

# State of the Art of Policy Practice Research

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# **STATE OF THE ART, TAKE 1**

## **JANUARY 2013**



“Things are  
“dismal.””

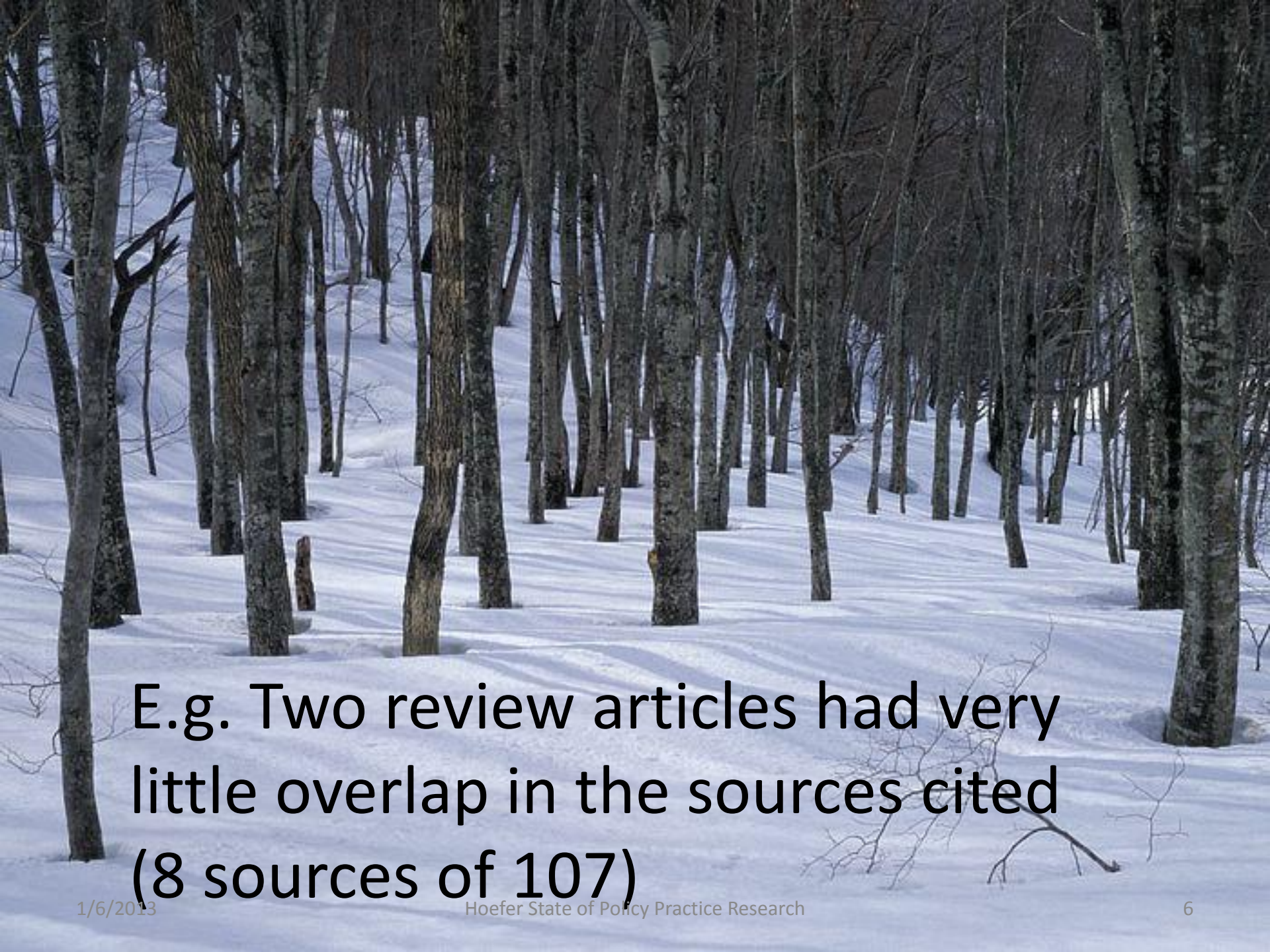
Deprimente, triste, דיגל, bleak, berriz, гнітючий,  
dyster, sombrio, 慘淡 etc.

