

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation



AN OVERVIEW OF WASHINGTON THINK TANKS

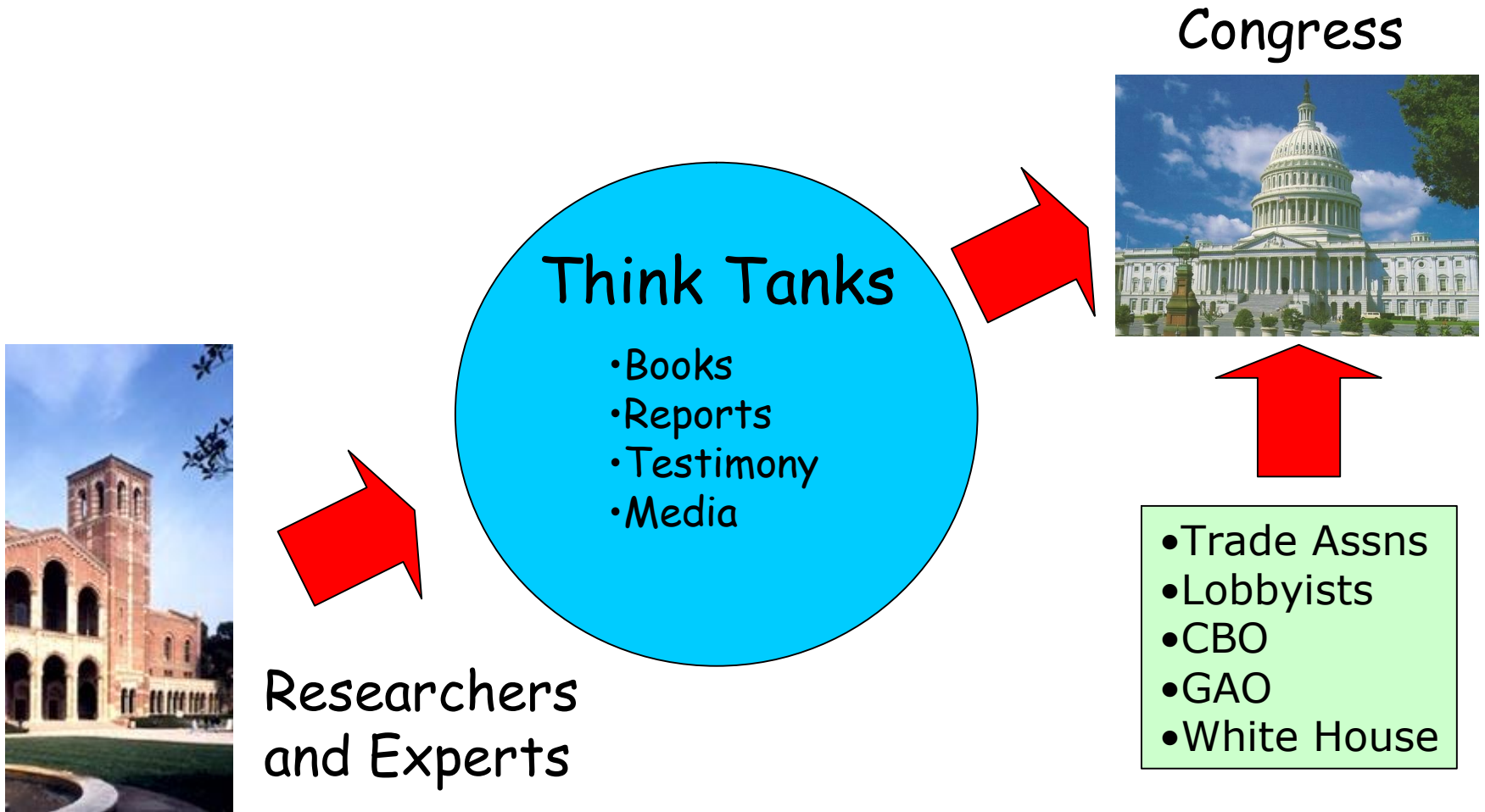
Tilting at Health Policy Windmills?



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American Enterprise Institute

2006 Health Policy
Synergy Workshop
Robert Wood Johnson
Foundation Programs
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Think Tanks and the Policy-Making Process



Defining a Think Tank

“an arrangement by which millions of dollars are removed from the accounts of willing corporations, the government, and the eccentric wealthy and given to researchers who spend much of their time competing to get their names in print.”

