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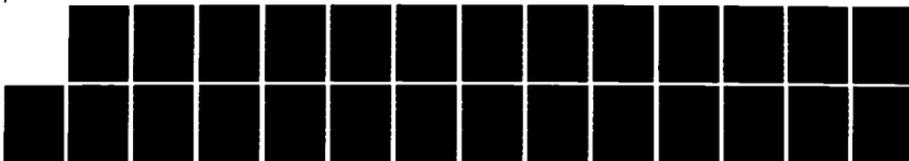
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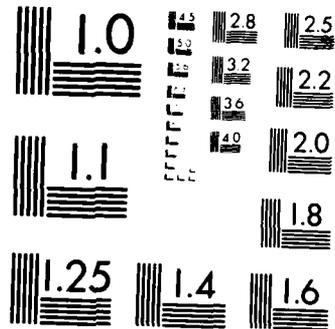
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Peter deLeon

September 1984

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**PASSING FANCIES:
PLUS CA CHANGE....¹**

Peter deLeon
The Rand Corporation
September 1984

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INTRODUCTION

The intellectual and professional underpinnings of the policy sciences have been well-articulated for at least thirty years.² But, perhaps like any emerging discipline, its track has not been true in any linear sense of the term. Divergencies rather than direction--meanderings in lieu of milestones--have marked its travels. Its erratic intellectual growth has seemingly been diverted and diffused by a number of factors which have deflected it from the original goals and objectives that Lasswell, Dror, and its other early proponents foresaw it attaining.³ Successive editors of the *Policy Sciences* journal have commented upon this lack of continuity that has apparently deprived the policy sciences (and the derivative policy analysis) of their founding vision.⁴

¹An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Third Annual Policy Sciences Summer Workshop, held at the University of Chicago, June, 1984. I am grateful to the participants for their comments.

²Harold D. Lasswell, "The Policy Orientation," in Daniel Lerner and Harold D. Lasswell (eds.), *The Policy Sciences* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1951).

³Harold D. Lasswell, *A Pre-View of Policy Sciences*, and Yehezkel Dror, *Design for the Policy Sciences* (both New York: American Elsevier, 1971).

⁴Garry D. Brewer, "The Policy Sciences Emerge: To Nurture and Structure a Discipline," *Policy Sciences*, Vol. 5, No. 3 (September 1974), pp. 239-244; Peter deLeon, "Policy Sciences: The Discipline and the Profession," *Policy Sciences*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (February 1981), pp. 1-7; and Ronald D. Brunner, "Integrating Knowledge and Action," *Policy Sciences*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (May 1984), pp. 3-11.

There is some possibility that this condition is not only expected but perhaps even healthy, a normal progression that one might expect from a new discipline attempting to carve its identity out of shifting intellectual and empirical environments. But, at base, this is a self-serving argument for policy researchers whose long term visions are uncertain or ambivalent. As any of the philosophers of science can document, the accretion of knowledge necessary to structure and communicate a discipline must accumulate around a shared analytic framework.⁵ Lacking that, one has a disparate set of observations with little connection or overarching coherence; there is, in point of epistemological fact, no *discipline*. The ad hoc insights policy researchers might often reach can be criticized for a lack of underlying theory, little empirical rigor,⁶ or, even more tellingly, as politically sophistic, i.e., irrelevant.⁷ For a discipline that defines itself in terms of relevance and real world application, these charges, if true, would be fatal.

These criticisms are, of course, neither totally irrelevant nor misplaced. There should be little doubt that the aggregation of societally relevant knowledge and its application to public policy issues is a difficult task.⁸ To ask its practitioners to assume the additional burden of developing underlying integrating themes is perhaps unreasonable, not because it is unnecessary but because it represents a distracting, perhaps intractable problem to the inherent complexities of

⁵For instance, Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), and Karl Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968).

⁶A recent example: J.A. Schneider et al., "Policy Research and Analysis: An Empirical Profile," *Policy Sciences*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (December 1982), pp. 99-114.

⁷As perhaps most clearly expressed by Charles E. Lindblom and David K. Cohen, *Usable Knowledge: Social Sciences and Social Problem Solving* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1979).

⁸A incisive review of these issues is Bjorn Wittrock, "Social Knowledge, Public Policy and Social Betterment: A Review of Current Research on Knowledge Utilization in Policy-Making," *European Journal of Political Research*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (1982), pp.83-89.

knowledge utilization in the public policy arena. In such an environment, one should expect to find what Polanyi has called "tacit" knowledge, that is, knowledge acquired through practice and that cannot be explicitly articulated.⁹ But these rationales, however reasonable, do not persuasively excuse the policy sciences from advancing from a feuilleton of topicality to a respected discipline of societally relevant and effective knowledge.

One thus needs to ask what has motivated and shaped the growth of the policy sciences. What trends and conditions have influenced their development as both a discipline and profession? To address these questions will indicate what future vectors one might expect the policy sciences to occupy and, more important, how their proponents might shape the resultant vector. In other words, how might one predict, regulate, and perhaps even overcome the "market forces" that have heretofore dictated the amorphous body of the policy sciences.

This paper attempts to inventory the development of the policy sciences and their determinants by employing a Lasswellian framework. This framework has two advantages. First, it has a certain internal cohesion which permits one to encompass the policy sciences approach to a wide variety of problems in a structured manner. Second, it permits one to project future developments and ask what influence they might have. We are then, in essence, turning the policy sciences approach upon the policy sciences themselves to identify both what they have done and what they might do. A second restriction should be noted: This paper draws its illustrations almost exclusively from the American milieu. At one time, this might have been more excusable because for a variety of reasons, the policy sciences were largely an American phenomenon. This situation is certainly no longer the case (if indeed, it ever were). Still, for this paper, the American emphasis is a parochialism one needs to recognize.

