



Replication or Innovation? Structuration in Policy Implementation

Jodi Sandfort and Stephanie Moulton

EasyChair preprints are intended for rapid dissemination of research results and are integrated with the rest of EasyChair.

June 4, 2019

Replication or Innovation? Structuration in Policy Implementation

May 2019

Jodi R. Sandfort and Stephanie Moulton

Paper presented at the Public Management Research Association conference,
University of North Carolina

An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Workshop on Organization Theory and Public Management at the University of Arizona in November 2018. We would like to thank Mary Feeney and other workshop participants for comments on that version of the paper.

Abstract

Why does a program, policy, or management approach implemented with success in one jurisdiction or organization fail to achieve similar results in another context? There is a large body of literature in public affairs and related fields that wrestle with this question. Scholars place varying emphasis on the constraints of the institutional system relative to humans' agency in bringing about successful outcomes, and there is a tendency to generate lists of factors that enable or impede successful implementation. In this manuscript, we present an alternative theoretical approach grounded in structuration processes. We turn to recent empirical scholarship and theory to re-examine what is known about tools often used to try and influence the implementation process: rules, routines, culture, and resources. This literature emphasizes that the work of these mechanisms are fundamentally shaped by endogenous factors within a system, fueled by the agency of actors within the setting. This is a more robust way to understand how micro dynamics shape meso conditions in organizations and networks. Rather than understanding the implementation puzzle as how to replicate effective ideas, this frame suggests more attention to how to support innovation and learning is warranted.

I. Introduction

For decades, scholars of public affairs have wrestled with a perennial puzzle of implementation—policies or programs that are successful in one context fail to be replicated in another context. In public policy circles, we frequently hear discussions about the challenges of scaling up good ideas, programs, or processes; how to implement a program with fidelity across implementation settings (List 2011; Weiss et al., 2014)? In public management circles, we hear of challenges to effectively reproduce process and performance management reforms; how to lead and manage the adoption of new ideas in governance systems to enable the most effective outcomes (Gerrish, 2016; Heinrich et al., 2009)? Recent claims by behavioral and implementation science promote behavioral nudges and fidelity to proven program models as answers to these questions. Yet these solutions are rarely sufficient to produce the change desired.

Part of the challenge lies in the implicit theory underpinning conventional understandings of how implementation of public programs is accomplished. Many approaches see the problem as one of adjusting ‘biases’ or controlling ‘replication,’ and this assumption is reflected in most studies of policy diffusion (Haider-Markel, 2001; Shipan and Volden, 2008), behavioral science (Madrian, 2014; Richburg-Hayes et al., 2017) and implementation science (Aarons, et al, 2011; Meyers, et al, 2012). In these traditions, the core problems are conceptualized as technical. The emphasis is on “knowing what”—what variables can explain readiness for change or predict successful implementation? Yet this overlooks what scholars have uncovered about how change is actually accomplished in complex social and economic systems (Colander & Kupers, 2014; Fligsten & McAdam, 2012; Innes & Booher, 2018; Rogers 2003).

Rather than focuses upon means of prediction and control, this alternative approach emphasizes human agency—the way individuals facilitate change and learn within organizations and networks. It is gleaned from a close read of sociological and organizational theory, as well as trends in public management research. This analytical turn is significant, as we move from consideration of “knowing what” to “knowing how,” privileging a understanding of context and social dynamics within meso-level institutions. This allows us to re-situate the classic implementation puzzle of how to replicate programs within a broader understanding of how social systems operate when encountering what is perceived to be an innovation. It also is consistent with pragmatic philosophy reflected a century ago in the work of Mary Parker Follett and John Dewey (Ansell, 2009, 2011; Cohen, 2009; Graham, 1995), which point to ways of integrating theory and practice, idealism and empiricism. It allows us to develop a theoretical approach that is both descriptive (allowing us to explain what happens) and normative (allowing implementers to be more informed in their practice).

In this paper, we illustrate these theoretical ideas with a particular case. Much has been written about the inconsistent implementation of cash assistance welfare policy in the United States (Allard, 2007; Brodtkin, 2006; Hill, 2005; Riccucci, et al, 2004; Sandfort, Ong, & McKay, 2019; Soss, Fording, & Schram, 2011). In the last twenty years since welfare reform, absolute grant levels have decreased and caseloads have plummeted—not because there is less need, but because of the shift in the federal policy. In the current program configuration, administration of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program focuses upon tracking program participants’ activities rather than supporting them to they find sustainable or adequate employment (Government Accountability Office, 2010; Hahn, et al, 2012). This exacerbates the administrative burden experienced by families living with low-incomes who turn to the program for temporary financial assistance (Herd, et al 2013) and

reinforces social constructions of the poor as deviants who need to be closely monitored (Fording, et al 2007; Hasenfeld 2010; Schneider and Ingram 1993). Overall, the implementation of this policy has institutionalized a desensitized response to citizens' experiences of living in poverty (Brodkin 2006; Soss, et al 2011; Watkins-Hayes 2013).

It is tempting to see the rules, routines, culture and resources of the TANF program as given, rather than a product of the particular institutional configuration created during implementation. When one does, there seem to be few avenues available to improve implementation. Yet, a more robust understanding of the interplay between institutional structures and human agency indicates that there is substantial opportunity for actors within TANF implementation systems to be agents of change. There is variations observed at the local level of implementation—such as variation in interpretation of performance measures, rigidity of application processes, or cultural understandings of the poor—which are not simply explanatory variables that predict differing outcomes such as TANF caseload levels (Sandfort, et al 2019). These structures are malleable and can be leveraged by human ingenuity to shift implementation practices and improve outcomes for households experiencing poverty. Experiences in Minnesota, where public managers recognized their own agency to reduce compliance costs and improve program efficiency between local service organizations, illustrates this point.

Before turning to this case illustration, however, we need to first establish the historical and analytical foundations of these ideas within social theory and pragmatic philosophy. We then drill down on the core theoretical constructs underlying the agency-structure interactions around program implementation. Rather than understanding this process as 'replication,' this theoretical foundation posits that this process is more akin to diffusion of 'innovation,' with an institutional twist.

II. Intellectual Aims

In the legacy of pragmatic philosophy (Cohen, 2009; Dewey, 1910; Farjoun, Ansell, & Boin, 2015; Graham, 1995; Gross, 2009; Hoser & De Tienne, 1998), we are interested in overcoming conventional dualities that separate theory from practice, environment from action, means from ends. By studying policy implementation in practice, we can explore how each are mutually constituted. Behavior can be recognized as purposive and the product of choice. But, unlike rational choice theories, people's aims do not have to be separated from their conditions (Whitford, 2002). We can explore the meanings people make of their actions, privileging the human experience of sensemaking about the ends-in-view as significant in determining what they do, the actions they take. We can acknowledge that in attempting to solve problems, people both rely on habits but also exhibit creativity if these habits fail to bring about desired results (Gross, 2009). As Chris Ansell (2007) has noted, such a pragmatic approach enables analytical holism; it is focused both on understanding a particular problem—in this case the puzzle of program replication across settings—and in synthesizing theoretical explanations of such a problem.