[Peter Kelley, 1988, as quoted by Kent Weaver]

Confusions about Think Tanks

Kent Weaver, 1989

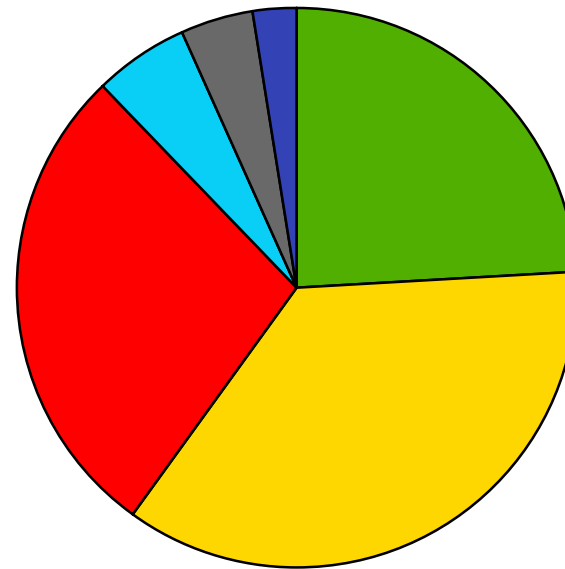
- Objective policy evaluation vs. policy advocacy
- University-based vs. free-standing
- Government funding vs. private-sector funding
- Contract research vs. self-initiated research

Weaver's Three Categories of Think Tanks

- University without Students
- The Contract Research Organization
- Advocacy Tanks

The World of Think Tanks

- Thinking is increasing!
- 290 think tanks in 1998
- 319 in 2002
- 444 in 2005



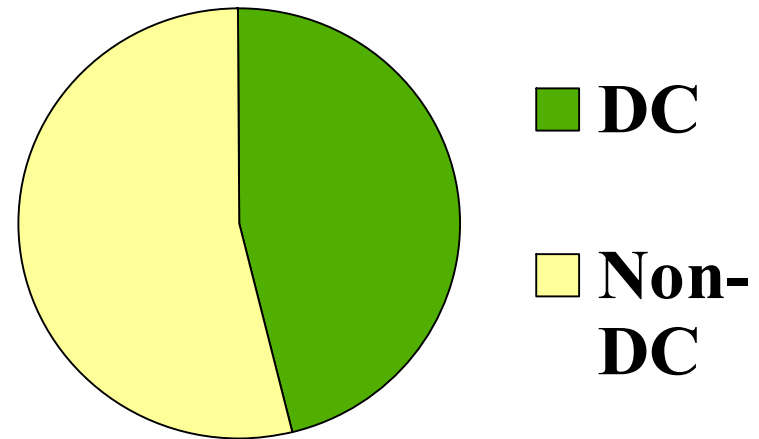
2005

- North America
- Europe
- Asia
- Africa
- South America
- Aust + NZ

Source: National Institute for Research Advancement,
World Directory of Think Tanks, 1998, 2002, 2005.

Thinking in America

- The NIRA directory lists 89 think tanks in the United States in 2005
- 42 of these (47%) were based in Washington, DC
 - 11 of these do health policy

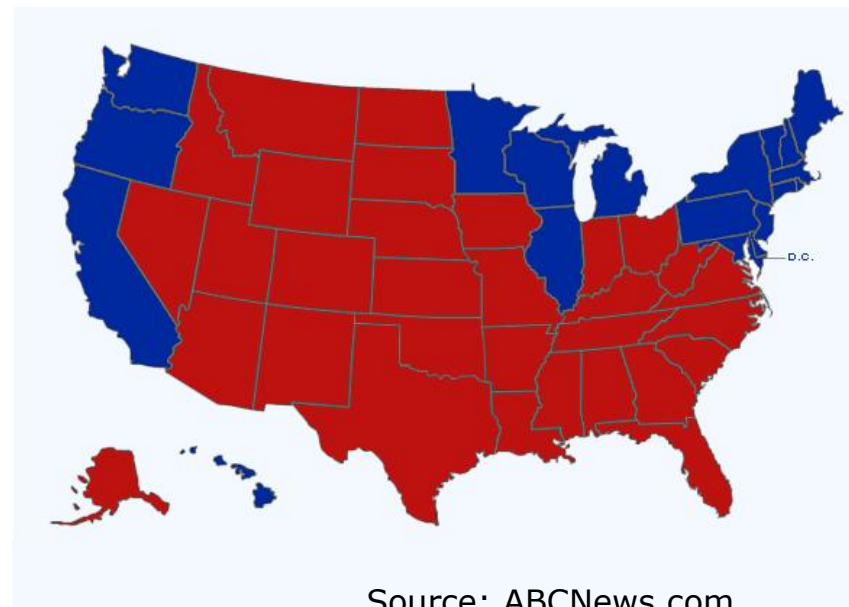


2005

Thinking in the States?

The Vast [Right/Left] Wing Conspiracy

- MovingIdeas.org
 - An online network of 194 groups
- Townhall.com
 - An online network of 121 groups
- State Policy Network
 - A network of “market-based” state think tanks
 - 51 policy think tanks in 43 states



Source: ABCNews.com
Election 2004

Washington Think Tanks, 2005

- 147 think tanks listed in Fall, 2005
 - *The Capital Source* listed 69 think tanks in 1988 [as quoted by Weaver]
- I have heard of 55 (37%) of the 147 listed in 2005
 - But incomplete: AH, KFF, CSHSC not listed
- By my count, 20 of these (17% of 147) do some health policy research [a very casual review!]