⁹Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), Chap. 5, or *The Tacit Dimension* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966).

THE POLICY SCIENCES AS AN INTELLECTUAL DISCIPLINE

The policy sciences represent a number of different phenomena, and as a result, can be examined on many levels. Still, as intellectual and professional activities, they may be seen as having three principal defining characteristics in the Lasswellian framework:¹⁰

- Multidisciplinary Approach
- Problem-oriented and Contextual in Nature;
- Explicitly Normative.

In many ways, these characteristics represent different levels of analysis, for they reflect separate events and conditions. In other ways, they can be viewed as mutually reinforcing. For purposes of the present exposition, they will be discussed individually because each has had an identifiable influence on the growth or evolution of the policy sciences.

Multidisciplinary Approach

The phrase *policy sciences* was deliberately chosen to represent the idea that multiple intellectual disciplines would be necessary to address the selected problems, because the complexities of such problems would rarely surrender themselves to a single disciplinary approach. "Using sciences, in the plural, invites all scientific disciplines to participate while giving preference to none."¹¹ This catholicity, of course, was not novel nor unique to Lasswell and his pioneering colleagues. In the late 1920s, Mannheim wrote that "History, statistics, political theory, sociology, history of ideas, and social psychology, among many other disciplines, represent fields of knowledge important to the political leader."¹² Merton claimed it was "well-

¹⁰Lasswell, "The Policy Orientation," and, in greater detail, *A Pre-View of Policy Sciences*.

¹¹Garry D. Brewer and Peter deLeon, *The Foundations of Policy Analysis* (Homewood, IL: Dorsey, 1983), p. 9.

¹²Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, Louis Wirth and Edward Shils, trans. (New York: Harcourt, Brace, approx. 1936), p. 99. It is interesting that Mannheim excluded such thoroughly Germanic disciplines as public administration, economics, and law from his list of contributors.

known, a given practical problem requires the *collaborative* researches of several social sciences," and singled out anthropology, psychology, social psychology, and sociology as especially relevant.¹³ Lasswell specifically wrote: "Nor are the 'policy sciences' to be thought of as largely identical with what is studied by the 'political scientists.'"¹⁴ He himself, drawing upon his wartime experiences in the Library of Congress, particularly stressed the inclusion of the behavioral sciences and the legal profession.

In spite of these multidisciplinary protestations, the early disciplinary emphasis in the policy sciences largely emanated from political science and public administration. This was undoubtedly due to its emphasis on knowledge in and of the policy process as found in government circles, traditionally the disciplinary domain of political scientists. Attentions were focused on the problems of administration; "muddling through" replaced Weber's bureaucratic model and Dewey's rationality; group theory made significant contributions to understanding the policy process. However, political science was too "academic," by design and tradition, too removed and detached from issues of relevance and importance to take up the agenda posed by Lasswell and others.¹⁵ Moreover, the discipline's underlying assumptions and its own internal conflicts (e.g., the behaviorist controversy) limited its contributions to the development of the policy sciences.

At the same time, there was a school of thought which viewed the policy sciences as an opportunity for developing an overarching metatheory of political interaction, whose purpose was to integrate the social and physical sciences as a means of alleviating societal ills. Merton asserted that "a major function of applied research is to provide occasions and pressures for interdisciplinary investigations and for the

¹³Robert K. Merton, "The Role of Applied Social Sciences in the Formulation of Policy," *Philosophy of Science*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (July 1949), p. 163; emphasis in original.

¹⁴Lasswell, "The Policy Orientation," p. 3.

¹⁵There were, of course, exceptions; see Harold D. Lasswell, "The Political Science of Science," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 50, No. 4 (December 1956), pp. 961-979; this was his 1956 Presidential address to the American Political Science Association meeting.

development of a theoretic system of 'basic social science,...'¹⁶ Dror was more forthcoming: "Policy Sciences must integrate knowledge from a variety of branches of knowledge into a *supradiscipline* focusing on public policymaking."¹⁷ Although well-intentioned, these efforts were quickly--albeit quietly--abandoned for at least three reasons. The emerging discipline lacked the theoretical foundations and empirical substance to support such an approach. Furthermore, any definitional progress towards this goal would have been so idiosyncratic and fractious as to have been counterproductive to the development of the nascent field. And, finally, an emphasis on metatheory at this early stage would have deflected the policy sciences from other central characteristics, such as their attention and application to real world dilemmas, and reinforced what critics were already identifying as the approach's problems (e.g., a lack of quantitative rigor).

Others, perhaps more modestly, looked upon the emerging discipline as a means to integrate several of the social sciences, although with each discipline still retaining its individual identity.¹⁸ Explicit in this movement was the hesitant recognition that the various disciplines would provide different but hopefully complementary perspectives to a given problem. This movement also waned, largely because it lacked a guiding set of principles. The mere promise of an integrated social science was not sufficient, for it failed to answer the central questions: integrated by what means and to what purpose?

The next major disciplinary contributors were operations research and, a short time later, economics. More than likely, the emergence of these more quantitative approaches to public policy issues was a

¹⁶Merton, *The Role of Applied Social Science in the Formulation of Policy*, p. 171.

