From Policy "Frames" to "Framing": Theorizing a More Dynamic, Political Approach

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Abstract

The concept of frames or framing, especially cast as "frame analysis," has an established history in public policy. Taking off from the work of Donald Schön and Martin Rein, we develop the idea of policy analytic fram*ing*, the more dynamic of the two terms, in ways that strengthen what we see as its promise for a more process-oriented and politically sensitive understanding of the activities it is used to characterize. We argue that such an approach needs to engage the following aspects of the work that framing does: sense-making; selecting, naming, and categorizing; and storytelling. In addition, frame theorizing needs to engage not only the way issues are framed but also the intertwining of framing and frame-makers' identities, and the meta-communicative framing of policy processes.

Keywords

policy framing, policy frames, frame analysis, policy analysis, sense-making, naming, categorizing, storytelling, Martin Rein, Donald Schön

The concept of frames or framing, especially cast as "frame analysis," has an established history in public policy studies, building largely on the work of Donald Schön and Martin Rein. It is an important analytic "tool" for those seeking to understand, for instance, issues in the mismatch between administrators' implementation of legislated policies and policy intent. Originally coined elsewhere (Bateson, 1955/1972a), the concept had, by the 1990s, been taken up in a wide range of academic disciplines. These included, in addition to public policy analysis (e.g., Rein, 1983a, 1983b; Rein & Schön, 1977; Schön, 1979/1993; Schön & Rein 1994, 1996), artificial intelligence and psychology (e.g., Minsky, 1975; Schank & Abelson, 1977; Tversky & Kahneman, 1981), linguistics (e.g., Fillmore, 1982; Lakoff, 1987; Tannen, 1979; see Cienki, 2007), social movement studies (e.g., Gamson, 1992; Morris & Mueller, 1992; Snow & Benford, 1988; Snow, Rochford, Worden, & Benford, 1986; for an overview, see Benford & Snow, 2000), communication studies (e.g., D'Angelo, 2002; de Vreese, 2012; Entman, 1993; for a critical overview, see Vliegenthart & van Zoonen, 2011), dispute resolution (e.g., Dewulf et al., 2009; Putnam &

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Holmer, 1992), and even music (Cone, 1968). Yet as the Rein–Schön policy analytic approach to framing is, today, less well known than its version in the social movement literature, public policy and administration scholars might be more likely to turn to the latter than the former in seeking to explain frame-related issues. Given what we see as the greater suitability of their approach for analyzing policy processes, we think the ideas they developed worth revisiting and extending in ways that enhance their applicability to dynamic, power-sensitive policy and administrative issues.

Although Schön also explored the subject in his own scholarship on metaphors (1979/1993) and reflective practice (e.g., 1983, 1987)—each of which might be understood, at least in part, as engaging aspects of framing—its policy applications are most fully elaborated in his collaborative work with Rein. Where Rein used "frame-reflective analysis" interchangeably with "value-critical analysis" (on this point, see Schmidt, 2006/2013), together they began focusing on frame analysis as "a methodology for problem setting" (Rein & Schön, 1977, p. 237). Later, they added its utility for investigating the possible resolution of policy controversies (Rein & Schön, 1986, 1993), and in particular those they saw as "stubborn" (Rein & Schön, 1991) or "intractable" (Rein & Schön, 1996; see also Rein, 1983a, 1983b; Schön, 1963/2001): prolonged debates on issues marked by uncertainties and ambiguities that were "highly resistant to resolution by appeal to evidence, research, or reasoned argument" (Schön & Rein, 1994, p. xi).[1] Their collaboration ultimately led to the co-authored *Frame Reflection* (Schön & Rein, 1994).

Schön and Rein's approach to frame analysis has been generative for many policy scholars across a range of topics, from waste management to immigrant integration, civil aviation to bovine TB (see, for example, Dudley, 1999; Grant, 2009; Hajer & Laws 2006; Hisschemöller & Hoppe, 1996; Kaufman & Smith, 1999; Laws & Rein, 2003; Rasmussen, 2011; Schmidt, 2006/2013; Scholten & Van Nispen, 2008; Sørensen, 2006; van Eeten, 2001; Yanow, 2009). Still, for all its utility, their approach warrants further development to realize its policy analytic potential in the context of intractable policy controversies, in particular with respect to the promise it holds out of a dynamic, process-oriented engagement that is politically nuanced and power-sensitive. In this context, it would be particularly suitable for understanding interactions not only in formal political arenas but also in governance networks (Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004) and in the more mundane encounters between street-level bureaucrats and their clients (Lipsky, 1980; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003; Vinzant & Crothers, 1996). In extending their approach, we draw on various ideas we find in Schön's earlier solo work (1963/2001, 1971), and we join Schön and Rein's treatment of policy frame analysis with ideas deriving from category and narrative analyses, two related analytic modes.

To make the potential contributions of this policy analytic focus on fram*ing* clearer, we differentiate it from approaches that focus on fram*es*. In our reading of these approaches, social movement theorizing chief among them, "frames" are often treated as objects people possess in their heads and develop for explicitly strategic purposes. By contrast, the policy analytic approach we engage here shifts the focus to "framing," the interactive, intersubjective processes through which frames are constructed (cf. Weick, 1979).[2] This distinction is more significant than mere differences between parts of speech: "frame" signifies a more definitional, static, and potentially taxonomizing approach to the subject; "framing" offers a more dynamic and, in our view, potentially politically aware engagement. Although the two treatments are not necessarily mutually exclusive,[3] each brings different features of the processes conceptualized as frames/framing to light. To be sure, Schön and Rein's work has aspects of both: Their case studies (e.g., of homelessness; 1994) trace policy developments over time, listing policy programs adopted in specific cases whose names are the equivalent of different frames on the policy problem, and the policy settings of those cases introduce some elements of political processes. Our argument develops the political character of policy processes more fully, thereby enabling a policy-focused frame theorizing and analysis that flesh out the more dynamic and politically sensitive aspects of their

work. This also enables us to address some of the issues raised by social movement and dispute resolution studies' treatments of frames (e.g., Benford, 1997; Dewulf et al., 2009).

Knowing something of the conceptual history out of which frame analysis emerged clarifies what is at stake in these different approaches. We begin there and with Schön's and Rein's basic ideas before turning to the further development of a policy analytic approach.

