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Clio's Lost Tribe: Public Policy History Since 1978

Policy history has straddled two disciplines—history and policy analysis—neither of which has taken it very seriously.¹ What unites those who study policy history is not that they are “policy historians” per se, but that they organize their analysis and narrative around the emergence, passage, and implementation of policy. Rather than a subfield, as the historian Paula Baker recently argued, policy history has resembled area studies programs.² Policy history became an interdisciplinary arena for scholars from many different fields to interact. While founders hoped that policies would become an end in themselves, rather than something used to understand other issues, scholarship since 1978 has shown that the two are not mutually exclusive. In fact, some of the most innovative scholarship has come from social or political historians who have used policy to understand larger historical phenomena. In the process, the work provided a much richer understanding of how policymaking evolved.

As we enter the twenty-first century, however, the future of policy history remains unclear. Some practitioners believe they have reached a critical turning point. As a result of increasingly innovative and bountiful scholarship, successful conferences, and organizational momentum, they claim that policy history is on the cusp of becoming a major subfield. Others are more pessimistic, pointing to chronic problems plaguing the field. Only a handful of history departments have developed policy programs. The *American Historical Review* and the *Journal of American History* rarely publish anything having to do with policy. Nor has a professional association or annual conference been established. Policy schools and scholars have moved decisively away from historical analysis after a brief period of flirtation. Far too often, policy analysts admit that they perceive historians as scholars who “just tell stories.”

JOURNAL OF POLICY HISTORY, Vol. 12, No. 3, 2000.

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The history of policy history reveals that its practitioners have always faced the perplexing task of having to satisfy two audiences, each with different types of assumptions, interests, and questions.³ Unfortunately, in response to this challenge, many scholars chose to retreat from the nonhistorical world. While there have been several works that explain why historians should take policy and politics seriously, few have attempted to systematically justify the value of their scholarship to policymakers.⁴ Synthesizing ten years of scholarship from the *Journal of Policy History*, I argue that five central categories of historical research have emerged: Institutional and Cultural Persistence, Lost Alternatives, Historical Correctives, Political Culture, and Process Evolution. These categories of research offer work that is distinct from the emphasis of mainstream policy analysts and can provide guidance to policymakers without becoming advocates. By situating recent research within these categories, and explaining their analytic value, I will show why historians should be speaking with greater authority in the world of governance.

Professional Development

Policy has never occupied a central role in the work of historians of the United States. At the height of “traditional” political history in the 1950s and 1960s, policies were only studied by scholars such as Arthur Schlesinger Jr. and William Leuchtenberg as a vehicle to understand presidencies.⁵ They paid little sustained attention to the policy process itself or to policies as they evolved over time. There were exceptions to this rule. Scholars from the New Left focused on political economy, discovering the influence of big business in shaping economic regulation, as opposed to well-intentioned liberals, during the Progressive Era.⁶ But these radicals were not in the mainstream of their profession, still dominated by New Deal liberals who found these arguments anathema to their understanding of the past. There were other historians who wrote about education and welfare policy.⁷ But the most prominent political historians only dealt briefly with policy as they focused on presidential administrations and the evolution of liberalism. The status of policy history only worsened in the 1970s as the profession underwent an intellectual revolution. A younger generation of historians who entered graduate school in the 1960s rejected the study of government institutions and political leaders as elitist and unrepresentative.⁸ Instead, they focused on social history from “the bottom up.” Even the “new political historians” of that decade, as they called themselves, concentrated primarily on quantitative historical analyses of voting behavior. These historians were interested in discovering whether ethnicity or class determined voters’ parti-

san allegiance. Policies were of little interest.⁹

There were, however, two alternate routes through which policy analysis survived at the margins of the historical profession. One was the public history movement that began in the mid-1970s. Amidst a severe job crisis that left thousands of Ph.D.'s and graduate students unemployed, some homeless scholars turned to public history as a means of applying their knowledge in nonacademic settings. While in the 1990s the popular conception of public historians centers on museums and archives, the use of historical analysis in policymaking stood at the core of these initial efforts. The movement stemmed from a populist hope of bringing history to the general public. Part of public history's success stemmed from the fact that it did not start from scratch. Rather, it provided recognition of what many historians had been doing since the founding of the profession in government agencies, archival institutions, historical societies and tourist sites, and museums.¹⁰ World War II had produced a boom in public history employment when the military services hired historians for practical purposes. The Army, for example, opened up historical divisions in each major command and service. Army leaders also started a history branch for the general staff. These historians were directed to produce studies on the U.S. experience in World War I since the Army was determined to avoid the problems that beset that effort.¹¹ While many historians left for the academy after 1945, many of the offices stayed in operation.

In the 1970s, public historians finally loosened the stranglehold that university scholars had maintained on the profession since its founding in the late nineteenth century.¹² The movement developed institutional muscle as various universities established comprehensive public history graduate programs starting in 1976. The University of California at Santa Barbara created an especially prestigious program under the direction of Robert Kelley, an eminent political historian. The Rockefeller Foundation provided a three-year grant to fund these efforts. For this program, Kelley and his colleagues reconceptualized graduate education in history to include internships, courses in other disciplines, and community-centered research.¹³

In addition to new graduate programs, public historians formed a national association, the National Council for Public History, and founded a journal called *The Public Historian*. The National Coordinating Committee for the Promotion of History, another association that was founded in 1977, aimed to link scholars with those outside the academy. In light of these developments, Peter Stearns and Joel Tarr, co-directors of Carnegie Mellon's applied history and social science program, promised that if public history departed from "the discipline's narcissism," the result "can revive a key discipline: It can also provide a broader range of data and a surer sense of values

to the public-policy arena. A born-again group of historians is busy making sure that our own past can serve these needs."¹⁴ The first pages of the premier issue of *The Public Historian* expressed forcefully the practical aspirations of this movement:

Other disciplines, economics, political science, and sociology, have made the transition from academy to public arena easily and without compromise. Since historians have traditionally occupied a halfway house between the social sciences and the humanities, they have tended to stay close to the academy. This was especially true with the increasing professionalization of history that took place after the turn of the twentieth century. This was symbolized by the fact that the gifted amateur (such as Theodore Roosevelt, who had been president of the American Historical Association) was now excluded from the discipline. Increasingly the academy, rather than historical society or public arena, became the habitat of the historian, who literally retreated into the proverbial ivory tower. The triumph of the professional was complete, and so was his isolation.¹⁵

The institutionalization of public history, as historian Peter Novick has argued, took place within an era of heightened skepticism toward the traditional professional claims that historians produced "unbiased" objective scholarship. Critics doubted that scholars hired by public or private institutions could avoid pressure from sponsors to shape their research. When advising policymakers, critics asked, what could historians offer other than propaganda for partisan objectives? But public historians, who created a code of ethics in response to this dilemma, responded that they could, in fact, produce analytic scholarship. Their defense grew out of a new professional consciousness. Unlike many senior scholars, they insisted that all historians were biased to some degree and, like colleagues in the universities, they would strive to obtain the best possible account of the past within the constraints faced by all scholars.¹⁶ Otis Graham Jr., from the University of North Carolina, insisted that "only in degree and in type, but not in kind, does the academic historian experience a different set of corrupting pressures than the friends of Clio who work outside." Another public historian, Barbara Benson Kohn, told readers of *The Public Historian*, "the unblemished scholar-historian who speaks freely, objectively, truthfully, and purely to an audience entirely of his own choosing was dismissed long ago as a fantasy."¹⁷ While all professional historians have continued to grapple with the ideological dilemma of objectivity, public historians have faced the problem more acutely than any other type of scholar since the institutional context within

which they work raises the issue directly. The discomfort with this dilemma would cause many policy historians to be excessively defensive when speaking about why their work mattered to policymakers in practical terms. Regardless, public history provided historians interested in policy with a viable outlet through which to pursue their work.