¹⁷Yehezkel Dror, "Prolegomena to Policy Sciences," *Policy Sciences*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Spring 1970), p. 138; emphasis added. Dror's attention to metatheory is spelled out in greater detail in *Design for the Policy Sciences and Ventures in the Policy Sciences* (New York: American Elsevier, 1971).

¹⁸See, for example, James C. Charlesworth (ed.), *Integration of the Social Sciences through Policy Analysis* (Philadelphia: American Academy of Political and Social Science, Monograph No. 14, October 1972). Also see James S. Coleman, *Policy Research in the Social Sciences* (Morristown, NJ: General Learning Press, 1972).

reaction against the more amorphous and removed types of analysis produced by political scientists. As such, it might partially be attributed to the general growth of behavioralism in the social sciences. At the same time, it reflected the success that systems analysis and economics were enjoying in certain sectors of government analysis in the United States, particularly in the Department of Defense. Although the more perceptive authors always warned of the limitations of such methodologies, cost-benefit analysis, systems analysis, and quantitative modelling became prevalent passwords for policy analysis.¹⁹ In many instances, technique seemingly was substituted for analysis; the "need" to quantify, to reduce all policies to a set of economic or quantitative indicators became pervasive. Quality of life indexes were devised and prices were literally affixed to human lives.²⁰

These disciplinary emphases were, like their political science predecessors, soon deemphasized. Systems analysis was seen to be brusquely insensitive to public policy issues, especially those of a normative nature.²¹ The recognition that economics had its limitations, even in economic analysis and policy recommendations,²² was a major cause for this retrenchment. The agnostic perspective on policy goals, the stress on optimization, and the acceptance of microeconomic assumptions regarding human behavior simply proved to be inadequate bases for treating public policy issues.²³ The general tendency of

¹⁹One of the more responsible books of this genre but still illustrative of this trend is E.S. Quade and W.I. Boucher (eds.), *Systems Analysis and Policy Planning: Applications in Defense* (New York: American Elsevier, 1968).

²⁰John D. Graham and James W. Vaupel, "The Value of a Life: What Difference Does It Make?" in Richard J. Zeckhauser and Derek Leebaert (eds.), *What Role for Government?* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1983), pp. 176-186.

²¹This criticism is exemplified by Ida Hoos, *Systems Analysis in Public Policy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972).

²²See, for instance, Wade Green, "Economists in Recession: After an Inflation of Errors and a Depletion of Theory," *New York Times Magazine*, May 12, 1972, pp. 18-19, 58-65.

²³Lawrence M. Mead, "The Interactive Problem in Policy Analysis," *Policy Sciences*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (September 1983), p. 46.

these disciplines to exclude normative considerations--to emphasize efficiency to the exclusion of equity--was unacceptable to political policymakers. And, lastly, the realization that public policy problems often--perhaps typically--refused to be treated by textbook approaches because of the very nature of the problem led policy analysts to explore new conceptual and methodological approaches.²⁴

The perceived shortcomings of law, political science, operations research, sociology, economics and the other social sciences as they applied to public policy issues led to a general identity crisis and pessimism.²⁵ Weiss talked about "knowledge creep" and asked if the social sciences could do little more for public policymakers than fulfill an "enlightenment" function.²⁶ Lindblom and Cohen suggested that the "success" of professional social inquiry was almost a random occurrence.²⁷ Still, as the individual disciplinary wells proved arid, the demand for their curative waters only increased. In the face of what Wollman has characterized as a "growth industry,"²⁸ the various and disparate approaches of the contributing disciplines have only been effective on the margins, for specific and usually very limited policy problems. A certain (and certainly welcome) humility seems to have settled over the policy sciences in terms of disciplinary hubris.

The observation is not an absolute one; disciplinary foci are still to be found. The Policy Studies Organization is avowedly directed towards the political science aspects of policy studies, while the Association for Public Policy and Management is heavily economic in its outlook.²⁹ But the fact that operations research texts now include

²⁴Ralph E. Strauch, "A Critical Look at Quantitative Methodology," *Policy Analysis*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (Winter 1976), pp. 121-144, talks about "squishy" problems and their resistance to quantitative approaches.

²⁵See inter alia, Martin Rein and Sheldon H. White, "Can Policy Research Help Policy?" *The Public Interest*, No. 49 (Fall 1979), pp. 119-136.

²⁶Carol H. Weiss, *Using Social Research in Public Policy Making* (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath, 1970).

²⁷Lindblom and Cohen, *Usable Knowledge: Social Science and Social Problem Solving*. The subtitle is indicative of their concern.

²⁸Hellmut Wollman, "Policy Analysis: Some Observations on the West German Scene," *Policy Sciences*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (May 1984), pp. 27-49.

²⁹For instance, the papers assembled from the Association's 1981 meetings were almost entirely based upon microeconomics. See Zeckhauser and Leebaert (eds.), *What Role for Government? passim*.

chapters on policy implementation along side of their technical exigeses³⁰ is evidence of the widespread acceptance of the multidisciplinary perspective.

In place of the strictly unitary disciplinary approach, these experiences have resulted in a return to first principles, to a much more genuine commitment to multidisciplinary research. This commitment is more profound than the earlier exhortations for two reasons. First, the initial call for multidisciplinary policy research was relatively isolated, more cant than capability. Its proponents were few and its opponents were many. To the point, very few analysts knew how to engage in multidisciplinary research, for their entire training was in a single discipline; the Lasswells of the world (and even his disciples) were rare. While this pool might not be particularly well-stocked, it is undoubtedly better supplied today than it was twenty years ago; the multidisciplinary training featured in the better public policy curricula serves to validate the establishment of such research approaches. Second, the inadequacies of strictly disciplinary approaches have been generally acknowledged; the imperative of true multidisciplinary analyses has been repeatedly observed, if not always practically attained. The disciplinary barriers are again being viewed as detrimental--or at least not conducive--to contextual policy research.³¹ Thus, in this aspect, the evolution of the policy sciences seemingly has come full circle. The dedication to multidisciplinary (as opposed to single discipline) policy research will clearly be an important determinant in the future development of the policy sciences.

