

Top down policy making by thomas r. dye

[Politics](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Once a political party is voted to power, it is expected to carry out the sentiments and expectations of the people who give it the reins of power. The process of policymaking is carried forward not by the masses, but by the interest groups, campaign managers, think tanks, lobbyists and the news and electronic media. All policies are framed at the top, supposedly for the benefit of the masses. Public policies have nothing to do with the demands of people, except in extraordinary circumstances. The policy document is framed at the top down. The sequences are arranged at the top; the public suffers or enjoys the consequences, as the case may be.

The title of the book goes well with the contents of the book as it explains the process of policymaking and informs the readers as to who actually makes the decisions. The book is intended for politicians, the economic advisers, and political thinkers. In a broad sense, it is applicable to all the voters, in a democratic country. This is a print paperback illustrated edition of the book. Thomas R. Dye, the author, is the president of the Lincoln Center for Public Service (a Florida-based non-profit and educational organization). Dye is also an Emeritus Professor of Political Science at Florida State University and was formerly a McKenzie Professor of Government. Dye graduated from Pennsylvania State University where he received his B. S. and M. A. degrees; Dye received his Ph. D. from the University of Pennsylvania. Dye has taught at the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Wisconsin, and the University of Georgia, among other institutions. He was a visiting scholar at Bar-Ilan University in Israel, and at the Brookings Institute in Washington D. C. Dye has served as president of the Southern Political Science Association, the Policy Studies Organization, and has served as the secretary of the American Political Science

<https://assignbuster.com/top-down-policy-making-by-thomas-r-dye/>

Association. Presently, Dye served as past president of the Lincoln Center for Public Service.

Summary of the Content

The masses hardly have any say in framing the public policy. Nation's elite makes the policies, primarily to protect its vested interests. They invariably try to implement their hidden agenda. The issue is to anticipate how the decisions will work in the long run. Dye writes, " Top-down policymaking does not necessarily imply the oppression or exploitation of the masses of people."(p. 2) The decision-maker is aware that he has to be in the position of power on an ongoing basis, and that is possible by winning the confidence of the masses. In conclusion, Dye asserts that public policy does not represent the " demands of the people." In fact, public policy is made from the top down. The interests of the people become secondary; the prime goal of the policymakers is to ensure the well-being of the wealthy supporters to sustain their position and occupy the powerful chairs.

Analysis

Once a political party is voted to power, it is expected to carry out the sentiments and expectations of the people who give it the reins of power. This process of policymaking is carried forward not by the masses, but by the interest groups, campaign managers, think tanks, lobbyists and the news and electronic media. All policies are framed at the top, supposedly for the benefit of the masses. Any set up whether it is political or commercial, the ultimate success of the decisions depends on the strategy of management style and its capacity to judge the attitudes and concerns of all concerned. Reverting to the observations of Dye, " No government can promise its citizens effective participation in all of the decisions that affect their lives. At <https://assignbuster.com/top-down-policy-making-by-thomas-r-dye/>

most in the United States, only a few thousand individuals have any direct influence over public policy.” (p. 1) This is true not only of the United States but all the countries and top business organizations. The author explains this viewpoint in an engaging manner.

It is a well-planned book with 9 chapters with detailed sub-titles as per the topics.

The themes of the book, the advantages, and pitfalls in top-down policymaking have been argued well. The evidence provided in the book, and the quotations mentioned above are good enough to support the theme and the arguments are convincing. Policymaking is a vast subject and within the limitations of 192 pages, the author has provided adequate material for students of political science and policy studies. Politics of policymaking begins once a particular party is voted to power. The voter is sidetracked and interest groups and lobbyists take over the stage. Many power blocks, mostly internal and often external, interact and put pressure on the process of rulemaking. Bureaucracy is also an important part of the policymaking process. The author provides a strong theoretical background, with the backup of research. Students of political science and scholars will be able to get new knowledge of lobbying at the level of bureaucracy and also the politicians. In the prevailing political scenario in America, the importance of lobbying in policymaking is important. Even in the feverish pitch of lobbying, they follow a method to share profits. Lobbying strategies vary with time and across settings. They mostly take place outside the public view.

Evaluation and conclusion

The book has addressed the task of policymaking well. It is intended for scholars and students of politics, sociologists and the practicing politicians. It <https://assignbuster.com/top-down-policy-making-by-thomas-r-dye/>

is also useful for the discerning citizens of any country who keep a watch on the moves of the government and to study how they conduct governance from the top. I liked the book for the simple reason that it does justice to the topic, do not stray away from the intended subject, and gives useful hints to the citizens to be vigilant and watch their politicians whom they have voted to power. The contents are authoritative and are masterfully argued. The author avoids direct criticism of the framers of the policy and does not endorse any political platform. He writes in a non-partisan tone and has no political agenda. Readers should know that political science and policy are different subjects. The policy may be excellent but it has been observed that the impact of lobbying is so strong, that the course of the policy undergoes compelling changes. The author does not endorse the current trends in American politics. He gives the analytical models to explain and understand its working system. Dye tells about the compulsions of the politicians in authority, to continue with the bad policies. Some such burning issues are, raising minimum wages, the death penalty for murder, life terms for drug dealers, Congressional term limits, etc. Dye's one important miscalculation is he forgets that America adores idealism as a part of its American tradition, and he stands for hardcore realism.