While public historians advised policymakers outside the academy, a few scholars in the university were not dissuaded by the topic's marginal status. Although sympathetic to the goals of public historians, particularly the notion of making history valuable to those outside the academy, these scholars were firmly rooted in the academy and disseminated their research in university presses and scholarly journals. Some focused on poverty, criminal, and mental health policies as a means of understanding social class relations.¹⁸ Meanwhile, diplomatic, and some legal, historians pursued their traditional interest in policy seemingly immune from the social history revolution taking place around them. Finally, a small group of historians produced the "organizational synthesis." Building on modernization theory, organizational historians argued that the major force driving change in the twentieth century was the evolution of national institutions such as the administrative state.¹⁹

Many of these university historians gathered at the Harvard University Business School in November 1978 for a Rockefeller Foundation-funded conference organized by Thomas McCraw from Harvard and Morton Keller from Brandeis University. McCraw, who took care of most of the logistics while Keller was a guest scholar at Oxford University, received funding from the Rockefeller Foundation. The effort started with the intention of bringing together historians, lawyers, and political scientists who shared a common interest in regulation. At that time, James Q. Wilson and Paul MacAvoy ran a popular seminar on regulation that generated much of the interest in this project.²⁰ But the conference ended up being important to broader scholarship since it marked the first "self-conscious discussion" of policy history as a distinct subfield of either history or the policy sciences.²¹ While there were several historians who dealt with policies on welfare, technology, science, and economic regulation, the organizers explained, "in each of these cases, the public policy theme is subsumed within the framework of the substantive area of inquiry. There tends to be relatively little concern with the history of the public policy process *per se*."²² McCraw and Keller hoped this conference could change that. Attendees included distinguished senior and younger scholars such as Edward Berkowitz, Louis Galambos, Ernest May, Robert Kelley, Ellis Hawley, Otis Graham, James Q. Wilson, and Graham Allison (Dean of Harvard's Kennedy School of Government). The organizers agreed that policy history should be an interdisciplinary project and

that the research should help policymakers in the “real world.” They also wanted the study of policy to overcome the fragmentation of historical scholarship.

At the Harvard conference, two core issues produced the most vigorous debate. Participants disagreed on the basic definition of policy history. One faction defined policy as the coercive power of the state. Another faction promoted a more liberal understanding of policy that encompassed “all institutional programs” impacting significant portions of the population. Adhering to the new emphasis in the historical profession, this definition blended public and private sources of power.²³ When the participants failed to reach a consensus, they decided that the tension between the public and private elements of policy might itself constitute a central question for policy historians to examine. The second controversy involved methodology. Rejecting the suggestion of a small minority, participants concluded that policy historians should not define themselves by adopting a social scientific model of analysis (which they viewed as ahistorical). Rather, policy historians should define themselves around a common set of issues, including the distinction between the public and private realms, the role of professionals in policymaking, the role of crisis in policy development, how changes in process influenced policy, the impact of institutional structure on policies, the relation between government and nongovernmental actors, the changing definition of policy over time, and the relation of policies to “contemporaneous” intellectual assumptions.²⁴ One of the biggest opportunities for policy history, all of the participants agreed, was to evaluate policies by determining if policymakers and policy users realized their goals during the implementation process. When the conference ended, the participants promised to build momentum for this subfield through book reviews, research articles, and further meetings.

There was ample reason to believe that history could be integral to policymakers. The policy analysis profession was just emerging as a field independent from political science and public administration. During the 1960s and 1970s, more than a dozen universities, such as Harvard, Berkeley, Princeton, Minnesota, Duke, and Michigan, formed graduate programs to train students in quantitative economic analysis rather than traditional management principles.²⁵ Increased funding for policy analysis arrived from government agencies under the Johnson and Nixon administrations as well as from foundations such as Ford. At the same time, think tanks were proliferating at a rapid pace.²⁶ In May 1979, fifteen representatives from leading policy schools and think tanks formed the Association for Policy Analysis and Management at Duke University, which published the *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, held an annual conference, and granted publica-

tion awards. First operated by Duke University, the association eventually hired a full-time executive director, whose office was located in Washington, D.C., in 1993.²⁷ Given the inchoate state of the policy analysis discipline in 1978, some historians believed they could be integrated into this field even though the initial emphasis was placed on quantitative economic analysis.

Between 1978 and 1984, the hopes of policy historians seemed to be realized. The Harvard Business School, under the direction of Morton Keller and Thomas McCraw, organized two followup conferences in 1979 and 1980, focusing on "Innovation and Public Policy" and "The Regulation of Industrial Society."²⁸ In other initiatives, historians brought history directly to policymakers. In 1979, McCraw conducted a historical seminar for the Federal Trade Commission. At the University of the District of Columbia, Steven Diner directed an institute that provided city officials and the local media with historical analysis on issues such as public education. Other scholars, such as J. Morgan Kousser, testified in court cases. Meanwhile, History and Public Policy programs were founded by Carnegie Mellon University and the University of Houston. These programs included traditional training in historiography as well as quantitative policy courses and internships in the field. The pages of *The Public Historian* were filling up with essays that explained the value of historical analysis to policymaking.²⁹ Many pieces were written by social historians, particularly urban specialists. While social historians had moved away from government institutions and political elites, they were interested in public policies that affected the poor. *The Journal of Social History* frequently published essays on policy under the editorships of Andrew Achenbaum and Peter Stearns.³⁰ The Russell Sage Foundation sponsored a conference in Mount Kisco, New York, that brought together several leading social historians and policymakers to examine how historical research could assist policymakers. David Rothman and Stanton Wheeler organized the conference and published the papers as a book.³¹ Herbert Gutman, for example, showed how erroneous historical assumptions about the black family had shaped policymaking.³² The conference raised an early-warning sign as many participants expressed intense frustration. Participants were skeptical that policymakers and scholars could find any consensus about the role of history in policy analysis. Nonetheless, through the event and publication, scholars were at least grappling with these issues. Finally, historians published several important books on modern social and economic policy.³³ If policy historians needed any more signs of encouragement, they received it when Thomas McCraw's 1984 history of twentieth-century regulatory policy, *Prophets of Regulation*, won the Pulitzer Prize in History.³⁴

There was also support for historical analysis among eminent policy scholars between 1978 and 1985. Political scientist Richard Neustadt, for example,

taught a course with historian Ernest May at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government entitled "Uses of History." May had published a widely acclaimed book on the misuse of history in policymaking.³⁵ Both scholars practiced what they preached, each having worked for different parts of the government earlier in their careers, Neustadt for Presidents Kennedy and Johnson and May for the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The course exposed high-level government officials to the utility of historical analysis. The NEH provided funding for May and Neustadt to produce historical case studies for use in graduate classes. Similar courses were launched at Carnegie Mellon, SUNY-Stony Brook and Albany, the University of Chicago, the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, and the RAND Graduate Institute.³⁶ Moreover, the period witnessed the publication of well-reviewed books by social scientists that relied on historical analysis, including Gilbert Steiner's *The Children's Cause*, Henry Aaron's *Politics and the Professors*, Martha Derthick's *Policymaking for Social Security*, Robert and Rosemary Steven's, *Welfare Medicine in America*, and Derthick and Paul Quirk's, *The Politics of Deregulation*.³⁷

Those who were pursuing policy history were not alone in breaking from traditional categories of academic scholarship. The 1970s and 1980s constituted a vibrant era when many historians were becoming involved in innovative interdisciplinary programs that were organized around issues that had previously been ignored or relegated to secondary status. Growing out of the conflicts of the 1960s, the most prominent programs were Women's, Black, and Ethnic Studies, all of which were tied to political movements.³⁸ These programs integrated scholars with very different methodological approaches who focused on a similar topic. In many respects, the evolving policy history movement mirrored these efforts.