Problem-Oriented, Contextual Basis

The initial definition of the policy sciences emphasized the policy process and, in particular, knowledge *of* and *in* the policy process.³² In addition, the policy sciences were explicitly problem-oriented and

³⁰Richard C. Larson and Amedeo R. Odoni, *Urban Operations Research* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1981).

³¹A point illustrated throughout Brewer and deLeon, *The Foundations of Policy Analysis*.

³²Harold D. Lasswell, "The Emerging Conception of the Policy Sciences," *Policy Sciences*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Spring 1970), p. 3.

utilized a broad contextual approach in recognition of the fact that most social problems could not be neatly extracted and isolated from their political, economic, social, and cultural environments. Finally, the problems addressed were defined to be of a significant societal nature and scale: "The policy approach does not imply that energy is to be dissipated on a miscellany of merely topical issues, but rather that fundamental and often neglected problems which arise in the adjustment of man in society are to be dealt with."³³

These three emphases have remained relatively constant and have had a pivotal influence in the development of and approach to policy research. Most particularly, they have assisted in the formulation of a model of the policy process. Lasswell set out an early version of the policy process when he talked about policy phases: intelligence; promotion; prescription; invocation; application; termination; and appraisal.³⁴ May and Wildavsky talk about a policy cycle, in which they include: agenda setting; issue analysis; implementation; evaluation; and termination.³⁵ And Brewer and deLeon base their conception of policy analysis on a series of stages upon which they define the policy process: initiation; estimation; selection; implementation; evaluation; and termination.³⁶ None of these models is universally subscribed to but their general thrust, form, and acceptance is widely recognized as evidenced by the body of public policy literature which can easily be categorized under one of these headings (evaluation, selection, implementation, etc.).

Two observations are pertinent here. First, this approach to the policy sciences is less topically and more conceptually oriented than some issue-oriented scholars might prefer. One is more concerned with the *process* rather than the specific issue-area at hand. This does not, of course, imply that issues are neglected, for that would stand in

³³Lasswell, "The Policy Orientation," p. 14.

³⁴Harold D. Lasswell, *The Decision Process* (College Park: University of Maryland Press, 1956); also *idem.*, *A Pre-View of Policy Sciences*, for an elaboration.

³⁵Judith V. May and Aaron Wildavsky (eds.), *The Policy Cycle* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1978).

³⁶Brewer and deLeon, *The Foundations of Policy Analysis*.

stark violation of the problem-orientation of the policy sciences. Lasswell did talk of knowledge *of* and knowledge *in* the policy process. But it does suggest a broader, more contextual approach to a problem than if one were strictly affixed to a specific policy issue. Second, these paradigms help us to move from a purely academic approach to a more applied art and craft. The idea of distinct and identifiable phases in the policy cycle implies that there are approaches, perceptions, and methodologies which are more applicable to one phase than to another. For instance, cost-benefit analysis is more apropos of policy estimation than implementation.

Naturally, none of these distinctions is set in concrete. Nor should they be. Policy selection and implementation should not be arbitrarily separated. But these stages do serve as the basis of a useful typology for examining the evolution of the policy sciences in terms of its problem-oriented, contextual nature. More to the point, one can observe how, for a given subject area, these phases have received particular emphasis. Taken in aggregate, across a large number of issue-areas, these respective foci have been key determinants in the development of the field. The case can be made for several different and disparate subjects, such as energy policy, environmental concerns, national security and social welfare programs. For purposes of illustration, this essay will principally allude to examples from American poverty programs, but with great confidence that similar observations and trends can be discerned in other areas.

By the late 1950s, the inescapable fact that an intolerable number of Americans suffered from various forms of systemic and pervasive poverty finally moved national policymakers to action.³⁷ Presidents Kennedy and Johnson declared a War on Poverty and committed the considerable resources of the Federal government to the fray. One could hardly find a more clearcut case of policy initiation: textbook examples of problem recognition, normative desiderata, and program formulation across a wide variety of options were the order of the day. The policy analytic community was professionally consumed with the

³⁷Michael Harrington, *The Other America: Poverty in the United States* (New York: Macmillan, 1963), is often given credit for advancing this recognition.

notion of devising new programs to alleviate problems identified in health care, urban renewal, housing, education, legal assistance, social welfare, and hunger.³⁸ Many of these efforts culminated in the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 and the establishment of the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO). The emphasis was on action rather than analysis; little attention was paid to the estimation stage--i.e., what might be the effect of these programs? Decisions were made with scant recognition of the complexity of the problems, let alone the proposed solutions. For instance, few argued against the need to increase welfare payments under the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), but even fewer recognized the effect these transfer payments would have on the family structure and unemployment. Whatever the outcome of these programs, it is safe to say that the overwhelming focus of policy scientists during this period was on problem recognition and program formulation, a condition which affected the field as a whole, for it virtually excluded consideration of the other phases of the policy process.

