Druckman and Jacobs (2011)	
Greene and Reher (2017)	Eichenberg and Stoll (2003)	
Huber and Powell (1994)	Erikson (1976)	
Jones and Baumgartner (2004)	Erikson et al. (1993)	
Jones et al. (2009)	Erikson et al. (2002)	
Louwerse (2012)	Esaiasson et al. (2017)	
Luna and Zechmeister (2005)	Esaiasson and Wlezien (2017)	
Lupu et al. (2017)	Ezrow and Xezonakis (2011)	
Mayne and Hakhverdian (2017)	Gabel and Scheve (2007)	
McDonald et al. (2004)	Gilens and Page (2014)	
Miller and Stokes (1963)	Grimes and Esaiasson (2014)	
Monroe (1998)	Hagemann et al. (2017)	
Morales et al. (2015)	Hakhverdian (2012)	
Norrander and Wilcox (1999)	Hanretty et al. (2017)	
Powell (2006, 2009)	Hartley and Russett (1992)	
Reher (2015)	Hobolt and Klemmensen (2008)	
Rohrschneider and Whitefield (2012)	Jacobs and Shapiro (2000)	
Stecker and Tausendpfund (2016)	Jacobs and Page (2005)	
Vasilopoulou and Gattermann (2013)	Manza and Cook (2002a, 2002b)	
Wlezien (2017a)	Nicholson-Crotty et al. (2009)	
	Mooney and Lee (2000)	
	Öhberg and Naurin (2016)	
	Page and Shapiro (1983)	
	Rigby and Wright (2011)	
	Rosset et al. (2017)	
	Soroka and Wlezien (2010)	
	Spoon and Klüver (2014)	
	Steenbergen et al. (2007)	
	Stimson (1991)	
	Stimson et al. (1994, 1995)	
	Wlezien (1995, 1996, 2004)	
	Wlezien and Soroka (2012, 2011)	

In this table we provide an overview over the literature on congruence and responsiveness as introduced in this review article. This list is neither exhaustive nor unquestionable. In most cases, it assigns the label of the concept assigned by the authors themselves, in cases of confusion of the concepts or interchangeable use of the two terms, our conceptualization applies.

Does Policy Learning Meet the Standards of an Analytical Framework of the Policy Process?

Claire A. Dunlop and Claudio M. Radaelli

Reference to policy learning is commonplace in the public policy literature but the question of whether it qualifies as an analytical framework applicable to the policy process has yet to be systematically addressed. We therefore appraise learning as analytical framework in relation to four standards: assumptions and micro-foundations, conceptual apparatus, observable implications, normative applications. We find that policy learning meets the four standards, although its theoretical leverage varies across them. Since we are not aware of theories of the policy process that meet all of these standards all the time, we conclude that policy learning fares reasonably well and it's worth investing intellectual resources in this field.

KEY WORDS: explanation, policy learning, causality, public policy, theories of the policy process

政策学习能否作为政策过程的分析框架？
在公共政策文献中时常见到政策学习的参考资料，但这样的参考资料是否能成为合格的分析框架，应用于政策过程呢？这是还需要进行系统处理的问题。因此，作者以四个标准评价了作为分析框架的政策学习。四个标准分别是：假设和微观基础、概念工具、可见的意义/影响，以及规范性应用。作者发现，政策学习达到了这四项标准，尽管其在各项标准中的理论影响有所不同。由于本文并未发现能在任何时候都达到这些标准的政策过程理论，结论认为，政策学习是相当成功的，并且值得对此领域投资智力资源。

关键词： 解释, 政策学习, 因果关系, 公共政策, 政策过程理论

¿El aprendizaje político cumple con los estándares de un marco analítico en el proceso político?

La referencia al aprendizaje político es común en la literatura de la política pública, pero el interrogante de si esto califica como un marco analítico que se puede aplicar al proceso político todavía tiene que ser sistemáticamente abordado. Entonces evaluamos el aprendizaje como un marco analítico en relación con cuatro estándares: las suposiciones y las micro fundaciones; los aparatos conceptuales; las implicaciones observables; las aplicaciones normativas. Hallamos que el aprendizaje político cumple con los cuatro estándares, pero su ventaja teórica varía entre ellos. Ya que no estamos conscientes de teorías del proceso político que cumplan con todos estos estándares todo el tiempo,

concluimos que el aprendizaje político se defiende razonablemente bien y tiene valor de inversión y recursos de inteligencia en este campo.

Introduction and Motivation

Learning and its link to beliefs, policy development, and change is a central theme of public policy analysis. A recent review of the field found nearly one thousand political science articles dealing with topics of policy learning (Dunlop & Radaelli, 2013). In a recent version of the classic *Theories of the Policy Process* (Sabatier & Weible, 2014), learning as a causal mechanism is associated with most of the major policy frameworks outlined in the volume. We have found the causality of collective learning (Sabatier & Weible, 2014, p. 13, see also Heikkila & Gerlak, 2013), organizational learning within the multiple streams framework (Zahariadis, 2014, p. 44), policy-oriented learning affecting social constructions in the context of the advocacy coalitions framework (Jenkins-Smith, Nohrstedt, Weible, & Sabatier, 2014, p. 198), learning as a mechanism of policy diffusion (Berry & Berry, 2014, pp. 310–311), and learning as a meso-theory adopted by the narrative policy framework (NPF) (Jones, Shanahan, & McBeth, 2014, p. 131). Since 2009, there have been five special issues devoted to learning in public policy journals—two on diffusion and transfer (Dolowitz, 2009; Evans, 2009, respectively); one on the EU as a learning organization (Zito & Schout, 2009); another on learning and policy failure (Dunlop, 2017a); a volume on policy change (Moyson, Scholten, & Weible, 2017) and another edited volume on modes and outcomes of policy learning (Dunlop, Radaelli & Trein, 2018)—all underpinned by international conference panels and workshops. In a nutshell, this is a growth field.

Given this interest, we raise the question of whether learning meets the standards of an analytical framework of the policy process. Our contribution to the literature is innovative because policy learning is either treated as a mechanism that supports other explanations or frameworks, or falls in the evaluation stage of the heuristic policy cycle (e.g., Araral, Fritzen, Howlett, Ramesh, & Wu, 2013). But in the literature, policy learning is not yet considered an analytical lens, as shown by its absence in all editions of *Theories of the Policy Process*, the advanced text pioneered by Paul Sabatier (Sabatier, 1999).

To answer our question, let us consider what a framework for the analysis of the policy process or lens "does." Before we do that, let us bear in mind the distinction between theory and analytical framework (Carlsson, 2017; Dowding, 1995; George & Bennett, 2004, pp. 115–117; Stanley, 2012). Analytical frameworks contain simplifying ontological assumptions that are useful to understand the world and are applicable to a variety of research questions and contexts. Assumptions about learning should not be judged by their precision to reflect and match the world, but on how convincing and useful they are to categorize and reduce complexity—and to address certain

research questions. The assumptions are stronger if they are derived from a theory, for example a theory of beliefs or a theory of the mind. Frameworks go beyond assumptions. They are used to generate and construct explanations or theoretical propositions (Stanley, 2012, p. 476), to normatively appraise a given phenomenon, and so on—but they are distinct from theories.

Theories explain and possibly predict a given reality, account for variance across their units and similarity in patterns, and finally allow us to generalize. We rehearse these points because the volume *Theories of the Policy Process* (Sabatier & Weible, 2014) actually contains "frameworks" as shown by the very label put on the advocacy coalitions framework (chapter 6), the narrative policy framework (chapter 7), the institutional analysis and development framework (chapter 8), and the multiple streams approach (chapter 2).

In policy analysis there is a shared understanding of what a framework should do, based on four criteria (Birchfield, 2013; Sabatier, 2007, p. 8; Zahariadis, 2013): (1) it should provide clear assumptions grounded in theory; (2) its concepts should have internal consistency and the main propositions should provide explanatory leverage; (3) it should contain observable implications—here is where the framework connects with theoretical propositions that can be tested; and (4) it should lead to normative appraisals of public policy, connecting the framework to democratic governance and reform.

We should be clear, none of the frameworks contained in *Theories of the Policy Process* is a total explainer. Indeed, we often hear that a multiple framework approach is better, whereby different perspectives can be layered to create wide explanations (Cairney & Heikkila, 2014). Granted that no framework can make claims to total and unique explanations, how does policy learning fare in relation to the four criteria?

A cursory overview of the field suggests a negative answer. Most articles routinely (and rightly) list the seminal work of Deutsch (1966), Lindblom (1965), and Heclo (1974). This is not simply giving due deference to the giants of our field, but also makes the point that very little has been built in terms of analytical framework in the intervening decades. Rather, policy learning is dominated by empirics sometimes organized around typologies (most obviously Bennett & Howlett, 1992, and May, 1992).

In the next section we review recent advances in the field, pointing to a set of concepts that is relevant for our discussion. The following sections examine the criteria to benchmark analytical frameworks, and the final section provides an answer to whether learning matches these criteria and where we go next. Throughout the article, we keep a focus on learning in the policy process, although we acknowledge that policy learning exists beyond the boundaries of the policy process.

Looking for Conceptual Foundations to Build the Learning Framework

In recent years, political scientists began to look at learning again. Two sets of authors in particular have pushed the agenda—Heikkila and Gerlak (2013) on

collective learning and Dunlop and Radaelli's (2013) varieties of learning. Here we focus on the model of varieties of learning. Heikkila and Gerlak (2013) provide a schema to distinguish between three elements: (1) where learning takes place—actor or system level; (2) the process and products of learning; and (3) within-learning processes, between the acquisition of information, translation, and dissemination. This approach has a good deal of merit. It is a valuable way to break down learning into the three elements. In this contribution we do not have space to reflect on more than one approach, however. This time we opt for Dunlop and Radaelli's (2013) varieties of learning approach because it systematizes a large body of literature and suggests a congenial way to build an analytical framework. The authors carried out a bibliographic search, identifying an initial population of 833 articles on policy learning. After excluding duplicates, articles that refer to learning in purely descriptive ways and, entirely normative articles on "more" and "better" learning (see Dunlop & Radaelli, 2013, p. 616, footnote 2), their study explores in depth 83 articles that engage with learning as an analytical framework. On the basis of this sample, they identify two dimensions that map out the field into four main learning types. They then decompose the two-by-two space into sixteen subtypes. Contrary to other typological exercises, theirs draws explicitly on the method of explanatory typologies—a method that allows researchers to be clear about the causal architecture of their model (Elman, 2005). Thus, their typology is explanatory instead of descriptive—with learning types being the dependent variable that falls into the various cells of the types.

The full account of varieties of learning can be found in Dunlop and Radaelli (2013), but let us recall the essentials. Systematization of the policy learning literature in political science reveals four different learning processes, or modes, which recur empirically: epistemic, reflexive, bargaining, and hierarchical. These main learning modes are the product of two conditions associated with policymaking environments: the level of *tractability* and *certification of actors* associated with an issue. Next, to expand the property space to 16, they consider the variables of learners' control over the objectives of learning (high or low) and the learners' control over the content and means of learning (high or low). We outline this in the next section.

