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5 Contemporary Environmental Philosophy and Its Challenge to Planning Theory

Introduction

The subject of the environment seems to be everywhere these days: in the news (in all media), in popular culture (in songs, videos, books, and films), through the birth of so-called green consumerism, and via the concern about the long-term global aftermath of international political events, such as the Persian Gulf War and the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. Issues such as the destruction of the global rain forests, acid rain, desertification, the thinning of the ozone layer, groundwater pollution, the availability of landfill space, recycling, and the safety of the world's beaches are only some of the environmental concerns that confront us daily as we go about our lives, listening, watching, and shopping.

To some extent, all of this attention, interest, and concern can be understood as an evolution that follows from the publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962), the first Earth Day in 1970, and the popular and legislative events of that period (Borelli 1987; Faber and

O'Connor 1989). As environmentalism has grown so has the environmental movement, and with it has evolved and grown the companion area of environmental philosophy and ethics.

Environmental ethics is a branch of philosophy intended to raise a set of fundamental questions about the relationships among people and the natural world. Many of these questions are long-standing ethical issues that are now recast in the context of new scientific knowledge and popular consciousness. These include, for instance, issues of intergenerational equity, the rights of natural objects, and ways of living in harmony with natural systems. Issues pertaining to, and, in fact, the rights of, the future nonhuman sentient beings (that is, animals) and nonhuman, seemingly nonsentient beings (that is, trees and the earth itself) are the grist of this literature.

As a relatively new field, and one tied to a seemingly constant array of ever new and complex environmental problems, environmental ethics covers broad terrain, so it is not always clear what are and are not appropriate areas of ethical discourse and deliberation. However, even though it is new, the field does have some accepted guideposts for organizing itself internally (Hargrove 1989; Rolston 1988; Taylor 1986).

Timothy Beatley (1989) has provided one categorization of the field and literature of environmental ethics for planners. He notes that much of the discussion in the field can be understood as echoing the long-standing debate over the so-called "conservation versus preservation" perspective that structured the rise of early forest management practices in North America. Embedded in this debate is the issue of whether environmental resources exist for human use—and our primary moral responsibilities are to each other (both in present time and future time)—or whether environmental resources can claim existence on their own bases. Viewpoints on this fundamental issue are played out into debates about utilitarianism and market efficiency and how to assess risk in making resource management decisions. Beatley further notes that a concern within the field is whether environmental ethics is viewed primarily as a human to resource relationship or if it also encompasses a social, or human to human, ethic.

Perhaps more popularly, the field of environmental ethics is known for what Beatley (1989, p. 14) calls efforts at "expanding the moral community." The animal rights/animal liberation theoretical literature and activist experience is one of the best examples of this component of the field (Regan 1983); its adherents and detractors fill the academic journals and popular magazines that discuss environmental ethics. While the moral community Beatley refers to covers other aspects of nature in addition to animals, it is this aspect that seems to have made

the easiest translation to popular consciousness. The field has also rejuvenated discussion about how to think critically about responsibilities to future generations and whether non-Western notions of resources and property (Booth and Jacobs 1990; Devall 1980) or indigenous but radically different Western ones, such as Aldo Leopold's land ethic (Leopold 1949), are essential to the creation of a sustainable planet.

The rise of environmental ethics has spawned its own, respected academic journal, *Environmental Ethics*, though as with many new intellectual fields, and especially one whose field of focus is so present in the "real world," discourse is in no way restricted to this journal. In colleges and universities, courses in environmental ethics are taught in curricula as diverse as philosophy, law, urban and regional planning, and integrative environmental sciences and environmental studies programs.

However, one other thing is important in understanding the development of environmental ethics. This is the fact that it has developed in the same period that there has been a virtual revolution in social and political theory. Critical reexaminations of old ideas and the articulation of new frameworks have fed into the development of contemporary environmental ethics. The invention and refinement of feminist theory, the recasting of Marxist theory, and the critical reexamination of concepts such as dualism, modern scientific thought, and contemporary Western religion are all intellectual movements that have contributed to a new environmental ethics.

Curiously, though, until very recently there seems to have been little direct impact from this field of inquiry into planning education and theory.¹ While many planning schools have courses in environmental planning—analysis, technique, and policy—evidence of connections to environmental ethics is less prominent, albeit increasing (Martin and Beatley 1993). The evidence of any connection of the issues raised in environmental ethics to courses in planning theory is even less strong. So far, only one major paper has appeared on this subject, and this paper largely takes up "classical" environmental ethics and says little about its relationship to planning theory (Beatley 1989).