By the late 1960s, it was clear that most of the War on Poverty programs had simply failed or, more generously, had not succeeded. This was repeatedly demonstrated by a series of program evaluations.. Head Start, urban New Towns-In Town, and AFDC failures were only indicative of the general malaise: the number of persons below the poverty level was as great as it was a decade ago. Apologists argued--not without some justification--that absolute levels of poverty and deprivation were reduced, that the problem was more one of rising expectations rather than diminished levels of service.³⁹ Whatever their actual result, the War on Poverty programs generated a multitude of evaluation studies to address the legitimate question of which programs seemed to be successful and which seemed to fail. The obvious purpose was to learn from these programs so the objectives expressed in the early 1960s could be met with new and better programs.⁴⁰

³⁸Robert E. Levine, *The Poor Ye Need Not Have: Lessons from the War on Poverty* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1970), describes the 1964 to 1969 period from the perspective inside the OEO bureaucracy.

³⁹See Aaron Wildavsky, *Speaking Truth to Power: The Art and Craft of Policy Analysis* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1979), Chap. 2, "Strategic Retreat on Objectives: Learning from Failure in American Public Policy."

⁴⁰See Eleanor A. Chelmsky (ed.), *A Symposium on the Uses of*

Almost en masse, the policy sciences community focused almost exclusively on policy evaluation. This group was now enlarged by great numbers of professional evaluators, mostly from universities, turned policy analysts with little sensitivity or appreciation for the particular training they might have lacked. The evaluation phase of the policy cycle certainly benefitted from this concentration of attention. New methodologies were brought to bear while others were adjusted to fit special needs. Perhaps most important, the disjunctions between the evaluator's skills and the program manager's requirements were noted, thus alleviating some of the tensions which had occurred between the analyst and the client.⁴¹ Still, for whatever reasons and to whatever outcome, the policy research community during the late 1960s and early 1970s was fixated on questions of policy evaluation.

In the early to mid-1970s, the focus again switched as policy researchers believed that they had identified the root cause of program failure. One report commented:

We became increasingly bothered in the late 1960s by those aspects of the exercise of government authority bound up with implementation. Results achieved by the programs of that decade were widely recognized as inadequate. One clear source of failure emerged: political and bureaucratic aspects of the implementation process were, in great measure, left outside both the considerations of participants of government and the calculations of formal policy analysts who assisted them.⁴²

No one should doubt that in the early 1970s implementation was a neglected phase--both conceptually and operationally--in the policy process. Pressman and Wildavsky, in preparation for their landmark study, found virtually no prior research on the implementation issue.⁴³ Claiming that implementation was "the missing link" separating program

Evaluation by Federal Agencies, Vols. 1 and 2 (McLean, VA: The MITRE Corp., 1977).

⁴¹These observations were later documented in Robert A. Levine (ed.), *Evaluation Research and Practice* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1981); and Lee J. Cronbach and Associates, *Towards Reform of Evaluation* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1980).

⁴²The Research Seminar on Bureaucracy, Politics, and Policy, *A Report on Studies of Implementation in the Public Sector* (Cambridge, MA: John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, 1973).

⁴³Jeffrey L. Pressman and Aaron Wildavsky, *Implementation* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1973), Appendix 2.

formulation and program success, the policy research community enthusiastically moved to this new phase of the policy cycle.⁴⁴ Berman and McLaughlin discussed implementation in terms of new education program⁴⁵ while Derthick explained the foundering of the New Towns-In Towns programs as a failure in implementation politics.⁴⁶ Some proposed "implementation analysis" as a means of including implementation issues in an analysis before decisions have to be reached. This would be one way of ensuring that the policymaker appreciates the problems that faulty or neglected implementation can engender and, armed with such knowledge, hopefully avoid.⁴⁷

Like the earlier emphases on program initiation and evaluation, this focus on implementation was undoubtedly salutary. Great amounts of case study experience were developed and brought to bear on both the difficulties of policy implementation and how they might be foreseen and reduced. Others offered implementation typologies⁴⁸ while a few proposed tentative first steps towards a general theory of policy implementation.⁴⁹ Again, regardless of the outcome of these efforts, one can safely say that the policy research community during the mid-to late-1970s heavily attended questions of policy implementation to the virtual exclusion of the other phases of the policy process.

⁴⁴Erwin C. Hargrove, *The Missing Link: The Study of Implementation of Social Policy* (Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute, 1975). The scope of these efforts is documented by Daniel A. Mazmanian and Paul A. Sabatier (eds.), *Effective Policy Implementation* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1981).

⁴⁵Paul Berman and Milbrey Wallin McLaughlin, *Federal Programs Supporting Educational Change: A Model of Educational Change* (Santa Monica, CA: The Rand Corporation, R-1589/1, September 1974).

⁴⁶Martha Derthick, *New Towns-In Town* (Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute, 1972).

⁴⁷See Walter Williams, "Implementation Analysis and Assessment," *Policy Analysis*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (Summer 1975), pp. 531-566.

⁴⁸Eugene C. Bardach, *The Implementation Game* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1977).

⁴⁹Erwin C. Hargrove, "The Search for Implementation Theory," in Zeckhauser and Leebaert (eds.), *What Role for Government?* Chap. 18.

Towards the end of the 1970s, governments were besieged with demands for greater economy, demands reinforced by reduced revenues as taxpayers insisted on less waste in government.⁵⁰ This tendency was reinforced by the political and ideological inclinations of elected representatives.⁵¹ In light of these developments, project termination, under such guises as management cutback, sunset legislation, and fiscal retrenchment, became a prevalent theme in policy research, although probably not to the degree of the previous emphases on program implementation and evaluation. Examples from the War on Poverty are easy to identify. Under the Nixon Administration, Howard Phillips labored mightily to eliminate the OEO, even while he was its director. Although the Community Services Act of 1974 officially ended the OEO's existence, many of its programs continued into the 1980s when they began to succumb to the Reagan budget cuts.⁵² With ample materials to draw upon and a growing public charter, policy scientists turned their attentions to describing and prescribing termination strategies.

