

framing in public decision interactions: transferring theory to practice

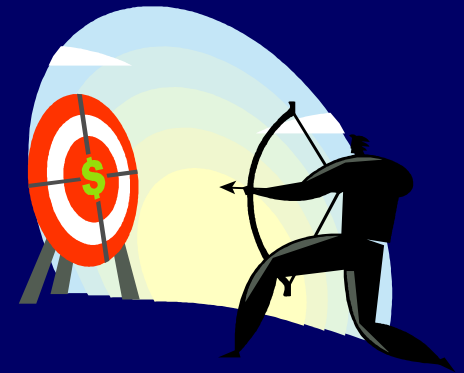



Practice Chapter for "
**Framing Conflicts:
Theory and Applications "**

symposium: "a book in the making" - iacm '08, chicago
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chapter focus



- contributions of framing knowledge to the practice of public decision making in contexts with physical and spatial consequences in time, such as:
 - planning
 - public administration
 - environmental disputes
- 



chapter structure

- placement of the chapter in the perspective of framing theories
- public decisions
 - review framing with respect to public decisions
 - obstacles to the use of framing in practice
- case: a practical framing tool to address obstacles to negotiation in environmental disputes:
 - complex information with highly technical content
 - key ingredient in public decisions, source of contention
 - focus on information frames in environmental disputes
 - predictable patterns of stakeholders' frames
 - use to understand and resolve some differences
 - benefits/difficulties of development and use of the framing tool
- an agenda for research and for the development of more tools to facilitate the theory-to-practice transfer

what makes decisions public?

- who makes the decision, how, and whom it affects
- public decisions
 - are negotiated through the political process among interdependent parties with
 - overlapping and fragmented jurisdictions and mandates,
 - no hierarchical authority
 - affect the public interest -- they impact shared resources and future collective options.
 - benefit certain groups who may be different from those who bear the burden of costs.

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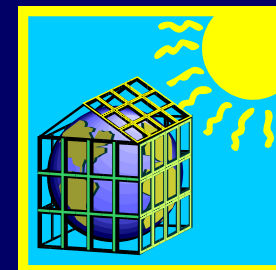


examples



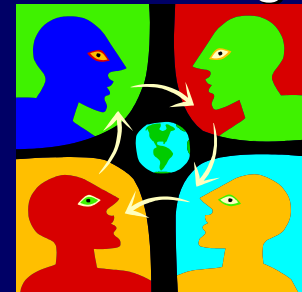
- policy and regulations contending with global warming consequences of settlement patterns with large carbon footprints;
- resource management – mitigating threats to water, endangered species, and agricultural land resulting from urban sprawl
- land use decisions – where to locate solid waste landfills or industrial facilities;
- protection of natural ecosystems

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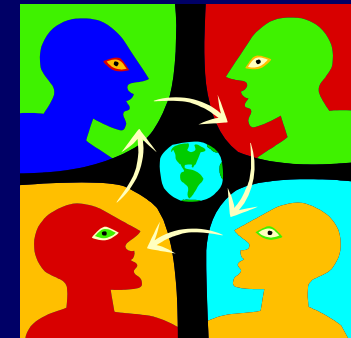
are public decisions special?

- *geographically bound*
- Involve *complex negotiations* among many stakeholders interacting over lengthy periods of time
- negotiations follow an *ad-hoc process*
 - lengthy
 - concurrent/sequential episodes in different fora & courts
 - interactions away from the "negotiation table"
- *spatial consequences over time* periods exceeding the lifespan of decision makers
- processes and outcomes
 - affect the *public and private realms*
 - concern many *more than the direct parties*



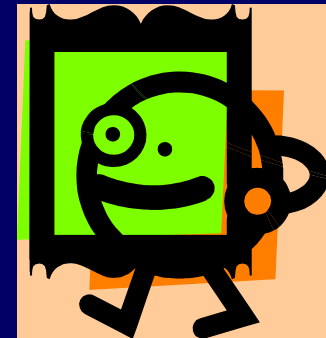
are public decisions special?