A photograph of a snowy forest with many bare trees. The ground is covered in a thick layer of snow, and the trees are dark and leafless. The scene is captured in a slightly low-angle perspective, looking down a path or through the trees.

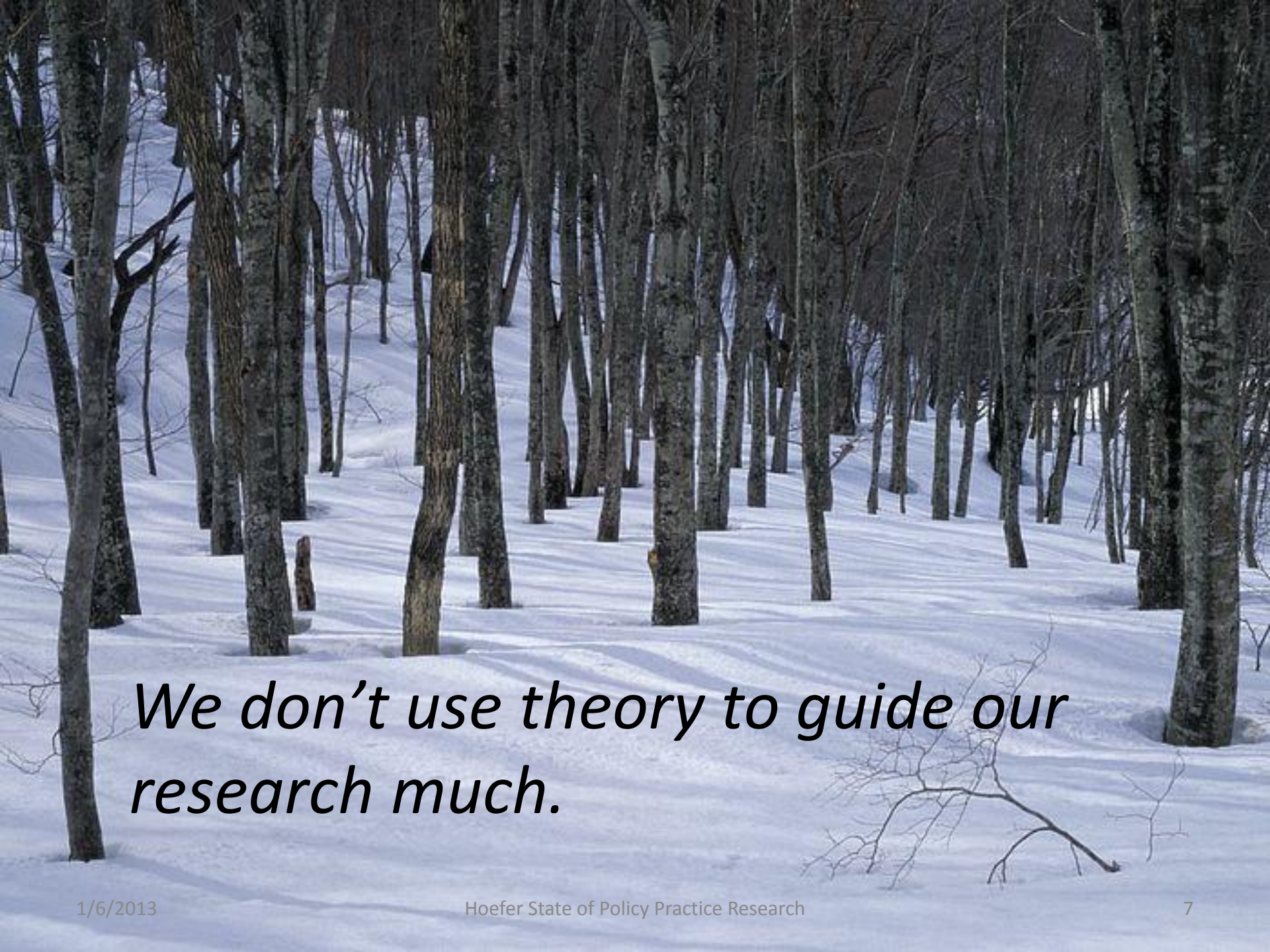
*We don't agree on  
what policy practice is.*



*We don't know the literature.*

A photograph of a snowy forest with many bare trees. The ground is covered in a thick layer of snow, and the trees are mostly without leaves, showing their dark trunks and branches. The scene is captured in a slightly overcast, winter light.