This overview of the development and decline of American poverty programs provides us with an idea as to how political conditions can vitally effect the foci and evolution of the policy sciences. The almost unencumbered demands to alleviate poverty in all its manifestations resulted in a surfeit of program initiation efforts in the early 1960s. Their predictable shortcomings generated a glut of evaluation studies in the late 1970s. Policy researchers launched a series of implementation studies in the late 1970s and then, spurred by

⁵⁰One of the first reflections of this was the articles collected by Eugene Bardach for a special issue of *Policy Sciences*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (June 1976), *passim*, devoted to termination issues and examples.

⁵¹See Peter deLeon, "A Theory of Policy Termination," and James M. Cameron, "Ideology and Policy Termination," both in May and Wildavsky (eds.), *The Policy Cycle*, Chaps. 12 and 13, respectively.

⁵²This is particularly true in the area of legal services; see Elizabeth Drew, "A Reporter at Large: Legal Services," *The New Yorker*, March 1, 1983, pp. 97-113; David Shribman, "Death Comes to a Federal Agency," *New York Times*, September 19, 1981, p. 7; and Jo Ann Boyd, "Despite Setbacks, Reagan's Assault on Legal Services Corp. Bears Fruit," *National Journal*, Vol. 15, No. 11 (March 12, 1983), pp. 562-564.

demands of fiscal cutbacks, turned to termination studies as the policy sciences' hallmark of the early 1980s.

Certainly none of these foci represent wasted efforts. Much has been learned about each of these areas. But what has been largely overlooked is the initial Lasswell injunction that these are not separable stages, that each is by necessity closely tied to one another, that the policy process is a series of iterative stages and feedback loops: initiation is tied to estimation, selection must be advised by implementation, just as evaluation must precede and inform termination. Indeed, deLeon has argued that termination and initiation are cut from the same bolt.⁵³

In a very real sense, political conditions external to the policy sciences discipline (in this example, the War on Poverty and its various programs) can be seen as having had a fundamental effect on the development of the discipline, urging researchers to concentrate their attentions on specific phases of the policy process rather than the process as a whole. But the consistent failures of policy analysis in this area have resulted in a renewed awareness of the complexity of the problems, the variability of the tools to handle these problems, and, above all, the requirements of the contextual approach.⁵⁴ This has also resulted in the realization that the policy process is more of a seamless web than a series of individual events.

Thus, once again, we can see how the evolution of policy sciences has come full cycle back to some of its founding Lasswellian hypotheses. Regardless of the clarity or cogency of Lasswell's vision, however, the fact is that perhaps more than any other intellectual discipline, the policy sciences are affected by events external to and beyond their manipulation. While this is not a dictum--they clearly should not run helter-skelter after every issue of topicality--it is clear that they have been profoundly affected by their heritage of problem orientation, even if it means surrendering to forces largely beyond their control.

⁵³Peter deLeon, "Public Policy Termination: An End and a Beginning," *Policy Analysis*, Vol. 4, No. 3 (Summer 1978), pp. 369-392.

⁵⁴Alice Rivlin, *Systematic Thinking for Social Action* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1971), discusses both methodological and political obstacles to policy research.

There is no ready answer for this condition, for the policy sciences have deliberately set themselves in the midst of the real world maelstrom and must therefore endure whatever political tides and eddies might swirl their way. This has been demonstrably true in the past and should continue to dictate the discipline's future developments.⁵⁵ The discipline's professional challenge, then, is to be able to accommodate these buffets without being unduly warped. Indeed, with application and dedication, it should be able to grow on account of rather than in spite of them.

Explicitly Normative

The policy sciences, almost from their very inception, have been explicitly normative in their content and concern with human values. In Lasswell's words, "The policy sciences approach...calls forth a very considerable clarification of the value goals involved in policy,"⁵⁶ towards what he called the "policy sciences of democracy." Lasswell and Kaplan defined the policy sciences as providing "intelligence pertinent to the integration of values realized by and embodied in interpersonal relations," which "prizes not the glory of a depersonalized state of the efficiency of a social mechanism, but human dignity and the realization of human capacities."⁵⁷ This emphasis on values--especially those relating to the protection and advancement of human dignity--have remained a conceptual touchstone of the policy sciences approach. Equally important is the idea that these values be recognized and made an explicit part of the analysis of social issues.⁵⁸ Can one, the

⁵⁵See Mannheim, "The Political and Social Determinants of Knowledge," in *Ideology and Politics*.

⁵⁶Lasswell, "The Policy Orientation," p. 16; for an elaboration, see Lasswell, *A Pre-View of Policy Sciences*, Chap. 3, "The Intellectual Tasks."

⁵⁷Harold D. Lasswell and Abraham Kaplan, *Power and Society* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1950), pp. xii and xxiv, respectively.

⁵⁸For example, see Abraham Kaplan, *American Ethics and Public Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963); and Martin Rein, *Social Science and Public Policy* (New York: Penguin, 1976).

policy sciences would ask, understand civil rights programs without a clear acknowledgment that all persons *ought* to have equal access without regard to race, creed, or religion?