For the moment, let us stay within the two-by-two space of the higher-level (of abstraction) typology, looking at tractability of the policy problem (Jenkins-Smith, 1990) and social certification of actors (McAdam, Tarrow, & Tilly, 2001). Tractability, and its opposite (radical uncertainty), is prominent in the analysis of learning in systems of risk assessment, highly technical domains of environmental policy, policy instruments like regulatory impact assessment, and the social contestation of science. The point is simple: given high tractability, elected politicians and bureaucracies can define the pay-offs associated with different courses of action. At the opposite, high or even radical uncertainty leads to reliance on epistemic communities, experts, and technical policy instruments. But, this variable is not limited to actors: it also refers to the forum or institutional setting of learning because highly tractable problems lend themselves quite naturally to standard operating procedures, technical fora, or delegation to independent regulatory agencies.

The second dimension of variation across the literature is about who, in a given policy sector during a certain period, is socially certified as a teacher. This can be a

PROBLEM TRACTABILITY

	LOW	HIGH
LOW	**2. Reflexive Learning**	**3. Learning through Bargaining**
CERTIFICATION OF ACTORS		
HIGH	**1. Epistemic Learning**	**4. Learning in the Shadow of Hierarchy**

Figure 1. Conceptualizing Modes of Policy Learning.

central bank, an elected politician, or a nongovernmental organization like Amnesty International. Social certification can also direct toward specific institutional solutions, like a parliamentary committee or an inquiry. In short, certification concerns the extent to which a socially endorsed group or organization exists and has a seat at the policymaking table. In the absence of a privileged actor, learning participants will be plural—composed of a range of interested actors or of wider society itself. Taken together, levels of issue tractability and actor certification provide the axes for four types of policy learning to vary (see Figure 1).

This approach moves us beyond binary thinking. Its research questions are more fine-grained than the presence or absence of learning. They are about the identification of a given type of learning, and whether over the course of time a policy subsystem moves from one learning mode to another. The independent variables are dynamic—the level of issue tractability or actor certification adjusts to external developments and internal learning processes. Thus, the pre-eminent mode of learning is in flux—over time, who creates the lessons that matter and the content of that learning will change. Finally, there are questions about whether an organization or a policy subsystem learns in the wrong mode, that is, dysfunctionally.

This way of mapping the literature is a promising start for tackling our research question about the status of policy learning. Establishing this status, however, requires a research design architecture able to account for causal relationships. And so, we move on to examine the criteria that an analytical framework should match.

Clear Assumptions and Micro-Foundations

To begin with, assumptions must be clear and grounded in theory. Without these, we have no axioms on which to build and are in danger of relying on common

sense rather than scientific strategies (Sabatier, 2007, p. 5). Given the scale of the literature, we need a minimal definition of policy learning. Let us start from learning as an updating of beliefs about public policy. This matches the central concern of all policy analysis—the study of how beliefs inform policy debates; content; performance; institutional structures; and, on occasion, change. Beliefs are updated through social interaction, appraisals of one's experience or evidence-based analysis, or most likely a mix of the three.

Yet, we are getting ahead of ourselves. What are the ontological assumptions that underpin this definition of learning and where do they come from? What are the micro-foundations of policy learning? We need a micro-level model of the individual that anchors our understanding of who learns, how, and with what effect. Here we enter the debate on micro-foundations. This debate is played out in the territory of varieties of *homo economicus* or types of rationality—full or bounded. Recently, we have heard of *homo narrans* in the context of the narrative policy framework (NPF) (Jones & McBeth, 2010; Jones et al., 2014; Shanahan, Jones, McBeth, & Radaelli, 2018). Although the *homo economicus* can accommodate some types of learning, for example in game theory, this is a straightjacket: we need to identify a type of micro-foundation sensitive to the vision of humans as sentient beings. Within learning as framework, *homo discentis*—the learning, studying, and practicing person—is at the heart of all policymaking. No matter what policy environment we operate in, what our role or standpoint, whether we work alone or in a collective, learning is the governing logic of action. Learning is how people make sense of the world.

The *homo discentis* vision of the individual is rooted in behavioral theories of psychology and adult education (Mocker & Spear, 1982; Rogers, 2002). We can think of this human as the composite of two sides. First, we have the *homo cognoscentis*. Our minds are full of prior knowledge, this knowledge is based on experiences, formal learning, intuitions, and values. These knowings are in a constant state of flux. We update and modify our beliefs as new information arrives. In line with the groundbreaking work on belief systems in political science by Haas (1990), Hall (1993), Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith (1993) and Muller (2000), these beliefs are of different types and have different degrees of resistance to change. For those beliefs most permeable to change, we do this on the basis of probability calculations—so-called Bayesian reasoning—where we estimate the likelihood, or impact, of an event based on contextual conditions that we think are related to that event. Our second side is *homo doctrinis*—armed with these priors and updates we teach each other most frequently through argument or rhetoric; socialization; and, in some cases, coercion. Again, role and style of teaching are contextually contingent.

Yet, we do not assume that this updating is efficient or results in "correct" learning outcomes; far from it. When we update our knowledge and arguments—i.e., our learning—we do so on the basis of fragmented and incomplete information and with imperfect cognitive capacity (Jones, 2001). Uncertainty and complexity in the policymaking environment and our own analytical limitations are the founding conditions of a world of "bounded rationality" (Simon, 1947, 1957). The goal here is to learn in ways that help us "satisfice" (Simon, 1956)—use what we know to find satisfactory solutions, given the limitations of the real world. In this view, the definition and

understanding of policy problems is epistemically developmental and so temporally contingent. Thus, what we learn is inevitability fragile and filtered through "heuristics" or cognitive shortcuts that fill the void left by uncertainty (Jones, 2001; Kahneman, 2011). In his seminal text *The Art of Judgment* (1965), Vickers puts it thus: "[F]acts are relevant only in relation to some judgments of value and judgments of value are operative only in relation to some configuration of fact" (1965, p. 40). Policy action is a product of actors' judgments of their contextual reality and the cognitive biases they hold. Understanding policy learning, which may be functional or dysfunctional, is to recognize how these two realities intertwine to produce action and practices at any given moment.

These are still abstract notions for micro-foundations—although not more abstract than the micro-foundations of other frameworks—and remember what we said about assumptions in analytical frameworks: they should not be judged by how well they match reality. Anyhow, experimental studies provide supplementary knowledge on how individuals learn. Essentially we have two micro-foundational mechanisms for individual learning. One is inferential, in the sense of drawing inferences by reasoning on what has happened. This reasoning has consequences for the priors and leads to an updating of beliefs. The drawing-lessons operation can be cognitive or emotional, correct or incorrect. But inference is fundamental; hence this is inferential learning.

The other mechanism is called contingent learning (Kamkhaji & Radaelli, 2016). It occurs under conditions of extreme surprise and uncertainty. In these conditions, experimental studies have observed that individuals learn via fast-paced associations of cue-outcome dyads. Priors do not change, individuals do not choose behavior on the basis of their understanding of cause-effect relations. They do not reason inferentially on what has happened. Surprise throws in a set of unexpected cue–outcome relations—decision makers are typically confronting these relations in crisis-related episodes. It is exactly the lack of experience about the relationship existing between a given stimulus and an outcome that triggers the mechanism. This surprise about the causal relationship generates contingent learning. Once contingent learning is triggered, feedback and the passing of time create the basis for inferential learning, where individuals understand, decode, and learn inferentially what they have done before in contingent fashion. Thus, under conditions of crisis and extreme surprise, we have micro-foundations that illustrate the sequence between contingent learning and inferential learning. This sequence has been successfully probed in the context of the crisis of the Euro—showing that the findings under carefully controlled experiments can also apply to the domain of public policy (Kamkhaji & Radaelli, 2016).

Logically Consistent Concepts and Clear Causal Drivers

Beyond clarity around its starting assumptions, an analytical framework must be internally consistent and offer clear causal drivers (Sabatier, 1999, p. 8). We observe two elements that ensure coherence. One is the fact that the concept of learning must cover the full spectrum, from unlearning to zero learning to learning (Radaelli, 2009).

This is a property that is fundamental to avoid bias in empirical analysis, where the risk is one of censoring learning as a variable by looking only at its positive values. The other is to allow learning to vary empirically from enlightenment to endarkenment (Weiss, 1977, 1979, and more recently Daviter, 2015). We shall go back to this second element later on—we flag it now because it is fundamental for conceptual consistency.

To explore in depth the conceptual and causal architecture of policy learning, we need to go back to the four varieties of learning. The varieties are distinguished by: knowledge use, the causal mechanisms that underpin that use, actors' modes of interaction, decision makers' mode of attention, the benefits they bring when learning is functional, and the "pathologies" or degenerations that may result from poor learning performances (see Table 1).

1. *Epistemic learning* takes place where knowledge is created around an issue with low tractability by a certified set of experts. The archetypal actor is the expert, or, collectively, the epistemic community with participatory or consultative rights in policy processes where complexity has to be negotiated and ultimately reduced. Epistemic actors occasionally enjoy direct policymaking responsibilities, such as the Delors Committee that paved the way for the decision to create the Euro (Verdun, 1999) or the European Central Bank in circumstances of radical uncertainty during the Euro crisis of 2010–2011. To use Weiss's (1979) famous typology, knowledge use is instrumental—the aim is for experts' advice to show up directly in policy development. Such impact is achieved by the close relationship that can develop between decision makers and epistemic communities. Knowledge deficits on the part of decision makers ensures this mode of interaction is necessarily asymmetrical, with decision makers effectively being taught by the experts. For example, under conditions of radical uncertainty or where a group of experts is particularly revered, decision makers' attention is

Table 1. Unpacking Varieties of Learning

Learning as …	Epistemic	Reflexive	Bargaining	Hierarchical
Knowledge use as …	instrumental	conceptual	political/ symbolic	imposed
Causal mechanism …	expert teaching	deliberation	resource competition	institutional rules
Interaction of policy actors as …	cooperative asymmetric	cooperative symmetric	competitive symmetric	competitive asymmetric
Benefits as …	clinching what works	depth of debate and breadth of knowledge types	wide range of evidence scanned	locks-in evidence
Pathologies as …	groupthink	uneven capacity leads to spurious consensus	unstable outcomes and expert discrediting or withdrawal	blocked learning and expert defeatism
Decision makers' attention as …	directed	diffuse/divided	selective	routinized
Mode underpinned by a logic of …	rationality	appropriateness	consequence	habit

Source: Dunlop, 2014 (Tables 1 and 2, pp. 212, 216).

"directed" to what they say and can result in expert involvement in preference formation (see Haas, 1990).

2. *Reflexive learning* occurs where uncertainty is at its highest—the issue lacks tractability and there is no socially agreed set of actors who is certified as the teacher. Instead, we have deliberation and contestation by a pluralist set of actors. Accordingly, knowledge use is conceptual—there to fuel and then consolidate the results of a socially thick policy conversation. In such uncertain policy environments, outcomes are difficult to predict but exchanges are cooperative. In its ideal form, this reflexive learning has Habermasian qualities—where decision makers' attention is diffused as they engage with a wide range of actors and viewpoints. Policy learning occurs over time through communication, preference change, and collective puzzling. Here, the technocratic world of epistemic learning dominated by codified knowledge is replaced with a wide range of knowledge types. Tacit, uncodified knowledge—such as myths or innuendo—take their place alongside formal knowledge in informing and changing beliefs about the appropriate form of policy (Sanderson, 2002). In its functional manifestations, we have the wisdom of crowds. Yet, the flip side of this is the so-called myth of the best argument (Pellizoni, 2001), where incommensurable paradigms should be acknowledged or else risk a fake consensus in the name of the "best argument."