But policy historians still lacked a journal, association, annual conference, or the sense that the subfield had arrived. In 1983, a young scholar named Donald Critchlow approached senior historian Ellis Hawley at the Organization of American Historians Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio, to discuss strategies for taking the subfield to a new level. Unlike Hawley, Critchlow had not attended the Harvard Conference. His belief that a subfield did not yet exist indicated that the agenda of the 1978 conference had not been entirely fulfilled. Critchlow was working as an assistant professor of History at the University of Notre Dame, after receiving his doctorate degree at the University of California at Berkeley, and completing a book on the Brookings Institution.³⁹ The following year, while Critchlow was a fellow at the Woodrow Wilson Center, he continued to have conversations with Hawley and sociologist Theda Skocpol about ideas for advancing the subfield.

In the end, Critchlow decided that the best way to solidify the subfield would be through a national conference. Besides offering an alternative to

organizational and economic theory, he hoped to bring “coherence to a field whose rapid growth threatens to leave it without a fulcrum.”⁴⁰ The conference, which was held October 1985 at Notre Dame, drew scholars from history, political science, and economics. Several papers from the conference were published as a book by the Penn State Press.⁴¹ The preface, written by historian Robert Kelley, argued that one of the major contributions of policy historians was to understand the evolution of the policy process: “Whatever the method, the field should be marked by a *systematic* study of the policy process over time. This should be the distinguishing characteristic of policy history, as the essays in this volume show.” Their work offered an alternative to popular social scientific models that depended on the assumption of rational political actors who based every decision on electoral needs.⁴² Another project to emerge from Notre Dame was an undergraduate reader on poverty and public policy in modern America. Dorsey Press published the book in 1989.⁴³

Despite their accomplishments, the conferees failed to articulate a clear argument about why historical analysis offered policymakers something better than standard economics or political science. Such an argument is crucial to the development of any subfield. All professions, as sociologist Andrew Abbot has argued, need to maintain a desired, secret expertise if they are to obtain and maintain jurisdiction over a particular form of work. Without doing so, they fail to establish themselves amidst interprofessional competition for jurisdiction.⁴⁴ There were scattered attempts in the 1980s to build such an argument beyond the vague claims that history matters. David Mock, for example, said that historians were particularly useful to policy evaluation since they could track unintended consequences of policy by comparing the intentions of policymakers with what unfolded.⁴⁵ Edward Berkowitz, moreover, wrote that historians could discern systematic patterns in the history of issues that were at the center of the policymaking agenda.⁴⁶

The boldest argument came in 1986 from Harvard University’s Ernest May and Richard Neustadt.⁴⁷ Based on experiences in their graduate course, May and Neustadt offered several reasons why history mattered to policymakers. Grounded in the practical ethos of the emerging subfield, the book provided an extremely explicit argument for the functional utility of history: “Our primary concern remains with those who try to govern, as they exercise authority through choices large and small. Our focus, to repeat, is on the uses they make of history or fail to make but could, and how they might do better for themselves in their own terms.”⁴⁸ They posited three ways in which policymakers could use history. First, historical analysis could help policymakers evaluate historical analogies in order to avoid decisions that are based on false comparisons with the past. Second, May and Neustadt

argued, historical analysis could help policymakers locate their decisions in longer “time-streams” that situated current problems within an ongoing continuum, thereby improving predictions about the future. Finally, the duo claimed that historical analysis could provide a richer explanation of the people, issues, and organizations involved in a debate and thereby improve a policymaker’s chances of success in negotiations. According to this logic, a politician would find more success in working with the Social Security Administration if he or she knew how that federal agency had operated and responded to issues in the past.⁴⁹ In essence, one reviewer noted, Neustadt and May’s advice is that decision-makers use history during policymaking so that they do not have to end up later asking: “How could we have been so mistaken.”⁵⁰ *Thinking in Time* soon became the standard text in historical policy classes around the country. Andrew Achenbaum called it the “best primer available for teaching nonhistorians how to incorporate insights from the past into the decision-making process.”⁵¹

In 1987, Donald Critchlow announced the formation of a new journal, the *Journal of Policy History*, to be published by the Penn State Press. Critchlow secured commitments from prestigious scholars in political science, sociology, and history. Peri Arnold, a colleague of Critchlow in the political science department, agreed to serve as co-editor.⁵² The journal, which published its first issue in 1989, gradually expanded its subscription and submission base, attracting work from leading names across disciplines, and from junior and senior scholars. By the late 1990s, it had become the premier forum for policy historians. Besides the journal, many outstanding books on policy were published during the late 1980s and 1990s by historians such as Brian Balogh, Molly Ladd-Taylor, Sonya Michel, Edward Berkowitz, Linda Gordon, and Hugh Graham. The increased sophistication of the new research was dramatic. Policy history did not entail myopic technocratic narratives about individual policies, as some feared it would. Instead, scholars examined policies by situating them in their political, social, cultural, and economic contexts.

Within the social sciences, moreover, the new historical institutionalism created another source of momentum for this field. Starting with the publication of Stephen Skowronek’s *Building a New American State* (1982) and the multi-authored *Bringing the State Back In* (1985), social scientists began using historical data to examine how institutions structured politics over long periods of time and how policies reconfigured politics.⁵³ These scholars included Skowronek, Theda Skocpol, Karren Orren, Rogers Smith, Martin Shefter, Margaret Weir, and Eldon Eisenach. The historical social sciences were institutionalized in 1988 through the creation of the History and Politics Section of the American Political Science Association. The section, which

organized panels for APSA's annual conference and published a newsletter, had more than five hundred members by 1995.⁵⁴ In addition, the journal *Studies in American Political Development* (founded in 1986) offered another important publication outlet for the historical institutionalists. Using policies as a tool to understand institutions, these scholars traced the historical development of public welfare, social insurance, and industrial regulation. Many also published in, and served on the editorial board of, the *Journal of Policy History*. Even some rational-choice political scientists turned to historical institutions.⁵⁵

If the story ended at this point, one might expect policy history to have experienced scholarly success. Yet policy history did not achieve anywhere near the influence founders seemed poised to obtain. Most troublesome was the fact that neither of the major host disciplines, history or the policy sciences, seriously embraced their scholarship. Despite dramatic advances in research and two successful conferences, policy history still lurks in the disciplinary shadows. At the tenth anniversary celebration of the *Journal of Policy History*, Ellis Hawley lamented that "the work done, I think we would have to agree, has not taken the profession by storm, leading to new programs in our most prestigious universities or broad professional receptivity to its integrating and cutting-edge claims. It has not, so far as I can tell, had much success in becoming 'must reading' for policy makers or in making historians indispensable and hence routine members of the policy sciences community."⁵⁶

During the 1980s and 1990s, historians had turned decisively away from politics and toward cultural studies. While social historians had maintained a modicum of interest in policy as it affected ethnic or class relations, most cultural historians were more interested in postmodern interpretations of popular culture. With a few notable exceptions, most cultural historians dismissed policy history for adopting the structuralist orientation they hoped to overturn.⁵⁷ Policy history was particularly irrelevant to cultural historians since most policy historians were grounding their work in the institutionalism of the social sciences. Toward the end of the century, social and cultural historians took over the leadership in most departments. Many of them have not displayed much interest appointing historians who focus on political institutions and policy. Upon their retirement, for example, diplomatic historians have not been replaced at Northwestern University, UCLA, the University of Iowa, or the University of Texas.⁵⁸ To make matters worse for policy historians, the profession entered into another severe job crisis in the 1990s due to budgetary cutbacks in state education. In such a dismal labor market, where thousands of graduate students competed for a handful of jobs, few dared to focus their research on a subject that many senior col-

leagues (including those on hiring and tenure committees) openly disdained. Only one department, at Bowling Green University, constructed its graduate program around policy history.