The Capital Source, pp 70-73

University Think Tanks

(Health Policy, Washington area)

- Institute of Health Care Research and Policy, Georgetown University
- Center for Health Services Research and Policy, George Washington University
- Center for Hospital Finance and Management, Johns Hopkins University
- Center for Health Policy and Health Services Research, U. of MD School of Medicine
- Center on Drugs and Public Policy, U. of MD School of Pharmacy

Health Policy Think Tanks

Primarily Health Policy, Washington Area

(my casual list)

- Kaiser Family Foundation/Kaiser Network
- Institute of Medicine
- Center for Studying Health System Change
- AcademyHealth
- National Pharmaceutical Council
- Galen Institute
- National Institute for Health Care Management

Think Tanks with Health Policy Programs

- Brookings
- Urban Institute
- Heritage Foundation
- AEI
- CATO
- Centrists.org
- American Institutes for Research
- Public Policy Institute (AARP)
- Progressive Policy Institute
- National Center for Policy Analysis
- Center for Budget and Policy Priorities
- New American Foundation

Government "Think Tanks"

- ASPE/HHS
- AHRQ/HHS
- Office of Research, Development, and Information, CMS/HHS
- CBO
- GAO
- MedPAC

History of Health Policy at AEI

- AEI established in 1943 as the American Enterprise Association
- Established the Center for Health Policy Research in 1974, name dropped in 1980s
- Health policy directed by Jack Meyer, 1981-1985
- I returned to AEI in 1991
- AEI now has 7 scholars in health policy

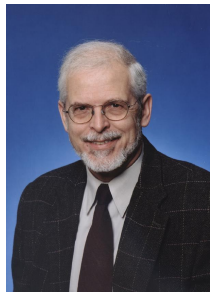
AEI Health Policy People



Joe Antos, PhD
Resident Scholar



Leon R. Kass, MD
Hertog Fellow



Jack Calfee, PhD
Resident Scholar



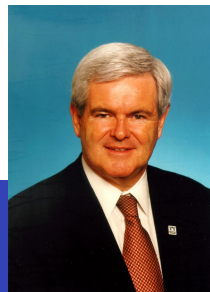
Sally Satel, M.D.
Resident Scholar



Robert Helms, PhD
Resident Scholar



Roger Bate
Resident Fellow



Newt Gingrich
Senior Fellow

Major AEI Publications 1970s, 1980s, 1990s

- Havighurst, *Regulating Health Facilities Construction*, 1974
- Peltzman, *Regulation of Pharmaceutical Innovation: The 1962 Amendments*, 1974
- Olson, *A New Approach to the Economics of Health Care*, 1981
- Pauly, et al, *Responsible National Health Insurance*, 1992
- Havighurst, *Health Care Choices*, 1994

Recent AEI Studies

- Antos, *Crisis du Jour or the Real Thing?* Health Policy Outlook, May 2006
- Helms, *Mission Improbable: No One is Going to Blow Up Health Insurance*, Tax Notes, June 12, 2006
- Calfee, Bate, *Pharmaceuticals and the Worldwide HIV Epidemic*, AEI-Brookings Joint Center, August 2004
- Klick & Satel, *The Health Disparities Myth*, 2006
- Miller & Frech, *Health Care Matters: Pharmaceuticals, Obesity, and the Quality of Life*, 2004
- Ohsfeldt & Schneider, *The Business of Health: The Role of Competition, Markets, and Regulation*, 2006

Current Research and Interests

- Tax credits and the individual insurance market
- Medicare reform
- New Medicare drug benefit
- Medical malpractice/tort reform
- Diseases in developing countries
- Risks and returns in pharmaceutical research
- The effects of price controls on health markets

Tilting Against Windmills?

- When do ideas affect policy?
- Chris DeMuth, President of AEI
 - It usually takes about 10 years for a new idea to make its way into policy (antitrust, welfare reform)
 - Studies focusing only on the cost of a program are usually not effective (EPA, Medicare)
 - Studies showing perverse effects are more effective (welfare, natural gas, FDA regulation).



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A Voice from the Past

- “Practical men, who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influences, are usually the slaves of some defunct economist.”
- “. . . the power of vested interests is vastly exaggerated compared with the gradual encroachment of ideas.”

John Maynard Keynes,
The General Theory, 1935.

Health Policy Web Sites

- AcademyHealth www.academyhealth.org
- AEI www.aei.org
- CATO www.cato.org
- CBO www.cbo.gov
- The Galen Institute www.galen.org
- Heritage www.heritage.org
- Kaiser Family Foundation www.kff.org
- MedPAC www.medpac.gov
- NCPA www.ncpa.org