3. *Learning through bargaining* captures situations where learning occurs as an unintended, but nonetheless potent, by-product of interest-driven stakeholders. Where actor certification and uncertainty are both low, learning takes place through competitive interactions of stakeholders who select evidence from a range of "knowers" that suits their policy preferences. While knowledge use is political or symbolic, policy-based evidence need not be a negative phenomenon. The polyarchic nature of these interactions ensures that a wide range of evidence may be aired in policy debates. Moreover, the stability generated by processes of partisan mutual adjustment (Lindblom, 1965) may ensure that some lessons hold for long periods. Yet, where evidence is judged to have been manipulated to secure policy preferences, learning through bargaining may degenerate resulting in a retreat of and from ideas.

4. *Learning in the shadow of hierarchy* occurs in hierarchical contexts where authorities use the vertical organization of policymaking to force knowledge use. Such imposition (captured in Weiss's later work—Weiss, Murphy-Brown, & Birkeland, 2005) is a result of circumstances where learning is structured by vertical institutional rules, for example rules that discipline budget constraints within which social policy can be made, or rules about intergovernmental relations. Interactions here are governed by a habitual logic (Hopf, 2010). Institutions use their mandates to steer learning from the "top" (Radaelli, 2008) in ways that minimize negotiations and exceptions to the rules. Learning becomes an exercise in gathering information centrally, and translating and disseminating it via instructions supported by incentives and sanctions. For the recipients at the

LEARNERS' FOCUS ON LEARNING OBJECTIVES / ENDS

	HIGH	**LOW**
HIGH **LEARNERS' FOCUS ON LEARNING CONTENT / MEANS**	Self-Directed Learning	Informal Learning
LOW	Non-Formal Learning	Formal Learning

Figure 2. Mocker and Spear's Lifelong Learning Typology.

bottom, learning is about understanding what is expected from them, the nature of instructions, and the forms of compliance. Thus, there is learning about compliance on a substantive topic, and meta-learning about understanding the ecology of rules and how the authorities expect the recipients to use them.

To investigate the causal architecture further, Dunlop and Radaelli (2013, pp. 604–613) expand the property space of each of our four learning types with a theory of adult learning that differentiates between situations where learners focus on the substance or goal of knowledge creation and communication. High or low focus over what we learn and why results in four adult learning types: self-directed learning, informal learning, non-formal learning, and formal learning (Mocker & Spear, 1982; see Figure 2). These types are constructed on empirical reality and assumptions of intended rationality. In line with the framework construction outlined already, this yields an account of learning dynamics which are objectively probable and involve a low degree of abstraction. We end up with four roles for *each cell* of the basic model of Figure 1. Thus, in total the literature can be mapped out in 16 learning modes from the original four (Figure 3).

   At any one time, we expect that a learning mode will dominate policymaking around an issue. As noted earlier, the mode that matters is contingent upon the state of our two dimensions. Changes in issue tractability and/or actor certification will trigger moves within and between learning types. The conditions are not simply set objective realities that exist "out there." Rather, they are constructed by decision makers in government who steer governance on the basis of exogenous conditions—economic performance, legal protocols, political power shifts—or endogenous developments—most notably learning and unlearning by policy actors.

   In terms of applicability, there is no one-to-one necessary correspondence between learning and a given stage of the policy process. While it is likely that epistemic learning may be confined to the issue framing stages—where uncertainty is at its peak—the model does not set this restriction. There is no *conceptual* reason that

PROBLEM TRACTABILITY
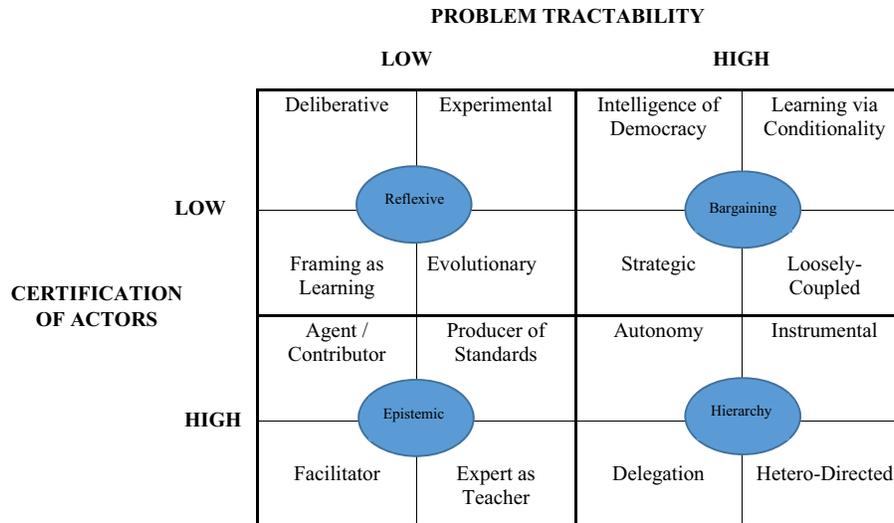
Figure 3. Expanding Modes of Policy Learning.

the epistemic mode cannot characterize implementation, though empirically this may be less likely than agenda-setting. In common with most policy frameworks, we assume liberal democratic politics with a civil society infrastructure. With that in place, the framework does not favor any particular political system over another.

To wrap up, we have demonstrated learning as an analytical framework is anchored to a set of coherent concepts and a causal architecture based on explanatory typologies. The learning approach we have described mitigates bias by allowing all values of the variables, without censoring some. Further, the explanatory typology is grounded in robust theories: adult education and policy theory. The 16-role expansion shows the connections between different types, and identifies the drivers that take us from one cell in Figure 3 to the others. To see whether all this amounts to explanatory leverage, we now move to the next section.

Implications and Empirical Testing

Learning can assist researchers in the field in three ways that relate to observable implications, but with different features.

The first pathway is observable implications that contribute to existing frameworks on the policy process. To illustrate: the varieties of learning framework can feed into the development of the narrative policy framework by putting forward propositions like "if learning is of type X, then narratives and narrators will have these observable characteristics Y_1 and Y_2." By way of exemplification, in Table 2, we portray the observable implications of learning types for a few of the key variables that define the focus of the narrative policy framework (NPF). This is just a suggested formulation of observable implications for the NPF. Others can be added—for example on the features of the causal plot, with epistemic-led narrative plot anchored to the authority of science and evidence whilst a hierarchical causal plot will emphasize law, formal authority, and due procedure.

Table 2. Varieties of Learning: Observable Implications for the Narrative Policy Framework

NPF Categories	Epistemic	Reflexive	Bargaining	Hierarchical
Narrator is defined on the basis of her ...	knowledge	argument and ethics	resources	formal authority
Decision maker is ...	teacher	maieutic agent	facilitator of exchanges	interpreter and developer of formal rules
Policy problems are narratively represented as ...	information and know-how problems	mutual obligations	benefit-cost issues	procedures and targets
Drama and metaphors	emphasizing the value of research and knowledge	pushing toward mutual understanding and collective binding	magnifying advantages from social exchange	illustrating consequences of compliance and lack thereof
Heroes and villains	heroes proceed via enlightenment	heroes respect social norms	villains are those who do not sit at the table and do not accept to negotiate	embedded in conceptions of compliance with rules
Doomsday scenarios explain the consequences of ...	acting in irrational ways	rejecting a community based on deliberation and common fate	following short-term interests	lack of compliance, sanctions, and punishment

We can do the same for the advocacy coalition framework (ACF)—one of the most established and tested frameworks. The ACF assists the development of observable implications for the learning framework as much as the latter enriches the ACF. The ACF central questions relate to the varieties of learning. When does policy learning (or policy-oriented learning to use ACF language) lead to policy change? What is it that changes? Three features of the policy subsystem matter in explaining the context and events that foster learning: the nature of professional fora, level of conflict, and the analytical tractability of the issue (Jenkins-Smith, 1990, pp. 95–103; Sabatier, 1987, pp. 678–681; Weible & Nohrstedt, 2013, pp. 130–131). These characteristics affect the object of learning—i.e., the likelihood that policy core or secondary beliefs will be altered. We now relate these conditions to the varieties of learning.

In his discussion of professional fora, Jenkins-Smith (1990, pp. 99–103) emphasizes the imprint left by the level of conflict, analytical tractability, and type of forum on the use of analysis. A focus on learning types extends this type of reasoning to capture the wider effects of social science utilization. Let us see how, starting from the type of forum. Since the forum disciplines participation, we can have an open forum, a professionalized forum, or a closed forum. Professionalized settings are characterized by shared analytical training and norms. Consequently, access to debate is screened. The likelihood of using social sciences to learn is high. A professionalized forum matches epistemic learning environments. Hierarchical settings discipline access by drawing on formal rules (of representation, for example) and levels of governance. Professionalized fora can facilitate learning by providing know how

in relation to clearly specified goals and targets. Learning is more exploratory in reflexivity mode, where professionalized fora do not necessarily have a pivotal position. Quite the contrary, they may be marginalized because professional and lay knowledge have the same value. In bargaining, professionalized fora are captured by partisan mutual adjustment—they can be instrumental and effective if they accept to become a component of the advocacy game.

The second condition concerns the level of conflict between actors in learning modes (Jenkins-Smith, 1990, pp. 95–97; Weible, 2008). Learning is frustrated where conflict is very low—hierarchical settings—and the incentives to update policy core and deep beliefs are absent. Conversely, in reflexive settings conflict is transparent but can be extreme. Reflexivity makes the assumption that communicative rationality assists one coalition in overcoming defensive positions and in accepting to hear the argument of the other coalition. Whether policy processes approximate these ideal-speech situations is another story. This is why in ACF analysis, the learning "sweet spot" is found where there are intermediate levels of conflict—settings where "there is enough of a threat to attract the attention of rivals but not too much of a threat to entrench opponents on rigid policy positions" (Weible & Nohrstedt, 2013, p. 131). Learning through bargaining and in epistemic mode best fit this description.

Finally, ACF analysis treats learning as conditioned by the level of analytical tractability of an issue (Jenkins-Smith, 1990, pp. 97–99)—we have already discussed this variable when we presented Dunlop and Radaelli (2013).

Varieties of learning assists the ACF in qualifying the types of learning, and within each type, the causal mechanisms that drive learning. It also allows for more endogenous forms of learning within and across coalitions (especially in the reflexive and bargaining modes), whereas the ACF is more powerful in explaining learning triggered by variables that are exogenous to the policy-subsystem.

The second pathway is about observable implications for learning as a dependent variable. In the analytical framework we presented, the value of two variables (problem tractability and certification of actors) will determine the prevailing learning type and the associated style of interaction between policy actors (e.g., partisan mutual adjustment or communicative rationality, rule and procedure-driven or evidence-based driven), the nature of policy fora (idea-labs, arenas, participatory venues, or consultation and advice bodies established by law and parliamentary procedure), and so on. As outlined, it also predicts each of the 16 roles on the basis of two additional variables—control of learning content and learning objectives (as in Figure 3). Further, we have implications from micro-foundational studies. Under conditions of extreme surprise, we should observe contingent learning first, followed by inferential learning. This is a proposition that can be tested in cases of acute crisis, and more precisely in intra-crisis periods (Kamkhaji & Radaelli, 2016), and crisis management capacity-building (e.g., Schwarzer, 2015).