History outside the academy offered marginally better results. The public history movement continued to expand rapidly as the number of graduate programs grew in universities and membership in public history associations rose.⁵⁹ Just as important, a larger number of federal agencies established historical offices.⁶⁰ With the job crisis of the 1990s, public history again was a new source of employment for unemployed students. Policy history continues to be one part of this government agency/public history mix. Indeed, the FBI recently placed an advertisement for a historian whose duties would include “presenting the FBI Director and other authorities with accurate responses to historical questions; maintaining liaison with outside historical and archival organizations; researching, writing and publishing officially approved FBI books; preparing oral presentations on FBI history; and performing other duties as necessary.”⁶¹

But public history programs have increasingly focused on training students to work for cultural organizations, corporations, and multimedia firms. Public history students have chosen to enter more lucrative fields than policy. Some of the best history students still avoid public history employment and research since it lacks the prestige of university employment.⁶² In hiring and tenure decisions, it is well known that administrators only consider scholarly monographs and give little professional credit for historical research that is presented in policy reports or “cultural resource” studies.⁶³ Other scholars shied away from the public realm as a result of controversial cases, such as *Equal Employment Opportunity Commission v. Sears, Roebuck & Company*, when scholarship was used to support causes the author opposed. These controversies revealed how historical research was often used for very different purposes than the author intended once the work was injected into contemporary policy debates. In 1999, moreover, several prominent historians received harsh criticism from scholars and citizens outside the discipline for having presented inconsistent and misleading analysis that was intended to be used for clearly partisan purposes during the impeachment of President Clinton.⁶⁴

As public historians began turning away from government, policy analysts focused almost exclusively on quantitative economic analysis. Within public policy schools, history fell out of the curriculum with a few exceptions. The Rockefeller College of Public Affairs at SUNY-Albany, for example, decided to end a required history course since students needed to learn more “practical” skills for the job market. As in academics, jobs became more scarce in the public sector, which pushed students to train in

more marketable economics and quantitative skills. Some policy analysts were openly hostile to historical research, perceiving it to be little more than telling stories. After reading Otis Graham's manuscript about the history of industrial policy, for example, one nonhistorian reader called the editor to complain that "Graham proposes that more historians join the policy process, but the truth is that they are entirely unprepared."⁶⁵ To make matters worse, quantitative analysis was marginalized within the historical profession during the 1980s. After a period in the 1970s when quantitative analysis was popular among political and social historians, the profession abandoned number-crunching in favor of the techniques of linguistic studies and anthropology. As a result of this decision, younger scholars obtained meager intellectual training in the methods of policy analysis, thereby intensifying the linguistic division that separated the two worlds of policy scholarship.

Even though historical institutionalism thrived within the social sciences, it has proven to be different than policy history. Historical institutionalists are still driven by abstract models and theory. Downplaying narrative and human agency, they rely on limited archival research to demonstrate larger theories rather than having the archives shape the argument of the work. Policy historians, moreover, tend to place institutions in a much broader context to draw the connections between political institutions, popular culture, social development, and mass movements. Like political historians of the 1960s, historical institutionalists have been more interested in how policies can help explain institutions rather than understanding the history of the policies as an end in itself. Thus even with many similarities, divisions exist between the two approaches.

Finally, policy historians were themselves to blame for failing to pursue many of the goals that had inspired founders of the subfield. Most important, policy historians lost much of their practical spirit. Policy historians had hoped to contribute to the world of policymaking as much as to the historical and political science disciplines. But as the years progressed, most scholars who wrote policy history targeted colleagues within their respective fields. Their work focused almost exclusively on historiographical debates without bothering to explain the implications for contemporary policy. There have been few sequels to May and Neustadt's treatise about why history matters to policymakers. Nor have there been many works that attempt to synthesize recent scholarship and explain how the findings might enhance public debate on major issues.⁶⁶ As Hugh Graham lamented in 1993, "The development of policy history has been anemic and the case made for it has remained largely abstract."⁶⁷ This failure is ironic since there is now so much more research on which to base those claims than back in the 1970s. In many respects, those who wrote about policy history failed to answer the

formative questions raised in 1978 about what distinguished their work. Revealingly, a majority of individuals who have produced the leading works in this area do not categorize or identify themselves as policy historians. Instead, they tend to perceive themselves as social, cultural, or political historians who are studying policy. Such a lack of identity is debilitating to the development of an intellectual field.

Many policy historians have avoided making any defense on ideological grounds, fearful that their work would be perceived as propaganda or they would be forced to make predictions their research could not support. Even the editor of the *Journal of Policy History* insisted: "The aim of policy history is to provide a context for answering such questions. Policy history seeks to edify and not to specifically instruct. Prescriptions are best left to policymakers actively involved in contemporary problems, and not to historians—those physicians of the buried. Historians of policy history, however, can provide careful dissections of past policies."⁶⁸ Likewise, historian Andrew Achenbaum warned of intrinsic differences between the type of scholarship his colleagues wrote and policy analysts wanted. "Current policy analysis," Achenbaum stated, "almost by definition, is work-in-progress; it focuses on a contemporary 'problem' and offers an admittedly incomplete diagnosis and prognosis. Historians, by contrast, are trained to write a 'product,' which has integrity of its own regardless of its practical usefulness."⁶⁹

Policy historians now look back at a checkered history. On the one hand, policy history has made significant advances since the 1970s. Notwithstanding the lack of a disciplinary home, policy history research has become more sophisticated and bountiful than ever before. At the same time, practitioners have lost some of the ethos that guided them in the early years, namely, that their work would aim to contribute to policy analysis. Increasingly, they have withdrawn into the shelter of professionalism while failing to provide basic guidance about how their work might be used. To make matters worse, policy historians were unable to convince their colleagues in history and policy departments that they had a special expertise which entitled them to claim any jurisdiction over policy issues.

The Arguments Policy Historians Make

Ultimately, policy historians will have to make a stronger case for the value of their research to policymaking. While the contribution of public historians who work directly for policymakers has been examined, I focus on an area that has been neglected: the scholarship of university professors. Drawing from the abundance of scholarship written since 1978, I have identified

several distinct categories of historical research that could be valuable to policy analysts and to other historians. These do not constitute the full range of possibilities, but they offer a starting point for discussion. Since 1978, policy historians have produced five categories of research that I call: Institutional and Cultural Persistence, Lost Alternatives, Historical Correctives, Political Culture, and Process Evolution. Even though these are each distinct, most scholars can fit their work into various of these categories.

Historical research has shown how certain institutional structures and cultural assumptions continue to shape policymaking over extremely long periods. Institutional and cultural persistence is both a historical and ahistorical argument. On the one hand, this research traces how certain conditions persist over time. On the other hand, it contends that in some respects the present is not that different from the past. By showing specific links between the past and the present, this research can provide policymakers with strategies for success. Explanations of how conditions stifled or supported previous initiatives can be instructive to those who design new proposals. The research offers a systematic response to Santayana's famous warning that those who don't remember the past are condemned to repeat it.