From Biting Monkeys to Quarreling Humans: A Genealogy of Frame/Framing Theories

The ur-text for frame analysis—whether used in public policy studies, social movement theorizing, or some other field of scholarship—appears to be Gregory Bateson's work (1955/1972a). The observational base for his ideas clearly stipulates what is in play in the idea of frames/framing. Observing monkeys biting each other, Bateson remarked that they were "engaged in an interactive sequence of which the unit actions or signals were *similar to but not the same as* those of combat" (1955/1972a, p. 152; emphasis added). That is, to a casual observer or a poorly socialized monkey (if there were such a creature), the same actions might be taken as either fighting or playing. Bateson reasoned that the monkeys must have some way of signaling to each other—some form of "meta-communication"—that enabled them to discern which of the two modes was afoot. They were, in other words, "framing" their actions to signal either fight-biting or play-biting.

Bateson's drawing on animal behavior to theorize social interaction was shared by other early-20th-century researchers. One of these, George Herbert Mead (1934), drew on a fight between two dogs to illustrate his notion of a "conversation of gestures" (pp. 42-43), an idea parallel to Bateson's about framing:

> The act of each dog becomes the stimulus to the other dog for his response. There is a relationship between these two; and as the act is responded to by the other dog, it, in turn, undergoes change. The very fact that the dog is ready to attack another becomes a stimulus to the other dog to change his own position or his own attitude. He has no sooner done this than the change of attitude in the second dog in turn causes the first dog to change his attitude. We have here a conversation of gestures.

What we see in this description, as in Bateson's monkeys, is framing—in the sense of an *understanding of the situation*—that is dynamically built and altered in and through the parties' interaction (discussed further below). The difference between Mead and Bateson is the stress that Bateson puts on the meta-communication, the framing that "appears" over and above the conversation of gestures. This is what enables the monkeys—and by extension, humans—to understand which kind of conversation they are taking part in.[4]

Bateson's frame ideas were taken up in social science in two disciplinary arenas, neither of which has, on the whole, been cognizant of the other's frame theorizing: policy analysis and social psychology, the latter leading to social movement's adoption of frames as a key concept, as well as its use in other fields, such as dispute resolution and communication studies.[5] The use of frame analysis in social movement and other studies traces to Erving Goffman (1974; a key figure in symbolic interactionism, along with Mead), who used Bateson's notion in *Frame Analysis*. Developing symbolic interactionist ideas concerning interpersonal constructions of the self, Goffman focused on the "definition of the situation" that transpires as people negotiate the meaning(s) of their interactions: It is "built up in accordance with principles of organization which govern events…and *our subjective involvement* in them; frame is the word I use to refer to such of these *basic elements* as I am able to identify" (Goffman, 1974, p. 10; emphases added). Frames, in other words, guide the ways situational participants perceive their social realities and (re)present these to themselves and to others; a frame reflects actors' organizing principles that structure those perceptions; and the frame's "basic" components are capable of being itemized.

One feature of Goffman's interactionist "definition of the situation" is that it is not consciously created. Instead, it is unconsciously adopted and/or developed by parties to an interaction in the course of communicating. Later, Goffman increasingly turned away from the interactionist character of his earlier work (e.g., Goffman, 1959), finding that approach too "socially constructivist": The frame concept he developed in the early 1970s is "less subjective and less determined by attitudes and negotiations than was his 'definition of the situation'" theorizing of the 1950s (Victor Vakhshtayn, personal communication, 12 July 2009).[6] His work on strategic interaction (Goffman, 1970), although still connected to symbolic interaction, shifts to emphasizing the strategic aspects of the "game playing" actors engage in, in some situations. Goffmanian frames acquired, in this way, a more objectivist-realist character, something notable in the social movement frame literature building on his work (e.g., Gamson, 1992; Snow & Benford, 1988; Snow et al., 1986).

In brief, social movement theorists typically focus on the strategic—conscious, intentional, cognitive—character of the different frame groups develop with respect to issues of concern to them, altering their positions—that is, their Goffmanian "definitions of the situation"—to enhance the possibility of alliances or coalitions.[7] In keeping with a Goffmanian understanding, which rests on "principles of organization" that govern situations and on identifying frames' "basic elements" (quoted above), much of the social movement literature has sought to develop taxonomies of such frames. Two elements central to Goffman's early theorizing are thereby lost: that frames develop through highly situated interactional processes of communication, rather than being intentionally created, cognitively, outside an (inter)action context; and that situated frames might not lend themselves well to taxonomizing, a universalizing that relies on a sort of "trait list" approach that ends up both essentializing specific frames and reifying their content. These two aspects—frames emerging during intersubjective processes and their situated character—are central to the policy analytic approach developed by Schön and Rein and more suited to analyzing the dynamics of policy and organizational processes.

Apparently independently of Goffman's work and at about the same time, Donald Schön, also drawing on Bateson (1972b) and, in particular, his notion of schismogenesis (see Note 4), began to elaborate his own concept of framing (along with metaphor) in the context of diffusion of innovation theories and organizational studies (e.g., Argyris & Schön, 1974; Schön, 1963/2001, 1971, 1979/1993).[8] In that early work, Schön engaged how and why policy-related publics might look at the same situation differently: "The nature of the public problem appears to different actors in different and often incompatible ways" because those involved have their own roles, interests, perspectives, and access to information (Schön, 1971, pp. 210-211). However, "…once having found a way of looking at (and therefore dealing with) a situation which was at first novel and puzzling, our impulse to stick with it is overwhelmingly powerful" (Schön, 1963/2001, p. 8). Here is how the dynamic of framing can generate frames that appear static.[9]

In the context of public problems, these processes account for the "intractable policy controversies" that Schön sought to explain together with his social policy studies colleague Martin Rein. Theorizing that such controversies entailed incommensurable views and values at play in the ways contending parties defined—framed—a policy problem enabled them to explicate how it is that policy-relevant actors often argue past each other, disagreeing even over what comprise the "facts" of the situation (Rein & Schön, 1986). In this view, analyses of the shortcomings of programs created to solve problems that had not been remedied by previous policy programs (analyses which themselves sought better programmatic solutions) would not help. Analysts needed, instead, to shift "backwards" in their focus—away, that is, from both administrative agency actions and legislative processes—to engage the very definition of the policy issue itself as the source of difficulties. This needed to take place during the problem-setting phase of the policy process (e.g., Rein & Schön, 1977; Schön, 1979/1993; Schön & Rein, 1994; see also Schön, 1971).

This shift backwards—their "methodology for problem setting"—is important because "the questions we ask shape the answers [i.e., policy solutions] we get" (Rein & Schön, 1977, p. 236). A novel idea in the 1970s, the need to attend to problem definition has since become more accepted in policy analysis and public administration (e.g., in theories of network governance; Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). Carol Bacchi (2009a) nicely sums up this shift, proposing as the key analytic question, "What's the problem represented to be?" This is in marked contrast to the "What's to be done?" approach (Gargan & Brown, 1993) characteristic of traditional policy analysis, which assumes the definition of the problem as given (cf. Bacchi, 2009b, and Verloo, 2005, on critical frame analysis).