Additionally, authors like Boswell (2008) have put forward propositions about how organizations use the knowledge they have learned, depending on the features of the policy area (namely, the acknowledgement, in a given policy domain, of epistemic uncertainty versus the acceptance of technical, science, and evidence-based modes of settlement) and the type of organization. Most interestingly perhaps,

Boswell argues that an organization that does not control its output will use knowledge to legitimize policy. Organizations like the European Commission, which depends on the bureaucracy of the member states of the European Union for implementation and ultimately output, will exhibit more legitimizing than instrumental usages. These types of propositions can be tested across a large number of policy sectors and types of organizations. They also invite more integration between policy learning and two research fields we do not cover in this paper, but have many points of contact: ideational politics and knowledge utilization (Freeman & Sturdy, 2014; Radaelli, 1995).

Turning to the third pathway, we look at observable implications of the type "if this learning occurs … then we should observe this effect on the dependent variable." The classic dependent variable for learning, but also for other frameworks, is policy change. Actually the relationship between learning and change is qualified. An individual can learn without necessarily being able to bring about change within an organization. A single organization can learn but change may not materialize because of institutional inertia, complexity, veto players, and other factors. A whole system may learn without having the necessary capacity to change.

Add that change has different properties depending on the variety of learning we take into account. Under "bargaining" change will take the form of an agreement or compromise among the actors interested. Whether this necessarily leads to major policy change is an open question. It depends on resources, capacity, de-coupling between the compromise and the actions, and so on. The old argument that many incremental changes make a big change applies. In "epistemic" types change will involve an alteration of priors on the basis of evidence. Yet again, this may or may not trigger change. Certainly epistemic networks have generated changes in domains like climate change, international tax evasion, and poverty—yet the degrees of implementation we have seen in these three international policy domains vary markedly.

In "reflexivity," we find the mechanism for major policy change. Actually authors working on experimental learning (Sabel & Zeitlin, 2008) and social learning (Hall, 1993) point to the inclusive properties of this mode to draw conclusions about societal-level change—or at least major paradigmatic changes in a policy field (like macro-economic and monetary policy for Hall, or sectors like energy and employment for Sabel & Zeitlin). Some of these propositions about the effects of reflexivity have now been tested across sectors with corroborating evidence (Sabel & Zeitlin, 2012; Zeitlin, 2015).

For "hierarchy" we have a full set of propositions concerning coordinated action in certain types of multi-level governance settings, like the ones dominating the European Union and German federalism. Fritz Scharpf has generated a causal model of how joint-decision systems hinder policy change. Take a multi-level governance system where some decisions are taken at the higher federal level. When these decisions are taken by the participating actors (goverments in the EU, Länder in German federal decisions) without a principle of representation that filters out the immediate interests of the lower units and there is a formal or informal unanimity rule, then decisions are suboptimal. Policies that are already in place are hard to reverse, and new decisions cannot be taken at the federal level—whilst the lower units have lost

competence for these decisions. This is the joint-decision trap. Recent work, however, has shown how the joint-decision trap can be relaxed (Falkner, 2011). In a revealing footnote in one of his joint-decision trap articles, Scharpf remarks about the difference between his Coasian approach and spatial voting theory. He observes that the Coasian theory he adopts includes policy learning: "spatial voting theory, in contrast, ignores the possibility of policy learning and takes fixed preferences over strategies" (Scharpf, 2006, p. 850, footnote 4, note that here Scharpf uses "strategies" as proxy for "policies").

The joint-decision trap would take us into a long discussion. All we can say here is that joint-decision traps, and escape routes from them, are intimately connected to learning processes, although the explicit derivation of observable implications of learning for change is rare in extant literature.[1] Essentially, some forms of hierarchical learning can be compatible with rational choice institutionalism and can explain how actors find escape routes from joint-decision traps. Other types of learning are obviously empirically possible, and grant additional ways to escape traps. However they are not compatible with the assumptions of rational choice institutionalism and should not be considered "extensions" of Scharpf's model. Simply, they belong to other types of explanations. This leads us to an important corollary: there is an affinity between rational choice institutionalism and two varieties of learning—bargaining and hierarchy—whilst epistemic and reflexive learning lend themselves quite naturally to sociological institutionalism and constructivism.

To sum up, learning has developed observable implications that add to existing frameworks on the policy process. It has also provided testable propositions about how to identify one type of learning or another, or sequences of learning. Here, however, the literature has just begun to operationalize concepts, hence measurement is a challenge. When we turn to learning as an independent variable, we have conjectures about when we should expect or not expect policy change, and its causal drivers under different modes of learning. Yet again, the literature is somewhat underdeveloped here.

Normative Dimensions—Connecting Learning to Democracy

As well as offering a positive theory explaining large elements of the policy process, claims for "promising" framework status are greatly enhanced by those approaches that contain normative elements (Sabatier, 1999, p. 8; 2007, p. 8). The assumption that learning is a "good thing" is implicit in much of the literature. But as mentioned, learning is not always desirable. We can think of individuals and organizations learning something that is dysfunctional and/or normatively unacceptable in terms of democratic accountability or legitimacy. That said, the framework is not normative in the tradition of social constructivism of Schneider and Ingram (1997), for example. Yet, a non-normative framework can still have prescriptive implications. Indeed, deLeon and Weible (2010) outline no fewer than six pathways to link policy process research with the improved democratic practices so passionately argued for by Lasswell (1951). The first three are what they term as the

"oversubscribed" strategies used by policy theorists to make their work relevant beyond academia. We relate them to the varieties of learning framework in turn.

1. *Reliance on the policy implications* that can be drawn from policy research (deLeon & Weible, 2010, pp. 25–26) is the prescriptive dimension most connected to varieties of learning, thus far. Using the concepts of functional and dysfunctional policy learning, the framework has been extended to identify the conditions for efficient learning in each of the four modes. Here the prescriptive reasoning is confined to the logic of the framework itself. Table 1 outlines the scope conditions for dysfunctional and efficient learning. One of the advantages of these underpinnings is that it lends greater precision to our reasoning. Recall deLeon and Weible (2010) chide researchers for being too ambiguous in the policy implications they often draw (pp. 25–26). This has been empirically explored in two empirical cases—the policy failure of bovine tuberculosis in England (Dunlop, 2017b) and the crisis of sovereign debt in the Eurozone (Dunlop & Radaelli, 2016). Both cases demonstrate that actors and institutions learn how not to comply. They also learn how to get trapped in their habits (heuristics) and competences, or learn "bad lessons." Taking the Euro example, Dunlop and Radaelli (2016) draw on varieties of learning to explore design, and precisely how the institutions and policy instruments of the European Union should be designed to generate socially inclusive, legitimate, and accountable learning. Or, put differently, if an organization is not learning in the right mode, we can identify what design features would make it learn in a more desirable mode.

2. *Reliance on normative theories* embedded in policy theories (deLeon & Weible, 2010, pp. 26–27) is the second oversubscribed strategy for connecting with democracy. That is not the case for this approach. Indeed, it is one of the varieties of learning framework's biggest areas of developmental need. That learning can be concentrated in one mode or is not necessarily efficient or normatively desirable raises issues of legitimacy and accountability. Learning modes generate power shifts. Take for example the scenario where learning is limited to the epistemic realm. This may lead to more than the dysfunctional groupthink to technocratic domination—bolting on ideas from normative political theory may help us determine whether we can consider this rule without justification or legitimate and accountable.

3. *Reliance on political advocacy* directed by our frameworks (deLeon & Weible, 2010, pp. 27–28). Outlining the conditions for functionality and dysfunctionality of learning offers inspiration to actors seeking an advocacy role by making their policy engagement more fruitful. A recent application of this has been made to the world of experts. Using the varieties of the learning framework to outline the probable worlds of policy learning scientific advisers can inhabit, Dunlop (2014) then extends the framework using knowledge utilization literature to postulate the types of "possible" expert personae that are required to function and flourish in each learning mode. Policy experts or "issue advocates"

(Jenkins-Smith, 1990) can achieve more effective engagement and impact by adopting a mode of engagement to match the learning setting they find themselves in (Dunlop, 2014).

In sum, while we appear some way off from a policy learning sciences of democracy, we have identified some promising beginnings. One final element to consider: varieties of learning includes four types and 16 subtypes. In some of the 16 cells, the reflection on the normative implications has already been deep. Think for example of the field of experimental governance (Sabel & Zeitlin, 2008), where the key authors are engaged in a conversation with constitutionalism and democratic theory (Cohen & Sabel, 1997)—to the point that experimentalism is seen as an embodiment of a new form of democratic governance.

Conclusions

We have appraised the field of policy learning as a promising analytical framework of the policy process. It is useful to repeat that we have chosen to focus on the varieties of the learning approach not because it is better than others, but because it allows us to treat in a single analytical template a vast portion of the field, as shown by its assemblage of four types and 16 subtypes.

So, does policy learning meet the standards of an analytical framework? We have considered assumptions and micro-foundations, the conceptual apparatus, observable implications, and the normative usages. Our analysis shows that policy learning meets these standards, although with variation. We point to specific research questions where research should be intensified. More work has been done on assumptions and concepts, less on normative appraisal. On observable implications we have cumulated more findings and causal relationships on learning as a dependent variable than on learning as an independent variable.

In fact, there are several conjectures about why and how learning as an independent variable can affect or hinder change, but we need to improve on operationalizations and measures that allow researchers to go confidently in the field. We have a set of conjectures waiting for confutation or corroboration. In short, there is a lot of work in progress. The same can be said of normative analysis.

One point we wish to make is that policy learning is not stuck to where we were in the 1990s. It is a progressive research agenda, with solid ontological assumptions, where new conjectures and causal relations have been theorized and are beginning to be tested. This progressive character of the agenda underpins the enthusiasm evidenced by so many special issues on learning produced in recent years. In a sense, the field we have considered is both classic (as mentioned we can trace its origin back to very classic, foundational articles) and able to attract new empirical and theoretical work. All this is a signal of vitality.

Certainly, the field has many limitations—the major is that after so many years from the intuitions of Peter Hall (1993), Bennett and Howlett (1992), May (1992), we are still struggling with the causal relation between learning and change. Possibly what we are finding out in terms of micro-foundations and, turning to another

dimension, the Coleman's "bath-tub" structure of causality (Dunlop & Radaelli, 2017), will illuminate the way ahead. As mentioned, presumably more leverage will need a closer integration among policy learning, ideational analysis, and knowledge utilization (on the latter, see the attempts made by Schrefler, 2010, and Radaelli, 2009). We also have to be clearer on the causal relations leading to nonlearning, endarkenment, and the pathology of learning—another area where there is a lot of exciting, fresh work but not much cumulative empirical knowledge so far.

With all these limitations, we have the impression that policy learning fares reasonably well as an analytical framework of the policy process. The next step is to measure "how well" with a systematic comparison with other, more established, frameworks.

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Note

1. In Falkner's edited collection on decision traps see chapter 10 on learning as pathway out of stalemate (Alecu de Flers, Chappell, & Müller, 2011), and in the concluding chapter Scharpf attends to (instrumental) policy learning in another of his illuminating footnotes (Falkner, 2011; Scharpf, 2011, p. 233, footnote 18).