There is a large body of literature in public affairs and related fields that wrestle with issues of public policy implementation and program replication (Sandfort and Moulton, 2015). Some theories and frameworks emphasize institutional structures and resources—it is the variation in the regulatory environment, the capacity and resources, or the bureaucratic processes and red tape—that set the "rules of the game" that lead to differences in outcomes. Other theories and frameworks emphasize the people—the politicians, managers, entrepreneurs—who can lead change and motivate innovation towards desired outcomes. Different approaches also place varying emphasis on action occurring at a particular level of the governance system.

In the last forty-years, considerable implementation research has focused upon generating long lists of variables or matrices of factors that attempt to predict what is necessary to “implement with fidelity” a policy or program. One widely applied framework in health sciences identifies 37 distinct constructs relevant to predicting faithful implementation (Damschroder et al., 2009). Yet even when replication is controlled, rarely is this care sufficient to create uniform results. For example, in a meta-analysis of the results of an energy conservation initiative replicated in more than 100 different settings, Allcott (2013) found that the early adopters had significantly larger impact estimates than those sites included in later impact evaluations.

Part of the challenges of replication with fidelity in the public arena is that public program and policy are implemented through multi-level systems of governance (Lynn, et al 2001; Heinrich et al 2009; Hill & Hupe, 2014; Moulton & Sandfort, 2017). Rather than a single public agency tasked with the implementation of a public service, most public goods and services are carried out by a networked array of actors with varying degrees of direct and indirect control (Milward and Provan 2000). Institutional structures at various levels of the system constrain and enable action that shape and lead to the ultimate policy and program outcomes. These include regulatory mechanisms generated from the policy field level of the system (e.g., formal laws or rules that accompany financing) and managerial processes at the organizational level (e.g., operational routines or staff cultures), all that potentially constrain and enable frontline service delivery structures and processes. The aggregation of these forces ultimately shape the outputs and outcomes of policy and programs.

While the multi-level logic of governance offers a comprehensive framework to describe the context within which implementation takes place, empirical research tends to emphasize either the macro-structural dynamics of the system that lead to observed

outcomes, or the micro-behavioral actions of individuals within the system (Barzelay & Gallego, 2006; Moynihan 2018; Robichau & Lynn 2009). Yet there is a significant missing piece. There are important meso-level processes—interactions between agency and structure around the core program technology—that occur at the organizational and service delivery levels of the system (Sandfort, 2010).

We must depart from conventional assumptions that essentialize either structure or human agency. Both are important and cannot be understood in isolation. Structures shape how action is directed. But structures attain their significance because of how actors invest in them. And actors, themselves, have agency in the valuation of institutional mechanisms and communication about them. This is the essence of structuration. And it is the recursive dance between institutions and agents that is central to the learning required to enable system change during policy and program implementation.

III. The Structuration of Implementation

Giddens' theory of structuration recognizes the dual nature of social structures (Giddens 1981; 1984). In this theory, social structures are viewed as part of a process rather than constant states. They are central to both constraining and enabling human agency within social systems, providing an explanation for how and why patterns of interaction are reproduced in the mechanisms of social structure. As Sewell notes, "agents are empowered with and against others by structures" (Sewell 1992, 20). Thus, understanding the potential for human agency within social systems requires an understanding of the structures at play. But neither agency nor structural forces are inherently deterministic. This idea is echoed by other important social theorists of the last forty years, such as Bourdieu (1997), Emirbayer and Mische (1998) Latour (2005), Fligstein and McAdam (2012).

For example, Emirbayer and Mische (1998) elaborated on the importance of time. Human agency in changing structures is simultaneously informed by the past (observing what was viable), oriented toward the present (understanding current conditions), and anticipating the future (imagining alternative possibilities). In this way, they point towards an explanation of how agency might alter structures in relation to time, with actors seeking to create interventions for the future, in relation to the past, responding to outcomes developed in the present. Neil Fligstein and Doug McAdam (2012) take another approach, articulating a theory of human action they call 'strategic action fields' that provides a sociological alternative to rational choice economics. Rather than assuming self-interested individuals, Fligstein and McAdam posit the socialability of human beings is the central driver in the quest for resources, the maintenance and alterations of institutions, and the origins of conflict.

These theories put nuance upon the ways in which social structures are institutionalized and altered by the actions and beliefs of individuals and groups. Across these works, there is often a distinction between mechanisms that are intangible and reflect virtual understandings, akin to schema or habits, and those that are tangible with physical attributes which operate more overtly as sources of power (Giddens 1984; Sewell 1992; Gross 2009). For this paper, we investigated empirical studies of these ideas. Specifically, we considered research exploring four structural tools policy makers often use to try to shape policy and program implementation: rules, routines, culture and resources. These mechanisms are not as mutually exclusive; indeed, all four interact and shape the social system within an institutional setting. Yet each are distinct strategies used to try to shape how core program technology is implemented and what outcomes result.

Rules

Rules or schema are often considered the basic building blocks of social structures (Giddens 1984). Elinor Ostrom (2011) defines rules as the "shared understandings among those involved that refer to enforced prescriptions about what actions (or states of the world) are required, prohibited, or permitted (17)." Some rules are superficial and tangible, such as written legislation or program guidelines, while others are deeply embedded and baked into day to day practices, so much so that they can be difficult to even identify, let alone change (Sewell 1992). Here, we conceptualize rules as being of the first more readily observed type, allowing deeper rules to be part of our exploration of routines and culture.

In implementation settings, rules include formal legislation passed by a central government, but they also include laws enacted at lower levels of government as well as regulatory restrictions and informal requirements imposed by governmental and non-governmental actors. In our conception, rules are macro-structures that guide system dynamics. There is a large body of literature in policy studies that examines the evolution of rules and formal policies, and the role of human agency in shaping them. Laws are passed and rules are written, with coalitions of actors vying for their positions to be reflected in formal policies. Research on agenda setting, advocacy coalitions, and institutional design has advanced understanding beyond top-down, "command and control" perspective of policy processes to consider the role of agents—and in particular, coalitions of agents—who shape the policies and rules considered to be legitimate within policy fields (Weible, et al 2009; Weible et al, 2012; Ostrom 2011).

Individuals attempting to bring about change in macro policy structures are often referred to as policy brokers, or more generally, policy entrepreneurs. Kingdon (1984) first introduced the role of the policy entrepreneur as an individual within the policy field—from a policymaker, to a member of an interest group or an implementing organization—who invests

their time, resources, and reputation to bring about policy change; these individuals watch for and take advantage of windows of opportunity to push forth new ideas.

The concept of the policy entrepreneur can be combined with an understanding of the structuration of rules and policies over time. For example, a recent sociological study of U.S. child labor law reform in the first half of the 19th century documents that variations in labor laws between states can best be understood as policy entrepreneurs' actions to shift collective understandings and create changes in the macro-structural factors over time (Anderson 2018). While this line of research offers promise for understanding institutional change in formal policies over a considerable period of time, it does not inform how actors maneuver and create change in institutional settings around implementation on a day to day basis. Much of this type of action takes place at the organizational and service delivery levels of the system.