In attending to the way "worries" are turned into "problems" (Rein & Schön, 1977), policy-focused frame analysis following Schön and Rein takes up the active work framing accomplishes: (a) highlighting certain features of a situation, (b) ignoring or selecting out other features, and (c) binding the highlighted features together into a coherent and comprehensible pattern. But what enables this way of seeing? Rein and Schön (1977, 1996; Schön, 1979/1993) draw our attention to three processes at play in framing: naming, selecting, and storytelling. In *naming* the features of a situation, policy-relevant actors draw on language that reflects their understanding of it, often naming the policy problem through metaphor (e.g., housing "decay"; Schön, 1979/1993). Furthermore, naming in effect *selects* what should be seen and diverts attention from other features. And at the same time, the aspects singled out in naming the problem cohere through a *storytelling* manner of presenting the situation. Telling such situational *stories*, Rein and Schön (1977) argued, typically helps policy-relevant actors to bind elements of a situation into a pattern that is coherent and graspable (cf. Rein & Schön, 1996). Storytelling "is at once a medium for problem setting and a way of discovering the tacit frames that underlie our problem settings" (Rein & Schön, 1977, p. 243).

Focusing on policy "talk" (including its written versions), this approach to frame analysis explores the ways in which situation-specific framing may contribute to divisions among policy-relevant actors. It also explores whether individuals or groups, promoting and maintaining conflict deriving from and supported by frame-based cross-communication, thereby prolong the intractability of the policy controversy (Schön & Rein, 1994). Schön and Rein theorized two sorts of framing processes at play in such situations: rhetorical frames, featuring the persuasive use of story and argument in policy debate, and action frames, which more directly inform policy programs. Even in cases where those two frame processes overlap, more often "the [rhetorical frame] language used to win the allegiance of large groups of people differs from the [action] frames implicit in the agreements that determine the content of laws, regulations and procedures" (Schön & Rein, 1994, p. 32).

Like the early Goffman, Schön and Rein argued that even though all competent members of a society can draw on its culturally specific frames, awareness of them is usually tacit (in Polanyi's, 1966, sense, p. 4, that "we know more than we can tell"; see Tsoukas, 2011). This accounts for the stubbornness of "intractable" policy controversies: When frames shape policy definition, discourse, and debate but are not explicitly recognized as doing so, the reasoning that underlies disagreements and contestation is typically not available, explicitly, to be acknowledged and discussed. This led Schön and Rein (1994, chap. 7) to advocate for "frame reflection" in the policy process: for contending policy-relevant actors to consider how their own frames might be contributing to the contentious situations they found themselves in. Perhaps, if actors were willing and able to reflect on their frames, frame shifts—*re*framing—might occur, and problems that had seemed irresolvable might be resolved after all.[10]

Frame analysis in this tradition has been taken up widely in policy analysis, even if Schön and Rein's work is not always explicitly mentioned or discussed.[11] In general, this work does not seek to develop taxonomies of frame types characteristic of policy topics (e.g., across educational or housing policy domains), examining instead the situated socio-political processes through which

framing takes place—the Meadian/Goffmanian understandings or definitions of the situation at hand constructed by the multiple interpretive communities party to it. These potentially multiple ways of framing a situation may constitute "a contest over the framing of ideas" that shifts attention "from the contest over individual preferences to the contest over shared meaning" (Abolafia, 2004, p. 349; see also Stone, 1988/2002, on politics as the struggle over ideas).[12]

Making Framing Analysis More Dynamic and Political

Schön and Rein can be credited with putting the idea of framing onto the policy analytic table. The capacity of this approach for engaging the political dynamism of policy controversies, however, calls for additional theorizing. We undertake to do this by fleshing out three concepts that Schön and Rein introduced but left under-theorized—naming, selecting, and storytelling—and bringing in two related ones—sense-making and categorizing. We explore these ideas in the context of two concerns central to such theorizing: elaborating the work that framing does, and clarifying what it is exactly that gets framed. As it becomes ever more dynamic, policy *frame* analysis increasingly becomes policy *framing* analysis, exploring the framing of a policy issue, the framing of relations among framers, and the framing of the policy-making process itself, distinctions we clarify in what follows.

The Work of Framing

Framing is carried out through three distinctive acts, attention to which elaborates its potentially dynamic, political character: sense-making; naming, which includes selecting and categorizing; and storytelling. Sense-making is a situated process to which policy-relevant actors attend in circumstances that are ambiguous or about which there are uncertainties. Intractable policy controversies are clear examples of these. Through their use of language, the other two—selecting-categorizing-naming and storytelling—draw certain features of an intractable policy situation together, thereby both rendering them more coherent and graspable and diverting attention from their ambiguities and uncertainties.

Framing as sense-making work. In policy-making, framing is a process in and through which policy-relevant actors intersubjectively construct the meanings of the policy-relevant situations with which they are involved, whether directly or as onlookers and stakeholders. When facing such situations, especially when what "worries" (Rein & Schön, 1977) or confronts them is a matter of some concern and appears uncertain or ambiguous, actors typically ask, explicitly or implicitly, the question that Goffman (1974, p. 8) posed, whose answer "framing" explicates: "What is it that's going on here?" (cf. Jay White's manager, as told by Ralph Hummel, 1991, p. 36). As Schön (1983) put it, "In order to convert a problematic situation into a problem," actors must "do a certain kind of work": They must "make sense of an uncertain situation that initially makes no sense" (p. 40). Imagine, to take a typical example from a common street-level bureaucracy, two experienced patrol officers who arrive at the scene of a domestic dispute. Although they enter the situation with prior knowledge and experience of previous disputes, they have to assess what is going on in this instance, often as it is unfolding. This is analogous (with no irony intended) to Bateson's starting point: Is this play or fight?