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Public Policy Perspective on Group Decision-Making Dynamics in Foreign Policy

Kasey Barr and Alex Mintz

Research on decision making in foreign policy and national security has had little interaction with the field of public policy. This review connects the two fields. We utilize a key public policy concept, the policy cycle, to provide a framework for our review of group decision-making dynamics in national security and foreign policy. We describe key stages of the policy cycle followed by a review of the leading models of group decision-making dynamics. We then construct a bridge between the two, demonstrating how specific stages of the policy cycle are typically associated with specific group decision-making dynamics. To illustrate this link we provide an example of decision-making dynamics within the Obama administration throughout policy stages of the 2016 campaign against the Islamic State in Raqqa, Syria.

公共政策对外交政策中集体决策动态的看法

研究外交政策决策和国防决策的学术调查一直以来几乎都没有与公共政策进行联系。本文则将这两个领域联系起来。作者使用政策周期这一关键的公共政策概念来提供框架，检验国防和外交政策中的集体决策动态。文章描述了政策周期的关键阶段，之后对集体决策动态的主要模式进行了检验。本文随后在二者间搭建桥梁，证明政策周期的特定阶段通常是如何与特定集体决策动态相联系的。为阐述此联系，作者提供了决策动态的案例，即奥巴马政府在2016年开展反对叙利亚拉卡伊斯兰国运动的各个政策阶段。

La perspectiva de las políticas públicas en la dinámica de toma de decisiones grupal en la política exterior

La investigación acera de la toma de decisiones en la política exterior y la seguridad nacional ha tenido poca interacción con el campo de las políticas públicas. Esta reseña conecta los dos campos. Utilizamos un concepto clave de las políticas públicas, el ciclo de las políticas, para proporcionar un marco teórico de nuestra reseña de la dinámica de toma de decisiones grupal en la seguridad nacional y la política exterior. Describimos etapas clave para el ciclo político seguidas por una reseña de los modelos líder de la dinámica de toma de decisiones grupal. Después construimos un puente entre las dos, lo que demuestra cómo etapas específicas del ciclo político están típicamente asociadas con dinámicas de toma de decisiones grupales específicas. Para ilustrar este vínculo proporcionamos un

ejemplo de dinámicas de toma de decisiones dentro de la administración de Obama a través de etapas políticas de la campaña de 2016 contra el Estado Islámico en Raqqa, Siria.

Palabras clave: toma de decisiones grupal, política exterior, toma de decisiones de seguridad nacional, ciclo político, pensamiento colectivo, polythink, con-div, Estado Islámico

Introduction

The fields of foreign policy and public policy have had very little interaction, yet a vast trove of scholarly work in the discipline of public policy exists alongside great contributions to foreign policy decision making (FPDM). The purpose of this article is to provide a review of the literature within the discipline of FPDM which is focused on key group decision-making models, enriched by the application of a well-known public policy concept, the policy cycle. Both public policy and foreign policy deal with group decision-making analysis, yet their toolkits are quite distinct. By engaging in cross-fields efforts, scholars can fill gaps and bring new insights in the respective fields. Specifically, we demonstrate an association between stages of the policy cycle and leading models of group decision-making dynamics.

We first lay the public policy foundations for our review by providing a brief summary of the policy cycle broadly and then more precisely the stages of policy formulation, decision making, and implementation. We then highlight a new framework (the group decision-making continuum) and summarize three leading models of group decision-making dynamics within the literature of FPDM: groupthink, polythink, and con-div. We discuss the foundations and current trends in the application of each model to foreign policy and national security decision making. We will demonstrate how scholars have utilized these leading models to explain foreign policy decisions. However, these scholars have not yet linked group dynamics to stages in the policy cycle. Likewise, none of these scholars have demonstrated how group dynamics may shift through stages of a foreign policy decision. Our review constructs a bridge between stages of the policy cycle and specific group decision-making models to expand on our understanding of foreign policy decision making. To illustrate the applicability of this interdisciplinary endeavor, we provide a brief example of group decision-making models within the context of policy stages of the Obama administration's actions in the 2016 Raqqa Campaign against the Islamic State.

The Policy Cycle

Since Lasswell (1956) first put forward the policy cycle model to illustrate the life cycle through which policy passes, the study of policy processes and stages has burgeoned into a diverse and thriving field. Lasswell originally identified seven stages: intelligence, promotion, prescription, invocation, application, termination, and appraisal. Hargrove (1975) further invigorated the policy process approach by identifying "implementation" as a missing stage in the policy-

making process. Jann and Wegrich (2006) summarized the current differentiation of the stages as: agenda setting, policy formulation, decision making, implementation, and evaluation (eventually leading to termination) as "the conventional way to describe the chronology of policy process" (p. 43). As an important step in bridging between public policy and FPDM, we utilize the policy cycle framework. This is because of the openness of the policy cycle to other theoretical and empirical studies (Schlager, 1999, p. 239, 258). Jann and Wegrich (2006) contend that "the model itself has been highly successful as a basic framework for the field of policy studies and became the starting point of a variety of typologies of the policy process" and conclude that "the policy cycle perspective will continue to provide an important conceptual framework in policy research" due to its "receptivity for other and new approaches in the wider political science literature" (p. 57). They further explain how scholars of policy studies seldom apply the whole policy cycle framework but rather utilize specific stages to "guide the selection of questions and variables" and that research is generally "related to particular stages of the policy process rather than on the whole cycle" (Jann & Wegrich, 2007, p. 45). This review will focus on the stages of policy formulation, decision making, and implementation.

We acknowledge the major criticisms to the policy cycle, termed by one scholar as the "textbook approach" (Nakamura, 1987). Noted policy scholars Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith (1993) argued in favor of more complex models that reflect complex realities. They developed the Advocacy Coalition Framework as a more interactive, inclusive, and nuanced picture of policy processes (see also Sabatier, 1999; Weible & Jenkins-Smith, 2016). While the linear approach of stages in the policy process has been challenged, it is nevertheless useful, particularly in the effort to construct a bridge between foreign policy group decision-making models and public policy frameworks.

Foreign policy is distinct from public policy in many aspects. Schafer and Crichlow (2010) explain that advisors around the president (1) have unique attributes providing for "more opportunities to overcome otherwise insurmountable bureaucratic conflicts or the inertia-like power of entrenched routines," (2) are less likely to be bound by enduring norms of procedure than many other groups," (3) have a "limited life span (they change in fundamental ways with every change in administration, and their format, design, and practices may be greatly altered during any particular government)," and (4) experience a greater frequency in change of "the nature of the rules and operational procedures that are utilized at different times" (p. 22).

Despite the differences between public and foreign policy, we agree with Archuleta's (2016) conclusion, that even though "Defense and national security subsystems are far more insular and less pluralistic than domestic policy subsystems, the construct [of the policy cycle] still applies" (p. S51). We now address the stage-specific definition for policy formulation, decision-making, and implementation, followed by a review of small group dynamics and the link between the two. We conclude with an example of the Raqqa 2016 decisions of the Obama administration.

Policy Formulation

Public policy literature defines formulation as a stage that "involves identifying and/or crafting a set of policy alternatives to address a problem, and narrowing that set of solutions in preparation for the final policy decision" (Sidney, 2006, p. 79). According to policy cycle literature, policy formulation precedes and is distinct from decision making (Sidney, 2006). The demand placed on the group is to identify and craft a set of policy alternatives. Based on these factors from the public policy literature above, the decision unit is faced with at least two major dilemmas as they work to fulfill the demand. Ideally, the group must first think expansively, providing for a full spectrum of options. Scholars Bobrow and Dryzek (1987) recommend that policy formulation should offer options that include no intervention, the status quo, and solutions not in line with current practice. In other words, a team of policy makers are *expected* to demonstrate to the decision maker/s that they have thought broadly and deeply about all viable options and can adeptly present the costs and benefits of each. Second, there is a dilemma resulting from the demand to reduce. Policy formulators must select "from among [viable options] a smaller set of possible solutions from which decision makers actually will choose [by applying a] set of criteria to the alternatives, for example judging their feasibility, political acceptability, costs, benefits, and such" (Sidney, 2006, p. 79). Schattschneider (1960) reminds us that, "the definition of the alternatives is the choice of conflicts, and the choice of conflicts allocates power" (p. 68). Clearly reducing options involves conflicts as well as heuristics and biases. Yet, in comparison to the stage of decision making, the stage of policy formulation is generally more conducive to expansive thinking and is therefore likely to foster a different group dynamic.

Decision Making

Both policy cycle literature and policy network theories provide a framework in which formulation and decision making are distinct processes warranting individual scrutiny. In the study of group decision making, the unit responsible for this stage has been called the "final decision unit" (Schafer & Crichlow, 2010, p. 18). At the decision-making stage the demand is to analyze a reduced set of options in preparation for selecting the most optimal path for achieving the strategic goal. Unlike policy formulation, there is not a demand for a comprehensive set of alternatives, but rather a demand for reducing and finally excluding all options, save one. The dilemma for the decision unit is how to reduce the set of options to a single course of action. Individuals within the group must "order [their] world, making its complexities somewhat simpler . . . unconsciously strip[ping] the nuances, context, and subtleties out of the problems they face. . ." (Stein, 2016, p. 133). There are numerous theories on how decisions are made. Stein (2016, 2017) provides a comprehensive review.

Implementation

Implementation in public policy literature is defined as "what happens between the establishment of an apparent intention on the part of the government to do

something, or to stop doing something, and the ultimate impact in the world of action" (O'Toole, 2000, p. 266). Jann and Wegrich (2006, p. 52) outline three core demands of implementation: (1) specification of program details (i.e., how and by which agencies/organizations should the program be executed? How should the law/program be interpreted?), (2) allocation of resources (i.e., how are budgets distributed? Which personnel will execute the program? Which units of an organization will be in charge for the execution?), and (3) decisions (i.e., how will decisions of single cases be carried out?).

These demands require process-oriented decision making involving numerous, real-time, micro-level decisions. During previous stages, it has been assumed that there are appropriate means (capabilities and tools) for the selected option, thus at the stage of implementation the demand "presupposes not only the capacity to pursue goals with effective *means*, but more generally the ability of governments to extract and mobilize resources from their audiences, both material and immaterial, and channel them into the pursuit of given objectives (Mastanduno, Lake, & Ikenberry, 1989). These are complex demands and are directly put to the test during implementation, a major differentiation from the two preceding stages and likely to facilitate a distinct group dynamic. Each of the stages of the policy cycle discussed above, and their unique demands and dilemmas, is associated with specific models of group decision-making dynamics (Mintz & Wayne, 2016a). In the next section we review the major models.

Key Models of Group Decision-Making Dynamics in Foreign Policy

Within the discipline of FPDM, there are several research agendas (Hudson, 2016). This review is focused on the scholarship surrounding small-group dynamics.[1] Within this genre, scholars are concerned with the consequences of the psychological dynamics within small groups on the outcomes of foreign policy decisions. Groupthink, summed up as premature consensus seeking, is possibly "the best known group-level phenomenon affecting foreign-policy decision making" (Schafer & Crichlow, 2010, p. 23). The term has infiltrated the nomenclature of multiple academic, business, and even social spheres. However, since the term was first introduced by Janis (1972), as well as the formal inquiry into the effects of group dynamics on foreign policy decision making, the field has undergone significant development in terms of contributions and advancements. The next section will address what we identify as three waves of research. These will be discussed within the context of the group decision-making continuum and the specific models of groupthink, polythink, and con-div. We utilize this construct in this review because it conceptualizes and categorizes the literature of small group dynamics more broadly and effectively than existing frameworks of group dynamics. The next section briefly describes the group decision-making continuum, followed by a more in-depth discussion of each model, and how it is identified by particular symptoms, as well as each model's impact on specific waves of research.