At the organizational level, the focus shifts from formal legislation to agency rules and rulemaking processes. Public programs are notorious for having bureaucratic rules that are often in conflict and that may not be oriented towards the most efficient—or effective—way to bring about policy and program results. Red-tape is defined as the "rules, regulations and procedures that remain in force and entail a compliance burden for the organization but have no efficacy for the rules' functional object" (Bozeman 1993, 283). Excessive rules and bureaucratic processes can reduce employee motivation and job satisfaction and can lead to worse agency and program performance (Bozeman & Feeney 2014; Brewer & Walker 2009 DeHart-Davis & Pandey, 2005; Moynihan & Pandey 2007).

While bureaucratic rules can and certainly do impact implementation outcomes, prior research that treats rules as merely exogenous predictors of outcomes misses a fundamental element of rules—they are not fixed or complete, but are shaped and interpreted by agents within the system (Blau 1955; March 1997; March et al.2000). For example, state agencies

administering social welfare programs make intentional and unintentional decisions regarding the onerousness of intake processes that may discourage client follow-through with the process and thus receipt of program benefits (Heinrich, 2018; Herd, et al, 2013). The use of rules to shift costs from the public agency to individuals is, as others have noted, a form of "hidden politics" (Moynihan et al. 2014).

Routines

The topic of routines shifts the focus from macro-policies and micro-macro interactions, to micro-meso behaviors that include the interpretation of formal rules (Reynaud 2005) and the development of habits (Gross 2009). Routines are repetitive patterns of actions that involve coordinating the activities of multiple actors within an organization, such as hiring, budgeting, program design, or performance assessment. They are so interesting to organizational scientists because they provide connection among organizational activities and, in a sense, make them collective.

While conventionally understood to be formal mechanisms that stabilize organizations, studies of how routines are actually carried out reveal there is more indeterminacy (Feldman, 2000; Feldman & Rafaeli, 2002; Feldman & Pentland, 2003; Pentland & Feldman, 2005). In fact, from a number of field studies, Feldman and colleagues document frequent changes are not uncommon. Rather than merely stabilizing the organization, they are regularly adjusted by actors trying to improve what results. As Feldman (2000:620) writes,

“[Routine changes]... are related to different kinds of outcomes. One reason is that sometimes actions do not produce the intended outcomes. Another is that sometimes actions produce outcomes that create new problems that need to be solved. A third reason is that rather than producing problems, actions can result in outcomes that produce new resources, and therefore enable new opportunities (Feldman 2004). A fourth possibility is that the outcome produced is intended but that participants still see improvements that could be made.” (620).

This diversity leads Feldman and colleagues to posit that routines in practice actually involve a “repertoire” of possible actions. When used, routines reflect "collective repertoires for thinking and acting vis a vis a set of problems" (Gross 2009). The performative characteristics of routines illuminate how actors’ agency shape what routines actually look like in specific times and places. People assess the relative success and limitations of a routine process. Influenced by their cares and commitments, they make decisions about what can be reasonably altered, and apply themselves to making improvements. Understood in this way, routines are the building blocks of both learning and institutionalization.

Around policy and program implementation, there has been much focus on the routines of workers at the frontlines of service delivery. Street level workers interpret and establish routines that allow them to accomplish their tasks more efficiently and effectively. There is varying emphasis in this stream of literature on the extent to which front-line workers have agency to push back against and shape routines. Often front-line worker agency is understood as a coping mechanism rather than strategic action to shape the direction of policy or programmatic outcomes (Lipsky, 1980). But there is a wide-spread recognition that a dynamic tension exists between the micro-level sense-making and organizational factors (Meyers & Vorsanger, 2003; Oberfeld 2009; Riccucci, et al 2004; Soss, et al 2011). Some studies highlight how frontline staff either develop routines or challenge the ones imposed by managers in light of their own sense of what actions are legitimately related to outcomes (Sandfort, 2000; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003).

Culture

Whereas routines and rules are relatively tangible, the cultural aspects of social structures are less easy to observe and often are more deeply embedded in the taken-for-granted interactions of day to day life. If routines are assumed to stabilize the structure of

organizations, culture is conventionally assumed to operate more informally, developed from the beliefs and values of organizational members to shape implementation processes (Morrill, 2008; Weber & Dacin, 2011). In recent years, research about organizational culture proliferated and scholars note five prominent conceptions developed to understand the construct (Giorgi, Lockwood, & Glynn, 2015): values; stories; frames, toolkits, and categories. For example, values were a topic of early scholarly exploration that focused upon uncovering how shared meaning guides and constrains individual and groups' thoughts and behavior within organizations. Frames were conceptualized as filters that limits cognitive attention, defining a situation within its social context. While this research initially conceptualized culture as a fairly inflexible constraint, operating through collective values or frames that were difficult to challenge, the has not held up empirically (Martin 1992). Rather, much like studies of routines, researchers document that organizational actors actually use culture to their advantage, to accomplish some purpose such as solving software glitches (Perlow & Weeks, 2002), improving product innovation (Seidel & O'Mahony, 2014), or enhancing operational effectiveness (Meyerson, 2003; Morrill, Zald & Rao, 2003).

Swidler's (1986) classic articulation named this idea the "cultural tool kit." She used this terminology to evoke the way she observed people using various configurations of symbols, stories, rituals, and worldviews when confronting problems in order to develop action strategies. In this conception, the cultural tool kit is a 'grab bag' of factors that offer ways actors might mobilize others to solve problems. When applied to organizational studies, this idea has spawned a vast empirical literature (Giorgi, et al, 2015); because individuals and organizations draw from larger cultural repertoires to pursue their desired ends, studies consider how people with social skill or salient identities acquire these tools and deploy them within a particular context (Weber & Dacin, 2011).

Anne Khademian's (Khademian, 2002) work in public organizations stresses how culture is produced from groups efforts to accomplish a programmatic purpose, with particular resources in a particular environment. While a group develops shared commitments, managers have agency in developing connections between those values and the programmatic work which needs to be done by that group, either reinforcing or challenging the existing culture. In this regard, public organizational culture is rooted in the interplay of program responsibilities, environment, and resources. Managers can draw upon the cultural tool kit that is created by this interplay and use their knowledge of it to fuel change. Like the research on rules and routines, culture is not merely something which creates stability. Practices – what people do – develop and alter organizational culture. Thus although organizations have cultures, “culture is also something that people do.” (Giorgi, et al, 2015: 30)

One of the ways this occurs is through how people within an organization or network communicate what is valued, through how they bestow legitimacy. In adopting new program technologies in policy implementation, actors must consider the value and understandability of the new approach. If it is something that seems aligned with current practices of the setting, its value often will not be questioned. Yet new programs, what are really innovations in that context, often require managers to think carefully about how they can be introduced. If they are framed in relation to current approaches, values, or aspirations shared by people in that context, they are more likely to be integrated into the setting. In the popular management literature, Johnson (2010) has talked about this as working in the ‘adjacent possible,’ emphasizing that when using the cultural toolkit, managers should make purposive choices in how they frame change.