There are thus two purposes to this chapter. The first is to outline, discuss, and explore three of the more provocative strains within contemporary environmental ethics, those being deep ecology, ecological feminism (or ecofeminists) and bioregionalism. The objective here is to make planners and planning scholars aware of these streams and how they are impacting upon environmental movements and environmentalism. Second, and more importantly, though, the exploration of these streams is undertaken so as to speculate on their relationship to that body of literature known as planning theory and to determine how a

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serious engagement of these aspects of environmental ethics might reflect, reshape, and inform the development of such theory.²

The results of this exploration reflect upon planning theory and its internal dialogues in a number of ways. Contemporary environmental philosophy³ partially affirms the position taken by self-described progressive planners, the position that argues that in order to successfully plan one needs to articulate and engage a set of deeper, more fundamental issues and questions about the root causes of the current situation (Beauregard 1978; Kraushaar 1988; Krawitz 1970). Yet contemporary environmental philosophy does more than this; it points toward the concept of a critical comprehensive planning.

Certain aspects of this exploration (most prominently that of ecofeminists) speak quite directly to concerns of certain so-called "inverted" theorists about the importance of interpersonal communication, the relationship of process to outcome, and means to ends (Forester 1989, 1990; Simmie 1989). Other aspects (those most prominently explored by bioregionalists) can serve to reawaken long-standing but now relatively dormant debates about the actual substance and focus of planning activity, issues raised by Lewis Mumford (1938), H. W. Odum and H. E. Moore (1938), and the Regional Planning Association of America (Sussman 1976). These aspects challenge the structure of contemporary urban and regional form, particularly the inevitable domination of large cities and urban culture existing in counterpoint with a depopulated countryside and deflated rural social structures.

Like planning theory, contemporary environmental philosophy originates in concerns about action. As philosophy, it argues that root questions must be posed if an action is going to be effective, equitable, and sustainable. This is its principal challenge.

Contemporary Environmental Philosophy

DEEP ECOLOGY

Deep ecology is a phrase coined by the Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess (1973). In his brief introductory article on the subject, Naess used the term to contrast it with a concept he termed "shallow ecology." Shallow ecology is what would be popularly thought of as the legislative management orientation of the mainstream environmental movement. Naess argued that this orientation was fundamentally flawed in concept and asserted that as long as environmentalism and the environmental movement focused upon reforms and at-the-margin tinkering with an

industrial-technological society in which people related to nature in a utilitarian and anthropocentric fashion, society could never truly fashion a sustainable way of living with the earth. For Naess, and those who have worked to further develop his initial conceptualizations, the problem is not one of a particular law or management approach but rather the *attitude* people bring to their relationship with the natural world.

Naess's views have been elaborated upon most prominently by a set of U.S. and Australian scholars and activists into one of the most pronounced strands of environmental ethics (Devall 1980; Devall and Sessions 1985; Fox 1990; Sessions 1987). Building upon Naess, they argue that to achieve an environmentally sustainable world, people have to acknowledge and afford equality (that is, equal rights) to all living creatures, whether animals, plants, landscapes, or even the earth itself. Their argument is that until we stop seeing humans as separate, above, and better than other parts of the natural world, environmental justice cannot be achieved.

This general axiom of "biospherical egalitarianism" (Naess 1973, p. 95) is tied to several other key working principles. Among these is the idea that the richest and most just form of life on earth is a broad state of species and social organization diversity and complexity. Drawing from a position that values all life on its own terms, deep ecology sees a natural wisdom to the organization and functioning of ecological systems that have not been disrupted by human activity. Thus, deep ecology urges us to learn from wild nature, generally to place high value on the preservation and protection of wild nature areas, and also to afford more credibility to the lessons that can be learned from more nature-based human societies. The dual focus on a diverse and complex social organization and more nature-based human societies leads deep ecologists to be strongly supportive of local autonomy and decentralized forms of social and political organization. In terms of social design, deep ecology urges a perspective in which quality of life is the measure used. Its proponents are thus strongly skeptical about growth per se and an uncritical acceptance of the benefits of a technological-industrial society. They urge upon us a society in which people work less and where the spiritual side of human nature (broadly defined) is given freer rein.

