When Policies Collide: The Case of Privatizing South Australian Lotteries

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The purpose of this paper is to examine the conditions in which policies interact with one another. While there is ample research and theory examining how policies interact, much of it is based on a temporally sequential framework whereby institutions are examined over a period of time and observed changes are noted. The best example of this comes from the historical institutional school of thought and draws on the "layering", "drifting" and "conversion" forms of organization change. But, what happens when one policy "interferes" or "intrudes" on another's domain? And, institutional change is facilitate (or not) by the actions of another related, but disconnected, institution? We propose that this occurs in the real policy world and we draw on the case study of the privatization of SA Lotteries in South Australia to examine this concept. In the late 1990s, the Liberal SA government set out to privatize SA Lotteries, but was not able to do so. It was, however, successful in selling some components of the gaming regime such as the horse and dog racing segment (the TAB) and the casinos, but was stymied in its efforts to sell the lottery provider, SA Lotteries. Twelve years later in 2012, a labor government completed this effort and sold SA Lotteries to a private firm, Tatts, which owns and operates both the TAB as well as the other state lottery firms throughout Australia. What changed over this period to allow the SA government to fully privatize the entire lottery system? How did the different sectors and policy and political actors interact in order to arrive at such an outcome? We hope that this research will add to our understanding of governmental decision-making processes and to the privatization literature more generally.