Resources

A common way to analyze organizational phenomena, particularly in open system approaches, is to consider the resources on which an organization or program is dependent for survival. According to resource-dependence theory (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978), organizations are dependent on their external environment for money, human talent, and other resources. Strategic management, then, focuses on how to respond to reduce environmental uncertainty and ensure stable and diverse resources that allow for maximum agency discretion. For example, in nonprofit organizations, managers are encouraged to develop a heterogeneous funding portfolio because of the different levels of predictability and control associated with various sources of funds (Gronbjerg, 1993). Yet the value of financial resources is often assumed to be fixed, tied to its objective value. Most fundamentally, resources are sources of authority.

More recently, though, scholars have thought more expansively about the work that resources do in social dynamics. In structuration theory, resources are recognized as unequally distributed within social systems and can be used by agents to enhance or maintain power (Sewell 1992). Said another way, resources are not exogenous to the system, but are themselves shaped by actors operating in the system.

Of course, there are objective variations of resources in organizations or communities. But the same level of resource endowments are frequently used in different ways based on agents' understanding of their significance and utility (Gross 2009). For example, there are endless cases of how comparable financial resources, such as contracts or grants, create very different outcomes across organizations. Human resources are similar. Teams made up of people who lack credentials on paper might create more value for the organization than those with the best training or expertise. Resources are significant when they are used to alter

relationships and results. In fact, their relative worth is dependent upon how they are configured and used within the field more than any objective valuation (Feldman, 2004; Sandfort & Quick, 2017).

This conception is also relevant for how other material resources are used. While scholars have long stressed material artifacts help bring sense and meaning to organizational life (e.g. Schein 1985), recent scholarship show the critical role they can play in activating others and crossing divides (Hill, 2003). For example, Carlile (2002) documents how material objects function to bridge professional differences. Best practice reports, visual analytics, or performance measures are regularly used to bridge the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic boundaries that separate departments or organizations. In fact, he terms them “boundary objects” that offer a way to represent information to others, learn other alternatives, and transform understanding. Artifacts operate as resources that can both be adapted to local needs and constraints, and maintain commonalities across sites (Star & Griesemer, 1989). When deployed through inclusive management approaches (Feldman & Khademian, 2007; Quick & Feldman, 2014; Sandfort & Quick, 2017), they enable a means for people to do work together and potentially change understandings or motivate new actions in the process.

These studies show that rather than being fixed, resources are malleable. When people apply their knowledge about a particular context and bring those resources into use, they become sources of power. In fact, it seems more accurate to understand the process of using resources as an action verb, rather than a focusing upon resource as a noun. Resourcing is the way of taking various assets—money, people, material artifacts, knowledge—and using them to accomplish some change or stability in the social setting (Feldman, 2004; Sandfort & Quick, 2017).

The “Know How” of Implementation

The structuration of rules, routines, culture and resources are a critical—but often taken for granted aspect of policy and program implementation. Recasting the implementation puzzle through the lens of structuration not only offers richer theoretical insights, but it offers a pragmatic hook to describe how agents can affect implementation. In their day to day actions, public servants at all levels of the implementation system evoke a "logic of appropriateness" (March & Olsen 1989) that is grounded in their enactment of rules, routines, culture and resources. Said another way, socially skilled actors know what is appropriate and legitimate in their particular context (Fligstein, 1997; 2001). Sometimes they act to promote harmony and shared understanding; other times, they introduce discord. Both are possible.

This understanding is significant for the puzzle that we presented at the outset of this article—why public policies and programs can be successful in one context, yet fail to be replicated with similar outcomes in a new context. Certainly, there are many factors that contribute to heterogeneous results, some related to structural characteristics of the context and technology, some related to the qualities and abilities of individual actors. Our purpose is not to offer a recitation or framework for these factors— that has been done elsewhere (Goggin, et al, 1990; Greenhalgh, et al, 2004; Mazmanian & Sabatier, 1989; Meyers et al., 2012). Rather, our purpose is to develop a better explanation for “know how”—how do people facilitate institutional learning and change in systems that are constrained by a high degree of institutionalized rules, routines, cultures, and resources?

To illustrate how structuration during implementation unfolds, let’s consider the case of a web-application developed to improve the implementation of the Minnesota TANF program

IV. Structuration of TANF Implementation Processes

The 2005 reauthorization of federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program strengthened the mandates for states to report program participants' involvement in required activities and impose sanctions if they fail to comply (Allard, 2007; Government Accountability Office, 2010). Federal rules require states to establish a system to track these activities—rather than performance measures that signify actual outcomes such as increased wages, education for better jobs or higher income. Notably, services that some participants need to support their job search and maintain employment, such as mental health treatment or chemical dependency, do not qualify as appropriate activities. These rules fly in the face of empirically documented effective interventions in the economic literature (e.g., Autor & Houseman, 2010; Herbst, 2008) and rigorous program evaluations of welfare-to-work programs (Hamilton 2002).

Some states work around these rules using a range of approaches such as alternative state financing or programs with distinct eligibility (Hahn & Loprest, 2011; Schott & Pavetti, 2013). Minnesota developed separate state-funded programs for hard-to-serve populations. Leaders in Minnesota also developed an alternative performance management system that directed local governments to report on their substantive outcomes—how many families found full-time employment, and how many left the cash assistance roles (Sandfort, Ong, and McKay, 2019)—and provided financial benefits to local governments with the best performance. Institutionalizing this alternative system took many years, but was led by program managers with social skill who carefully assembled evidence about the administrative costs of the implementing the federal rules (Indovino, et al, 2008) and built the case for a more appropriate outcome measure to assess program performance.

Routines within service organization process program applicants, ensure their eligibility for cash assistance, and enact requirements to track program participation. Even

though Minnesota developed an alternative performance system and rewarded counties that achieved superior performance, local service agencies still needed to report client activities, such as job search activities, to state officials. The idea of a web-app to ease client experience of this reporting activity emerged as state-managers considered how they could help local organizations adhere to this reporting requirement. In developing the tool, they engaged clients and local service agencies in a series of design labs that shaped the functionality and feel of the product, and a general process for integrating it into local office contexts.

To actually implement the web-application in local offices, Future Services Institute (FSI) held training sessions. In each office, managers worked out additional details and the specific ways activities could be coordinated to enable frontline staff to deploy the application. In some local organizations, managers were particularly concerned with ensuring clients could ‘opt in,’ and steps were added into the routine to maximize client choice; in other offices, good relationships with nonprofit employment service providers simplified the workflow; in still other offices, relationships with nonprofit partners were tense, and better relationships needed to be facilitated to ease implementation. Each adjustment in the routine was led by a program manager with social skill, who knew the context, the people, and the ways to get things done in that setting.

Understanding the various manifestations of culture was a critical element necessary to develop and implement the technology. FSI staff worked for over a year with the state agency before the idea of the web-application crystalized as a possibility. They knew state program managers were motivated to reduce the administrative burden caused by federal rules on program participants. They also navigated the competing values of accountability, privacy, and efficiency articulated during initial design sessions and crafted a product to reflect those commitments.

In working with local sites, FSI staff also needed to ascertain the most effective way to frame the technology. Depending upon the dominant values in each context, it might be framed as an innovation to improve customer satisfaction, a tool for improved efficiency, or a modernization of existing program delivery. Because the external consultants at FSI were not always knowledgeable of the local field values in service agencies, they depended upon managers, often those who had agreed to champion the app, to inform them about the salient values, and landmines of that context. Training sessions and responses to provocative questions when challenges were encountered were customized in relation to local cultural values, norms, and practices.