Michael Katz's work has been particularly influential in this regard. *The Undeserving Poor* showed how a discourse about the poor has shaped welfare debates since the early nineteenth century. According to Katz, the distinction between the "deserving" and the "undeserving" poor has been a staple of political debates throughout most of the nation's history. While emphasizing the "moral" failures of those in need, the discourse downplayed questions of power, politics, and equality. Katz ended his introduction by explicitly linking the book to his own political activism: "To transcend this historic division in the way we talk about public issues, to pull poverty away from family and toward power, requires surmounting the strongest conventions in Americans' social vocabulary. I offer this book as a modest toehold for the struggle."⁷⁰ Stressing institutional persistence rather than political discourse, Sven Steinmo compared the history of tax policy in the United States, Sweden, and Great Britain. He argued that the design of each nation's political institutions (separation of power, parliamentary government, etc.) determines what type of tax regime a nation adopts.⁷¹ In another institutionalist work, Stephen Skowronek examined how the institutional tension between the nineteenth-century court and party system and the twentieth-century executive bureaucracies resulted in a jerry-built administrative state. Each interest inserted itself into new programs and agencies, such as budgeting and civil service, thereby guaranteeing ongoing conflict.

Gender and race have played an important role in this category. Indeed, one of the most vibrant areas of policy history has focused on how cultural

notions of gender influenced social insurance and welfare policies. Linda Gordon, for example, has argued that a shared consensus over the legitimacy of single-wage-earning families produced a bifurcated welfare state that left poor single women to rely on stigmatized welfare benefits while men received pensions that were not considered to be government assistance. Gordon ended her work by writing that contemporary welfare problems “derive more from historical constraints—on the ability to foresee future social and economic developments and on the range of political possibility—and above all from the political exclusion of those with the greatest need to be included: the poor.”⁷² Other scholars have argued that southern legislators strove to protect the racial hierarchies which defined their region. As a result, Congress created generous social insurance programs that excluded those jobs which employed the greatest number of African Americans. Jill Quadagno also has contended that racism undermined the War on Poverty.⁷³ In these kinds of work, persistent racism and sexism define the terms over which welfare policy is designed.

But this scholarship is not just about how persistent institutions and cultural beliefs constrain policymaking. In acknowledging the role of human agency, this research occasionally points to how policy entrepreneurs and political groups have succeeded in overcoming obstacles and offer a guide to policymakers who seek to overcome these same cultural and institutional obstacles. Theda Skocpol, for example, has demonstrated how during the Progressive Era middle-class women organized and lobbied effectively within a federalist system to obtain programs to protect mothers and children. She suggested that these women offer a roadmap for policymakers. “Hopeful scenarios for contemporary American social politics will become more likely, it seems to me, if feminists can learn to recapitulate in contemporary ways some of the best ideas and methods once used by the proponents of maternalist social policies.” Skocpol wrote: “Feminists must work in organizations and networks that tie them to others in very different social circumstances. They must also articulate values and political goals that speak to the well-being of all American families. If feminists can find better ways to do these things, organized women will again be at the forefront of the development of social provision in the United States.”⁷⁴ Studying a very different policy domain, Amy Sue Bix claimed that grassroots activism after World War II was able to undermine the traditional authority of doctors and scientists, resulting in federal funding to fight Breast Cancer and AIDS.⁷⁵ In his biography of Social Security policymaker Wilbur Cohen, Edward Berkowitz showed how a policy entrepreneur worked through bureaucratic politics to expand federal welfare despite America’s antistatist traditions and fragmented political institutions.⁷⁶

In the second category of research, Lost Alternatives, historians use the past to show viable policy alternatives that once succeeded.⁷⁷ Policy analysts, who are concerned with practical proposals rather than unworkable theories, can find much value in this scholarship. Of course, in some cases the conditions surrounding past alternatives have changed too drastically for them to be viable in the present. But in other cases, key conditions are still in place so past alternatives might be reconstructed. This is particularly true when one considers the aforementioned persistence arguments. In the long run, policy conditions are often not that much different from those in the past. At other times, these studies offer a warning since particular conditions under which past alternatives succeeded are no longer in existence. The alternatives also provide a clearer perspective of the parameters that define current policymaking.

Historian Hugh Graham has provided an excellent example of Lost Alternatives. Graham showed that until 1969, civil rights policy—as embodied in the Civil Rights Act of 1964—was grounded in popular twentieth-century ideals of individualism, universalism, the timelessness of equal rights, negative government protection for rights (meaning the government should take action after it found an individual was being denied his or her rights), and the centrality of national protection for rights. As civil rights policy departed from these ideals after 1969, Graham argued, programs became less popular.⁷⁸ He wrote: “Although proponents of affirmative action were remarkably successful in the 1970s and 1980s in expanding their program base in government and the private economy, by the 1990s they were losing the battle of public opinion. Most Americans supported the nondiscrimination-plus-outreach of soft affirmative action but opposed the preferences of hard affirmative action.”⁷⁹ Implicit in his analysis is a roadmap for civil rights policies to become more popular by reverting to the model of the pre-1969 era. Martha Derthick, in her work on federal-state relations, claimed that a different system of federalism existed before the 1960s. Until that time, she explained, the federal government respected the autonomy of local communities even when enacting social programs. After the 1960s, however, the federal government started creating more specific guidelines that required the states to enact protections for specific social groups. The role of place and community, Derthick concluded, was replaced by individuals who were categorized by special ethnicity, race, or gender. The article pointed to an earlier model of federalism that respected the autonomy of local communities while allowing for a more expansive federal government than in the nineteenth century.⁸⁰ Others have found lost alternatives in the history of other countries. Helene Silverberg, for instance, has shown why abortion politics has been less polarized in European nations than in the United States.⁸¹

The third category, Historical Correctives, builds on May and Neustadt's argument that the task of the historian is to evaluate the historical assumptions and analogies used by policymakers. Research in this category constitutes more than simply correcting the historical record for its own sake, although that has been part of the project.⁸² Assumptions about history constantly influence politics, although policymakers are often not aware of their influence. Immediately after World War II, for example, policymakers based many of their arguments about price controls on the post-World War I experience.⁸³ The power of analogies was extremely apparent in 1999, when the Holocaust loomed large over decisions about what America should do in Kosovo. Policy historians, more than any other scholars, are able to perceive the underlying historical assumptions that shape policy debates and to challenge misperceptions. By doing so, policy historians can sometimes undermine or buttress the basis of policy positions.

There have been numerous contributions to this category. In his recent prize-winning work, Thomas Sugrue challenged the assumption that urban decline began after the War on Poverty and after the riots shook cities such as Detroit and Newark. Instead, Sugrue contended that cities were eroding by the late 1940s as a result of racial discrimination in housing and employment. Sugrue hoped to undermine policymakers who claim that federal welfare programs, radical civil rights activism, and a culture of poverty were to blame for urban decay. Rather, his new chronological framework emphasized the impact of racism.⁸⁴ David Beito's study of fraternal societies between 1900 and 1930 contested the assumption that government welfare policies that distinguish the "deserving" from "undeserving" poor reflect white middle-class biases against the poor. In contrast, Beito showed how similar distinctions were made by African Americans and the working class when they provided aid to the needy. Beito thus lent support to such distinctions by showing that they reflect mainstream values, not social-class interests.⁸⁵ Christopher Howard offered one of the most striking examples of this research. He showed how most debates over social policy rest on the assumption that government assistance means direct federal expenditures. Instead, Howard looked at the development of the welfare state by considering tax loopholes as a form of government assistance. In doing so, he showed that federal spending in the United States has been much more extensive than is usually assumed and that the majority of benefits go to those who are not poor.⁸⁶ Edwin Amenta complemented this finding by revealing that the United States, contrary to the conventional wisdom about its "laggard" welfare state, led the world in spending on social provision programs during the 1930s.⁸⁷ Timothy Minchin challenged the assumption that civil rights initiatives have not positively changed race relations since 1969. Through his study

of southern industries, Minchin claimed that federal policy has resulted in racial integration.⁸⁸