E.g. Two review articles had very little overlap in the sources cited (8 sources of 107)

A photograph of a snowy forest with many bare trees. The ground is covered in a thick layer of snow, and the trees are dark and leafless. The scene is captured in a slightly desaturated, cool-toned light, possibly during a winter day. The trees are scattered throughout the frame, creating a sense of depth and a quiet, still atmosphere.

*We don't use theory to guide our research much.*

# Still...



# **STATE OF THE ART, TAKE 2**

## **APRIL 2014**



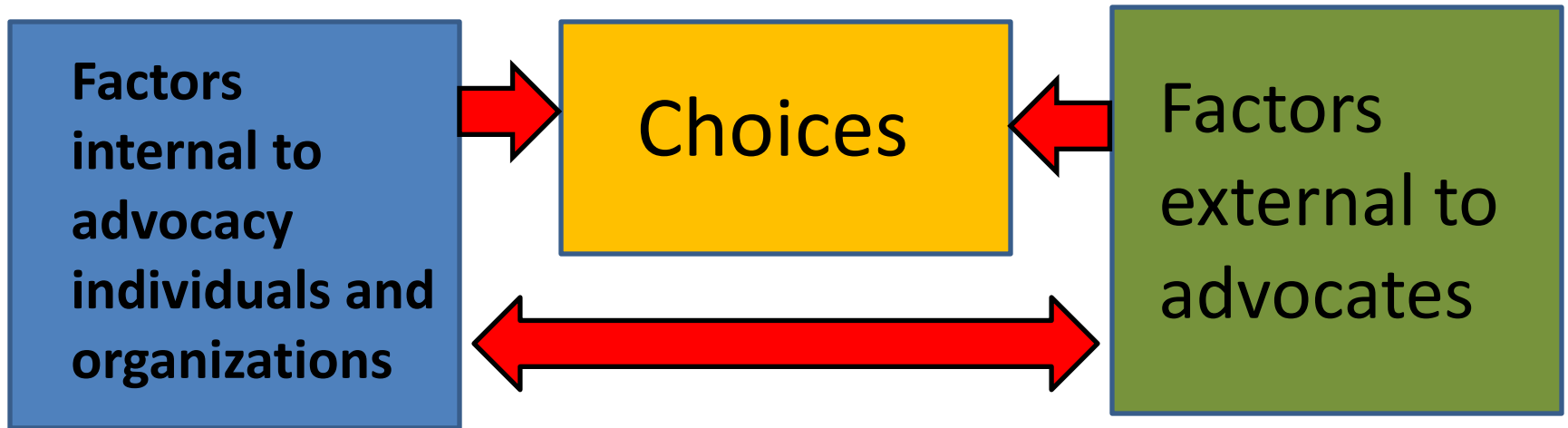
# Hope Springs...

- Literature reviews ARE being done to lay out what we do know and what we don't know
- Better empirical research is being submitted and published
- Theories are being considered in the design of research

*But, to make more  
progress, faster*

*We need a map  
showing what we've  
explored and what's  
left to discover.*

*Here are two possibilities.*



## ***Systems Theory-Influenced Approach***

# What's the Lay of the Land? (Internal Factors)

- What are the inclinations of the actors?  
(topography)
  - Clients
  - Staff
  - Managers
  - Boards
  - Funders
  - Other stakeholders



# What's the Lay of the Land? (Internal Factors)

- What are biases of the organizations (built structures) that are involved?
  - Organizational missions
  - Organizational vision/values
- How are resources distributed within organizations? (weather)