Finally, many resources were brought into use to develop the idea and implement it across service organizations. To actually bring the app into existence, state managers needed a means for convening the various stakeholders, securing the web-developer, and recruiting local sites for the field test. Because of the strength of the FSI partners and the significance of the innovation, state managers secured fairly flexible federal grant dollars to contract for these services. Yet those contract dollars merely enabled FSI to build the necessary implementation tools—the first iteration of the product, a web-site to explain it, a video and brochure to motivate local managers to participate.¹ Administrative tools were subsequently created to allow frontline workers to have a dash-board summarizing their interactions with clients. Training materials were built, including a ‘sand-box’ for local sites to play with the apps functionality before taking it ‘live.’ The field tests conducted by three local offices helped to identify both technical enhancements and improvements in process routines. As Feldman (2000) notes, the tests produced outcomes, generated new resources, and enabled new opportunities for improvement.

¹ For an overview of the web-application see <http://www.mfipconnect.com/>.

This simple case illustrates how the TANF system in Minnesota evolved to enable successful implementation outcomes—despite rigid legislation and burdensome rules passed down from federal policymakers. Scholars studying variation in TANF implementation across states might document different outcomes for Minnesota TANF recipients, but would be hard pressed to identify *how* these outcomes came to be different. Empirical analyses could analyze agency rules, survey employees to measure agency culture, or observe employee routines; yet these analyses would miss the dynamic interplay between human agency and the enacted structures that facilitated change.

V. Implications for Research & Practice

Our reading of the research and our practice experiences like that in Minnesota suggests a new and, we believe, more robust way for public management scholars to understand how meso-level organizations is stabilized or changed through micro-level behaviors of individuals and groups actors during implementation. This theoretical move is important (Barzelay & Gallego, 2006).

With the rise of new interest in public administration on behavioral science (Moynihan, 2018), it is important to note that our approach is complimentary but distinct. Whereas behavioral science draws insight from psychology and cognitive sciences, this approach is informed by sociology. The structuration of implementation is grounded in a fundamental ontological assumption—individuals are not strictly self-regarding but are motivated to make meaning with others and they have a fundamental need for social acceptance (Fligstein and McAdam, 2012). The collective provides ‘existential refuge’ in modern life and collective action is motivated and sustained by people’s efforts to make meaning. Rather than attending to isolated factors that predict individuals’ behavior, this approach privileges exploring how social meaning and membership shapes that behavior.

This understanding also provides a significant challenge to current public management researchers who create models with only meso-level variables (e.g., organizational rules, routines, culture, or resources). Their cross-sectional analyses often assume (for empirical simplicity) that these structures are given, ignoring how micro-processes shape the meso level factors. We must take seriously the developments in organizational theory (Feldman, 2000; Giorgi, et al, 2015; May & Finch, 2009; Orlikowski, 1992; Romme; 2003; Yoo, et al 2006) that show how individual agency operating within the constraints of institutions shapes meso-level realities. As Sewell (1992) writes, “Structure is dynamic, not static; it is the continually evolving outcome and matrix of a process of social interaction. Even the more or less perfect reproduction of structures is a profoundly temporal process that requires resource and innovative human conduct. But the same resourceful agency that sustains the reproduction of structures also makes possible their transformation.”(27) Said another way, there is a dynamic interplay between stability and change, constraints and autonomy, at the meso-level of institutional life (Feldman and Orlikowski, 2011).

Finally, this conceptualization moves beyond seeing organizational, meso-factors as something as exogenous to the social system, to be controlled or imported in attempts to ensure fidelity in replication of program technologies. Instead, we posit that meso-level factors are endogenous to the field. They are both shaped and legitimated by human agency within that context. If an “evidence-based” program or management practice is not legitimated by those within the institution, then symbolic or mimetic adoption is the result. There is not real change in the system and program implementation does not produce the desired results.

This is why, in our mind, it is important to move from thinking of the task of implementation as something technical, focused merely upon preserving internal validity from initial evaluations. Instead, the interactive, social process that surrounds implementation is more akin to innovation.

Innovation is a new product or administrative process introduced into a particular context (Lam, 2009; Pavitt, 2006; Torfing, 2016; Van de Ven et al 2008). Unlike invention, which is the development of something never been seen before, innovation is something perceived as new by actors within a particular setting. Thus the concept is innovation is intrinsically tied to the social context. Certainly, while innovations differ in the extent to which they represent a significant departure from what is already being done, they inevitably involve disruption of “established practices and routines” (Ansell and Torfing 2014; Torfing, 2016; Bason & Bessant, 2005; Van de Ven et al. 2008). Research about the diffusion of innovation focuses largely upon communication and learning (Rogers 2003), looking at how the adoption and integration of something new follows a patterns if actors pay attention to how they apply resources and communicate with others. Diffusion is a social, adaptive and collaborative process. It requires skillful attention to power, cultural meanings and developing shared understanding to motivate collective action (Fligstein and McAdam, 2012). In fact, many times as innovations are taking hold, they actually alter what is understood to be viable within the implementation setting (Van de Ven, et al, 2008). Seeing implementation as innovation enables us to see that this type of change requires organizations and the people within them to learn new ways to understand problems and act to resolve them. And, seeing innovation as a process of structuration provides additional purchase for the theoretical ideas described here, and how they relate to other aspects of public management.

The practical implications of this orientation are not that difficult to glean. The process of taking a good idea or intervention from context and bringing it to another is not one that can overlook the understanding, ingenuity, and skill of people. Frustrated efforts to control the replication of evidence-based programs (Aarons et al., 2012) has led some to try to articulate the ‘core components’ of an intervention. Purveyors—entities focused upon promoting evidence-based programs— try to focus attention on these core components (Fixsen et al., 2005; Fixsen, et al, 2009). Yet it is often difficult to say definitively which components are the most essential.

Rather than focusing on technical control, the structuration of implementation suggest more purposive attention to foster learning across the social systems that comprise fields. Public managers should create collective forums, virtual and face-to-face, where field actors can discuss the merits and limitations of program ideas, explore options, and collectively debate what might be appropriate action. Methods like Breakthrough Series Collaborative operate in this regard, helping practitioners to consider how research-based program ideas can be integrated into particular contexts (Institute for Health Care Improvement, 2003). Public managers can create implementation teams tapping people from diverse perspectives who meet to understand the change being proposed, develop trials, and identify feedback tools (Langley, et al 2009). They can sponsor design processes, that use labs—short-term events that bring people together to design a particular process – or other creative methods for changing existing routines into new practices (Bason, 2017; Sandfort, Phinney, and Merrick, 2019). These social interactions stimulate collective learning and enable human agency to change structural constraints that inhibit effective implementation.

In the larger policy field, purveyors might recognize that rather than seeking to promote a few elements of core practice, their key role is creating implementation resources—

recruitment materials, manuals, and virtual trainings—that stimulate leaders in other social settings to diffuse the innovation (Hill, 2003). In the hands of informed, strategic actors, such resources can be made into tools for convincing others to change the rules and routines necessary to implement policy or program ideals.