To some extent, the biospherical egalitarian axiom of the deep ecological viewpoint has a basis in new scientific research, particularly that of James Lovelock (1979). Lovelock formulated a concept that he termed the Gaia Hypothesis. What he argues is that according to many widely accepted definitions of biological life, the earth, with one exception (that being possession of the ability to reproduce), can be understood as itself fully alive. This is important to ponder—Lovelock

and those who take his work seriously are arguing that the earth is not just a platform upon which life occurs in its various forms but that the earth is itself a living, breathing, stability-seeking organism.

The real impact of this philosophical discourse is in the realm of action. So-called radical environmental groups—such as Earth First!, the Sea Shepherds, Greenpeace, and the Greens—often justify their obstructionist and sometimes destructionist actions on a deep ecological analysis (Russell 1987). For these radical environmentalists, the acquisition of rights by nature is a natural evolution of the acquisition of rights by other oppressed groups, such as women, children, minorities, the elderly, and the disabled. Strong, radical action is justified in the defense of nature, whether it be endangered species, objects, or landscapes, in the same way society will now condone (but did not always) such action against slavery, wife or child abuse, racism, or discrimination based on age or physical ability.

In terms familiar to those who know the early-twentieth-century history of resource management and policy debates in the United States, deep ecology represents the resurrection and reassertion of the classical debate between John Muir (representing the preservationist position of the then nascent Sierra Club) and Gifford Pinchot (representing the utilitarian-conservationist position of the then nascent U.S. Forest Service) about the bases and terms upon which resources will be "used." This time, however, the academic debate and the action of the radical activists appear to favor Muir's position.

ECOLOGICAL FEMINISM

Like deep ecology, ecofeminism starts with a concern with the ability of the "shallow" environmental movement to solve environmental problems, and, like deep ecology, it pushes for a deeper analysis and understanding (Saleh 1984). As the name implies, ecofeminism evolves out of the feminist movement of the 1970s, which itself spawned a tremendous growth in feminist theory and philosophy (Warren 1987, 1990).⁴

In many ways, the theme of ecofeminism is quite simple. Ecofeminists argue that the roots of oppression of nature—be it the oppression of animals, plants, landscapes, or places—and the roots of oppression of women are inextricably linked (King 1983). These two modes of oppression originate in a patriarchal culture that validates male-associated values and denigrates that which is nonmale. The values that are identified as particularly problematic include, for example, an excessive

reliance on rationalism and rationalistic ways of reasoning; dualistic forms of intellectual organization; hierarchy as a mode of conceptualization and organization; and rule-based modes of management. Ecofeminists see that the subjugation of women and nature comes from their being viewed as, for instance, wild and irrational. Thus, it is the validation and predominance of these male-associated values that result in the domination of both women and nature.

From an ecofeminist point of view, the roots of liberation of women and the roots of liberation of nature are likewise linked by a need to reform how we understand, think about, and conceptualize the world around us. From an ecofeminist point of view, it is this internal, conceptual reorganization and reorientation that is the truly revolutionary environmental work. As a beginning, they seek a validation of alternative concepts of knowledge and management. These include concepts that stress intuition, interconnected and systems forms of organizations, nonhierarchical forms of organization, and process and substantive equity ways of management (see the collections by Diamond and Drenstein 1990 and Plant 1989). Women's (and nature's) ways of knowing are not to be viewed as less valid than men's; rather, they are to be seen (at least) as equally valid and perhaps even more insightful from living in a complex and dynamic world. From an ecofeminist perspective, the issue is not to seek control over but rather to learn to live with. Together these are values and ideas that are tagged, sometimes problematically, as more female associated.

The impact of ecofeminism is likewise in action. It, too, influences the new environmental radicals by encouraging a challenge to the process of how things are done—the equity of administrative hearings, environmental impact statements, and judicial proceedings—as being able to afford an appropriate forum for true dialogue about "environmental management."

Deep ecology and ecofeminism share a great deal in common, though there are also important differences between them (Fox 1989; Zimmerman 1987). They both argue, in their own ways, that it is people's attitudes that are the key to the construction of a sustainable world. Together they represent a rejuvenation of discourse about the underlying principles of environmental management. They both recognize that how you view the world is critical to the type of action you will take toward it and that the long-accepted ways of viewing the world in which we live—as encompassed in the standard scientific-technological-industrial paradigms—are open for serious intellectual and activist challenge.

