

Political Science 367.01

Lecture 2:

The Fall of Pluralism, or Olson's Revenge

- 1) A review of pure or ideal pluralism...
 - a) What is it?
 - b) What does it mean for group formation?
- 2) Truman's Group Formation hypothesis
 - a) Why do groups form, according to Truman?
 - b) What does "wavelike" mean?
- 3) Who the heck is Mancur Olson (and how do you pronounce Mancur)?
 - a) Public vs. private goods
 - b) What's a group's role in the provision of goods?
- 4) The collective action problem—What is a free rider?
 - a) What are the costs of group membership?
 - b) Why wouldn't groups form, according to Olson?
- 5) The conditions for group formation and persistence
 - a) Size
 - b) The role of the entrepreneur
 - c) The provision of selective benefits
- 6) Were the pluralists really wrong (or, where does Olson fall short)?
 - a) By Olson's logic, groups should never form...but they do!
 - b) Does a hybrid of pluralism and Olson explain group formation?