

# DUAL POLICY TRANSFER AND THE 1991 CHILD SUPPORT ACT

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# AIM OF THE PAPER

- ▶ Briefly introduce Policy Transfer
- ▶ Summarise how it can help explain policy failure
- ▶ Discuss 1991 Child Support Act as a case study for Policy Transfer
- ▶ Introduce 'dual policy transfer' and show how it will advance understanding of the role of policy transfer
- ▶ Show the significance of 'dual policy transfer' and how the origins and failure of the 1991 Child Support Act lay here.

# WHAT IS POLICY TRANSFER?

- ▶ An **umbrella term** that builds on work done on ‘*policy diffusion*’, ‘*lesson drawing*’, ‘*emulation*’, ‘*policy convergence*.’
- ▶ PT: ‘*the process by which knowledge of policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in one political system (past or present) is used in the development of policies, arrangements, institutions and ideas in another political system*’ (Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000, 5).

# THE ROLE OF POLICY TRANSFER (PT)

- ▶ Analytical tool
- ▶ Not a complete theory which cannot explain everything but does have the capacity to enhance our understanding
- ▶ Helps illuminate the policy-making process, the origins of a policy,
  - ▶ and possible reasons for failure.
  - ▶ Provides insight into 'black-box'

# POLICY TRANSFER AND POLICY FAILURE

Existing work on PT and policy failure

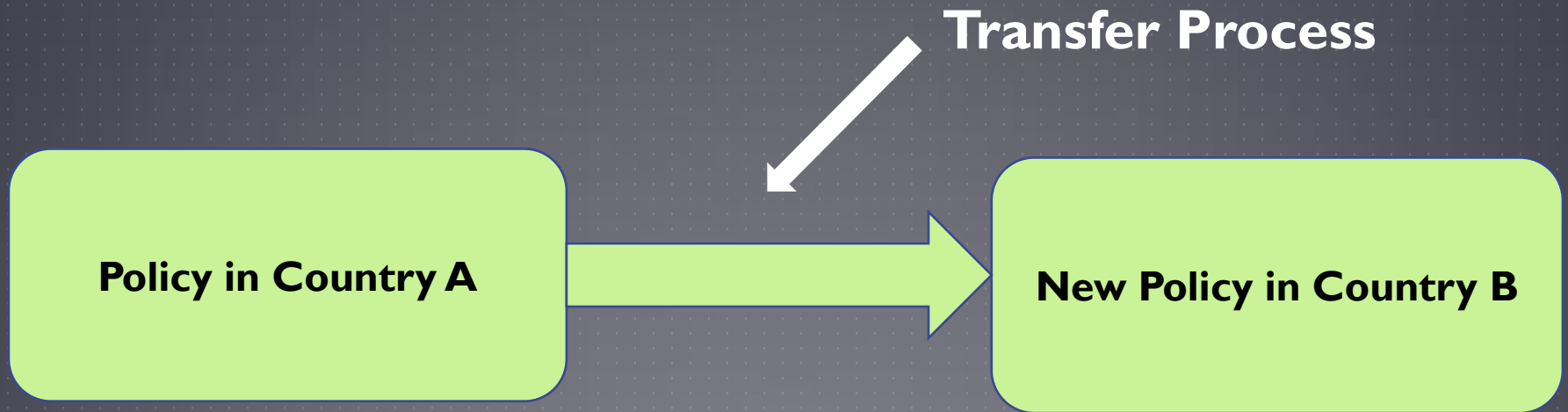
3 factors contribute to failure after PT: (Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000).