However, these areas of agreement should not overshadow the

real areas of difference between these two strains of environmental philosophy. In fact, the debate between these two schools of thought has dominated the environmental philosophy journals as much as their individual developments (see, for example, Biehl 1988; Bradford 1989; and Salleh 1984). It has largely been launched by ecofeminists, whose arguments are twofold. On the one hand, they find fault with deep ecology. They point out that it is an approach to environmental philosophy that is quite abstract in its origins (meaning that it comes from thinking about the environmental problem rather than reflecting upon the experience of it) and that in offering an alternative framework, deep ecology seeks to universalize human experience (an approach that feminists of various persuasions find objection to). On the other hand, from an ecofeminist point of view, the focus of deep ecology seems to be on the utility of lessons to be learned from Eastern religions and Native American philosophy; social theory and political theory seem to have little place in this discourse. Also, ecofeminists note that in its presentation, deep ecology tends to be quite romantic in content, often urging adherents to lose themselves to the experience of nature.

In contrast, ecofeminism is, for many of its adherents, an approach to finding oneself. It is a process of discovery of the place of women (and other oppressed groups) relative to the oppression of nature and in contrast to that which is oppressing. Even though ecofeminism itself has many strains (two of the most significant fault lines have to do with the necessary centrality of women-based spirituality to ecofeminism and the issue of whether women are inherently closer to nature than men), as a whole it is founded on the need for a wide-ranging and deep social, cultural, and political critique of historical and contemporary social structures. Ecofeminism seeks to be explicitly critical in its examination of the sources of women's and nature's oppression. As such, ecofeminism explicitly recognizes the influence of race, class, and culture in the development of contemporary social systems and how action on these issues is linked to ecological liberation.

While the debate between these two groups has often been acrimonious, a number of scholars and activists have striven to derive the commonalities in these strains of environmental philosophy and to emphasize how they can be understood as mutually reinforcing in the development of a new environmental ethic (Devall 1988; Fox 1989; Zimmerman 1987).

BIOREGIONALISM

Bioregionalism is distinguished from deep ecology and ecofeminism in several ways. Perhaps most importantly, it does not originate

as an approach to environmental philosophy by posing abstract or philosophical questions. That is, it did not come about by asking questions about the relationship of people to the natural world and from that concluding that changes in a worldview were necessary to facilitate long-term environmental change. Rather, bioregionalism originates through observation of the earth, its patterns, and the ways people accommodate and become part of those patterns. Bioregionalism is concerned with how people live in a place and learn from living in that place (Andruss et al. 1990). It is from this practical basis that it develops a set of philosophical positions about human-earth relationships.

Bioregionalism starts with the concept of bioregion. Two of the leading proponents of bioregionalism have said that the term bioregion "refers to a geographical terrain and a terrain of consciousness—to a place and the ideas that have developed about how to live in a place. Within a bioregion the conditions that influence life are similar and these in turn have influenced human occupancy" (Berg and Dasmann 1978, p. 218). Similarly, another author has defined a bioregion as "any part of the earth's surface whose rough boundaries are determined by natural characteristics rather than human dictates, distinguishable from other areas by particular attributes of flora, fauna, water, climate, soils, landforms and by the human settlements and cultures those attributes have given rise to" (Sale 1985, p. 55). The key factors here are that a bioregion is a distinct ecospace, distinguishable from other ecospace (even though the exact boundaries between ecospace may be difficult to precisely delineate) and that the bioregion gives rise to distinct human use, which reflects the influence, the power, of the land.

How does a systems-ecological definition give rise to a strain of ecological philosophy (Alexander 1990)? Bioregionalism is not just about thinking about the environment or just acting to prevent environmentally destructive behaviors but instead involves living in such a way as to know your place and to be profoundly affected by it (Berg 1990). Peter Berg and Raymond Dasmann (1978, p. 218) say it means "... applying for membership in a biotic community and ceasing to be its exploiter." The notion is that by being fully alive in and with a place, people will cease to cause such profound damage to it. By developing sensitivities to the ecosocial carrying capacities of different bioregions, people will learn how to more fully use land without abusing it.

