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Transportation Policy
& Environmental Limits
Lecture 3
Managed Conflict:
Transportation & Environmental Politics
Cultural Basis to Explain Transportation & Environmental Policy

• The management of the concrete commons and its impact on the ‘commonweal or commonwealth’ is derived from how people agree to live with each other and share common resources.

• How we define this arrangement predisposes us to certain problem definitions and policy solutions.

• Transportation facilitate, reflects and reinforces how we choose to live with each other and therefore can become highly politicized.

• Transport & Environment as an example of “managed conflict or dynamic conflict.”
Competing & Conflicting Value Sets

• Individualist – high value on personal choice an individual freedom.
• Communitarian – high value on community & social equity.
• Collective policy decisions (transport) choose values between these two perspectives.
GREEN PERSPECTIVE

- Mass Transit
- Congestion Pricing
- Operational Restrictions HOV
- Technological Improvements e.g., ITS
- Road Construction

TRADITIONAL GROWTH PERSPECTIVE

Increasing Acceptability
Comparing Individualist & Communitarian Values in Transportation

• Objectives
• Who they are
• Name Game
• Values
• Approach to Planning
• Political Power
• Time Horizon
Objectives

• Individualist Policies
  - more material good
  - technology as a ‘good’ in itself.

• Communitarian
  - pastoral, conservation, protection to preemption.
  - social value, technology not necessarily an improvement in QOL
Who They Are

- Traditionalists: Road builders, corporations and general public.
- Communitarian: traditional environmental groups, neighborhood associations, marginalized populations, e.g., disabled, elderly, poor.
- Public vs. Publics?
- Pigs as swing voters.
Primary Value Set

• Traditional: individual choice. Pioneer/frontier.
• Communitarian: ‘commonwealth’ or ‘commonweal’ common interest of the new frontier.
Approach to Planning

- Traditional approach: incremental, segmented systems approach, specific, e.g., transportation system alone.
- Communitarian, global, holistic, problems and solutions are interconnected, e.g., land use and transport, public-global health.
Political Power

- Traditional: Strong in established areas, seek to limit agenda access and debate, strategy is to segment debates, e.g., highway bill vs. air systems.
- Communitarian: growing stronger, large scope limited intensity, clean air versus noise versus historical trust or special population. (STPP) Local versus national venue.
Time Horizons

- Traditional: Short term, election cycle, product cycle, e.g., two auto platform cycles – 6-10 years.
- Communitarian – decades or more.
- Perception of risk – green view of measure risk in future, short term view sees a manageable ‘hazard.’
GREEN PERSPECTIVE

Increasing
Congestion
Operational
HOV

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Increasing Acceptability

TRADITIONAL GROWTH PERSPECTIVE

Increasing Acceptability
Recent Evolution of Green Values in US Transportation

- Department of Transportation (1966)
- Torrey Canyon – First major oil spill (1967)
- National Environmental Policy Act (1969)
- Clean Air Act I (1970)
- Environmental Protection Agency (1970)
- OPEC Embargo (1973)
- Corporate Average Fuel Economy CAFÉ (1975)
- Department of Energy (1977)
Recent Evolution of Green Values in US Transportation

- Port and Tanker Safety Act (1978)
- Gasoline Prices Peak (1980)
- Oil Prices Collapse (1986)
- Exxon Valdez Spill (1989)
- Clean Air Act II (1990)
- Oil Pollution Act (1990)
- Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (1991)
- NexTea (1996)
- NexTea – “The Sequel, 2004”
Up & Down With the Environment Attention Lifecycle

ATTENTION

Event/Mobilization
- Pre-Disaster
- Normal
- Planning

Escalating Media Attention

Pre-Disaster

Multiple Actors Engage

Preliminary Assessment/Allocation Of Blame

Hearings

Interests Group Mobilization

Symbolic Actions, e.g. Commission

Policy Change?

TIME

REPORT

Reports issued, full return to equilibrium

KNOWLEDGE
Are environmental values stuck in traffic?
Are environmental values stuck in traffic?

The normal policy process is characterized by muddling through, can we muddle through incrementally on environmental policy, regionally, nationally or globally?

If not, how would you initiate meaningful movement?