The Group Decision-Making Continuum

Mintz and Wayne (2016a) introduced the group *decision-making continuum*, arguing that a balanced decision-making process lies between two opposite extremes that are equally dysfunctional and destructive. They conceptualized a framework in which "completely cohesive" (groupthink) anchors one end of the spectrum and "completely fragmented" (polythink) anchors the other. They explain that con-div exists on the group decision-making continuum within a central range where neither groupthink nor polythink dominates. They explain that it is within this range where there is a greater possibility for optimal decision making to be crafted. Each group dynamic on the continuum exhibits particular symptoms, allowing for scholars and policy analysts to identify and diagnose which group dynamic is at work within a given decision-making unit. We now review the concept of groupthink within the context of the first wave of research into group dynamics and their impact on foreign policy decision making.

Groupthink

Janis (1972, 1982) conceived of groupthink as a linear model of broadly defective group processes that flow from seven antecedents which included group cohesiveness, four types of structural faults of the organization, and two types of provocative situational contexts. This, he argued, leads to problematic concurrence-seeking tendencies and groupthink. The symptoms included the illusion of invulnerability, belief in inherent group morality, collective rationalization, stereotypes of outsiders, self-censorship, the illusion of unanimity, pressure on dissenters, and self-appointed mind guards. These symptoms resulted in specific defects including an incomplete survey of alternatives and objectives, failure to re-examine preferred choices, failure to re-examine rejected alternatives, poor information search, selective bias in processing information, and the failure to develop contingency plans. The final result is a "low probability of a successful outcome" (Janis, 1972, 1982).

The First Wave of Group Dynamics Scholarship

The first wave of scholarship following Janis's model is characterized by scholars applying, reinforcing, and amending or expanding the groupthink model. Those applying the theory focused on single case studies confirming, and in some cases excluding, groupthink as a significant cause of policy failure. The term groupthink became expansive and often disconnected from the entirety of Janis's model, prompting scholars Schafer and Crichlow to note that "If one reads 25 different articles on groupthink, one is likely to see 25 different definitions of the concept" (2017, p. 1).

Other scholars raised some questions about the soundness of the groupthink model. In their review of groupthink literature, Schafer and Crichlow note one category of scholars as "those who modified Janis's framework somewhat, or placed more emphasis on one of Janis's concepts as key" (2017, p. 4). We identify these

scholars as being part of the first wave. They were the first to interact with the model and while they did challenge many aspects of the concept, they did not offer something wholly "other" than groupthink but rather noted weaknesses and offered corrective insights by adding or changing emphasis on specific variables or antecedent conditions. The general focus become centered on groupthink avoidance and how to engage in more effective group decision making. For example, Janis (1982); 't Hart (1990); and Aldag and Fuller (1993) placed heavy emphasis on one of Janis's key antecedent conditions, group isolation. Gladstein (1984) and Aldag and Fuller (1993) reinforced Janis's concern with group homogeneity, demonstrating that heterogeneity among group members yields a better quality of group interactions, perspectives, and information in group problem solving. Callaway, Marriott, and Esser (1985) stressed another antecedent condition, the importance of the role of the leader. Herek, Janis, and Huth (1987) quantitatively tested and confirmed parts of Janis's causal chain.

Key scholars developed strategies for avoiding groupthink dynamics. George (1972) designed the multiple advocacy model in which leaders encourage debate and "harness diversity of views and interests in the interest of rational policy making" (p. 751). Johnson (1974) advanced the Competitive Advisory System, in which the leader conceals his views through the process and engineers strenuous debate among group members.

Other scholars expanded on variables Janis neglected to emphasize. White (1998) introduced the term collective efficacy, wherein a group overestimates their likelihood of being effective leading to an increase in high-level risk taking. McCauley (1998) raised the problem of uncertainty, arguing that uncertainty introduces the threat of failure in a given situation which induces group members to seek support, increasing premature group compliance and concurrence. Vertzberger (1990) focused on the impact of cultures and subcultures on the decision process. Stern and Sundelius (1997) argued that New Group Syndrome explains conformity because new or ad hoc groups often lack established procedural norms.

The literature on groupthink has become extensive and dominant in the study of small-group FPDM. While the contributions of the first wave advanced our understanding of many aspects of FPDM, they also formed an unfortunate bias in analysis at the group level such that poor group processes became almost synonymous with Janis's concept of groupthink.

First-wave researchers were instrumental in identifying tensions and inconsistencies in the groupthink model. This was an important step in revealing heterogeneity across situations and group characteristics. However, the baseline continued to be groupthink. While individual scholars challenged and/or refined several aspects of the theory, some presented the dynamics of group decision making as Janis (1972) did in his introduction of the theory such that there are good dynamics (vigilant decision making) and the opposite of good dynamics (groupthink). To illustrate this, McCauley's (1998) review of groupthink literature stated that "ideal decision making emerges as the inverse of the definition of groupthink" (p. 143). In their 2017 review of groupthink literature, scholars Schafer and Crichlow explained that "What Janis described fundamentally was a limited, circumscribed decision making process that was not thorough or complete or unbiased" (p. 4). They concluded, "We can call all

of those parts and pieces something like the syndrome of groupthink, or we could simply call it the *opposite of* careful, thorough, rational decision making" (Schafer & Crichlow, 2017, p. 2). The success of the concept of *groupthink* had a rather astonishing blinding effect to the possibility of its polar opposite. This is likely because its opposite was conceived of, by many leading scholars, as effective group processing. The dualistic framework of groupthink vs. good began to shift with second wave scholars which we discuss under the term polythink.

Polythink

Mintz, Mishal, and Morag (2005) presented the group decision-making model of polythink, which was further developed by Mintz and Wayne (2014, 2016a). These authors defined polythink as "a group dynamic whereby different members in a decision-making unit espouse a plurality of opinions and offer divergent policy prescriptions, and even dissent, which can result in intra-group conflict and a fragmented, disjointed decision-making process" (Mintz & Wayne, 2016a, p. 3). They presented the symptoms of polythink as: greater likelihood of intragroup conflict, greater likelihood of leaks, confusion, and lack of communication; greater likelihood of framing effects; adoption of positions with the lowest common denominator; decision paralysis; limited review of policy options; and no room for reappraisal of previously rejected policy options. They outline five key explanations of the dynamic as: (1) the institutional "turf wars" explanation, (2) the political explanation, (3) the normative explanation, (4) the expert/novice explanation, and (5) the leader/followers explanation. Mintz and Wayne noted that polythink is a *contingent* phenomenon "dependent on a variety of factors such as government structure (e.g., parliamentary vs. presidential) and advisory group structure (competitive vs. collegial)" as well as leadership style (2016b, p. 11). Similar to Janis, they also list and stress the importance of specific contextual variables.

Through the conceptualizing of the term polythink and the broad application and testing of it in multiple foreign policy case studies, scholars have demonstrated the soundness of the concept and the need for this paradigm shift in the study of group dynamics. The model has been effective in shedding light on defective group processes in foreign policy decision making that have been concealed by the great shadow cast by the dominance of the groupthink model.

The Second Wave of Group Dynamics Scholarship

In what we identify as the second wave of group dynamics scholarship, several scholars began to challenge Janis's central concept of group consensus seeking as the dominant cause of dysfunctional group dynamic. Some of the earliest work in this vein we find in Callaway et al. (1985) who demonstrated that groups composed of high dominance members with dominant leaders make "better decisions in faster time". Diehl and Stroebe (1987) demonstrated results that group productivity loss is associated with increased group participation due to group members' having to wait

to express an idea thus becoming distracted and unable to remember their own ideas. They were also less capable of generating new ideas. Aldag and Fuller (1993) touched on the possibility that groups may become burdened by a deluge of poor suggestions from individual members. Scholars 't Hart (1998) and Stern and Sundelius (1997) focused on uncovering different group interaction patterns, acknowledging that groupthink should be considered as one of many explanations of failed group decision making.

't Hart (1998) emphasized the need to move beyond the groupthink model and consider that small groups function in many different ways. He encouraged researchers to consider that, in some cases, competing values within a decision-making unit may result in "the inability to resolve conflict and to reach any collective decision at all" ('t Hart, 1998, p. 312). In response to Janis's (1972) method for preventing groupthink, as well as George's multiple advocacy model and Johnson's (1974) competitive advisory system, 't Hart argued that the tactics would "at best . . . slow down the policymaking process; at worst, they may inadvertently result in a breakdown of collegiality in government"('t Hart, 1998, p. 316). He was concerned that "By institutionalizing dissent and opening up group deliberation to a wide array of outside forces, the decision making process may break down under political factionalism and bureaucratic in-fighting" (p. 316). His perspective helped to broaden the scope of academics regarding the multiple possibilities for group decision-making failures. These groupthink avoidance tactics are distinct from the polythink phenomenon. Mintz and Wayne note that "polythink is more a reflection of the group *dynamic*. Leaders do not seek or engineer it. It is a description of reality" (2016a, p. 34). They explain how groupthink avoidance strategies can "descend into destructive polythink if not effectively managed by the leader" (Mintz & Wayne, 2016a, p. 34).

Thus, in the second wave, several scholars ebbed away at the notion of groupthink as the governing concept of dysfunctional group dynamics. Mintz et al. (2005) took an important step in removing undue emphasis on consensus seeking as the vanguard of group dysfunctions by identifying and conceptualizing polythink, the diametric opposite of groupthink. The dominant question in the second wave became "not whether groupthink fits or can be made to fit 'the facts' of the case in question, but rather which of a number of competing or complementary group interaction patterns best captures what went on in the decision group or groups under study" (Stern & Sundelius, 1997, p. 125). Stern and Sundelius reviewed patterns in the literature and concluded that "because these interaction patterns are drawn from differing discourses and idiosyncratic conceptualizations by individual authors, together they do not yet meet the standard typological criteria of mutual exclusiveness and collective exhaustiveness (1997, p. 125). This begins to shift in the third wave which we associate with and discuss under the concept of con-div and the decision-making continuum.

Con-Div

Any theory of how decision making can go wrong "must contain at least the seeds of a theory of how decision making can go right" (McCauley, 1998, p. 143). Mintz and Wayne (2016a) developed the concept of a successful group dynamic

called "con-div" in which "the convergence and divergence of group members' viewpoints are more or less balanced and in equilibrium" (p. 9). They explained that in a con-div dynamic, the group does not suffer from a dominating dynamic of either groupthink or polythink but is able to balance and utilize converging and diverging view-points in the process of making a decision. The dynamic, like groupthink and polythink, exhibits particular symptoms which these authors identify as: a clearer policy direction than in polythink with little or no confusion over the policy direction, fewer group information processing biases than in groupthink, less likelihood of ignoring critical information than in groupthink, operating in one voice, too much harmony that may hinder real debate, less likelihood of decision paralysis, and finally a greater likelihood of a "good" decision compared with groupthink or polythink (Mintz & Wayne, 2016a).