The next category is Political Culture. One scholar defined political culture as “the underlying assumptions and rules that govern behavior in the political system . . . the political ideals and operating norms of a polity . . . the manifestation in aggregate form of the psychological and subjective dimensions of politics . . . the product of both the collective history of a political system and the life histories of the members of the system.”⁸⁹ This has been one area of policy history where the work of cultural historians had a positive impact on reconceptualizing the policy process. In showing repeatedly how political culture influenced policymaking, historical research offers a counterpoint to policy analysts who assume all actors are rational.⁹⁰ This category of research provides a different understanding of the policy process that is fundamentally at odds with what most policy schools teach. For policy historians, the rational-choice model fell short. Historians believed it important for scholars to understand the political culture that established the framework for debate and the larger mindset within which policymakers operate. Robert Kelley argued that the policy sciences depiction of human nature is “mechanical” and “simplistic.” With their greater perspective, he said, policy historians would provide a much richer understanding of the ideological context within which policy debates take place, particularly the “shaping influence upon policy of political culture.”⁹¹ The evidence that political culture matters has been plentiful. In his landmark book on environmentalism, Samuel Hays showed how post-World War II middle-class values influenced success of environmental policies.⁹² Donald Critchlow, moreover, found that family planning policy encountered much more success in the 1960s and 1970s partially as a result of changing cultural norms on sexuality.⁹³ Policy historians attempt to delineate how political culture influences policy. Marc Eisner, for example, has traced how ideas about antitrust entered into the executive branch through experts who gained key positions in bureaucracies.⁹⁴ In his seminal book on public life in the nineteenth century, Morton Keller showed how persistent cultural traditions of localism and antistatism constrained political responses to industrialism.⁹⁵ The evidence accumulated by this research serves as a warning to policymakers who embrace mainstream, social scientific policy analysis and fail to seriously factor the influence of ideas and culture into their strategies.

The final category of historical research is Process Evolution. Scholars who write about the evolution of the policy process itself have fulfilled one of the main goals of the policy history subdiscipline. While the immediate utility of this research is often more difficult to discern, it offers those seeking to change the policy process—a wrenching challenge given the tenacity of

institutions—a better sense of how this has been accomplished in the past. This research also reveals how the power of politicians often rests on the process through which policies are constructed. One of the best examples comes from Brian Balogh, who showed how the classic iron triangle model of policymaking, which stresses interest-group demand, does not explain policymaking for much of the post-WWII period. Rather, through his study of commercial nuclear power policy, Balogh found that policies were created by professional administrators working within the American state, despite the fact that there was little external demand for the programs they created. Federal administrators then tried to secure interest-group support only after starting their programs. After detailing how commercial nuclear programs became extraordinarily unpopular among the citizenry, the book ends on a note that speaks directly to government administrators. Balogh suggested that the history of nuclear policy shows why administrators have lost their influence. He hoped that history will lead them to seek more participation in the policy process as programs are created.⁹⁶

All five categories of research—Institutional and Cultural Persistence, Lost Alternatives, Historical Correctives, Political Culture, and Process Evolution—offer distinct contributions that historians can make to policy analysis. But this list is by no means exhaustive. In the coming years, if they are to succeed in influencing policymakers and informing the media and general public, policy historians must think more systematically about the type of research they produce and explain how history can inform current decisions. This does not require that policy historians become advocates. Rather, the record shows that historians can provide sound analysis that enhances decision-making performance.

Thinking About the Future

There are many signs that the future of policy history will be more successful than its past. In addition to the continued success of the *Journal of Policy History*, there are now concrete plans for an annual conference and a national association. There have also been signs within the historical profession of more interest in policy, especially among the post-Baby Boom generation graduate students and professors. The continued vitality of historical institutionalism in the social sciences, moreover, complements the efforts of policy historians. On a different front, historians have even started to appear with greater frequency in the media as commentators on contemporary politics. Michael Beschloss and Doris Kearns Goodwin are familiar faces on prime-time television. Although few in this group would classify

themselves as policy historians, their success reflects a thirst that exists among the public and politicians for historians to provide a nuanced understanding of contemporary politics. Maris Vinovskis, a preeminent historian of education policy, has served in various positions within President Clinton's administration.

To secure their place in Washington, D.C., and state capitals, however, policy historians will have to embark on a campaign to sell their contributions. To be sure, historians will never be fully comfortable in this role. In the end, they will have to accept that their work may be used only when it serves the needs of political interests.⁹⁷ Even in an age where applied history has gained greater acceptance, many scholars are hesitant to claim a practical use for their research. Yet it is clear that careful historical research is valuable to training policymakers, evaluating policies, and informing citizens without being propaganda. This article has attempted to explain what some of those contributions have been. Should historians fail to defend their own value to politics, policy history will continue to be Clio's lost tribe.

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Notes

1. For another insightful history of policy history, see Hugh Davis Graham, "The Stunted Career of Policy History: A Critique and an Agenda," *The Public Historian* 15 (1993): 15–37. My work focuses much more on the professional and intellectual history of what policy historians have written since the 1970s. I would like to thank Edward Berkowitz, Donald Critchlow, Michael Grossberg, Richard Hamm, Michael Katz, Morton Keller, Eric Patashnik, Beryl Radin, and Nora Zelizer for their suggestions. I would especially like to thank Ellis Hawley for sharing his valuable documents with me.

2. Paula Baker, "Remarks at a Roundtable Discussion on the State of Policy History And Its Future," 27 May 1999, paper presented at the 1999 Policy History Conference, Clayton, Missouri.

3. Edward D. Berkowitz, "The Historian as Policy Analyst: The Challenge of HEW," *The Public Historian* 1 (1979): 17–18.

4. For examples of articles that speak to the concerns of the historical profession, see Steven M. Gillon, "The Future of Political History," *Journal of Policy History* 9 (1997): 240–55; Joel H. Silbey, "The State of American Political History at the Millennium: The Nineteenth Century as a Test Case," *Journal of Policy History* 11 (1999): 1–30.

5. Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., *The Age of Roosevelt: The Coming of the New Deal* (Boston, 1959); William M. Leuchtenburg, *Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal* (New York, 1963); Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F.D.R.* (New York, 1955).

6. Some of the landmark books that dealt with economic regulation in the Progressive and New Deal eras include Gabriel Kolko, *The Triumph of Conservatism* (Glencoe, 1963); James Weinstein, *The Corporate Ideal in the Liberal State* (Boston, 1966). To be sure, there were moderates who studied the relationship between business and economic policy. For one of the best works in this period, see Ellis Hawley, *The New Deal and the Problem of Monopoly* (Princeton, 1966).

7. See, for examples, Roy Lubove, *The Professional Altruist: The Emergence of Social Work as a Career, 1880–1930* (Cambridge, Mass., 1965); Michael B. Katz, *The Irony of Early School Reform: Educational Innovation in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Massachusetts* (Cambridge, Mass., 1968).

8. Mark H. Leff, "Revisioning U.S. Political History," *The American Historical Review* 100 (1995): 829–53.

9. Samuel P. Hays, "The Social Analysis of American Political History," *Political Science Quarterly* 80 (1965): 373–94; Paul Kleppner, *The Cross of Culture: A Social Analysis of Midwestern Politics* (New York, 1970); Joel H. Silbey, Allan G. Bogue, and William H. Flanigan, eds., *The History of American Electoral Behavior* (Princeton, 1978).

10. John Higham, *History: Professional Scholarship in America* (Baltimore, 1989), 68–86. See also Benjamin Franklin Cooling, "History Programs in the Department of Defense," *The Public Historian* 12 (1990): 43–63; Roger R. Trask, "Small Federal History Offices in the Nation's Capital," *The Public Historian* 13 (1991): 47–60.