VI. Conclusion

In previous work (Moulton and Sandfort, 2017; Sandfort and Moulton, 2015), we developed the strategic action field framework for public policy and program implementation. This framework applies the social theory developed by Neil Fligstein and Doug McAdam (2012) to provide a new explanation for persistent questions about policy and program implementation. It builds upon multi-level governance (Lynn, et al, 2001; Hill & Hupe, 2014) and stresses that any analysis of policy implementation must focus on scale, because distinct implementation actions occur at different levels within complex systems. Importantly, the framework begins to conceptualizes how social dynamics and the strategic application of human agency determine policy implementation outcomes.

In this paper, we have further developed these ideas in relation to an important puzzle of program replication across settings. We have argued that human agency is an essential ingredient for understanding how rules, routines, culture, and resources are actually enacted in practice; the structuration process explains how good ideas about program technology—both those which have been subjected to rigorous social science testing and those which have not—are integrated into different organizational contexts.

This theoretical approach allows us to both describe what happens and provide more clarity for the practice of those implementing public programs. We do not mean to suggest that it is not important for those practitioners to consult social science and evaluation evidence about the programs they are interested in implementing. Rather we want to

encourage them to feel comfortable in letting down the elusive goal of implementing evidence-based programs with fidelity. This theory privileges what practitioners know about their context, appreciating their understanding of what is possible within their context and what learning needs to occur to achieve desired results. Rather than focusing scholarly attention on emphasizing implementers' attempt to control factors in that context, we want to stress that research should pay attention to understanding those contexts. As we develop that awareness, we are more likely to be able to offer strategic consultation about how managers and leaders can shape rules, routines, culture or resources to support the integration of innovation in those settings. In this way, we recognize and engage others in practices of innovation, helping them to shift the constraints that get in the way of improving policy and program outcomes.

References

- Aarons, G., Glisson, C., Green, P. D., Hoagwood, K., Kelleher, K. J., Landsverk, J. a, ... Schoenwald, S. (2012). The organizational social context of mental health services and clinician attitudes toward evidence-based practice: a United States national study. *Implementation Science : IS*, 7, 15.
- Aarons, G., Hurlburt, M., & Horwitz, S. M. (2011). Advancing a conceptual model of evidence-based practice implementation in public service sectors. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, 38(1), 4–23.
- Allcott (2013).
- Allard, S. W. (2007). The Changing Face of Welfare during the Bush Administration. *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, 37(3), 304–332.
- Anderson (2018).
- Ansell, C. K. (2009). Mary Parker Follett and Pragmatist Organization. In *The Oxford Handbook of Sociology and Organization Studies: Classical Foundations* (pp. 1–25).
- Ansell, C. K. (2011). *Pragmatist Democracy: Evolutionary Learning as Public Philosophy*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Ansell, C. K. (2007). “Pragmatist Philosophy and Interactive Research,” *Public Administration in Transition: Theory, Practice, Methodology*. 299–318.
- Autor, D. H., & Houseman, S. N. (2010). Do temporary-help jobs improve labor market outcomes for low-skilled workers? Evidence from “Work First.” *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 2(July), 96–128.
- Barzelay, M., & Gallego, R. (2006). From “new institutionalism” to “institutional processualism”: advancing knowledge about public management policy change. *Governance*, 19(4), 531–557.
- Bason, C. (2017). *Leading Public Design: Discovering Human-Centered Governance*. Bristol, United Kingdom: Policy Press.
- Blau, P. (1955). *The Dynamics of Bureaucracy*. Chicago University Press: Chicago.
- Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. (J. Goody, Ed.) *Cambridge studies in social anthropology* (Vol. 16). Cambridge University Press.
- Bozeman, B. (1993). A theory of government “red tape,” *Journal of public administration research and theory*, 3(3), 273–304.
- Bozeman, B., & Feeney, M. K. (2014). *Rules and Red Tape: A Prism for Public Administration Theory and Research: A Prism for Public Administration Theory and Research*. Routledge.
- Brewer, G. A., & Walker, R. M. (2009). The impact of red tape on governmental performance: An empirical analysis. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 20(1), 233–257.
- Brodkin, E. Z. (2006). Bureaucracy Redux: Management Reformism and the Welfare State. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 17(1), 1–17.
- Carlile, P. R. (2002). View of Knowledge and Boundaries : Boundary Objects in New Product Development. *Organization Science*, 13, 442–455.
- Cohen, M. D. (2009). Reading Dewey. In P. Adler (Ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Sociology and Organization Studies: Classical Foundations* (pp. 1–22). Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.
- Colander, D. & R. Kupers (2014). *Complexity and the Art of Public Policy: Solving Society's Problems from the Bottom Up*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Damschroder, L. J., Aron, D. C., Keith, R. E., Kirsh, S. R., Alexander, J. a, & Lowery, J. C. (2009). Fostering implementation of health services research findings into practice: a consolidated framework for advancing implementation science. *Implementation Science*, 4,

- DeHart-Davis, L., & Pandey, S. K. (2005). Red tape and public employees: Does perceived rule dysfunction alienate managers?. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 15(1), 133-148.
- Dewey, J. (1910). *How we think*. Boston, Massachusetts: DC Heath and Co.
- Emirbayer, M. & A. Mische (1998). What is Agency? *American Journal of Sociology* 103(4): 962-1023.
- Farjoun, M., Ansell, C. K., & Boin, A. (2015). Pragmatism in Organization Studies: Meeting the Challenges of a Dynamic and Complex World. *Organization Science*, 26(6), 1787-1804.
- Feldman, M. S., & Khademian, A. M. (2007). The role of the public manager in inclusion: creating communities of participation. *Governance: An International Journal of Policy, Administration, and Institutions*, 20(2), 305-324.
- Feldman, M. S. (2000). Organizational Routines as a Source of Continuous Change. *Organization Science*, 11(6), 611-629.
- Feldman, M. S., & Orlikowski, W. J. (2011). Theorizing Practice and Practicing Theory. *Organization Science*, 22(5), 1240-1253.
- Feldman, M. S., & Pentland, B. T. (2003). Reconceptualizing Organizational Routines as a Source of Flexibility and Change. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 48(1), 94-118.
- Feldman, M. S., & Rafaeli, A. (2002). Organizational routines as sources of connections and understandings. *Journal of Management Studies*, 39(3), 309-331.
- Feldman, M.S. (2004) "Resources in Emerging Structures and Processes of Change," *Organization Science* 15(3): 295-309.
- Fixsen, D. L., Blase, K. A., & Naoom, S. F. (2009). Core Implementation Components. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 19(5), 531-540.
- Fixsen, D. L., Naoom, S. F., Blase, K. A., Friedman, R. M., Burns, B., & Wallace, F. (2005). *Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature*. Tampa, FL.
- Fligstein, N. (1997). Social skill and institutional theory. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 40(4), 397-405.
- Fligstein, N. (2001). Social Skill and the Theory of Fields. *Sociological Theory*, 19(2), 105-125.
- Fligstein, N., & McAdam, D. (2012). *A theory of Fields*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.
- Fording, R.C., Soss, J., & Schram, S.F. (2007). Devolution, discretion, and the effect of local political values on TANF sanctioning. *Social Service Review*, 81(2), 285-316.
- Gerrish, E. (2016). The impact of performance management on performance in public organizations: A meta-analysis. *Public Administration Review*, 76(1), 48-66.
- Giddens, Anthony (1981). *A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism. Volume I: Power, Property and the State*. London: Macmillan
- Giddens, Anthony (1984). *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Giorgi, S., Lockwood, C., & Glynn, M. A. (2015). The Many Faces of Culture: Making Sense of 30 Years of Research on Culture in Organization Studies. *Academy of Management Annals*, 9(1), 1-54.
- Goggin, M. L., Bowman, A. O. M., Lester, J. P., & O'Toole, L. J. (1990). Studying the Dynamics of Public Policy Implementation: A Third-Generation Approach. In D. J. Palumbo & D. J. Calista (Eds.), *Implementation and the Policy Process: Opening up the Black Box* (pp. 181-197). New York: Greenwood Press.
- Government Accountability Office (2010). *Temporary Assistance for Needy Families: Implications of recent legislative and economic changes for state programs and work participation rates*.