One obvious implication of the bioregional perspective is that people should not live the same everywhere. From a bioregional viewpoint, the fact that urban and regional form is, with minor trappings, largely the same throughout North America is exactly the problem. We are isolated and insulated from the places in which we live. We protect

ourselves from the land; we protect it from speaking to us, affecting us, and because we do, the quality of our lives is diminished. As our lives are diminished, the quality of the environment is likewise diminished. If we want the environment to be rich, diverse, and sustainable in fully ecological terms, we need to promote and mirror those conditions in human society. One way to do this is to live with the land.⁵

Like many deep ecologists, bioregionalists take great solace from Lovelock's Gaia Hypothesis. The aliveness of the earth provides the opportunity for a mutual relationship, the same as we can have with any other living creature. However, in contrast to many deep ecologists, who are focused on the preservation of unique ecological areas and threatened species, bioregionalists seek to understand how to actively and appropriately use the land. The bioregional project is a long-term one—Peter Berg is known to comment that it is a multicentury effort—but bioregionalists do not despair. On the whole, they have great faith in the human species and see that through life-styles—our individual acts of living—we can make significant impact upon the earth.

Comparing bioregionalism with the two other strands of contemporary environmental philosophy is instructive. In addition to building a philosophy from the ground up, bioregionalists have to date afforded little attention to the social and economic roots of the contemporary environmental crisis. While they agree with both the deep ecologists and ecofeminists that a change in the concept we hold of ourselves and our relationship with life on the planet is at the root of solving environmental problems, bioregionalism has afforded little discourse into issues such as gender, race, or class and how these affect the bioregional vision. Not unlike the ecofeminist critique of deep ecology, bioregionalism is open to the criticism that it treats all people the same and assumes that all types of people in all places both want and have the capacity to achieve the changes that are advocated. In other ways, bioregionalism shares important tenets with both deep ecology and ecofeminism. Like deep ecology, bioregionalism stresses the importance of local autonomy and decentralization and admires the wisdom of more nature-based human societies. Like ecofeminism, bioregionalism is antihierarchical. Like both (or at least one strand of ecofeminism), bioregionalism emphasizes the need to reintegrate aspects of spirituality back into everyday life.

The Challenge to Planning Theory

A BRIEF REVIEW OF PLANNING THEORY

To speak of the relationship of any body of literature or thought to planning theory is itself difficult, if only because of the internal

debate as to what constitutes planning theory and how to classify it.⁶ For the purpose of this chapter, I use a conventional and simplistic typology of the field. This typology characterizes planning theory into three parts: comprehensive-rational, incremental, and advocate-progressive. I will briefly describe the essential elements of each, emphasizing their differences from each other and then highlighting the particular challenges to planning theory in its parts and as a whole offered by the developments in contemporary environmental philosophy.

Comprehensive-rational planning is understood to be the foundational paradigm in planning. It is an approach that argues that in order to plan effectively it is necessary to be comprehensive with regard to both the types of functions within a geographic area (planning should cover all functions) and relative to the area itself (one needs to plan for the entire city, county, state, province, and so on). Because of the effort that goes into this type of planning, it is necessary that it be both general in its content and long-range in its time frame; Kent (1964) is a classic statement of this approach. The type of planner who uses this approach is often characterized as a neutral technician, whose method is the systematic application of scientific-rational techniques, such as in population and economic forecasting and land use and environmental analysis (see, for example, Chapin and Kaiser 1979). The position of neutrality originates from the planners' perspective that they are working for the greater public interest and therefore their planning is of benefit to all.

Incremental planning arose in response to the perceived failure in the practice and theory of comprehensive-rational planning. Largely beginning with Martin Meyerson and Edward C. Banfield's (1955) classic study of the Chicago Housing Authority, incremental planning is an approach that argues that there are major obstacles to the implementation of the ideal of comprehensive-rational planning. Some of these are practical in nature, such as the politics of planning and organizations; some of them are more theoretical, such as the rationality, from a decision maker's point of view, of taking a low-risk small step rather than a high-risk large step (Altschuler 1973; Banfield 1973; Lindblom 1973).

The alternative model put forth by incrementalists is almost the opposite to that of comprehensive-rational planners. Incrementalists argue that planning should be limited in scope and area, specific in its content, and short-range in its time frame (Lindblom 1973 is the classic statement of this position). Yet, for very different reasons, the definition of the planner's role is the same—the argument is that the planner should be a neutral technician. The reasoning for neutrality is that it is functionally impossible to define a greater public interest, and therefore planners end up using their own values, or their sense of what the

public interest should be, as the basis for planning. Planners have no legitimacy to impose their values upon a planning situation; this is a right reserved to politicians and citizens (Altschuler 1973). The best planners can do is act as technical advisers, providing focused analysis to decision makers that assists in the understanding of planning problems (Lindblom 1973).