Mintz and Wayne (2016a) demonstrated symptoms of the con-div dynamic in the decision making of the Bush administration regarding the 2006 Surge in Iraq. Other articles have referenced the con-div dynamic and the group decision-making continuum (Barr & Mintz, 2018; Mintz & Schneiderman, 2017, Mintz & Wayne, 2016b; Sofrin, 2017). The model has fewer case study examples than the groupthink or polythink models due to (1) the newness of the model. It was introduced in 2016. And (2) the model deals with effective decision making and many case studies in FPDM deal with situations of defective decision making. However, what sets the con-div model apart from the other models of how decision making can go right is the more holistic decision-making process it advocates. Its presence at the center of the group decision-making continuum, and within academic literature on group decision-making dynamics, is essential for its normative as well as practical utility. An excellent avenue for future research would be to define and clarify where the boundaries lie between groupthink and con-div and con-div and polythink. We expand upon this below in terms of the direction for the third wave of group dynamics research.

The Third Wave of Group Dynamics Scholarship

For the better part of the last half century of academic research into group decision-making processes, the field has lumbered under the dichotomy of good versus groupthink. This resulted in what Schafer and Crichlow (2017) identified as "major tensions in the groupthink literature" including contradictory findings related to core elements of Janis's theory such as the effects of too little consensus versus too much, too little information versus too much, and leaders who are too dominant versus leaders who are too passive.

Scholars catching the third wave of group dynamics research conceive of group dynamics as existing on a continuum where good processes and interactions are found as the balance between extremes. This is reflective of Aristotle's golden mean wherein a virtue lies between the excess of a particular vice on one end of the spectrum and the deficiency of the particular vice on the other end. For example, con-div is the balance between too much group harmony on one end (cohesive groupthink) and too little harmony on the other end (conflictive polythink).

Third-wave scholars are demonstrating symptoms and cases along the entire continuum of group decision making, indicating the variations of group dynamics possible yet within a comprehensible framework for analysis. The group decision-making continuum provides an effective framework allowing scholars to identify important anomalies or puzzles such as: what level of group conflict is productive and at what level does it become counter-productive; at what point does information overload the process and at what point is it too constricted; what type of information is productive and what type is counterproductive? These and other threshold questions are more easily asked and understood in light of the continuum framework (Mintz & Wayne, 2016a). There is a need within the field for scholars to construct and apply a scale to the continuum framework; i.e., the absence of X or Y or Z, or the presence of A or B or C, as well as how the "balanced" area of con-div is distinct from the extremes of groupthink and polythink. Answering these questions will offer more effective and applicable advice to practitioners by helping them to identify when and how dysfunctional dynamics (across a broad spectrum) are likely to be reversed and moved into a more functional direction. And as Stein (2017) noted, "the better the baseline, the better the choice of puzzles and the more productive the research agenda" (p. S259).

The present wave of scholarship continues to include characteristics of the first and second wave. For example, Dubé and Thiers (2017) utilized the groupthink model to explain contradictory patterns related to integration processes in Latin America. Forsberg and Pursiainen (2017) also utilize the groupthink dynamic as part of their explanation of Russia's annexation of the Crimean Peninsula in 2014. Other scholars are engaged in the "groupthink or its opposite" debate. For example, Monroy and Sánchez (2017) challenged findings of the groupthink model in explaining the Latin American foreign policy decision processes while negotiating with the United States about the major financial aid package, *Plan Columbia*. They found that decision makers benefited from group cohesiveness and concurrence-seeking tendencies. Kelman, Sanders, and Pandit (2017) argue that "what distinguishes outstanding executives from others is not vigilance but decisiveness." They argue that, more than groupthink, the danger within government decision making may be "paralysis by analysis."

Several recent publications are demonstrating the effectiveness and broad applicability of the polythink model. Scholars have yielded key insights about the negative impact of polythink in key U.S. foreign policy failures such as Pearl Harbor and 9/11 as well as the Israeli foreign policy fiasco of the Yom Kippur War (Mintz & Schneiderman, 2017). Sofrin (2017) analyzed the group dynamic within the subgroups of foreign policy decision making in the Israeli government. Barr and Mintz (2018) analyzed group dynamics in the U.S. administration and in the U.S.-led coalition against ISIS. Expanding beyond U.S. foreign policy cases, Maor, Tosun, and Jordan (2017) point to how dysfunctional group dynamics of groupthink and polythink can be linked to disproportionate policy responses to climate change. Kelman et al. (2017) pointed to one of the symptoms of polythink "paralysis by analysis" in their challenge of groupthink model assumptions. These findings have been important in confirming the polythink theory as well as the group dynamic continuum framework.

Assessment

The first wave of research focusing on groupthink avoidance and how to engage in more effective group decision making was key in demonstrating the importance of small group processes in the outcome of foreign policy decisions. The second wave of group dynamic research expanded the concept of dysfunctional group dynamics beyond groupthink by presenting effects in the opposite direction. This was an important step in identifying tensions and contradictions in theories and models of group dynamics. Third-wave scholars have moved beyond the old tensions of "competing perspectives" and are poised to address more complex questions relating to thresholds as well as situational contexts. We now move from the connecting stages of the policy cycle to the analysis of the FPDM group decision-making models.

Policy Stages and the Dominant Group Dynamic

All policy groups and all policy contexts are obviously not identical. Stern and Sundelius (1997) noted that despite this, "the bulk of small group literature is directed at the case where a single, stable, easily identifiable, and (in the case of foreign policy literature) top-level decision group, is the relevant decision unit" (p. 146). They posited that "a succession of radically different interaction patterns might well emerge if one tracked group decision making over time through the course of a particular crisis or policy problem." The policy cycle framework offers an excellent framework to trace decision making through different contexts. Stein recently expressed the need for this in FPA stating that while scholarship has given great weight to the decisions of the presidents who reserve to themselves the central decisions in foreign policy that "it is in the framing of decisions and in the implementation phase that more complex models are necessary (2016, p. 144). Consequently, it is incumbent upon scholars to engage extensively, not only with "the decision" but also with the pre and post decision stages. The policy cycle is formulated precisely for this type of analysis. As discussed above, each stage of the cycle has specific demands and dilemmas. We now demonstrate how these stage-specific factors are associated with symptoms of particular group decision-making models. Specifically, we focus on policy formulation, decision making, and implementation.

During formulation, the demand placed on the group is to identify and craft a set of policy alternatives and to narrow that set of solutions in preparation for the final policy decision (Sidney, 2006, p. 79). The requirement to provide multiple and diverse options at the stage of policy formulation facilitates the more positive and constructive con-div dynamic within a decision unit. There are circumstances where specific individuals, known as policy entrepreneurs (David, 2015; Kingdon, 1995; Smith & Larimer, 2009; Zahariadis, 2014), manipulate the process even in this early stage. However, the demand for inclusive options makes this far more difficult at this stage than at the stage of decision making. The demand for broad, yet feasible, solutions means that there will be fewer group information-processing biases and less likelihood of ignoring critical information at this stage than at the stages of

decision making and implementation. This is reinforced by the general practice of policymakers to include specialists for the solicitation of advice. Because information in today's highly complex world is no longer centralized, architects of policy increasingly invite specialists and institutions to play an increasingly important role in communicating knowledge (Albaek, Christiansen, & Togeby, 2003). There may be a tendency for the group to operate in one voice; however, this is less likely at this stage than other stages. Contrary to another con-div symptom, we do not expect that there is likely to be too much harmony due to the demand for a choice set across a spectrum of options (Bobrow & Dryzek, 1987). We identify five of six con-div symptoms as more likely at this stage than during decision making or implementation. Scholars associated the formulation of the Bush administration's Surge decision in Iraq with the con-div dynamic, explaining that "Unlike the re-invasion period . . . the Administration's decision makers strongly benefited from the diverse and conflicting points of view regarding the best strategy for moving forward in the Iraq War" (Mintz & Wayne, 2016a, p. 58).

Several studies have demonstrated that at the stage of decision making, the dominant group dynamic is reflective of the groupthink model. In an effort to meet the stage-specific demand to analyze a reduced set of options in preparation for selecting the most optimal course of action to accomplish the strategic goal, the group becomes more susceptible to groupthink dynamics. As expressed by Janis's model, in order to reach a collective decision, group members are more likely to suffer from groupthink symptoms than during formulation and implementation. These include premature consensus, close-mindedness, overestimation of the group's power and morality, rationalization to discount warnings, pressure toward uniformity such as self-censorship, the illusion of unanimity, and pressure on dissenters through self-appointed mind guards. Six of seven symptoms of groupthink are more associated with the decision-making stage. Stereotyped views may be just as likely in the stage of formulation. However, no symptoms of groupthink are "more" likely during formulation or implementation. Most of the groupthink literature is centered on this stage of the policy cycle. Janis's case studies relating to groupthink decision-making dynamics related to Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor (1941), the escalation of the war in Korea (1950), Bay of Pigs operation (1961), and the involvement of the U.S. in the Vietnam conflict under President Johnson focus on the decision stage. More recent examples of groupthink during this stage include the 2003 decision of the Bush administration to invade Iraq (Mintz & Wayne, 2016a), the 2014 decision of the Obama administration to fight ISIS in Iraq and Syria (Mintz & Wayne, 2016a), the 2014 decision by Russia to annex the Crimean Peninsula (Forsberg & Pursiainen, 2017), and the policy decisions related to integration processes in Latin America (Dubé & Thiers, 2017).

During the stage of implementation, the demand is for the group to translate macro-level strategic objectives into micro-level tactical demands within an environment in flux. This stage-specific demand, and resulting dilemmas, make the decision unit during implementation more prone to a polythink dynamic. We associate five of seven polythink symptoms as more dominant during implementation, including: intragroup conflict, leaks, confusion; lack of communication; adopting the lowest

common denominator positions; decision paralysis; and limited review of policy options. Two of the symptoms of polythink may also be likely in both the preceding stages of policy formulation and decision making. These include: no room for reappraisal of previously rejected policy options and framing effects. There is existing literature demonstrating the polythink dynamic during the process of implementation. Sofrin (2017) documents the polythink dynamic within the Israeli cabinet's decision making during the implementation of operation *Protective Edge*. Mintz and Wayne (2016a) uncover the polythink syndrome during the implementation of the Obama administration's initial decision to combat ISIS in Syria wherein decisions related to the tactics of whether to use force, sanctions, or support the rebels resulted in a dominating polythink dynamic. The decision of Israel on October 6, 1973 not to pre-empt with an attack on Syria and Egypt was also a product of the polythink syndrome (Mintz & Schneiderman, 2017).

The previous section highlighted how scholars have utilized three leading models of group decision-making dynamics—groupthink, con-div, and polythink—to explain foreign policy decisions. However, these scholars have not linked group dynamics to stages of the policy cycle or demonstrated how group dynamics may shift through stages of the same foreign policy decision. In the next section we illustrate how this could be done. While our illustration only presents an example of connecting the policy cycle framework with group decision-making models, it reveals how it can yield fruitful insights in this direction. Barr and Mintz (2018) demonstrated how polythink in the Obama administration led to paralysis in the 2016 campaign against ISIS in Raqqa, Syria. We illustrate here how this case study actually focused on the stage of implementation. We further illustrate that in this same decision regarding the 2016 campaign in Raqqa there is evidence of a con-div dynamic during the stage of policy formulation, whereas during the actual decision-making stage, the group dynamic is more reflective of groupthink. This example demonstrates how dominant group dynamics can be related to the policy cycle and how these group dynamics can shift from stage to stage.

