

I. BRACKEN, URBAN PLANNING METHODS: RESEARCH AND POLICY ANALYSIS 18-20 (1981)[Citations omitted]

Although analytical investigation of values poses many problems, we suggest that urban planning is best served by as systematic a study as possible of values and value systems and their relationship to activities. Inconsistencies may then be resolved in pursuit of specified purposes and this should lead to the identification of more explicit criteria for policy formulation. In theory, analysis of an entire value system can be postulated as feasible and it would lead to a portrayal of value hierarchies. Administrative complexities, however, make the identification of relevant groups problematical, and the fact that group views do not necessarily adequately represent the views of their members is an acknowledged difficulty. Assuming these can be overcome, a more fundamental issue is that knowledge of available facts is needed to determine the relative weight of particular values and this raises particular methodological issues.

Everyday experience suggests that personal values are influenced by our knowledge, or understanding of facts. But equally, though it is less obvious, factual statements and their analysis reflect the values of persons making those statements. This is particularly true in the attachment of importance to certain facts, choice as to what are the *relevant* facts to a given situation, and in the selection of what should be studied to yield factual information. Fact and value, then, are heavily inter-related. But it is important to note that disagreement over value-based positions *cannot* be resolved by recourse to facts, that is, by any amount of empirical data. Values can only be verified and differences in belief resolved in terms of consistency within the hierarchy of other values, in other words, in terms of reasonableness.

In practice, the planner is required to steer a path effectively between technical determinism on the one hand and the uncritical acceptance of sectoral value assumptions on the other, in such operations as the identification of relevant problems, the setting of objectives, problem investigation and the generation of relevant policies directed to secure solutions. This requires that the planner effectively embraces both *analysis*, that is the understanding of facts, and *policy*, that is the communication of values, in a relationship defined in terms of a purpose.

Etzioni postulated a realistic position between the search for full rationality and the adoption of pragmatic incrementalism, the so-called “mixed-scanning” approach. This attempts to blend “high-order” social policy-making processes, which set basic directions through an analysis of values, and “low-order” or technical processes which first prepare for fundamental decisionmaking, for example by making clear what exists in the world, what may be studied and how problems may be defined. Second, these processes are used to forecast and evaluate the practical consequences of fundamental decisions.... [T]his “mixed” view involves first the identification of critical issues and subsequently the focusing of attention *alternatively* on local detail, for example, at the individual level, and on broader strategy. This alternation means that a proper synthesis of the short- and long-term technical operations and values may reasonably be achieved.

The planner's task, then, is to stimulate the debate about urban affairs so as to allow this process to develop and then to rationalize the outcome into meaningful and on-going possibilities for action.... [t]his role must not become simply a political role of compromise, incrementalism or "maintaining the *status quo*" which is often the hallmark of the politician. Rather, the role should be to broaden the horizons of political and public concern by making the polity aware of its problems and the potential for at least ameliorating urban problems. Posed in these terms, urban planning can widen choice and increase opportunity in society by the portrayal of problem-solving, reformist and feasible policies. At the very least, this will cause a questioning of the nature of the *status quo* and suggest the possibility of evolutionary or revolutionary (that is, more radical) possibilities for change. In so doing, the planner uses technical operations to develop an understanding of urban processes, to identify what is possible, revealing choice, conflict and incompatibility in policies, and to objectively evaluate the consequences of alternative strategies. These operations involve both the dissemination of relevant information and understanding *and* a full discussion of values. It also requires that urban planning is conceptualized as an on-going controlling or steering process, capable of permitting policy decisions to be subjected to correction and refinement over time.

It will now be clear that urban planning cannot be a unitary process, not only because of the need to synthesize values and technical operations, but because disagreement will inevitably arise during its course.... [S]ocial policy making emerges from the resolution of conflict about values, and [we] have now observed that this resolution can be helped through a proper synthesis of technical operations. However, policy making is a generator of conflict as well. Through political interaction and social adjustment, the decisions and priorities of the participants in policy making are ratified, altered, compromised, or rejected. Even the announcement of policy intention is a stimulus to reaction, and this suggests that policy making is an inherently political, rather than a technical process. It is not surprising, then, that planners have found it impossible to be both rational and participative at the same time.