The kinds of materials that policy-relevant actors might be confronted with—from more "raw" sense data such as sounds, images, or smells to that more "processed," such as pictures, texts, or rumors—are often difficult to combine into a neat, coherent picture. Drawing on some prior cognition of the situation, as Schön (1979/1993) argued with respect to metaphors, which derives from previous experiences, expectations, and/or emotions, framing provides a scaffolding for perceiving and articulating patterns among its disparate, and perhaps contending,

elements. Frames, like metaphors (in a cognitive linguistics perspective; discussed further in the next section), are implicit theories of a situation: They model prior thought and ensuing action, rendering that action sensible in terms of pre-existing thinking (Geertz, 1973; Lakoff & Johnson, 1987; Yanow, 1992, 2008; cf. Snow et al., 1986). What gets produced in the framing process is both a model *of* the world—reflecting prior sense-making—and a model *for* subsequent action in that world. Framing, then, does two kinds of work: It organizes prior knowledge (including that derived from experience) and values held, and it guides emergent action (cf. Rein & Schön, 1977, on diagnoses that contain prescriptions for action). Although for analytical purposes it can be useful to separate the two, they typically work simultaneously and interactively, and at the level of tacit, not conscious, knowledge. The sense-making that framing works to achieve takes place in the midst of acting; it is not a conscious, explicitly planned and strategized activity; and enactments of meaning are every bit as much a part of framing processes as the words used to talk about those ideas and acts.

The framing of a situation enacts the sense-making work that enables what Rein and Schön (1977) called a normative leap from what *is* to what *ought to be* (p. 240; see also Schön, 1983, p. 40; cf. Benford, 1997, p. 416, "signifying work"). Framing enables actors to understand a situation as being of a certain kind (enacted in categorizing, taken up in the next section), and they can start to imagine what could or should happen next in light of prior notions concerning the ways certain problems can and should be handled (Rein & Schön, 1977). Although Schön (1979/1993) stressed the cognitive character of this process, which might be taken to imply individual sense-making, policy settings involve more than that. Sense-making has an intersubjective aspect, drawing upon direct or indirect interaction with other actors (Weick, 1995; cf. the interactionist approach of Mead, 1934 and Goffman, 1959). Indeed, various modes of collective knowing, such as practices, cultures, and organizational learning, exhibit similar dimensions of group sense-making (see, for example, Cook & Yanow, 2011/1993; Schatzki, 2001). Sense-making can also entail interacting with non-human elements (cf. Schön, 1983, 1987, on reflective practitioners conversing with their materials). These interactions—including gestures and other modes of non-verbal expression, at times mediated by material objects—draw on more, or other, than cognitive ways of knowing alone.[13]

An important part of the meanings of the acts, events, and things actors are confronted with resides not in those entities themselves or in the cognitive frames actors supposedly have, but arises, instead, in the course of interacting in and with those acts, events, and things.[14] Grasping framing's dynamism rests on understanding that actors act toward things on the basis of the meanings things *acquire* for them *in the course of* that sense-making (cf. Blumer, 1969; Vickers, 1965, 1987, on appreciative settings and systems). Combining a Schönian line of thought in which practitioners are engaged in conversations with their materials and a Meadian−Goffmanian symbolic interactionist one, the sense-making work of framing can be seen to unfold as actors engage in a *conversation with the situation*, where "the situation" intermingles persons, acts, events, language, and/or objects. At a certain point in the process, actors attribute some initial meaning to the situation at hand, looking then to see what happens as a result.[15] This is an interactive and iterative process, in which details and generalities inform one another, a clearer idea of what is going on develops, and meanings "emerge."

In sense-making work, talk and gesture, and observation of both, are highly interactive. There is no a priori sequencing to their appearance or mutual influence: Talk and action are not completely separable, as speech act and multimodal linguistics theorists have noted (Austin, 1975; Cienki & Müller, 2008). Moreover, both understanding and the ways of talking about those understandings develop in interacting with whatever it is actors are trying to make sense of. Much as members of a culture learn to interpret acts, objects, and language in particular ways, the meanings that things in a particular policy-making, implementation, or other situation have for actors is not *given* to them by that setting. "Culture" does not comprise a set of stable frames that

drive all members of a culture (whether national, organizational, or some other) to see things in certain ways: Multiple influences are often at play; multiple possible interpretations co-exist within a single cultural "code," and actors bring their own prior knowledge (from experiences, education, and other sources) to situational sense-making. We might say instead that actors draw on a repertoire of cultural resources in framing the situations they are confronted with.

Framing's sense-making work proceeds in the midst of complexities arising from the multiple ways that multiple actors, whether individual or collective, potentially have of seeing a problematic situation, developed in the process of making sense of that situation. Different ways of seeing often (though not necessarily) entail different problem definitions and different solutions, which arise as various actors select various elements from a situation for attention and name and categorize similar ones differently.

Framing as the work of selecting, naming, and categorizing. In introducing the idea of policy framing (see also Schön & Rein, 1994), Rein and Schön (1977) talked about "the complementary process of naming and framing." To explicate that relationship, we bring in two other features that work together with naming: selecting and categorizing. These three are framing devices in their own right.

Consider, for example, "Western European immigration policy." The phrase does three things at once: It *selects* from among a range of possible features those that—from the framer's perspective—warrant attention (mobility in, not out; permanent residence, not temporary labor), it *names* them, and it *categorizes* (European, not Canadian; Western, not Southern). Through all three of these, policy actors draw disparate elements together in a pattern, selecting some things as relevant or important and discarding, backgrounding or ignoring others, occluding other ways of seeing (and acting), and thereby silencing them in policy discourse and ensuing action (at least, from the perspective of that particular frame). As Rein and Schön (1977) remarked, "Whatever is said of a thing, denies something else of it" (p. 239). In these ways, framing lays the conceptual groundwork for possible future courses of action, and actors intersubjectively, interactively construct the socio-political world in and on which they act.

Selecting certain aspects of a worrisome situation for attention is a contingent, political act: Other features might have been selected; these might have brought other configurations of decision-makers and resources into play; and they might have focused on aspects of the situation that worry other societal groups (cf. Weick, 1995, on attending to situational cues). Even while it is contingent and political, such selecting is also a practical necessity, as it reduces the range of stimuli bombarding actors' "sense (and sense-making) receptors" contributing to the ambiguities and uncertainties of the situation and of their possible responses, enabling them to frame the situation they are engaging in ways that they can act in and on.

For purposes of communicating about that framing, the features that are selected for attention have to be named. Such policy naming at times invokes metaphors: Concepts whose meaning(s) in *other* situations is (are) known and understood, such that their use in *this* situation (typically without conscious intent) makes what is going on clearer (Schön, 1963/2001, 1979/1993; see also, van Hulst, 2008; Yanow, 2008). Political decision-makers often use metaphors that are common currency within their own socio-political communities or cultures; they may also have drawn on those metaphors on previous occasions, reflecting their accustomed ways of dealing with situations (e.g., van Hulst, 2008).