An Example: The Raqqa Offensive and Group Dynamics within Stages
of the Policy Cycle

Members of President Obama's National Security decision-making unit relating to operations against ISIS included, but were not limited to, Vice President Joe Biden; Secretary of State John Kerry; National Security Council (NSC) Advisor Susan Rice; Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter; Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Joseph Dunford; Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) John Brennan; Director of National Intelligence James Clapper; White House Chief of Staff Denis McDonough; and Middle East director on the NSC Robert Malley, also known in the press as the ISIS Czar (Chuck, 2015). During the stage of implementation there is also evidence that Ambassador to the United Nations Samantha Power and Ambassador to Turkey John Bass were active and influential advisors within the decision unit (Entous, Jaffe, & Ryan, 2017).

In the fall of 2015, Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter presented the president with options for how to deal the final blow to ISIS in Syria and deprive them of territorial holdings in their last major stronghold in Raqqa (Department of Defense [DOD], Office of Press Operations, 2016a). The con-div dynamic characterizes the policy formulation process within the Obama administration. Secretary Carter, a recent replacement of defense secretary Chuck Hagel, presented balanced, careful, and comprehensive options to the president. Press briefings reveal several options across a broad spectrum including: (1) going it alone with American troops on the ground; (2) refraining from any intervention; and (3) recruiting, training, and facilitating local troops on the ground to defeat ISIS (DOD Office of Press Operations, 2016a). These options were reviewed by multiple agencies. Typically, presidents hold National Security Council meetings at the White House. However, in an effort to create and "illustrate the multifaceted U.S. approach to defeating IS" (Lederman, 2016), President Obama held NSC meetings at the Pentagon, CIA, and State Department. While official plans were drawn up by the Pentagon by Secretary Carter and the joint-chiefs, officials from the Department of State and the CIA were engaged in the process. Defense officials directly referenced intelligence estimates in connection to the urgency of the campaign against ISIS in Raqqa (DOD Office of Press Operations, 2016b, 2016c). CIA director Brennan was very vocal in his discussion of the external threat emanating from Raqqa as the center for plotting and planning of global terror attacks (Starr, 2016).

The con-div dynamic facilitated the inclusion of multiple opinions. Beyond the inter-agency cooperation, Secretary Carter invested months soliciting advice from multiple and diverse actors including top generals down to combat soldiers in the field as well as international leaders within the U.S.-led coalition (DOD Office of Press Operations, 2016a). The inclusion of multiple perspectives made it far less likely for the president to ignore critical information than under a groupthink dynamic. And though it took time to consult with individuals and groups outside of the decision unit, this did not significantly delay action or result in paralysis. Also, the stage-specific demand for the inclusion of multiple options regarding tactical operations made decision paralysis less likely. Based on evidence available of the administration's efforts to involve advisors of multiple government agencies, as well as input from generals and troops on the ground, perspectives were clearly balanced and productive, yet the administration was able to speak for the most part in one voice with regard to the broad mission against ISIS. Secretary Carter has written about his extensive effort to shift the mission focus away from the "degrade" aspect with a focus on a "lasting defeat" of ISIS (Carter, 2017). This exact wording is evident in the 2016 messaging of administration officials: in a speech by the president (White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 2016b), comments by NSC Advisor Susan Rice (White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 2016a), remarks by Vice President Biden (White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 2016c), messaging of the White House Press, Office of the Press Secretary Secretary Josh Earnest (2016d), as well as many other top officials and military leaders (DOD Office of Press Operations, 2016c, 2016d). Yet not all con-div symptoms fit the formulation stage of the Raqqa campaign. Anonymous sources revealed that there were top advisors warning against

toppling ISIS in Raqqa within the established time frame for fear that it would lead to increased regional instability (Rogin, 2016). However, the policy formulation process reveals a purposeful decision unit engaged in a balanced, careful, and comprehensive effort to formulate broad policies based on multiple, diverse, and diverging opinions. Overall, six of the seven symptoms of con-div fit the formulation phase of the Raqqa campaign. We now turn to the stage of decision making.

Group dynamics during the decision-making stage in the Raqqa campaign were very different from the stage of policy formulation. Unlike the balanced and careful con-div dynamic that characterized the formulation of the policy, the group during the decision-making stage reflected a pattern of groupthink symptoms. To begin with, the antecedent conditions of groupthink were textbook. There was strong group cohesiveness. Once the United States had engaged in Syria, there was unusual bipartisan support in the highly polarized Congress. In fact each side was pressuring Obama to "increase the pace and intensity of the campaign against the Islamic State following the recent terrorist attacks in San Bernardino, California, and Paris" (Jaffe, 2015). Second, Obama acted as an impartial leader, "direct[ing] aides to examine all proposals that could accelerate the fight against the Islamic State," explaining that he wanted an offensive "well underway before he left office" (Reuters Staff, 2016). Third, there was an intense provocative situational context with each international terror attack by ISIS. Secretary Carter asserted that the attacks "underscored, for anybody who doubted it, the necessity of this campaign" (DOD, Office of Press Operations, 2016a). In October 2016, Carter announced the timeframe for the Raqqa campaign, saying that it would take place "within weeks," and affirmed the administration's decision to "enable local, motivated forces" to fight against ISIS in Raqqa (DOD, Office of the Press Secretary, 2016a). He justified the urgency, citing intelligence estimates of the CIA (Starr, 2016).

In accordance with the symptoms of groupthink, it is clear that administration officials demonstrated an overestimation of their capabilities to maneuver proxies to accomplish the strategic objectives of the United States. This is exemplified in Carter's comment that "the United States is not just the finest fighting force the world has ever seen…, but as Ramadi showed, our unmatched capabilities can enable and multiply the power and force of our local partners (DOD, Office of the Press Secretary, 2016a). Reflective of the groupthink dynamic, individuals within the decision unit exhibited overconfidence about U.S. capabilities. Secretary Carter's statement reveals that the administration firmly believed the United States had the power to maneuver the situation and bring the victory in their established timeframe (DOD, Office of Press Operations, 2016a). Administration officials locked into a preferred course of action, to utilize an essentially Arab force to liberate Raqqa (Wintour, 2016). The administration discounted warnings about the battle readiness of the local Arab forces. An earlier attempt at using local Arab fighters to fight ISIS in Syria provided graphic evidence of the dangers of this option. In July 2015, the first U.S.-backed Arab fighters in Syria were dead or missing just days after being commissioned (Miklaszewski, 2015). The administration discounted this event, selectively interpreting information in favor of their strategic objective, as is predicted by the groupthink model.

Other key groupthink symptoms are evident at the decision-making stage. With the resignation of Defense Secretary Hagel, rumors swirled in the press that there was pressure toward conformity within the administration (Goldberg, 2014). And as Janis predicted, this leads to self-censorship and the illusion of unanimity. While there was near unanimity related to the strategic goal to defeat ISIS in Raqqa, the specifics regarding tactical questions were anything but settled. This is evident in the statement of General Votel, commander of U.S. Special Operations who testified to the Senate Armed Services Committee, that he had "concerns" and when questioned about the capabilities of the United States to recapture both Mosul and Raqqa, he testified that "there have yet to be plans developed to take away ISIS's Syrian capital of Raqqa" (Guardian Staff, 2016). Obama's team of advisors demonstrated a pattern of groupthink wherein the strategic objective was quickly agreed upon without due diligence to the tactical complexities. This becomes more apparent in the stage of implementation, to which we now turn.

In the stage of implementation, the demand of a decision unit is to translate strategic objectives into tactical operations. This often involves addressing the complex questions that are often brushed aside in earlier stages of the policy process (O'Toole, 2000). Despite public announcements by U.S. and international coalition leaders that the liberating force would be a local Arab force, the internal decision making during implementation was still focused on what composition of forces could actually accomplish the strategic objective within the timeframe and without repeating the embarrassing and costly debacle of 2015 (Schmitt, 2016). This led to serious disagreements (Entous et al., 2017). The tactical options included liberating Raqqa with the battle-ready YPG Kurdish fighters, the broadly accepted but untested Arab-only force, or an Arab force led by Turkish troops. These tactical options were discussed during formulation, but no immediate decision was required. During the decision-making phase the administration chose to use the term "local forces" avoiding the tactical choice of the exact composition of forces (DOD, Office of Press Operations, 2016a, 2016c). However, in the stage of implementation, soldiers needed to be deployed and the decision of which forces would best achieve the strategic objective needed to be made.

Within Obama's administration there were long and contentious debates over the force structure (Entous et al., 2017). Two subgroups emerged. Secretary Carter as well as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Dunford, were in favor of arming the Syrian Kurds directly. The competing perspective came from National Security Advisor Susan Rice; Ambassador to the UN, Samantha Power; and Ambassador to Turkey, John Bass. These advisors to the president adamantly opposed the use of Kurdish YPG fighters on the grounds that it would severely compromise U.S. relations with Turkey. They argued for local Arab fighters reinforced by soldiers promised by Turkey (Entous et al., 2017).

The policy was fought out between two distinct institutional lines, the State Department and the Pentagon, each perceiving their needs to be in direct competition with the needs of the other. The result would be "dozens of meetings of President Obama's top national security team, scores of draft battle plans and hundreds of hours of anguished, late-night debates" (Entous et al., 2017). Former Secretary of Defense Hagel's account of meetings directed by Susan Rice sheds some light on the process

inside the National Security Council which typified polythink. He complained that "everybody had a chance to talk. We rarely got to a conclusion or a decision, [with] too many people talking, and I think that always leads to an ineffective process" (Kirk, Wizer, & Gilmore, 2016). Pointing to another symptom of polythink, he discussed a fear of leaks, noting that there were unknown staffers at White House meetings making it difficult for him to express his views noting that, "The more people you have in a room, the more possibilities there are for self-serving leaks to shape and influence decisions in the press" (de Luce, 2015). As predicted by the polythink model, there was a significant delay and decision paralysis. On January 17, 2017, the team placed the decision in the hands of the Trump administration, handing over a document with an official recommendation to arm the Kurds and a memo on how to explain this to Turkey (Entous et al., 2017). As predicted by the polythink model, the president's foreign policy team had been fragmented and conflictive over the implementation of the initial decision and unable to advance a key objective of the president that had initially been widely accepted within his administration, by the American public and a broad coalition of global leaders (DOD, Office of Press Operations, 2016b; Ensor, 2016).

Conclusion

In the Raqqa offensive example, we illustrated group decision-making dynamics in the context of policy cycle stages. We demonstrated how dominant group dynamics in this particular foreign policy decision-making process shifted throughout stages of the policy cycle. The more successful group dynamic of con-div was dominant during policy formulation. However this quickly shifted to the suboptimal group dynamic of groupthink at the decision-making stage. Finally, the polythink dynamic dominated the stage of implementation when tactical questions required action. A single illustration has little empirical, external validity, but the example should encourage scholars to connect the fields of public policy and foreign policy decision making and continue to test the assertions presented in this article.

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Notes

1. We acknowledge the relevance and importance of other models of group decision-making, such as organizational processes and bureaucratic politics. However, we have not included such models because they are not included within the conformity-plurality continuum (Mintz & Wayne, 2016a) and are categorically different. See Hudson (2016, pp. 19–21) for a discussion of the unique research

questions and agendas in areas focused on *group decision-making dynamics* and those areas of inquiry into *organizational processes* and *bureaucratic politics*.

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