- *"fractal"* - high levels of *complexity at any scale*
 - *extensive, compact information with heavy scientific, technical and other specialized content, uncertainty and risk*
→ cognitive overload, recourse to frames
- *interstitial character*: decisions made by
 - loosely coupled/independent public/private organizations
 - elected/appointed officials and administrators at various government levels
 - Individuals
 - specialized professionals
 - special interest groups
- *the public interest can be at odds with direct (local) parties' interests*



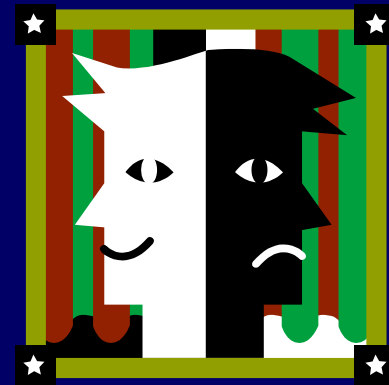
framing in public decisions

- 2 studies finding/using similar categories:
 - characterization/identity
 - substantive
 - gain/loss
 - whole-story
 - Trust
 - conflict management (process)
 - social control
 - *risk*
 - *information*

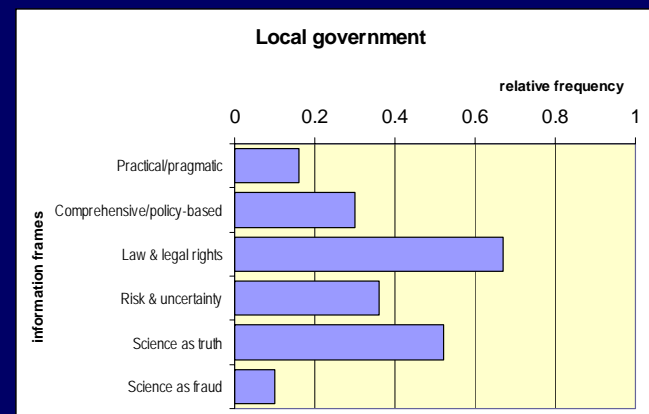
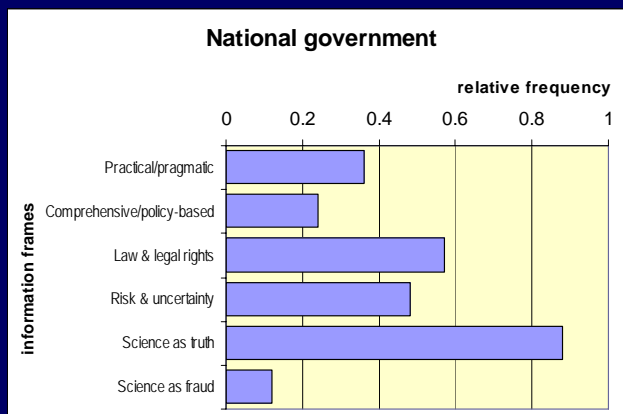
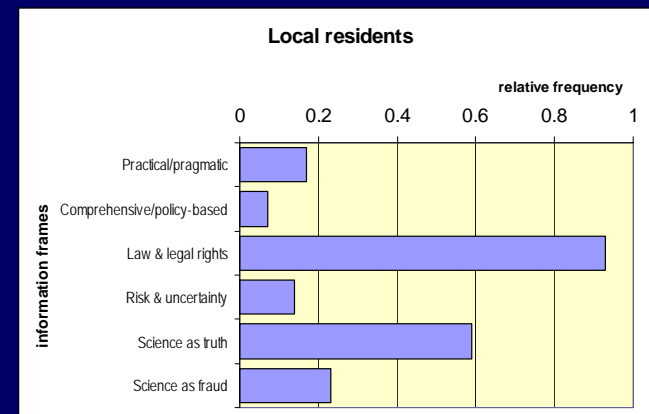
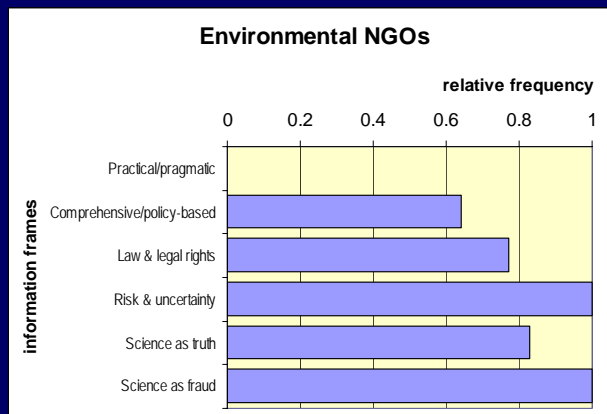


the profiles tool

- israeli project: environmental disputes
 - "typical" group reps negotiate repeatedly
 - reps develop frames elicited and captured in "profiles"
 - profile information contributes to improved communication among reps
 - focus on six information-related frames:
 - practical/pragmatic
 - comprehensive/policy-based
 - law and legal rights
 - risk
 - uncertainty

