ATPS 09

**Similarities in Policy & Research Design**

**General Policy Design Process**:

Problem identification ----- Problem definition---Agenda setting--- Alternative formulation-----Decision making-----Implementation---- Establish evaluation criteria----Evaluation--- (start the process over or interrupt at any point as stakeholders are involved or new understandings emerge)

**Importance of Design**

Policy design and research design can be major determining factors in the focus, obstacles, and success of a project. It is also important in both cases because design is an opportunity to take ownership of what you are doing- be invested in the process, make it yours rather than an abstract thing.

**Framing Dynamics**

What is the role of research in policy design and what is the role of policy in research design? How do they each influence the framing (and therefore the design) of each?

**Goals**

Research= prediction, description, explanation, exploration, understanding, promote change. Policies usually have one or more of these goals within them.

**Context Matters**

Public policies and research are impacted by time, budget, audience, and context: local, state, federal, tribal, inter-governmental, or global. There is no “one best way” to design policy or research. Often, “it depends” and context drives the design.

**The Act**

Challenge our ideals about democracy and social science. When we design policy in particular ways we actively make decisions about what “democracy” should or should not look like. When we design research we actively make decisions about what “science” should or should not look like. Is it the job of the policy designer or the researcher to be a custodian of democracy or science? What/who gets the attention of policy makers/researchers? Many “stories” or issues never make it. Whose experiences or values matter and are worth researching or designing policy around?

**Divides between “deserving” and “undeserving” in policy and research design:**

Schneider, A. & Ingram, H. (1997). *Policy Design for Democracy*. University of Kansas.

“The social construction of potential target populations interacts with the extent of political power to form four different kinds of possible policy targets: advantaged (who are powerful and positively constructed- ex. scientists); contenders (powerful but negatively constructed as undeserving or greedy- ex. gun owners); dependents (positively constructed as “good” people but relatively needy or helpless who have little or no political power- ex. “the” poor); and deviants (who have virtually no political power and are negatively constructed as undeserving, violent, mean, and so forth- ex. gang members)” (p. 102).

Social construction : world making--- the varying ways in which the realities of the world are shaped. Is there such a thing as universal woman-ness? Such a thing as “a” person on welfare? Can we deconstruct and/or reconstruct social constructions through either policy or research design?