- Washington D.C.: Government Accountability Office.
- Gross, N. (2009). A Pragmatist Theory of Social Mechanisms. *American Sociological Review*, 74, 358–379.
- Graham, P. (Ed.). (1995). *Mary Parker Follett, Prophet of Management: A Celebration of Writings from the 1920s*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard Business Press.
- Greenhalgh, T., Robert, G., MacFarlane, F., Bate, P., & Kyriakidou, O. (2004). Diffusion of innovations in service organizations: systematic review and recommendations. *The Milbank Quarterly*, 82(4), 581–629.
- Gronbjerg, K. (1993). *Understanding Nonprofit Funding: Managing Revenues in Social Services and Community Development Organizations*. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass.
- Hahn, H., & Loprest, P.J. (2011). *Improving state TANF performance measures*. Washington D.C.: Urban Institute.
- Hahn, H., Golden, O., & Stanczyk, A. (2012). *State approaches to the TANF Block Grant: Welfare is not what you think it is*. Washington, D.C: Urban Institute.
- Haider-Markel, D. P. (2001). Policy diffusion as a geographical expansion of the scope of political conflict: Same-sex marriage bans in the 1990s. *State Politics & Policy Quarterly*, 1(1), 5-26.
- Hamilton, G. (2002). *Moving people from welfare to work: Lessons from the National Evaluation of Welfare-to-Work Strategies*. New York, NY: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC).
- Hasenfeld, Y. (2010). Organizational responses to social policy: The case of welfare reform. *Administration in Social Work*, 34(2), 148-167.
- Heinrich, C. J., Lynn Jr, L. E., & Milward, H. B. (2009). A state of agents? Sharpening the debate and evidence over the extent and impact of the transformation of governance. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 20(suppl_1), i3-i19.
- Heinrich, C. J. (2018). A Thousand Petty Fortresses: Administrative Burden in U.S. Immigration Policies and its Consequences. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 37(2), 211–239.
- Herd, P., Deleire, T., Harvey, H., & Moynihan, D. P. (2013). *Shifting the Administrative Burden from Citizens to the State: A Case Study of Medicaid Application and Enrollment Procedures*.
- Herbst, C. M. (2008). Do social policy reforms have different impacts on employment and welfare use as economic conditions change? *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 27(4), 867–894.
- Hill, C. J. (2005). Casework Job Design and Client Outcomes in Welfare-to-Work Offices. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 16(2), 263–288.
- Hill, H. C. (2003). Understanding Implementation: Street-Level Bureaucrats' Resources for Reform. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 13(3), 265–282.
- Hill, M., & Hupe, P. (2014). *Implementing Public Policy: An Introduction to the Study of Operational Governance* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Houser, N. & Tienne, A. D. (Eds.) (1998). *The Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings*. Volume 2. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press.
- Indovino, D. Kodet, A., Olson, B., & Streier, J. (2008). *The Flexibility Myth: How Organizations Providing MFIP Services are Faring Under New Federal Regulations*. Master's thesis completed at the Humphrey School of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota.
- Innes, J. E. and D. E. Booher (2018). *Planning with Complexity: An Introduction to Collaborative Rationality for Public Policy*. Second edition. London: Routledge.
- Institute for Health Care Improvement (2003). White paper.

- Johnson, S. (2010). *Where Good Ideas Come From: The Natural History of Innovation*. New York: Penguin Group.
- Kellogg, K. C. (2011). Hot lights and cold steel: Cultural and political toolkits for practice, change in surgery. *Organization Science*, 22(2), 482–502.
- Khademian, A. M. (2002). *Working with Culture: The Way the Job Gets Done in Public Programs*. Washington D.C.: CQ Press.
- Kingdon, J. W. (1984). *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*. Boston: Little Brown.
- Lam, A. (2009). Organizational Innovation. In J. Fagerberg & D. Mowery (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Innovation*.
- Langley, et al (2009) Improvement Science book.
- Latour, B. (2005). *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press / UK.
- Lipsky, M. (1980). *Street-Level Bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Services*. New York, NY: Russel Sage Foundation.
- List, J. A. (2011). Why economists should conduct field experiments and 14 tips for pulling one off. *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 25(3): 3-15.
- Lynn, L. E. Jr, C. Heinrich, and C. Hill. (2001). *Improving Governance: A New Logic for Empirical Research*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.
- Madrian, B. C. 2014. Applying Insights from Behavioral Economics to Policy Design. *Annual Review of Economics* 6 (1):663–88.
- March, J. (1997). 'Understanding how decision happen in organization, in Z. Shapira (ed.) *Organizational Decisionmaking*. Cambridge University Press: New York.
- March, J. and J. P. Olsen (1998). The Institutional Dynamics of International Political Orders,” *International Organization* 52(4): 943-969.
- March, J., M. Schulz and X. Zhou (2000), *The Dynamics of Rules. Change in Written Organizational Codes*. Stanford University Press: Stanford.
- Martin, J. (1992). *Cultures in Organizations: Three Perspectives*. New York: Oxford Unviersity Press.
- May, C., & Finch, T. (2009). Implementing, Embedding, and Integrating Practices: An Outline of Normalization Process Theory. *Sociology*, 43(3), 535–554.
- Maynard-Moody, S., & Musheno, M. (2000). State Agent or Citizen Agent: Two Narratives of Discretion. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 10(2), 329–358.
- Mazmanian, D., & Sabatier, P. (1989). *Implementation and Public Policy*. Lanham: University Press of America.
- Meyers, M. and S. Vorsanger (2003). Street-level bureauacrats and the implementation of public policy,” *Handbook of public administration*, edited by G. Peters and J. Pierre. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications: 245-257.
- Meyers, D. C., Durlak, J. a, & Wandersman, A. (2012). The quality implementation framework: a synthesis of critical steps in the implementation process. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 50(3–4), 462–80.
- Meyerson, D. E. (2003). *Tempered radicals: How everyday leaders inspire change at work*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business School Press
- Milward, H B., and Provan, KG. 2000. Governing the hollow state. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 10:359–79
- Mintrom, M., & Norman, P. (2009). “Policy entrepreneurship and policy change,” *Policy Studies Journal*, 37(4), 649-667.
- Morrill, C. 2008. “Culture and Organizational Theory.” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. September: 15–40.