The third major school or paradigm of planning theory—advocate-progressive—emerged in the 1960s and is largely associated with Paul Davidoff's (1973) seminal article on advocacy. Emphasizing the issue of how a planner should function, rather than how a plan should be prepared and what it should consist of, Davidoff offered up a very different notion of the practitioner. Rather than the role of a neutral technician, Davidoff argued for the necessity and functionality of a politicized planner. Starting with the same conclusions as the incrementalists about the inability to identify an overriding public interest, Davidoff argued for planners to work with multiple, focused public interests and to promote a highly participatory, plural planning process.

Davidoff's work provided a wedge that opened an approach to planning theory emphasizing the need to put the act of planning into a larger structural context. Questions such as "Whose interests are served by planning?" "How are the good intentions of planning misused?" and "How does planning as a profession and a social action relate to other social and economic forces in society and history?" have come to characterize the so-called progressive paradigm (see, for example, Beauregard 1978; Kraushaar 1988; and Kravitz 1970). Progressive planning, though, is not just a critical examination of planning practice but also a search for how to promote a more socially equitable planning (Clavel 1985; Krumholz 1982). Progressive planners in general seem less concerned with the issues of what constitutes the plan (comprehensive or limited) and how to plan (general or specific, long-range or short-range) as with the workings of planning itself—particularly the empowerment of citizens, especially from oppressed groups, into the planning process and the design of planning programs that not only redress and prevent social injustice but also promote social justice.

AN ECOVIEW OF PLANNING THEORY

How do the contemporary environmental philosophies inform the planning theory debate? While different strands of each environmental philosophy perspective have particular implications for planning and

planning theory, some general direct observations and indirect speculations can be made.

Most directly, it seems that the environmental philosophy literature presses the invalidity of the incrementalist's claim relative to perspective and process. Incrementalists seek to narrow the scope of planning; a common thrust in the environmental philosophies discussed here is that long-term, substantive success will come only from a broadening of the scope of analysis and recommendation. In planners' terms, the message of environmental philosophy is that it is not useful to make little plans. Not only will they not stir people's souls, ultimately they will be counterproductive by delaying an examination of the underlying and fundamental causes of problems. It is within this examination that lies the basis of long-lasting, sustainable solutions.

Also directly, environmental philosophy can lend validity to the positions of both comprehensive-rational and progressive planning. As noted above, an environmental philosophy perspective suggests the need to pose a set of questions that exposes the structural origins of the conditions that underlay the world, so these conditions are understood in their long-term systemic context, and to think about responding to these conditions with a comprehensive (though not solely rational) strategy. Drawing as it does from ecological science, environmental philosophy has a natural tendency to place issues into a systems context, a context that in planning terms is comprehensive. Ecology is a perspective that starts with the premise that everything is connected to everything else, and you cannot affect one element of a system without causing some correlative change in another part of it. Therefore, analysis tends toward being comprehensive in both area and function—one strives to examine an entire ecosystem and all of its parts. The implication of all this for planning theory is to suggest that environmental philosophy establishes the basis for a critical comprehensive-rational critical comprehensiveness will differ from both comprehensive-rational planning and progressive planning in two ways: first, by drawing upon the critical perspective of progressive planning as the basis for comprehensiveness analysis; and, second, by utilizing the rational mode of analysis that is the explicit foundation of comprehensive-rational planning, and the barely guised basis of progressive planning, as only one of several systems of informing and knowing.

Indirectly, the environmental philosophy literature presses a number of points upon planning theory, including the legitimacy of an abstract or contextless planning theory, the general anthropocentric orientation of planning theory and practice, the relationship of means

(or process) and ends (or outcomes), and the loss of "place" as a specific basis for planning.

A common theme in planning theory is the debate about whether the field is, in and of itself, legitimate enough. That is, planning theory grew out of the idea that you could have a body of literature about how to plan that need not be tied to the actual object of this planning.⁷ In this way, the body of literature that is commonly identified as planning theory is described as abstract and general—it exhibits one set of characteristics that identifies a theory. Environmental philosophy, while it is philosophy and thus by its very nature often abstract and theoretical, originates from the actual conditions of environmental degradation and the consequent need for environmental management. It is the very question "How do we go about managing the environment?" (or "How do we achieve environmental sustainability?") that serves as an origin of the various strains of environmental philosophy. While they may come to different answers to this question, it is the real conditions of acid rain, rain forest destruction, species extinction, water pollution, and so on, that drive the inquiry. From this basis, planning theory seems contextless—that is, it is a discourse absent a subject. Environmental philosophy presses the question "What is the actual object of planning theory?" From an environmental philosophy point of view, it seems untenable that one can have a discourse on how to plan (or manage) without knowing what one was planning for. To put it another way, environmental philosophy might suggest that the validity of a planning approach would be contingent on the object of planning—whether it be landscape management, species protection, housing, or social services provision.