11. Richard G. Hewlett, "The Practice of History in the Federal Government," *The Public Historian* 1 (1978): 30–31.

12. Patricia Mooney-Melvin, "Professional Historians and 'Destiny's Gate,'" *The Public Historian* 17 (1995): 14–18.

13. Robert Kelley, "Public History: Its Origins, Nature, and Prospects," *The Public Historian* 1 (1978): 24–28.

14. Cited in Theodore S. Hamerow, *Reflections on History and Historians* (Madison, 1987), 8.

15. "Editor's Preface," *The Public Historian* 1 (1978): 5.

16. Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession* (Cambridge, 1988), 512–21.

17. Both quotations cited in Novick, *That Noble Dream*, 516–17.

18. See, for example, David Rothman, *The Discovery of the Asylum: Social Order and Disorder in the Early Republic* (Boston, 1971), and Paul Boyer, *Urban Masses and Moral Order in America, 1820–1920* (Cambridge, 1978). Much of the scholarship on social control was influenced by Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward, *Regulating the Poor: The Functions of Public Welfare* (New York, 1971).

19. Louis Galambos, "The Emerging Organizational Synthesis in Modern American History," *Business History Review* 44 (1970): 279–90; idem, "Technology, Political Economy, and Professionalization," *Business History Review* 57 (1983): 471–93.

20. Correspondence from Morton Keller, 26 August 1999.

21. Ellis Hawley, "Remarks at a Roundtable Discussion on the State of Policy History And Its Future," 27 May 1999, paper presented at the 1999 Policy History Conference.

22. Morton Keller and Tom McGraw to Ellis Hawley, 13 July 1978, Hawley Papers.

23. Michael Grossberg, "A Report of the Conference on the History of American Public Policy," *The Public Historian* 1 (1979): 24.

24. *Ibid.*, 25.

25. Graham, "The Stunted Career of Policy History," 18.

26. James A. Smith, *The Idea Brokers: Think Tanks and the Rise of the New Policy Elite* (New York, 1991).

27. Home Page of the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management, <http://qsilver.quensu.ca/appam/information>.

28. Joseph Badaracco, "Report of the Conference on the History of American Public Policy," 2–3 November 1979, and Morton Keller and Thomas McGraw to Ellis Hawley, 23 June 1980.

29. See, for example, Stephen W. Grable, "Applying Urban History to City Planning: A Case Study in Atlanta," *The Public Historian* 1 (1979): 45–59; Peter N. Stearns, "History and Policy Analysis: Toward Maturity," *The Public Historian* 4 (1982): 5–29.

30. See, for example, W. Andrew Achenbaum, "American Medical History: Social History and Medical History," and Daniel Fox, "History and Health Policy," in *The Journal of*

Social History 18 (1985): 343–64; James Reed, “Public Policy On Human Reproduction and the Historian,” *The Journal of Social History* 18 (1985): 383–97.

31. David J. Rothman and Stanton Wheeler, eds., *Social History and Social Policy* (New York, 1981).

32. Herbert G. Gutman, “Mirrors of Hard, Distorted Glass: An Examination of Some Influential Historical Assumptions About the Afro-American Family and the Shaping of Public Policies, 1861–1965,” in *Social History and Social Policy*, 239–73.

33. Morton Keller, *Affairs of State: Public Life in Late Nineteenth-Century America* (Cambridge, Mass., 1977); Edward Berkowitz and Kim McQuaid, *Creating the Welfare State: The Political Economy of Twentieth-Century Reform* (New York, 1980); William Graebner, *A History of Retirement: The Meaning and Function of an American Institution, 1885–1978* (New Haven, 1980); James T. Patterson, *America’s Struggle Against Poverty, 1900–1980* (Cambridge, Mass., 1981); W. Andrew Achenbaum, *Shades of Gray: Old Age, American Values, and Federal Policing Since 1920* (Boston, 1983); Michael B. Katz, *In The Shadow of the Poorhouse: A Social History of Welfare in America* (New York, 1986).

34. Thomas K. McCraw, *Prophets of Regulation: Charles Francis Adams, Louis D. Brandeis, James M. Landis, and Alfred E. Kahn* (Cambridge, Mass., 1984).

35. Ernest R. May, “Lessons” of the Past: *The Use and Misuse of History in American Policy* (New York, 1973).

36. Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May, *Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision Makers* (New York, 1986), 275–84.

37. Robert B. and Rosemary Stevens, *Welfare Medicine in America: A Case Study of Medicaid* (New York, 1974); Gilbert Steiner, *The Children’s Cause* (Washington, D.C., 1976), Henry Aaron, *Politics and the Professors: The Great Society in Perspective* (Washington, D.C., 1978), and Martha Derthick, *Policymaking for Social Security* (Washington, D.C., 1979); Derthick and Paul J. Quirk, *The Politics of Deregulation* (Washington, D.C., 1985).

38. Novick, *That Noble Dream*, 522–72.

39. Donald Critchlow to Ellis Hawley, 9 January 1984, and Donald Critchlow to Ellis Hawley, 1 February 1984, Hawley Papers.

40. *Ibid.*

41. Donald T. Critchlow and Ellis W. Hawley, *Federal Social Policy: The Historical Dimension* (University Park, Pa., 1988).

42. *Ibid.*, 6.

43. Donald T. Critchlow and Ellis W. Hawley, eds., *Poverty and Public Policy in Modern America* (Chicago, 1989).

44. Andrew Abbot, *The System of Professions: An Essay on the Division of Expert Labor* (Chicago, 1988).

45. David B. Mock, “History in the Public Arena,” in *Public History: An Introduction*, eds. Barbara J. Howe and Emory Kemp (Malabar, Fla., 1986).

46. Edward Berkowitz, “History, Public Policy, and Reality,” *The Journal of Social History* 18 (1984): 79–89.

47. Neustadt and May, *Thinking in Time*.

48. *Ibid.*, xxii.

49. Hugh Graham later echoed this proposal by claiming that historians were able to understand the “institutions that drive the policy process—their personality and culture, their values and memory, the legacy of their leaders.” Hugh Davis Graham, “The Stunted Career of Policy History: A Critique and an Agenda,” *Public Historian* 15 (1993): 35–36.

50. Margaret Jane Wyszomirski, “Book Review: Thinking in Time,” *The Journal of Politics* 49 (1987): 607.

51. W. Andrew Achenbaum, “Public History’s Past, Present, and Prospects,” *The American Historical Review* 92 (1987): 1162.

52. Donald Critchlow to Ellis Hawley, 20 February 1987, Hawley Papers. Arnold stepped down in 1990 because of his responsibilities to the Department of Political Science, leaving Critchlow as the only editor. Critchlow moved to Saint Louis University in 1991.

53. Stephen Skowronek, *Building a New American State: The Expansion of National Administrative Capacities, 1877–1920* (Cambridge, 1982); Dietrich Rueschemeyer, Theda Skocpol, and Peter Evans, *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge, 1985).

54. Leff, "Revisioning U.S. Political History," 849.

55. One exemplary publication comes from Sarah Binder. Her recent publication draws on a wealth of historical data to argue that partisan interests in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were the primary factors shaping parliamentary rules for minority rights in Congress. Her work demonstrates clearly how majorities must grapple with rules inherited from the past. Sarah Binder, *Minority Rights, Majority Rules: Partisanship and the Development of Congress* (Cambridge, 1997).

56. Ellis W. Hawley, "Remarks at a Roundtable Discussion," 27 May 1999, paper presented to the 1999 Policy History Conference, Clayton, Missouri.