In whatever form naming takes, situational elements are categorized, as the "Western European immigration" example shows. Even if objects, events, acts, and actors might arrive already categorized (e.g., in news reports talking about "the living standard of immigrants" in a certain country), situation-specific categorizing of sense data and interpretations of these always have to take place (see Bowker & Star, 1999; Lakoff, 1987; Yanow, 2003). Categorizing, itself a form of naming, entails identifying things as a "this" but not a "that." (Naming can also draw distinctions,

but it does so less explicitly than categorizing.) Differences are thereby established between, for instance, natives and immigrants, friends and enemies, victims and perpetrators, normal and abnormal, old and new, work and pleasure, fight and play—whatever is relevant to the issue at hand. Even when category names do not appear in full-fledged taxonomies—as in the "Western Europe" example—other elements in the category set are present by implication (Eastern Europe, Africa, North America—as relevant to the policy context).

Like selecting and naming (including metaphorizing), categorizing is a framing device: All of these can be ways of highlighting some aspects of a policy discourse while occluding and even silencing others, as noted above. In this sense, selecting, naming, and categorizing are "ways of world-making," to use Nelson Goodman's (1978) phrase. The initial framing or operational "definition" of a policy situation is a way of making a world one can act in, and upon. In the world of policy and administrative practices, framing an issue is a condition for being able to do one's work. Selecting, naming, and categorizing are ways not only of shaping the world that one has made, but of knowing it (although we certainly do not mean to suggest that policy or other actors have the socio-political and/or physical powers to create and change their worlds at will). Street-level bureaucrats, for instance, select certain features of the clients they meet as they categorize the clients' cases and decide how to handle them (Lipsky, 1980). In another example, calling a policy event or situation "worrisome" or "problematic," thereby distinguishing it from the non-problematic commonplace, is a key world-making or framing act. Which situations get labeled problematic is ultimately contingent: As Murray Edelman (1988) taught us, "conditions that hurt people need not become [accepted as] problems" (p. 13). Although often only one feature of a situation is explicitly named, thereby framing the situation (as in calling something "an act of terrorism"), other, unnamed features (the repertoire of name- or category- and policy-relevant elements) may help to establish that meaning (or contest it).

Framing as the work of storytelling. Theorizing policy framing must also include an account of storytelling because of their relationship, something Laws and Rein (2003) and Stone (2006) also note. Although Rein and Schön's first and last joint publications engaged both storytelling (1977) and narrative frames (1996) and their 1994 book talks in passing, in theoretical terms, about turning a situation that is experienced as worrisome, uncertain, ambiguous, and probably problematic into a policy issue by telling a story about it (Schön & Rein, 1994; cf. Schön, 1979/1993), they do not elaborate on how framing works through storytelling.

Beyond selecting and naming some elements and ignoring others, framing also entails "*bind[ing] together* the salient features of the situation . . . into a pattern that is coherent and graspable" (Rein & Schön, 1977, p. 239; emphasis added; cf. "weaving a connection," Gamson & Modigliani, 1989, and "frame resonance," Snow & Benford, 1988, in social movement frame theory). Such "binding together" into a pattern is what storytelling achieves (Gabriel, 2000; van Hulst, 2012), and it does this work through "narrative frames" (Rein & Schön, 1996; van Hulst, Siesling, van Lieshout, & Dewulf, 2014) or plot lines. These attribute sense to a situation, drawing on "narrative" or "prose" rather than the explicit logical structure of argumentation, for instance, or outline.[16] Stories frame their subjects as they narrate them, explicitly naming their features, selecting and perhaps categorizing them as well, explaining to an audience what *has been* going on, what *is* going on, and, often, what needs to be done—past, present, and future corresponding to the plot line of a policy story.[17] By contrast, names, metaphors, and categories frame their policy issues without fully, and explicitly, narrating the stories that they condense (e.g., "homelessness"; Schön & Rein, 1994), which remain implicit within them (cf. Edelman, 1964/1985, p. 198, on symbols "condens[ing] a range of ideas, feelings, and sentiments"). Where the naming and categorizing aspects of framing might be expressed in one word (e.g., "communist," "creationist"), stories elaborate on the perceived policy problem (and perhaps its envisioned solution).

Storytelling achieves its "certain kind of work" (Schön, 1983, p. 40; see also Forester, 1999, p. 29) through introducing and narrating new selections, names, and category schemes or reimagining those already available, gluing these elements together by "emplotting" them (see also Czarniawska, 1998, p. 2). That plot weaves story elements together into a text that makes sense as a whole: sketching out the situation in which actors find themselves, establishing a situation's beginnings, tracing its development from something unnoticed or perceived as normal to something perceived as worrisome and/or experienced as problematic, and suggesting or pointing to a possible resolution or "end" (Stone, 1988/2002; van Hulst, 2012; but see Shenhav, 2005, on political stories' lack of closure). As policy-making entails collective action, and policy-relevant actors often do not agree on what is happening and what needs to or should be done, persuasion is called for. In providing plot lines that tie elements together in logical, even motivational or causal ways, storytelling is often key to such persuasive efforts (Rein & Schön, 1977; see also Throgmorton, 1992; van Hulst, 2012, in the context of planning practice; Sørensen, 2006, on storytelling's role in governance; Shenhav, 2007, in political settings more broadly; Boje, 1991; Czarniawska, 1998; Gabriel, 2000; Hummel, 1991; Ingersoll & Adams, 1992; White, 1992, in organizational studies and public administration). Storytelling of this sort may be found not only during policy design, but also during implementation as individuals frame their policy-related concerns by telling their stories about, for instance, housing, legal, welfare, and other problems to the public administrators who deal with their cases (e.g., Bennett, 1979; Dubois, 2010; van Hulst, 2013).

In aiming to persuade, storytelling typically moves beyond "mere" problem definition (Forester, 1999, 2009). In telling the story behind their problems, policy-relevant actors typically reach back in time to a moment when all was well, sketching the context in which certain worries came into being (van Hulst, 2012). They narrate the history, *their* history, of what went wrong. With more time, they might relate what matters to them and what they fear might happen. Whereas such storytelling is often meant to persuade (Stone, 1988/2002; van Hulst, 2012), resting at times on stereotypical characters and stereotypical depictions of settings and actions, it might also be a vehicle for contending parties to listen to others and their views, to reflect and even reframe (Forester, 1999, 2009). Indeed, as Forester (2009) notes, it may "be more difficult to hurt each other once we know one another's stories" (p. 187).

