

Reading Tips and Study Questions: Session One

Required reading:

1. **Scott Campbell and Susan Fainstein**, pp.1-2 in "Introduction: The Structure and Debates of Planning Theory," *Readings in Planning Theory* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003).
2. **Friedmann**, *Planning in the Public Domain* (hereafter, "PPD"), Introduction (pp.3-15). THIS IS ON STELLAR IN CASE YOU DON'T HAVE ACCESS TO THE HARDCOPY YET.
3. **Klosterman**. "Arguments for and against planning," pp.86-101 in *Readings in Planning Theory*, edited by Scott Campbell and Susan Fainstein. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003.

Tips and questions

Each of these sheets is like the rudder on a supertanker: Small in scale but really important. We'll use these sheets to provide "connective tissue" for the course, outlining the sequence of ideas and key debates on which we will focus in Gateway, punctuating important transitions between segments of the course, and in other ways illuminating *why* we're doing the work we're doing, step by step. Always read these tips and questions before doing the assigned reading for the session.

We have two things to accomplish in the first part of the course: Becoming a group that can learn effectively together, in both small settings (study groups) and large ones (class meetings); and critically reviewing the origins and evolution of planning. We'll do the latter in broad terms at first, to prepare for the three big cases that will give theory and other general ideas about planning a context.

A final word of preface: Our focus is on planning in democratic societies. But you'll note immediately that much writing about "planning" is focused on so-called Western planning, i.e. planning after the 18th century in North America and Europe. Complex systems of order and planning (broadly defined) obviously go back to the Ancient Roman and Persian Empires and beyond (Egypt, 2900 BC?), and China had large, elaborate systems of planned intervention—to build great cities and a Great Wall, as early as 214 BC—many centuries before Europe's intellectual awakening a half millennium ago. This is something for us to talk about. For now, the important thing is that the most *influential* planning—for good or ill—is the form that developed and defined its role in the specific cultural and historical settings discussed by

Friedmann and others we will read in this first unit of the course. It is *this* planning that has swept the globe, via specific channels and with major consequences. Understanding what's influential is critical, though it's very distinct from understanding all that is good or desirable or original.

Read through the syllabus, calendar and readings carefully so you can identify questions you want to ask, and then these questions, to go with readings 1-3 above:

1. The two pages of **Campbell and Fainstein** are dense with important arguments. What are they? In light of Friedmann (next item), why might a critical understanding of planning theory be important if, as Campbell and Fainstein claim, it's hard to define and "practitioners largely disregard it"? You may be able to identify, in some field in which you've worked, "assimilated" ideas that shaped practice in powerful, albeit rarely visible, ways.
2. What principal assumptions accompany the origins of planning after the 18th century, according to **Friedmann**? In light of today's experience, what are the strengths and weaknesses of a societal model in which, as Friedmann puts it, politicians handle "values" toward which we should aim and planners navigate "facts" to determine the means of realizing those aims? What aspects of Friedmann's critical assessment of planning are most and least convincing, i.e., of his arguments about the inadequacy of "planning as societal guidance" to cope with "the crises of industrial capitalism"? Note that Friedmann was writing in 1987, before the fall of the Berlin Wall and with it the Soviet Union, before capitalism's declared "victory" as the model for economy and society.
3. **Klosterman** echoes a number of Friedmann's arguments about the decline of planning, and erosion of its claims to legitimacy, following a golden age at mid-20th century. What are the key differences between economic and "pluralist" arguments about planning? How about between "traditional" and Marxist arguments? What does Klosterman mean when he claims that planning retains justifiable claims about its *ends*—as meeting social needs—but not its *means*, i.e. no agreed-upon "procedural model for defining planning problems or justifying planning solutions"?
4. How does **focusing our perspective outside of government**—outside *the state*, in international parlance—shift any of these considerations? That is, do very general justifications for *planning*, many of which justify government's role more generally, tell us very much about how *planners* should act, particularly in private and nongovernmental roles and contexts?