



Planning Traditions

11.201 GATEWAY: Planning Action

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Lecture 2



Today's agenda

- **Revisiting Rebuild L.A. (RLA) and Katrina aftermath**
- **Major planning traditions: Assumptions and links**
- **Action requires *actors*: Who plans, planner's roles, role confusions, definitions of success.**
- **Preview next session**



Rebuilding L.A.: Revisited

- **Crisis *context*:** High visibility, varied expectations, fragmented communication, limited trust.
- **Many inter-connected *problems*,** with technical and political dimensions, to be defined.
- ***Resources:*** Extraordinary interest, relationships, money, and more—available to be mobilized.
- **Spotlight:** An entrepreneurial *institution* with a well-defined (narrow?) focus.

“Planning” in action in the public domain addresses all of these—or relegates itself to technical support.



Some strategic options (year 2 on)

- **Redefined role and relationship** to government, business, nonprofit and “community” groups?
- **Focus of activities:** Adjust, reinvent, clarify?
- **Constituents and coalitions:** Who, for what?
- **Operational partners:** Who, for what?



The first “school” of planning

Saint-Simon/Comte, according to Friedmann:

- Rigid, functional division of labor: “Theoretician-planners” and administrators vs. everyone else.
- Politics as “inconsequential,” not a “guiding force”—trumped by immutable scientific laws, including “social physics.”
- Addressed to “the rulers of society.”



Planning traditions

KNOWLEDGE TO ACTION	Conservative	Radical
In SOCIETAL GUIDANCE	<i>Policy analysis</i>	<i>Social reform</i>
In SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION	<i>Social learning</i>	<i>Social mobilization</i>



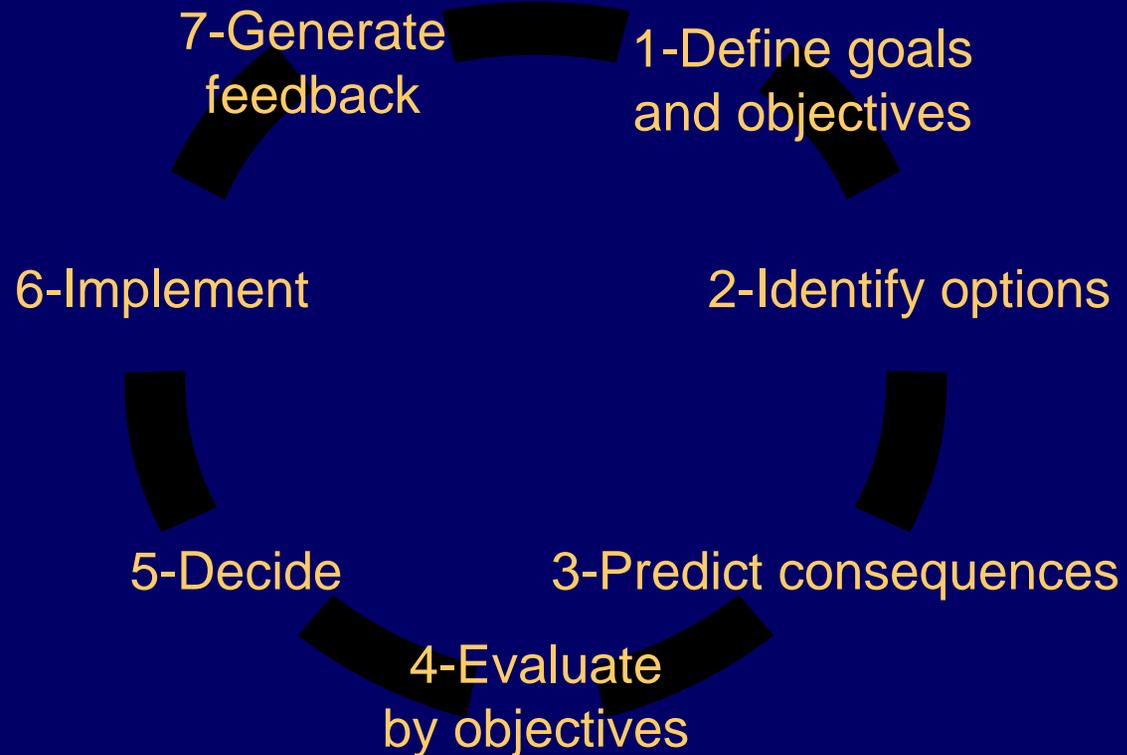
Social reform tradition

- **Applying technical knowledge to public affairs, mainly via the state (government)**
- ***Focus:* Role of government vis-à-vis the market**
- **Relevance in RLA/Katrina ...?**



Policy analysis tradition

Focus: Decision analysis, optimal choice





Social learning tradition

- **Learning by doing, knowledge grounded in experience and reflection**
- ***Focus: Democracy as constant experimentation; dialogue can challenge and overcome habits, prejudices, ignorance***



Social mobilization tradition

- **Collective action “from below,” with specific targets—abuses of government, the market, etc.—and constituents.**
- ***Focus: Planning as a form of politics, whether in *confrontation* or *disengagement/isolation*, generating learning and transformation.***



Fundamental questions

- ***Ends***: What defines the good society? Economic gain, human “freedom” defined by capabilities (Sen), something else?
- What are the most effective *means* of intervention? Does “effective” include legitimate?
- ***Who*** decides and *how*?



Action requires *actors*: Who plans?

- **Trained professional planners with job titles that say “Planner”**
- **Professionals who plan but without the title**
- **Others who plan, especially civil society advocates (nongovernmental, private)**
 - **Grassroots vs. “grasstops”**
- **Others who shape what is planned (stop or change what professionals propose)**



Planners' roles

- **DESIGNER** (“form giver”)
- **ANALYST** (using data to judge ideas by standards)
- **ADVOCATE** (building support for ideas)
- **MEDIATOR** (helping stakeholders find agreement)
- **MANAGER** (creating and deploying capacity to produce)
- **FUTURIST** (visionary)



Role conflicts and confusion

- Defend technical standards vs. popular ones? *Not all popular ideas are wise, not all wise ones are popular or legitimate.*
- Be objective as well as committed and ethical?
- Educate and advocate?
- Answer to the client/employer vs. constituents, the marginalized?
- Equipped to play multiple roles? (skills and personal resources)



What's success?

- The **outcome** is sustainable (growth, equity, environment, engagement) and enhances freedoms.
- The **process** was effective (produced the desired output or outcome)
- The **process** built trust and capacity for more collective action
- The **stakeholders**—All? Some? A majority? A targeted subgroup?—are satisfied



Next session ...

- **Core dilemmas that define planning in practice vs. in theory**
- **Dilemmas that define our three cases**