In spite of these early admonitions, the normative aspects of the policy sciences were neglected by virtually all their proponents. Three reasons might be suggested for this condition. First, some claimed that governments and programs do little more than "muddle through" and insisted that an incremental approach to policy would encompass or balance any normative imperatives that might occur; these imperatives might "appear" at a sub rosa level, but, nevertheless, they would somehow be incorporated.⁵⁹ Second, others argued that quantitative methodologies, such as found in operations research and economics, were essentially value-free and therefore did not have to concern themselves with questions of ethics or values. An unspoken faith in Dewey's rationality, the Weberian bureaucracy, and positivism in general underpinned this assumption. And, third, a sizable number of policy analysts argued that values were the exclusive domain of the policymaker, that for the analyst to intrude on that realm would be unwarranted (i.e., beyond their expertise) and perhaps even "wrong" in the sense of the democratic ethic.⁶⁰

Of course, none of these arguments is without some merit, yet they clearly deviate from the original notion of the policy sciences. But even more cogently, the refusal to consider explicitly the normative and ideological aspects of the policy process has repeatedly resulted in empty analysis which inadequately "explains" what has happened or what might be. While a value-free approach might be sufficient for a very limited, perhaps technical problem, the broad, societally relevant, contextual issues addressed by the policy sciences simply cannot be understood without the open recognition of the pertinent social values. To approach them on an incremental basis fundamentally finesses the problem by tacitly saying "Everything will work out all right." Dror

⁵⁹Charles E. Lindblom, "The Handling of Norms in Policy Analysis," in Paul A. Baran et al. (eds.), *The Allocation of Economic Resources* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1959), pp. 160-179.

⁶⁰Douglas J. Amy, "Why Policy Analysis and Ethics Are Incompatible", *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, Vol. 3, No. 4 (Summer 1984), pp. 573-591, reviews many of these arguments.

effectively demonstrated the bankruptcy of that argument years ago.⁶¹ Second, most observers can agree that the strictly quantitative approach to policy problems is insufficient, that matters of equity must be broached. Furthermore, it is now widely recognized that even the choice of methodologies implies a certain and powerful set of values. The ideas of rationality in government and an indifferent bureaucracy have been shown to be simply wrong.⁶² In short, there is no such thing as a "value-free" study or even approach. And third, few analysts would claim that they can "resolve" normative issues in their analyses, but an increasingly large number will admit that they can at least make such considerations an open aspect of their work and ultimate advice.

Examples of the effect of normative standards or political ideology on policy analysis are increasingly easy to find. For instance, President Reagan's "New Federalism" is "predicated on the assumption that programs dismantled at the federal level can, if desired, be reconstituted at the state or municipal levels and be more directly attuned to the needs of their constituents. The evidence for this assumption is clearly open to debate."⁶³ Reagan spokespersons have articulated this position in a report by the Department of Housing and Urban Development: "State and local governments have amply demonstrated that, properly unfettered, they will make better decisions than the federal government acting for them."⁶⁴ Normative overtones would be hard to ignore in the Administration's view of compensatory education funds:

It's simply something the federal government shouldn't be doing. Education is the province of the states and localities...and no matter how effective a federal program may be, it still intrudes on the state and local domains.⁶⁵

⁶¹Yehezkel Dror, "Muddling Through--'Science' or Inertia?" *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (September 1964), pp. 153-157.

⁶²A recent accounting of the bureaucratic effects on public policy is Douglas Yates, *Bureaucracy Democracy* (Cambridge, MA: 1982).

⁶³Peter deLeon, "Policy Evaluation and Program Termination," *Policy Studies Review*, Vol. 2, No. 4 (May 1983), p. 636.

⁶⁴Quoted in Lee May, "U.S. Softens Urban Policy After Criticism," *Los Angeles Times*, July 10, 1982, p. 6.

The decision to abolish the Department of Energy was no less ideologically pronounced; in the words of the DOE's own sunset review document:

Many of the department's programs are no longer valid within the context of the federal role in the energy sector of the economy.... In the view of the demonstrated success of energy markets in those cases where they have been allowed to function freely, and given the limited role and responsibilities of the federal government in this sector of the economy, it is no longer necessary or appropriate to maintain a Cabinet-level Department of Energy. The department was established to address a set of problems that were peculiar to their time and that were largely the result of a philosophy that stressed excessive government intervention in the energy market in the first place.⁶⁶

Similar illustrations can readily be found in the debates over national security, in which the linchpin is whether one trusts the Soviet Union or not, a belief is clearly driven by one's moral precepts.

If one can thus assume that normative standards are being increasingly made specific in political decisionmaking, then it is equally clear that they must be openly and explicitly considered in policy analysis exercises.⁶⁷ The ideas (or hopes) that they could be ignored or subverted to technical sophistications are no longer tenable, if they ever were. Thus, for a third time, the policy sciences seem to have reverted back to their original Lasswellian framework. Although it might be difficult to predict exactly what effect this realization might have, it is safe to forecast that it will have a decided influence both conceptually and in the workaday policy world.

⁶⁵Rochelle L. Stanfield, "If It Ain't Broke, Don't Fix It, Say Defenders of Compensatory Aid," *National Journal*, Vol. 15, No. 5 (January 30, 1982), p. 201.

⁶⁶Quoted in Burt Solomon, "DOE Memoirs to Congress," *Energy Daily*, Vol. 10, No. 28 (February 11, 1982), p. 10.