Telling stories about a developing situation involves fitting unfolding events into the plot. Even in stories that weave together the most surprising events (from the perspective of their narrators) or those that seem to be "the same old story" (the same actors being cast as heroes and villains over and over again), storytellers might be working hard backstage (to draw in Goffman, 1959) to incorporate new elements. And that new material might actually destabilize the story. What is paramount for purposes of persuasion is that framing produces a depiction of reality that is credible—that "rings true" —and which enables actors to engage in action. Stories do that work. As Weick (1995) put it, when it comes to acting in practice, plausibility suffices; accuracy is hardly aimed for (if it can ever be achieved). A story, in other words, is "good" when it not only creates a coherent, graspable account, but also "holds disparate elements together long enough to energize and guide action" (Weick, 1995, p. 61).

In telling about policy action and its human and non-human actors, policy framing stories implicitly or explicitly attribute blame or praise and suggest causes of harm or success; they set out "a view of what is wrong and what needs fixing" (Schön, 1979/1993, p. 144). As various policy-relevant actors bring different and conflicting experiences, expectations, desires, and fears to policy situations or develop these in them, conflicts over the interpretation(s) and meaning(s) of these narrated stories can be expected, and negotiations over their meaning(s) may take place. In this persuasive sense, framing through storytelling manifests discursive power.

What Does Framing Frame?

In policy processes, framing (and reframing) operate on three kinds of entities: the substantive content of the policy issue, the identities and relationships of situational actors in the policy process, and the policy process itself. Dewulf et al. (2009) suggested a similar approach to framing in dispute resolution studies; we adapt it here for policy analysis.

Framing the substance of policy issues. The policy "what" that gets framed through the iterative selecting, naming, categorizing, and storytelling processes discussed in the previous section is primarily the world of ideas relevant to the policy issue at hand (Rein & Schön, 1986, 1993, Schön & Rein, 1994, chap. 2)—their meaning(s) for various issue-relevant interpretive communities. In analyzing U.S. abortion policy and its supporters and opponents, for instance, Luker (1984) explores the two camps' (pro-life, pro-choice) framing of the idea of motherhood. Swaffield (1998) examines the meanings of "landscape" to various parties to debates over New Zealand planning and natural resource policies. Schmidt (2000) links the meanings of U.S. "English-only" language policy to different ideas and values—frames—concerning immigrants and their integration into society. Rasmussen (2011) shows how competing framings of contraception as preventive care, which would require health insurance coverage, themselves, also construct issue categories.

In the momentary "freezing" of actors' policy positions for purposes of description and analysis, framings take on a static aspect. But looking within these for the more dynamic, political character of policy framing brings two additional dimensions to the fore: the ways in which policy-relevant actors' identities and the relationships between and among them can also be a focus of policy framing, and the ways in which policy processes, themselves, can be subject to framing.

Framing policy-relevant actors' identities and relationships. Conflicts over the meanings of policy situations may be rooted not just in different views of the issues at stake. Such conflicts may also be located in policy-relevant actors' senses of their own and other actors' identities and the relationships between or among them, including identities that those actors cherish (Forester, 1999, 2009; Sinha & Gasper, 2009). Framing works to construct these identities, as well as their relationships to one another. These ideas arose in passing in Schön and Rein's (1994, Part III) theorizing as they considered that the shared interests of actors involved in policy conflict, along with their willingness to *re*frame a problematic situation jointly, might help them envision pragmatic solutions to even the most intractable of policy issues. We think there is more to it than that.

Policy-relevant actors' identities can become strongly intertwined with a particular framing of a policy issue. They might discover their calling, earn their keep, find friends or partners, or be in some other way(s) drawn into the articulation of a particular framing of a policy issue, or tied in with the organization or group that has constructed, supported, or fought that framing. They might, in other words, become "attached" to their problems, not just through formal political acts (e.g., having voted for some option), but also in emotional, psychological, social, and/or cultural ways. A public change to that position might feel to them like losing a part of who they are—their social and/or political identity, or part of that. For actors involved in intractable controversies, then, reframing the policy issue might involve reconceptualizing not only vested interests but also personal identities—identities that are interwoven with beliefs that the world is or ought to be as they perceive it. Schön saw this from the perspective of social systems—he referred both to organizations and parts of them and to communities—and their power over individuals: "Threats to the social system threaten this framework" of meaning, he wrote. Their power

. . . becomes understandable, I think, only if we see that social systems provide for their members not only sources of livelihood, protection against outside threat and the promise of economic security, but a framework of theory, values and related technology which enables individuals to make sense of their lives. (Schön, 1971, p. 51)

Yet he did not tie this in with the difficulties of reframing. At issue is an understanding of identity as more than a surface layer that can be put on, taken off, or otherwise altered at will. Reframing in such circumstances is not always easily done; actors need to find ways in the new framing of giving expression to what is meaningful to them.

Framing the policy process. The framing of the policy process itself can also be subject to framing, which returns us to Bateson's point of departure in a view that brings framing's communicative work into focus.

Consider, for instance, disagreement and debate that may unfold concerning the process through which an immigration policy, say, has come onto the policy-making agenda. The narrative concerning which party or person introduced the policy in Congress or Parliament, responding to which specific "triggering event(s)" (e.g., the assassination of a key immigration opponent), and who voted for and against it says little to nothing, explicitly, about the substance of the policy, but everything about its social, cultural, political, and/or other context. "The Labour Party's bill, blocked by the Greens," for instance, might be something a journalist would say in commenting on the policy process; the Labour Party itself could also comment on what is transpiring in their exchanges with the Greens. In other words, such framing of the policy-making process tells a story about the storytelling and other policy activities. That is Bateson's notion of meta-communication: the ways in which people communicate about what is being communicated (how the monkeys, for example, communicate that what they are doing is playing, not fighting). It is manifest in the concept of meta-governance in public administration theorizing, which takes place when the framing of self-governing institutions and networks is "exercised through the shaping of the political, financial, and organizational context[s] within which self-governance takes place" (Sørensen, 2006, p. 101).

Meta-communication can complicate matters as it allows for endlessly recursive sense-making loops concerning policy processes, a sort of "I think that you think that I think that you think . . ..." It is, however, very important for a theory of policy framing because through such meta-communication, actors try to determine the kind of policy-making they and others will undertake. Such recursive sense-making can entail a reflective practice, to the extent that policy-relevant actors might explore and perhaps question the basic assumptions guiding their thinking and actions, especially when these are bringing them into conflict with each other. This reflective process could help those actors see their own policy framing, possibly enabling them to grasp how it is preventing them from exerting fundamental efforts to change the policy under debate.