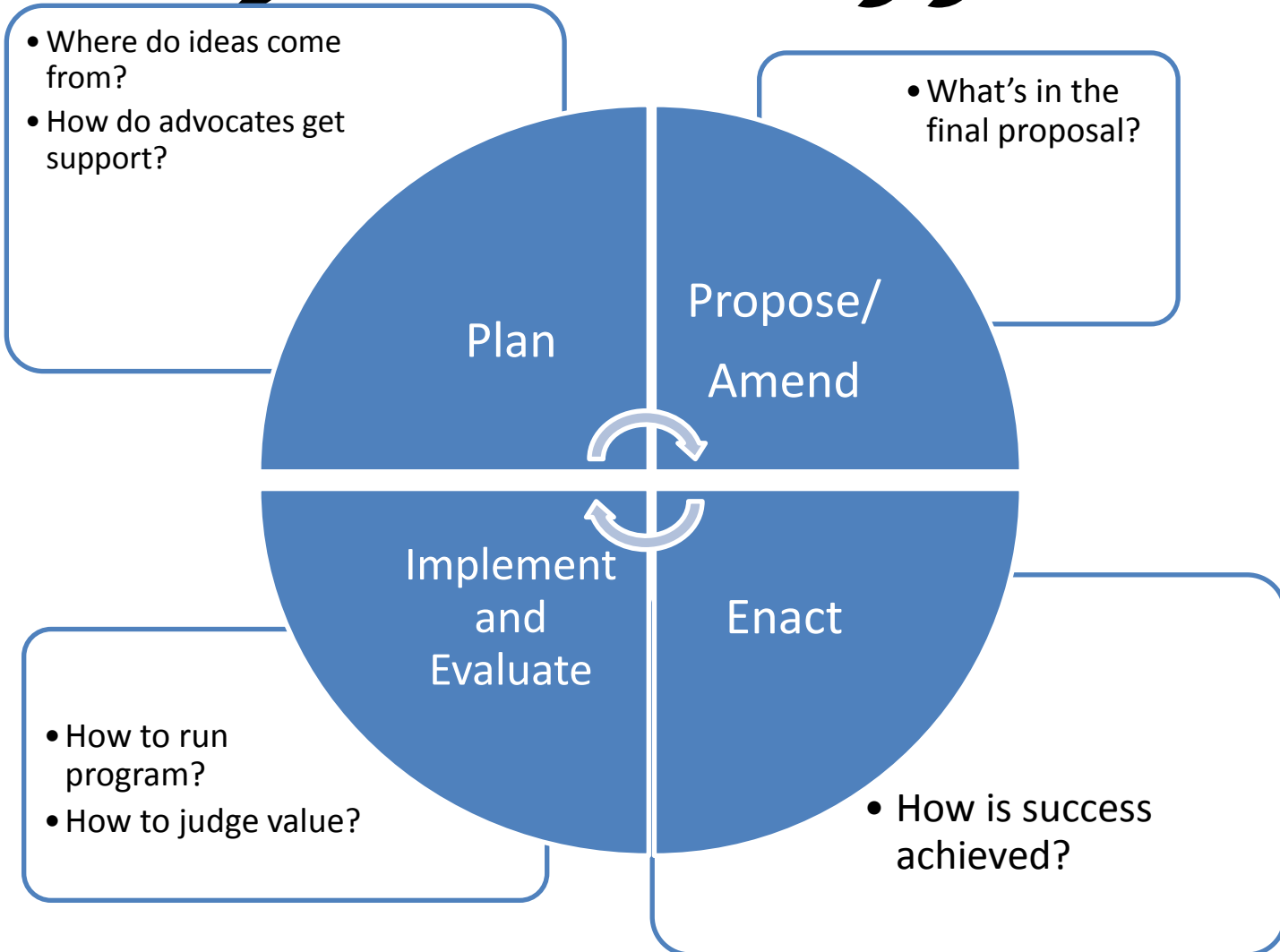
# External Factors (The Environment-Shapers )

- Who are the decision-makers?
- How are institutions designed?
- What are the rules and who makes them?
- What is the general environment? Who is helped and who is hindered?
- What is the distribution of resources throughout the system?

# Choices

- Advocates must make choices relating their inclinations, structures and weather to the external environment using relationships
- First choice: to advocate or not?
- Choose among various goals, moral frames, targets, strategies, and tactics
- Choose with whom to work and who to oppose, using which technologies and in what venues (legislature, executive, court)

# *Policy Process Approach*



# Combining Approaches

- Internal factors that impact planning and the choices that are made
- How external factors impinge choices regarding selecting collaborators and tactics?
- The key is to remember that advocacy always has a transactional element—you can't really advocate in the absence of at least one other party

# International Dimensions

- None of these ways of conceptualizing the “map” of advocacy-land is specific to one country
- We can research any of the factors or elements in depth within one country or across many
- Gatherings such as this help bring hope so that at my next presentation, we can feel like.....





Thank



*you,*



*very much!*