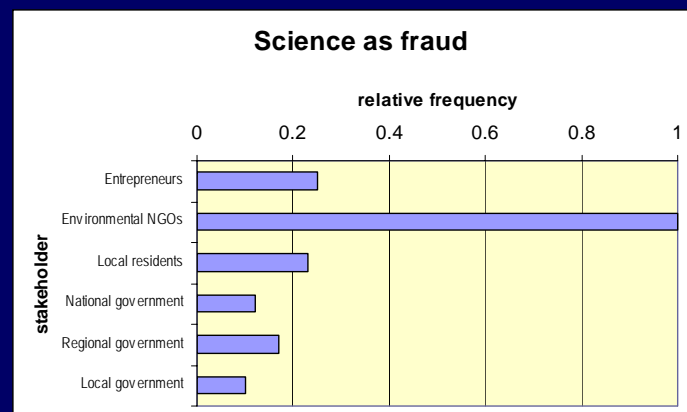
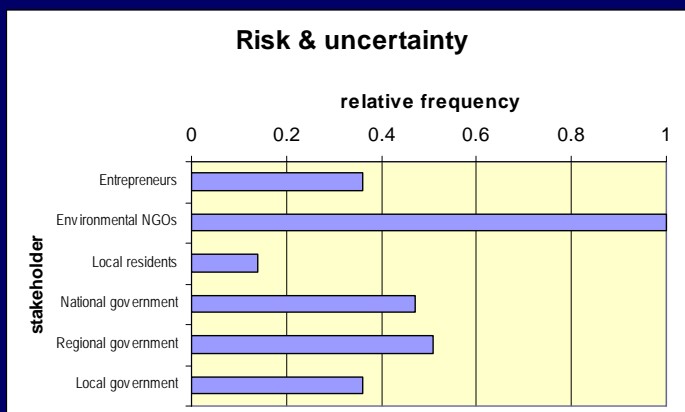
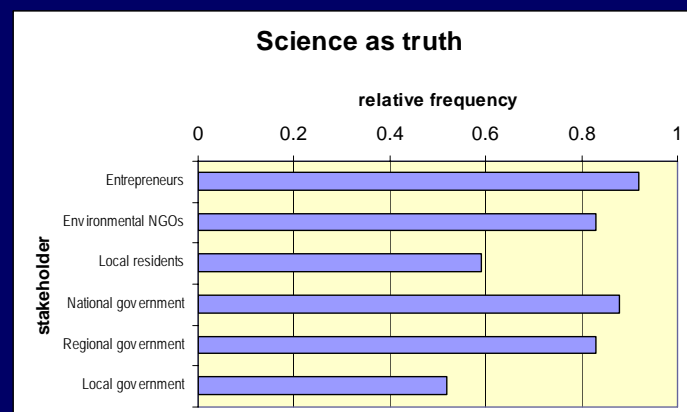
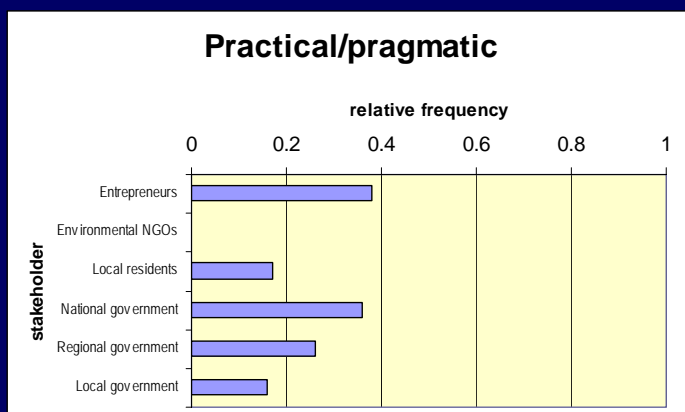
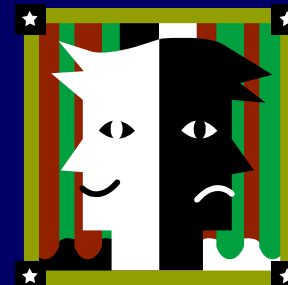


stakeholder frame profiles



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information frames



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