Revisiting the How and the What: Framing Analysis in Dynamic and Political Modes

The approach sketched out here offers a fuller understanding of the various dimensions of framing and reframing in complex, controversial, and politically sensitive policy processes. Focusing more on framing than on frames draws attention to dynamic processes, rather than treating policy frames as stable, self-contained entities whose component elements can be taxonomized and generalized. Focusing on dynamism leads us to see the ongoing work framing entails and the struggles that can take place over developing and defending certain ways of framing an issue. This emphasis also builds bridges to other interpretive analytic modes that offer specific insights into elements of framing—those concerned with metaphor and category analyses, and narratives

and storytelling, in particular. Analysis of the naming (including metaphors), selecting, and storytelling embedded in specific policy frames can help clarify the highlighting and blindsiding taking place in dealing with intractable situations, ideally leading to reframing and resolution. The political dimension of this approach emphasizes the ways clusters of selecting, naming, categorizing, storytelling, identity-maintenance (and change), and, indeed, the policy process itself gain or lose credibility during and as a result of framings' use in various moments in policy-making processes. Schön theorized about framing in several aspects of his work—metaphor, frame analysis, reflective practice—which he himself often compartmentalized in different publications, addressed to different audiences and literatures. Bringing them together, as we have done here, to address framing, with additional elements that we see as relevant, makes a fuller theorizing possible. We have shown that in toto, these several ideas contribute to elaborating the concept that he, together with Rein, sketched out in their frame-specific writings.[18]

In bringing out more of the dynamism entailed in framing and more of its political side, our theoretical development brings greater complexity to the matter of changing existing policy framings, shedding light on why reframing might be even more difficult than Schön and Rein envisioned. In their account, frame change appears to be a relatively straightforward, cognitive matter of reflection and revision. We find that problematic for several reasons. Two developments in the 1970s, around the time when Bateson's paper was republished and Schön and Rein began their collaborative writing, help explain the limitations of a cognitive approach to frame change, along with the need for a more dynamic, politically sensitive policy framing theory and the relevance of Bateson's monkeys to explicating these processes.

First, the unintended consequences of governmental policies and the limits of "technical rationality" (Schön, 1983) began at that time to become increasingly visible (see, for example, Rein & Schön, 1977; Rittel & Webber, 1973; Schön, 1979/1993). The policy implementation that had been seen as an undertaking of a-political public administrators who would apply technical rationality to create problem-solving programs—for a world from which they themselves were removed—was "unmasked" as itself a realm of political action (Pressman & Wildavsky, 1973). Some problems turned out to be more "wicked" and "intractable" than anticipated; over the years, wars on poverty, on drugs, on terror have turned out to be very hard to win. Implementation and street-level bureaucracy studies (and some of the public administration literature of the late 1980s and beyond) also increasingly showed that policies are at times shaped by public administrators in their interactions with policy "targets," rather than exclusively by elected officials. Often, then, governments have been fighting the results of "their own" previous actions, and they have in recent years become more aware of the fact that they themselves and their actions are part of the worlds they try to govern. In this sense, like Bateson's monkeys, policy-relevant actors are engaged in a complicated interaction concerning the "correct" interpretation of the situation they are facing. This is more, or other, than a rational, cognitive process tout court.

Second, in a policy problem world increasingly seen as marked by networked governance and public–private partnerships, societal actors and governmental actors—citizens, corporations, bureaucracies—are increasingly expected to collaborate on solving public problems. Over time, the boundaries between policy-makers and "targets" of policy-making—like the distinction between those who govern and those who are governed—have blurred. As the distinctions between governmental action and actions of others have become more and more interrelated and, indeed, dynamic, the "playing field" has become increasingly crowded with framers and situations to frame, and the extent to which framing, identity-construction, and meta-communication prove to involve and influence each other seems to have become increasingly complex. To sort out these dynamics, a theory of framing needs to transcend the cognitive efforts of problem setting and solving, taking up instead the constant sense-making work of multiple actors involved in framing processes seen to be thoroughly political efforts aimed at policy problems, and the identities and relationships of those involved in policy processes.

Schön's (1983) theory of reflection-in-action and the cases he and Rein examined in the 1994 book gave them confidence that working on concrete issues could lead to pragmatic solutions. They posited, and hoped, that reflective conversation would lead policy-relevant actors to become aware of their frames, such that they would be able to move beyond them. And indeed, conversing together is a first step in creating a context that might become shared, perhaps leading over time to frame shifts. As we have argued, however, a significant hurdle to conversing together, let alone joint action, might derive from the identities actors develop that are enmeshed in the sides they have taken in intense policy controversies. Identity can be hard to bargain over (Forester, 2009) and to reframe. Before one can get to the work of deconstructing and reconstructing frames, emotional issues arising from challenges to personal identities may need to be overcome. Indeed, as Schön argued about social systems (see Note 9), actors might well fight to remain the same because proposed changes to their definitions of the situation—their framing of it—pose challenges to what they find meaningful, including their sense of self, especially in times of crisis and change "beyond the stable state" (Schön, 1971).

Play-Fighting and Policy Contestation: Concluding Thoughts

Along with members of the public, practitioners—we have in mind policy-makers, as well as partners in governance networks and public administrators charged with implementing policies—are not always cognizant that problem definitions are not given, but "framed," let alone aware of how such framing takes place. The dynamic, power-sensitive approach we have sketched out opens up the processes through which framing occurs. Seeing the sense-making work entailed in framing—engaging how selections are made, how names are given, how categories are created, and how stories are told—brings a stronger process orientation to framing, seeing it as a many-dimensional socio-political process grounded in everyday practices and ordinary beliefs. This moves analysis away from generating more static taxonomies of fixed frames toward a more dynamic understanding of framing processes, including questions of maintenance and change. Although our own empirical research engagements lead us to focus on framing in policy-making and organizational contexts, we anticipate that this theorizing will be applicable to other settings as well, including social movement and environmental dispute resolution settings in which scholars want to engage power-sensitive analyses of dynamic processes.

Contemplating Bateson's monkeys enables us to draw out the potentialities of such a policy analytic framing, as their situation metaphorically contains a lot of the complexities that play a role in policy controversies. This includes ideas that were present in the early dimensions of Goffman's work but which have disappeared from a frame analysis that aims at taxonomies of frames. For theorists interested in the philosophical underpinnings of framing theory, what these ideas bring to the fore—by contrast with social movement theorizing—is a hermeneutic-phenomenological character that positions intersubjective meaning-making front and center, resting on the interactive processes entailed in working out definitions-of-situations. Not only do these processes unfold over time; they do so in a not so evidently conscious and strategic fashion. Even when it comes to intervening to improve a situation—the aim of assisted reframing—which requires making implicit, tacitly known frames explicit, framing is not assessed on the basis of its potential to prevail in a contest or its winning or losing capacity.

