

A Few Words of Caution

- People confuse "feasible" with "desirable"
- People tend to be unrealistic
- Assumes no unexpected events—which do occur often
- Measuring feasibility can influence events and alter feasibility—can be a weapon
- Ignores "capacity of human devotion" (Orin)
- May discourage "doing the right thing"

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The Congressional Oversight Panel's Valuation of the TARP Warrants (A)



Assessing Political Feasibility

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- One of the most challenging steps in the policy analysis process
- Policy made in subjective, complex, dynamic political environments
- Human element—can be quite irrational
- Explicit political feasibility discussions rare
- Literature is sparse

Definitions

- Brown: “...the right fit between bright ideas and the values and interests that animate stakeholders with crucial pieces of power”
- Oberlander: Deals not with ideals but with what can be done given policy constraints
- Dror: **Thecasesolutions.com**
 - For actor: Ability to influence various activities
 - For policy alternative: Likelihood of adoption in a particular timeframe
 - For issue area: Range of alternatives that could be adopted and implemented (political feasibility domain)

Four Variables for thinking about political feasibility

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- 1) The main actors
- 2) Inputs into the policy arena
- 3) The interplay of actors and inputs
- 4) The threshold for adoption

Actors influenced by inputs interact with other actors to combine political leverage and achieve critical leverage mass

Starr's Policy Trap

- People see Medicare and other programs not as insurance but as a privilege that has been earned and paid for
- They don't want to see that privilege disturbed
- Oppose any change

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Agenda Setting

Set of circumstances must be identified as a problem—influencing factors include:

- Public opinion/voter attitudes/political mood
- Media coverage
- Emerging social movements
- Interest group mobilization
- Availability of potential policy solutions
- Arising threats (real or perceived)
- Economic changes
- New research finding
- Critical evaluations of program
- Level of sympathy for affected population

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Authorizing Environment

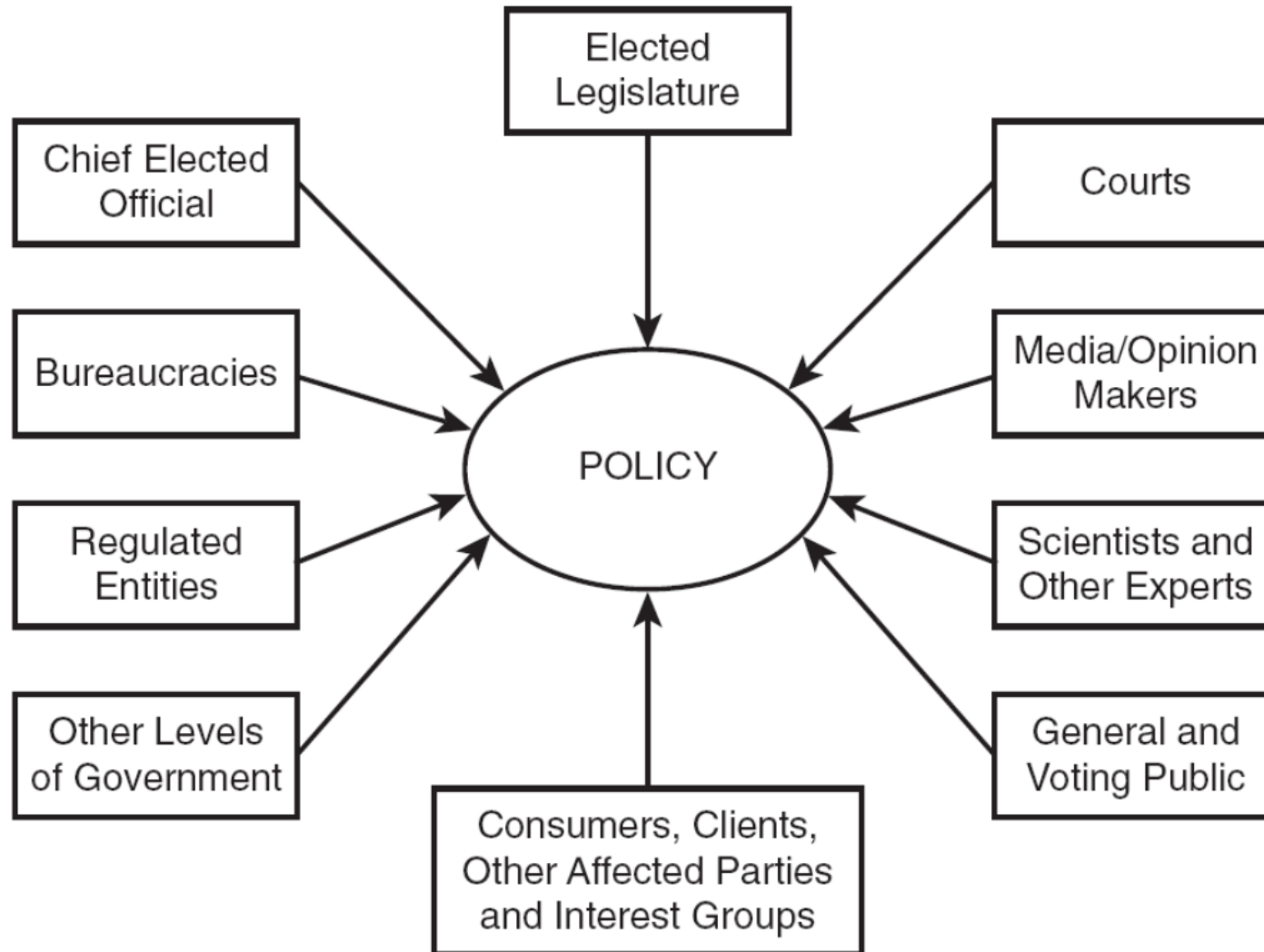
(Stakeholder Mapping)

- In public administration, list of actors from whom a public manager must receive authorization to survive and be effective

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- Also applies to institutions
- Relevant to development, adoption and success implementation of policy in a pluralistic society.

Authorizing Environment



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