The points discussed so far in this section refer to elements of environmental philosophy that are common to the three strains profiled. However, there are specific points about planning theory that are alluded to by the individual perspectives.

From the perspective of deep ecology, planning is disturbingly utilitarian and anthropocentric in its orientation. It is a literature and a practice focused upon the needs and concerns of humans. In a more pronounced way than the other perspectives, deep ecology stresses the rights⁸ of the "nonhuman." The rights of natural objects—the rights of these objects to exist for their own purpose rather than for how they serve a human need—have been a subject of debate since the early days of the contemporary environmental movement (Stone 1974). Just as advocacy and progressive planning have stressed the need to expand the types of human constituencies involved in and served by planning, deep ecology raises the issue of how to structure planning so that

the nonhuman species (not just the intergenerational human species) receives a voice.

If deep ecology promotes an alternative, supplementary object orientation for planning, then ecofeminism advances an alternative process agenda, though one that is not dissimilar to that raised by planning theorists such as John Forester (1989). From an ecofeminist perspective, the relationship of means and ends is absolutely critical. A just end cannot be achieved through unjust means. The very nature of means permeates the quality of the solution that results. Specifically, ecofeminism recognizes that the very process of how we do things—the words we use to communicate, the forums we provide for communication, the individuals who are empowered to act as representatives in discourse, the types of knowledge bases that are legitimate for representing what one "knows" to be true—is intimately connected to the types of solutions that are crafted for problems. Processes that are more encompassing and empowering will generate solutions that are more enduring, for several reasons. The participants will be more vested in them, and they will be because they will have been treated more equally in the process of problem identification and solving. Also, solutions will endure because through a multiparty communicative process all of the participants will be changed by their participation.

The implication of all this for planning theory and practice has to do with how planners conceive of their own roles and the place that is afforded to citizen participation and communication. An ecofeminist perspective suggests a more democratic conception of knowledge and expertise. Planners would need to acknowledge the necessary broad basis for understanding the nature of a problem and seek to solicit and incorporate, on its own terms, alternative conceptions. Thus, planners would move into active roles as facilitators and legitimators. To some extent this is analogous to the type of activity that occurred in the 1960s with community planning centers, following from the type of pluralistic planning Davidoff (1973) originally called for; but to a significant extent, it is quite different. It is different because ecofeminist planners would not seek to be experts, to impose their expertise and/or to be neutral in the application of their knowledge and analysis. An ecofeminist-informed planning would strive for a politically critical and astute facilitative process.

Bioregionalism is concerned with learning to live in place and then how to be affected by the uniqueness of place so that a life pattern evolves that fits with the particular ecological conditions of the place. Bioregionalism stresses the importance of intimate knowledge about

place and the utilization of that knowledge in the design of all of the aspects of everyday life—the economy, the architecture, the art.

From a bioregional point of view, planning theory seems too abstract, a point similar to that made above that planning theory, from the point of view of environmental philosophy in general, seems contextless. However, bioregionalism is much more specific and can serve to reawaken a debate central and long-standing in planning. The bioregional argument about place is analogous to that raised by Mumford (1938), Odum and Moore (1938), and the Regional Planning Association of America (Sussman 1976). Mumford, along with Odum and Moore, publishing in the same year, explored different aspects of regionalism, with Mumford emphasizing physical regionalism and Odum and Moore emphasizing sociocultural regionalism. Both sets of authors, though, advanced a similar thesis—that planning needed to be based on the integrity of these regions and, conversely, planning that was not fully cognizant of these regional realities would necessarily fall short of effectiveness and success. In many ways, a bioregional position is not very far from the vision of Patrick Geddes that served as the inspiration for Mumford's own perspective, a vision that a people can be understood only in the context of their place and can find themselves only by knowing their place (Sussman 1976).