Frame analysis began as a concern for meta-communication in interactions between two or more beings. Although Bateson pointed attention toward the ways in which actors inform one another about the interactions they are directly caught up in, the ways in which humans develop and make manifest their meanings renders policy framing ever more complex than in the animal world (or so scientists think at this point in time). What we are talking about here is not just a politics of who gets what, when, and how, but also a politics of who people are or perceive themselves to be. Any call for reflection and reframing needs to be acutely aware of and sensitive to the all-too-human, power-laden barriers posed by such framing-related identities.

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Notes

1. Rittel and Webber's (1973) "wicked problem" in the context of planning theory is a similar idea (introduced initially by Rittel in a 1967 lecture—Churchman, 1967—and presented in 1969 to the Panel on Policy Sciences, American Association for the Advancement of Science, Boston). Problem definition is also a crucial element in their treatment (see also Hisschemöller & Hoppe, 1996).
2. Analyzing frame analysis from the perspective of dispute resolution, Dewulf et al. (2009) differentiated between a cognitive and an interactional paradigm in frame analysis, which gets at a similar point. Tannen and Wallat (1987) had previously identified these two approaches in the literature, arguing that both can be seen as dynamic. We disagree.
3. In the social movement literature, for instance, the concepts are not always used with such clear distinctions; some accounts of framing, and of sense-making more generally, blend the two approaches. For example, theoretical statements may stress the socially constructed character of frames but then reify them when itemizing frames in taxonomies (e.g., Snow & Benford, 1992; cf. Benford's critique, 1997). Dewulf et al.'s (2009) account of framing in the dispute resolution literature to some extent parallels ours.
4. Bateson (1972b) termed this *schismogenesis*, an idea Schön took up in his theorizing about reflection-in-action, encountered below as frame-reflective practice, and in his work on organizational learning (Argyris & Schön, 1974).
5. A recent critical review of frames and framing in media studies (Vliegenthart & van Zoonen, 2011), for instance, cites no policy works. Framing analysis' promise for mediating policy controversies, a possibility implied in interpretive policy analysis, has developed in dispute resolution, in particular in the arena of environmental policy. A stream of theoretical and empirical research has emerged from this scholarly community (e.g., Gray & Putnam, 2003; Kaufman & Smith, 1999; Putnam & Holmer, 1992) seemingly amalgamating social movement and policy approaches: the former, given the field's desire to identify collectivities and their propensity to organize oppositional forces; the latter, in light of researchers' desires to bridge differences and bring about more effective policies. See also Lewicki, Gray, and Elliott (2003) for framing in environmental conflicts and Dewulf et al. (2009) for an analytic overview of framing in dispute resolution studies.
6. Vakhshtayn draws our attention to critiques of Goffman's structuralism (e.g., Denzin & Keller, 1981; see also Goffman's response, 1981), noting that Herbert Blumer, a leading sociologist in constructivist symbolic interactionism, had repudiated Goffman's views even earlier.
7. For a critical summary of that literature, see Benford (1997) or Benford and Snow (2000).
8. As far as we know or can uncover, Schön did not come to the frame concept through Goffman's work, although later writings with Rein mention him (Rein & Schön, 1993, p. 146; Rein & Schön, 1996, p. 89). Schön did, however, discuss Bateson's ideas in 1970s classroom lectures and in his work with

Argyris on Models I and II (Argyris & Schön, 1974). The publication date of this book suggests that Schön was already working with Bateson's ideas when Goffman published his treatment of them (also in 1974).

9. This idea echoes in his later treatment of social systems, whose "dynamic conservatism" (Schön, 1971) meant that they would fight hard to remain the same.

10. Frame shifts might also occur, they noted, as a result of precipitating events that do not entail reflection, such as radical changes in context (Rein & Schön, 1986, 1993), for example, the end of the Cold War, the 9/11 attacks.

11. Empirical examples include Linder (1995) on U.S. electro-magnetic frequency emissions, Swaffield (1998) on New Zealand natural resource policies, Dudley (1999) on the British Steel Corporation and the British government, Schmidt (2000, 2006/2013) on the U.S. "English-only" political movement, van Eeten (2001) on The Netherlands' civil aviation controversy, Laws and Rein (2003) on reframing efforts in the U.S. Love Canal scandal, Abolafia (2004) on the U.S. Federal Reserve Bank, Scholten and Van Nispen (2008) on immigrant integration policies in The Netherlands, and Rasmussen (2011) on U.S. contraceptive policy.

12. Such analysis intertwines an analytic approach with a research method, something common in many forms of meaning-focused, interpretive research (Yanow, 2007). Seen within the perspective of interpretive approaches to policy analysis (e.g., Fischer, 2003; Hajer & Wagenaar, 2003; Yanow, 1996, 2000, 2007), framing analysis joins a large, and growing, group of methods centering on sense-making or meaning-making (here, treated as synonyms) in empirical studies of public policies and other aspects of political life, as well as social life more broadly (e.g., Prasad, 2005; Yanow & Schwartz-Shea, 2013).

13. The combination of cognitive, social, and human–non-human interfaces clearly begs the question as to how this works or what it looks like in practice, something we do not have the space to elaborate on. This topic is increasingly being explored in subfields within science and technology studies (e.g., Orlikowski, 2007; Suchman, 2005); see also the examples discussed in Schön (1983, 1987).

14. Some would perhaps call this a Wittgensteinian view. Others go further, positing that action precedes meaning and that sense-making is always retrospective (e.g., Weick, 1979).

15. Schön (1983) calls such a practice "seeing-moving-seeing." It echoes Kurt Lewin's (1947) unfreezing-moving-freezing model of change (pp. 34-35), both of these resting on a kind of experimentation in the moment, as actors "try on" new ideas, attitudes, and acts. It could also be seen as a version of the hermeneutic circle/cycle of initial sense-making refined by additional subsequent learning. The implications of our argument here for what has been called policy learning are extensive, and we thank one of our reviewers for suggesting we pursue it, something we have no room here to do. We note, however, that it suggests a very different take on the subject from that proposed, for example, by Jenkins-Smith (1988).

16. Stories are also used to argue with, and arguments are often supported by causal stories (Stone, 1988/2002), but we do not have space to explore this further.

17. A good deal of the storytelling literature argues that stories are defined by having beginnings, middles, and ends (e.g., Gabriel, 2000; Kaplan, 1993), in a kind of Aristotelian treatment. But in political settings, as Shenhav (2005) notably argues, this may not hold. We discuss this further below.

18. In this theorizing, it is clear that "frame" is both an umbrella concept and a specific instance of it, much as Miller (1985) argued with respect to metaphor. That is, the things that do framing work include names—in particular in the form of metaphors and categories—stories, and frames themselves.

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