⁶⁷A possible example: Martin Rein, "Value-Critical Policy Analysis," in Daniel Callahan and Bruce Jennings (eds.) *Ethics, the Social Sciences, and Policy Analysis* (New York: Plenum, 1983), Chap. 5.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

If these identified trends or cycles in the evolution of policy sciences have validity, it is fair to ask what they might portend in the future for the multidisciplinary, problem-oriented, normative world of policy analysis. This can be answered from both an external and an internal perspective and their respective sets of requirements. The first requires the capability to predict what external forces will motivate future policy studies, i.e., what the next "topical" issues (e.g., disposal of toxic wastes, telecommunications, or reindustrialization) will be. The internal perspective deals more with the inherent forces which shape policy research, such as new approaches and concepts. Without denigrating the importance of the external influences, this essay focuses on more internal considerations, for they are more amenable to conscious choice and decision by the policy science community. Six such considerations come to mind.

The first is that the multidisciplinary approach should continue to grow as new methodologies present themselves for policy application and fruition. An example of a relatively recent addition to the arsenal of policy research tools is the use of formal risk analysis.⁶⁸ Second, and along much the same line, would be the application of tried methodologies to new situations. Much as PPBS, as practiced in the Department of Defense, was moved by executive fiat to other agencies,⁶⁹ various approaches such as technology assessment might be transferred to a new set of problems (e.g., acid rain or other natural science situations) with laudatory results. But, in promoting these new methodologies and applications, it is important to exercise caution, remembering that they can only add a limited number of pieces to the overall policy puzzle.

⁶⁸E.g., Bernard Fischhoff et al., *Acceptable Risk* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); some of the implementation problems are described by Marshall W. Meyer and Kenneth A. Solomon, "Risk Management in Local Communities," *Policy Sciences*, Vol. 16, No. 3 (February 1983), pp. 245-266.

⁶⁹Albeit with mixed results; see Aaron Wildavsky, *The Politics of the Budgetary Process* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1979), Chap. 6; also, Elizabeth B. Drew, "HEW Grapples with PPBS," *The Public Interest*, No. 8 (Summer 1967), pp. 9-24.

This suggests a third observation, namely a realization that there are no ubiquitous solutions or even approaches. The complexity of the social condition assures this situation.⁷⁰ This recognition should multiply the diversity of the policy sciences, for it implies that most applications will have to be customized to fit the particular problem at hand. This requirement raises a fourth challenge, the tension or dynamic between micro- and meta-policy studies. On the one hand, as noted above, the complexity and richness of specific policy studies dictates a somewhat peculiaristic approach to a given problem. In other words, individual cases are resistant to aggregation and generalization. On the other hand, for a discipline to advance itself intellectually, it must be able to formulate some coherent and overarching intellectual framework. The accumulation of comparable knowledge and the development of a body of theory is a dynamic that has described the growth of most of the social sciences. There is little reason to assume pessimistically that it cannot be resolved for the policy sciences unless, for various reasons, it is ignored.

A fifth trend reflects the increased internationalization of the policy sciences. While there have been some notable examples of comparative policy analysis,⁷¹ the cultural and political differences found in the respective contexts made cross-national comparisons relatively infrequent and methodologically suspect. But now, as larger numbers of analysts are sharing their experiences, these barriers are being systematically lowered. Earlier exchanges of information were essentially ad hoc and individually based. Now research institutions and funding sources are increasingly sponsoring exchanges on a regular basis. This trend would appear to have at least two roots. The first is an awareness that many contemporary problems are global (e.g.,

⁷⁰The situation and its implications are drawn out by Todd LaPorte (ed.), *Organized Social Complexity: Challenge to Politics and Policy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975).

⁷¹For example, Arnold Heidenheimer, Hugh Hecllo, and Carolyn Teich Adams, *Comparative Public Policy; The Politics of Social Choice in Europe and America* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1974); and Cynthia H. Enloe, *The Politics of Pollution in a Comparative Perspective* (New York: McKay, 1975).

pollution and arms control) and must therefore be treated from an international perspective. Second, there is an enhanced understanding that while specific solutions must be tailored to the given conditions, there are levels of analysis at which similar policy issues and analytic approaches can be compared and traded. Hence, the earlier injunctions against comparative policy analysis are being discarded. One can foresee a continuing move toward comparative policy analysis but with an explicit reservation that conditions are not universal and that any comparisons must be carefully couched in the particular context of the problem. This caveat is especially relevant in the temptation to transfer concepts and approaches from the industrialized nations to the lesser developed nations.

The sixth and final trend in the policy sciences is predicated on the growing normative aspects of policy research.⁷² If normative criteria are to become openly critical in reaching a policy choice, then one can foresee situations in which the politically disenfranchised will be excluded from the policymaking arenas because they have no one to voice their concerns. If such a condition should occur, then the policy analyst might have to assume a new role, that of interest articulator for the less visible social groups. Such a new role would certainly rehearse the long-worried distinctions between policy analysis and policy advocacy but, in light of the policy sciences' normative underpinnings, issues like equity and distribution cannot be conveniently neglected.⁷³

It would be at least presumptuous--probably even foolish--to speculate at this point what specific effects these--or other unnoted--trends might have on the future evolution of the policy sciences. What one can say with some confidence is that the policy sciences over the past few decades have confirmed many of the insights of their remarkably prescient pioneers. To build upon their foundation with the bricks of twenty years' evidence and the methodological mortar since accumulated would seem to suggest a promising edifice. It is the ultimate

⁷²Amy, "Why Policy Analysis and Ethics are Incompatible," p. 588, argues that analysts will continue to neglect ethical considerations, which if true, renders this trend problematic.

⁷³Again, see Rein, *Social Science and Public Policy*.

challenge, then, for the policy sciences and their practitioners to design and build a structure that is more the product of deliberation than fate.

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