- ▶ Uninformed Transfer
- ▶ Incomplete Transfer
- ▶ Inappropriate Transfer

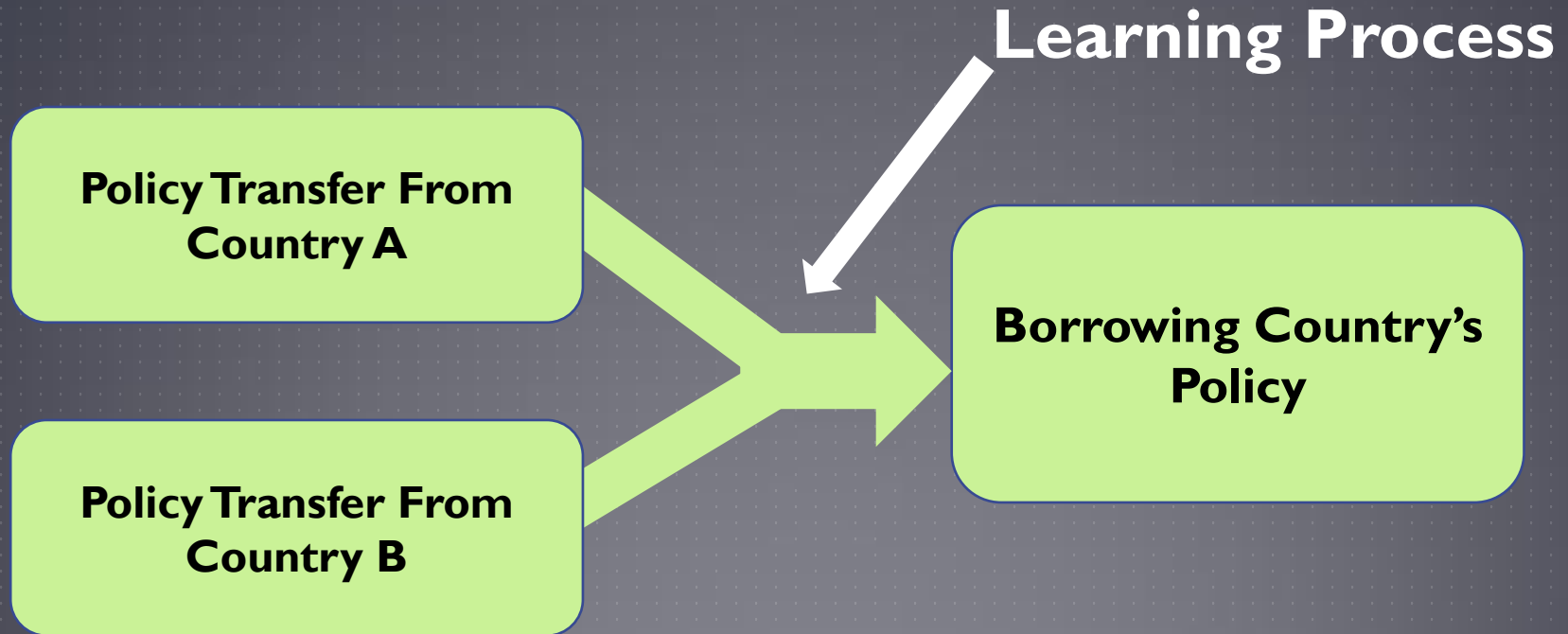
# POLICY TRANSFER AND THE 1991 CHILD SUPPORT ACT (CSA)

- ▶ PT has been used to explain the failure of the CSA.
- ▶ Dolowitz claims that 'the origins of the agency are to be found in policy transfer from the USA' (2001, 373).
- ▶ Evidence of 'incomplete', 'uninformed', & 'inappropriate transfer'
  - ▶ E.g. applied retrospect, not imbedded with other policies, little acknowledgement of cultural difference, no cash disregard, not operated via tax system
- ▶ PT and its links to the failure of the policy goes deeper.

