

Words Poorly Used #114 — Policy

Etymology online addresses “policy” as:

*policy (n) — “way of management,” late 14c., policie, “study or practice of government; good government;” from Old French policie (14c.) “political organization, civil administration,” from Late Latin politia “the state, civil administration,” from Greek politeia “state, administration, government, citizenship,” from polites “citizen,” from polis “city, state” (see polis).
Meaning “plan of action, way of management” first recorded c. 1400.*

This seems fairly watered down, except of course where it says “good government,” which is an oxymoron. But the above is only denotation. It leaves out the broader affect of the word — its connotation. For instance, it definitely has a public relations application. POTUS immediately responds to events with a public relations front. He pats himself and government employees on the backs for doing a great job, long before any rational performance review could take place. Then he begins to make policy before our eyes. For the most recent tragedy, he responded to the bike path vehicular murders in NYC by saying extreme vetting was going to get more extreme. How does one measure that? What is vetting? Have you noticed that our POTUS likes to use weasely, squirmy, slippery words — as do most POTUS’es, for that matter. He likes to make policy sound ever more “policier!”

— Kilgore Forelle