57. There were exceptions to this trend, which are discussed in the next section of this article.

58. Jeff Shartlet, "Why Diplomatic Historians May Be the Victims of American Triumphalism," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 24 September 1999.

59. For a wonderful overview of the public history movement, see the special issue of their journal, *The Public Historian* 21 (1999).

60. Otis L. Graham Jr., "The Organization of American Historians and Public History—A Progress," *The Public Historian* 18 (1996): 7–10.

61. American Historical Association, *Perspectives* 37 (1999): 59.

62. Patricia Mooney-Melvin, "Professional Historians and 'Destiny's Gate,'" *The Public Historian* 17 (1995): 21–24.

63. Page Putnam Miller, "Reflections on the Public History Movement," *The Public Historian* 14 (1992): 69.

64. Richard A. Posner, *An Affair of State: The Investigation, Impeachment, and Trial of President Clinton* (Cambridge, Mass., 1999), 230–40.

65. Cited in Otis L. Graham, "Editor's Corner," *The Public Historian* 15 (1993): 12. For the excellent book that emerged, see Otis L. Graham, *Losing Time: The Industrial Policy Debate* (Cambridge, Mass., 1992).

66. One notable example is Michael B. Katz, *The "Underclass" Debate Views from History* (Princeton, 1993).

67. Hugh Davis Graham, "The Stunted Career of Policy History: A Critique and an Agenda," *The Public Historian* 15 (1993): 16.

68. "JPH Editor's Note," *Journal of Policy History* 3 (1991): 350.

69. W. Andrew Achenbaum, "Politics, Power, and Problems: Perspectives on Writing Policy History," *Journal of Policy History* 1 (1989): 208.

70. Michael B. Katz, *The Undeserving Poor: From Poverty to the War on Welfare* (New York, 1989).

71. Sven Steinmo, *Taxation and Democracy: Swedish, British, and American Approaches to Financing the Modern State* (New Haven, 1993).

72. Linda Gordon, *Pitied But Not Entitled: Single Mothers and the History of Welfare* (New York, 1994), 306. See also Alice Kessler-Harris, "Designing Women and Old Fools: The Construction of the Social Security Amendments of 1939," in *U.S. History as Women's History: New Feminist Essays*, eds. Linda Kerber, Alice Kessler-Harris, and Kathryn Kish Sklar (Chapel Hill, 1995), 87–106; Eileen Boris, *Home to Work: Motherhood and the Politics of Industrial Homework in the United States* (Cambridge, 1994); Nancy Fraser and Linda Gordon, "'Dependency' Demystified: Inscriptions of Power in a Keyword of the Welfare State," *Social Politics* 1 (1994): 4–31; Robyn Muncy, "Gender and Professionalization in the Origins of the U.S. Welfare State: The Careers of Sophonisba Breckinridge and Edith Abbott, 1890–1935," *Journal of Policy History* 2 (1990): 290–315. For a nuanced and innovative analysis of this issue, see Suzanne Mettler, "The Stratification of Social Citizenship: Gender and Federalism in the Formation of Old Age Insurance and Aid to Dependent Children," *Journal of Policy History* 11 (1999): 31–58.

73. Robert C. Lieberman, *Shifting the Color Line: Race and the American Welfare State* (Cambridge, Mass., 1998); Jill Quadagno, *The Color of Welfare: How Racism Undermined the War on Poverty* (New York, 1994). For a pointed critique of this type of policy analysis, see Gareth Davies and Martha Derthick, "Race and Social Welfare Policy: The Social Security Act of 1935," *Political Science Quarterly* 112 (1997): 217–35.

74. Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers* (Cambridge, Mass., 1992), 539. See also Molly Ladd-Taylor, *Mother Work: Women, Child Welfare, and the State 1890–1930* (Urbana, Ill., 1994).

75. Amy Sue Bix, "Diseases Chasing Money and Power: Breast Cancer and AIDS Activism Challenging Authority," *Journal of Policy History* 9 (1997): 5–32. See also William B. Turner, "Lesbian/Gay Rights and Immigration Policy: Lobbying to End the Medical Model," *Journal of Policy History* 7 (1995): 208–25.

76. Edward Berkowitz, *Mr. Social Security: The Life of Wilbur Cohen* (Lawrence, Kan., 1995).

77. See, for example, Frederic S. Lee, "From Multi-Industry Planning to Keynesian Planning: Gardiner Means, the American Keynesians, and National Economic Planning at the National Resources Committee," *Journal of Policy History* 2 (1990): 186–212; Peter Skerry, "The Ambivalent Minority: Mexican Americans and the Voting Rights Act," *Journal of Policy History* 6 (1994): 73–95; Julian E. Zelizer, "'Where Is the Money Coming From?' The Reconstruction of Social Security Finance, 1939–1950," *Journal of Policy History* 9 (1997): 399–424; Meg Jacobs, "The Politics of Purchasing Power: State-Building, Political Economy, and Consumption Politics, 1909–1959" (Ph.D. diss., University of Virginia, 1999); Alan Brinkley, *The End of Reform: New Deal Liberalism in Recession and War* (New York, 1995); Margaret Weir, *Politics and Jobs: The Boundaries of Employment Policy in the United States* (Princeton, 1992).

78. Hugh Davis Graham, "Race, History, and Policy: African Americans and Civil Rights Since 1964," *Journal of Policy History* 6 (1994): 12–39; Graham, *The Civil Rights Era: Origins and Development of National Policy, 1960–1972* (New York, 1990). Gareth Davies showed how Lyndon Johnson's initial campaign against poverty framed its programs within popular American ideals of individualism and self-sufficiency. The book traces why these efforts were abandoned by the 1970s, but also hints that those older programs offered a vision of federal assistance that might have been more successful politically. See Gareth Davies, *From Opportunity to Entitlement: The Transformation and Decline of Great Society Liberalism* (Lawrence, Kan., 1996).

79. Hugh Davis Graham, "Legacies of the 1960s: The American 'Rights Revolution' in an Era of Divided Governance," *Journal of Policy History* 10 (1998): 284.

80. Martha Derthick, "Crossing Thresholds: Federalism in the 1960s," *Journal of Policy History* 8 (1996): 64–80.

81. Helene Silverberg, "State Building, Health Policy, and the Persistence of the American Abortion Debate," *Journal of Policy History* 9 (1997): 311–38. For another insightful example of international comparison to understand alternatives, see Gareth Davies, "Understanding the War on Poverty: The Advantages of a Canadian Perspective," *Journal of Policy History* 9 (1997): 425–49.

82. Alfred E. Eckes, "Revisiting Smoot-Hawley," *Journal of Policy History* 7 (1995): 295–310.

83. Michael W. Flamm, "Price Controls, Politics, and the Perils of Policy by Analogy: Economic Demobilization After World War II," *Journal of Policy History* 8 (1996): 335–55.

84. Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton, 1996).

85. David T. Beito, "Mutual Aid, State Welfare, and Organized Charity: Fraternal Societies and the 'Deserving' and 'Undeserving' Poor, 1900–1930," *Journal of Policy History* 5 (1993): 419–34.

86. Christopher Howard, *The Hidden Welfare State: Tax Expenditures and Social Policy in the United States* (Princeton, 1997).

87. Edwin Amenta, *Bold Relief: Institutional Politics and the Origins of Modern American Social Policy* (Princeton, 1998).

88. Timothy J. Minchin, "Federal Policy and the Racial Integration of Southern Industry, 1961–1980," *Journal of Policy History* 11 (1999): 347–378.

89. Jo Freeman, "The Political Culture of the Democratic and Republican Parties," *Political Science Quarterly* 101 (1986): 327–28.

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