Thus, a bioregional perspective on planning theory stresses (1) the imperative of bringing into all planning analysis a specific spatial element, that of the region, and (2) using this element to both ground planning theory and to free it.

Conclusions

The mirror that environmental philosophy holds up to planning theory ends up making a number of significant challenges to the internal structure of the planning theory literature. As outlined above, some of these are challenges offered by environmental philosophy as a whole body of literature, irrespective of its internal differences, and some of these challenges derive from the particular strains of environmental philosophy. These challenges have to do with planning theory's internal debates, where environmental philosophy may offer a way to recast and reformulate some long-held positions, and with specific issues within planning theory, some of which are the focus of contemporary theorists, some of which have faded from the theory agenda, and some of which have never even been addressed.

These challenges should not be dismissed and, in fact, should be taken quite seriously. Not only are the points raised by environmental philosophy insightful in and of themselves (to illuminate what planning does and does not take up and perhaps should) but more fundamentally the challenge raised by environmental philosophy must be addressed because the root of contemporary environmental philosophy and the root of planning theory are the same—both are born from concerns about how to act in the world. While the spheres from which they originate are ostensibly different—the so-called natural environment for environmental philosophy and the person-constructed city and its impact on a surrounding region for planning—both are concerned with how to organize human action so as to achieve desired ends. If planning theory is the basis for planning action, then the challenges offered by environmental philosophy must be engaged because they confront basic notions of effective action.

Finally, and perhaps most fundamentally, it seems that the challenges brought forth by environmental philosophy echo the speculations of Michael P. Brooks (1988). As Brooks sees it, the transformation of planning in the twentieth century has been a continuing search for relevance and influence in the decision-making process. What has been lost in this search is a connection to the visionary tradition of planning that asked questions and posed issues about the nature of the good life—what it is we are planning for. Brooks wonders whether in our search we have achieved any more influence (he thinks not) and, if not, whether we have lost something important (he thinks we have). A parallel to Brooks's argument in the environmental literature is a strident article by Kirkpatrick Sale (1986). Here he accuses the mainstream environmental movement and its lead organizations of being so enamored of the potential for influence within the corridors of power that they no longer pose fundamental questions and challenges to the power structure itself, a structure that Sale argues is at the root of environmental problems.

Contemporary environmental philosophy wants us, implores us, challenges us, not to be afraid to ask fundamental questions. Contemporary environmental philosophy argues that to the extent we do not pose these underlying questions and then act upon their implications, our planning deeds may be irrelevant at best and counterproductive at worst. This is not the easy path; contemporary environmental philosophy would have us believe, though, that there is no other if our goal is an effective, long-term, sustainable, and equitable planning.

Notes

1. It is perhaps not unlike the lag we have experienced in integrating the discourses about Postmodernism into our dialogues; the notable exception is the 1991 issue of the *Journal of Planning Education and Research* (volume 10, number 3) that contains a five-article symposium.
2. A cautionary note, though. Given the nature of this chapter, it is possible to make only a rudimentary and cursory presentation of these respective strains of environmental philosophy. Since my interest is presenting the essence of what is contained in this literature and then exploring its connections with planning theory, I necessarily have to slight many of the nuances within the philosophical discussions themselves. My goal has been to extract those elements that most clearly identify and explain these tendencies and to highlight those factors that most clearly illustrate the challenge they present to planning theory and practice.
3. Environmental ethics, environmental philosophy, earth ethics, and other terms are often regarded as synonyms (Martin and Beatley 1993). I use environmental ethics and environmental philosophy interchangeably in this chapter.
4. Feminist theory is a subject, like Postmodernism, that planning academics and planners have been slow to take up. For two recent treatments, see Beth Moore Milroy (1991) and Leonie Sandercock and Ann Forsyth (1992).
5. A very similar point is made in Native American thinking; see Annie L. Booth and Harvey Jacobs (1990) for a review of this perspective.
6. The literature on what constitutes and how to classify planning theory is itself quite large. See John Forester (1984), John Friedmann (1987), Patsy Healey et al. (1982), and Barclay M. Hudson (1979) for only some examples.
7. Andreas Faludi (1973) discusses this in his distinction of the difference between a theory of planning versus a theory in planning; James Simmie (1989) and Robert A. Beauregard (1990) are two recent expressions of this debate, siding for a theory in planning.
8. However, many deep ecologists might well be reluctant to use the word "rights," in that the concept of rights may not be consistent with their philosophical and spiritual orientation.

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