- Morrill, C., Zald, M. N., & Rao, H. (2003). "Covert political conflict in organizations: Challenges from below." *Annual Review of Sociology*, 29, 391–415
- Moulton, S., & Sandfort, J. R. (2017). The strategic action field framework for policy implementation research. *Policy Studies Journal*, 45(1), 144-169.
- Moynihan, D. P., & Pandey, S. K. (2007). The role of organizations in fostering public service motivation. *Public administration review*, 67(1), 40-53.
- Moynihan, D., Herd, P., & Harvey, H. (2014). Administrative burden: Learning, psychological, and compliance costs in citizen-state interactions. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 25(1), 43-69.
- Moynihan, D. (2018). A great schism approaching? Towards a micro and macro public administration. *Journal of Behavioral Public Administration*, 1(1).
- North, Douglas (1990). A Transaction Cost Theory of Politics. *Journal of Theoretical Politics*. 2(4): 355-367.
- Oberfield, Z. W. (2009). Rule Following and Discretion at Government's Frontlines: Continuity and Change during Organization Socialization. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 20(4), 735–755.
- Orlikowski, W. J. (1992). The Duality of Technology: Rethinking the Concept of Technology in Organizations. *Organization Science*, 3(3), 398–427.
- Ostrom, E. (2011). Background on the institutional analysis and development framework. *Policy Studies Journal*, 39(1), 7-27.
- Padgett, J. F., & Ansell, C. K. (1993). Robust Action and the Rise of the Medici, 1400-1434. *American Journal of Sociology*, 98(6), 1259-1319.
- Pavitt, K. (2006). Innovation Processes. In J. Fagerberg & D. C. Mowery (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Innovation* (pp. 1–33). Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.
- Pentland, B. T., & Feldman, M. S. (2005). Organizational routines as a unit of analysis. *Industrial and Corporate Change*, 14(5), 793–815.
- Perlow, L. & Weeks J. (2002). Who's helping whom? Layers of culture and workplace behavior. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*. 23(4) 345-361
- Pfeffer, and Salancik (1978). *The External Control of Organizations: A Resource Dependence Perspective*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Quick, K. S., & Feldman, M. S. (2014). Boundaries as junctures: Collaborative boundary work for building efficient resilience. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 24(3), 673–695.
- Reynaud, B. (2005). The void at the heart of rules: routines in the context of rule-following. The case of the Paris Metro Workshop. *Industrial and Corporate Change*, 14(5), 847-871.
- Riccucci, N. M., Meyers, M. K., Lurie, I., & Han, J. S. (2004). The Implementation of Welfare Reform Policy: The Role of Public Managers in Front-Line Practices. *Public Administration Review*, 64(4), 438–448.
- Richburg-Hayes, Lashawn, Caitlin Anzelone, Nadine Dechausay, and Patrick Landers. 2017. Nudging Change In Human Services: Final Report on the Behavioral Interventions to Advance Self-Sufficiency (BIAS) Project. <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre>
- Robichau, R.W. and Lynn, L.E. Jr. (2009) The Implementation of Public Policy: Still the Missing Link, *Policy Studies Journal* 37, (1): 21–36.
- Rogers, E. M. (2003). *Diffusion of Innovations*, 5th Edition. Free Press, New York.
- Romme, A. G. L. (2003). Making a Difference: Organization as Design. *Organization Science*, 14(5), 558–573.
- Sandfort, J. R. 2000. "Moving Beyond Discretion and Outcomes: Examining Public

- Management from the Front-lines of the Welfare System,” *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 10:4, pg. 729-756.
- Sandfort, J. R. (2010). Human Service Organizational Technology. In Y. Hasenfeld (Ed.), *Human Services as Complex Organizations* (2nd ed., Vol. 2nd editio, pp. 269–290). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Sandfort, J. R., Ong, S. J., & McKay, C. (2019). Performance Management Regimes in Practice: Examining the local agencies implementing Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. *American Review of Public Administration*. 49(2):145-158
- Sandfort, J. R., & Quick, K. S. (2017). Deliberative technology: A holistic lens for interpreting resources and dynamics in deliberation. *Journal of Public Deliberation*, 13(1).
- Sandfort, J.R. & Moulton, S.. (2015). *Effective implementation in practice: integrating public policy and management*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Sandfort, J.R., Phinney, R. and Merrick, W (2019).
- Schein, E. (1985). *Organizational Culture and Leadership: A Dynamic View*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Schott, L., & Pavetti, L. (February 26, 2013). *Changes in TANF work requirements could make them more effective in promotion employment*. Policy Brief. Washington, D.C.: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.
- Schneider, A., & Ingram, H. (1993). Social construction of target populations: Implications for politics and policy. *American political science review*, 87(2), 334-347.
- Seidel, V. P., & O’Mahony, S. (2014). Managing the repertoire: Stories, metaphors, prototypes, and concept coherence in product innovation. *Organization Science*, 25(3), 691–712.
- Sewell, William. 1992. “A Theory of Structure : Duality , Agency , and Transformation.” *American Journal of Sociology* 98 (1): 1–29.
- Shipan, C. R., & Volden, C. (2008). The mechanisms of policy diffusion. *American journal of political science*, 52(4), 840-857.
- Soss, J., Fording, R. C., & Schram, S. F. (2011). *Disciplining the Poor: Neoliberal Paternalism and the Persistent Power of Race*. Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press.
- Swidler, Ann. (1986). "Culture in action: Symbols and strategies." *American sociological review*: 273-286.
- Torfin, J. (2016). *Collaborative Innovation in the Public Sector*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.
- Van de Ven, A. H., Polley, D. E., Garud, R., & Venkataraman, S. (2008). *The Innovation Journey*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.
- Walkin-Hayes (2013).
- Weber, K., & Dacin, M. T. (2011). The cultural construction of organizational life: Introduction to the special issue. *Organization Science*, 22(2), 287–298.
- Weible, C. M., Sabatier, P. A., & McQueen, K. (2009). Themes and variations: Taking stock of the advocacy coalition framework. *Policy Studies Journal*, 37(1), 121-140.
- Weible, C. M., Heikkila, T., & Sabatier, P. A. (2012). Understanding and influencing the policy process. *Policy Sciences*, 45(1), 1-21.
- Weiner, B. J. (2009). A theory of organizational readiness for change. *Implementation science*, 4(1), 67.
- Weiss, M.J., Bloom, H.S., & Brock, T. (2014). A conceptual framework for studying the sources of variation in program effects. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 33: 778-808.
- Whitford, J. (2002), Pragmatism and the untenable dualism of means and ends: Why rational choice theory does not deserve paradigmatic privilege, *Theory and Society* 31(3).

Yoo, Y. R., Boland, J., Lyytinen (2006). From Organization Design to Organization Designing
Organization Science 17(2): 215-229.