# 'SIMPLE' POLICY TRANSFER

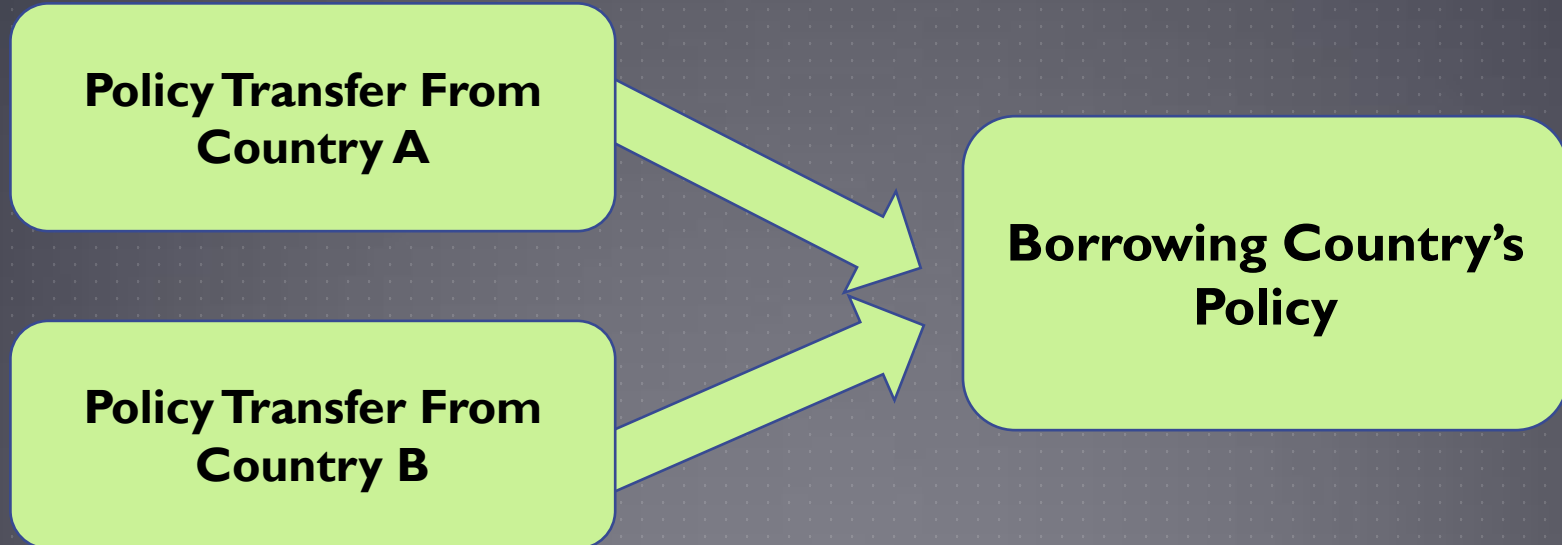


# 'COHERENT' DUAL POLICY TRANSFER





# 'INCOHERENT' DUAL POLICY TRANSFER



# CONFLICTING ORIGINS: TWO POLICIES, ONE BILL (I)

- ▶ The 1991 CSA can be seen to have developed from two sources: DSS and the LCO AND Thatcher and the Treasury.
- ▶ Divergent sources looked towards different countries. Minister in the Thatcher Cabinet stated:

*“[the DSS] looked mainly towards Australia...our Prime Minister looked towards Wisconsin.”* (interviewed by author on 19 July 2011).

- ▶ Two separate problem definitions and two distinct strands of policy transfer.
- ▶ Not exclusively a case of policy transfer from one country to another.

# CONFLICTING ORIGINS: TWO POLICIES, ONE BILL (2)

- ▶ Policy Transfer from different countries because different definitions of the problem.
- ▶ Thatcher and the Treasury – reduce expenditure
- ▶ DSS and LCO – create a fairer system of child maintenance.
- ▶ Thatcher and the Treasury allowed ‘dual policy’ transfer to occur, almost using it as a strategic tool to increase chances of support what appeared the DSS’s policy.

# POLICY TRANSFER AND THE 1991 CHILD SUPPORT ACT

- ▶ Not a simple case of PT from one country to another, or even a problematic PT from one country to another, or a disagreement over which nation's model Britain should pursue.
- ▶ Grand misconception of the American system forced onto policy transfer from Australia.
- ▶ An inconsistent mix of the DSS's attempt to introduce an appropriate, complete, and informed PT from Australia, and Thatcher and the Treasury's determination to introduce incomplete, inappropriate, and uninformed PT from America.

# DUAL POLICY TRANSFER AND POLICY FAILURE

- ▶ We should consider the possibility that PT has taken place from more than one source, and the impact this has on the final policy.
- ▶ Dual PT can occur effectively, whereby policy-makers attempt a synthesis of policies which is **coherent**, contains an effective condensing and learning process.
- ▶ But dual PT can also occur with no condensing or communication process between the two stands of transfer, leading to **incoherent** PT.
- ▶ Dual policy PT is therefore a model that can increase understanding of the reasons behind policy failure.

# QUESTIONS