

An Examination Of The Contribution Of Utilitarian
And Phenomenological Schools Of Thought In Planning

by

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**AN EXAMINATION OF THE CONTRIBUTION OF UTILITARIAN
AND PHENOMENOLOGICAL SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT IN PLANNING**

BY

KEVIN ALLEN CHOY

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF CITY PLANNING

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ABSTRACT

This thesis addresses the issue of utilitarianism in planning discourse in contrast with phenomenology. The first part examines the tenets and limitations of utilitarianism in planning thought. The influence of utilitarianism's "greatest happiness for the greatest number" concept in rational comprehensive planning is overviewed. The conceptual, methodological and ethical limitations of utilitarianism in planning are presented in the final section of part one.

Phenomenology is presented as an alternative school of thought in planning in part two. Its subjectivistic 'common-sense' approach at examining the everyday life-world is examined. How phenomenology can contribute to planning thought is examined through its tenets of subjectivity, common-sense and its open-minded approach. Phenomenology's goal of typification and of bracketing preconceptions is also explored.

The central questions addressed are:

What is phenomenology? What are its basic tenets?
How can phenomenology help planning thought and practice? How does phenomenology improve planning knowledge?

A final Chapter deals with how phenomenology addresses contemporary planning issues.

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Chapter I. Introduction

Within the current century, and at least up until the mid-1950s¹, it was commonly held that rational comprehensive planning was a defensible criterion for evaluating planning policies. 'Rationality' and 'comprehensiveness' set out methodological parameters for measuring a "single hierarchy of community objectives"² with a multiplicity of means based on the 'public interest'.

By the mid-1950s, however, planners began to assess the credibility of the rational comprehensive model. Howard, in his 1955 article entitled "The Planner In A Democratic Society--A Credo" alluded to the question that "it is healthy,

¹ *Interestingly, Hemmens claims that as late as mid-1980, the model continued as the "ruling planning theory". See Hemmens, G. C. "New Directions In Planning Theory" Journal Of The American Planning Association 46:3 (1980): 259. See also Galloway, Thomas D. and Mahayni, Riad G. "Planning Theory In Retrospect: The Process Of Paradigm Change" Journal Of The American Institute Of Planners 43:1 (January 1977): 62-71; Grabow, Stephen and Heskin, Allan "Foundations For A Radical Concept Of Planning" Journal Of The American Institute Of Planners 39:2 (March 1973): 106-115, and Hudson, Barclay "Comparison Of Current Planning Theories: Counterparts And Contradictions" Journal Of The American Planning Association 45:4 (October 1979): 387-406 in addition to the classic by Kuhn, Thomas S. The Structure Of Scientific Revolutions 2nd ed. 2:2 International Encyclopedia Of Unified Science Chicago (1970).

² Altshuler, Alan "The Goals Of Comprehensive Planning" Journal Of The American Institute Of Planners 31:3 (August 1965): 186.

from time to time, for a profession to pause and consider itself--what is it that we profess?"³ in leading to his conclusion that "since change will never cease--and, we may hope, change will always represent an improvement over the previous condition--Master Plans for change are futile if they are regarded as ultimate goals."⁴

Throughout this century, the rational comprehensive model has been challenged. A number of alternative theories have been presented. In the 1960s, the questioning and assault continued with Webber's 1963 article, "Comprehensive Planning And Social Responsibility". Significantly, Webber delineated the 1960s as a "Time For Re-Examination".⁵ On rationality, he claimed that "improving capacity for rationality must be joined with improving wisdom,"⁶ and that although "it is here that the road forks, the one route leading to technocratic control by elites, the other to guided expansion of individual freedom,"⁷

³ Howard, John T. "The Planner In A Democratic Society--A Credo" Journal Of The American Institute Of Planners 21:1 (1955): 64.

⁴ ibid.

⁵ Webber, Melvin M. "Comprehensive Planning And Social Responsibility: Toward An AIP Consensus On The Profession's Roles And Purposes" Journal Of The American Planning Association 29:4 (November 1963): 232.

⁶ ibid.

⁷ ibid.

the map has often been misread and "those signposts are false".⁸ He summarized his concern in claiming that "those who would be planners must thereby be artists-scientists--no less than that the so-called artist is thereby rigorous analyst of the real world and that the so-called scientist is thereby imaginative and perceptive innovator."⁹ This conclusion marked a sharp departure from the well-known 'expert' rational comprehensive planner of earlier years.

Other writers continued the barrage, reflecting and criticizing planning practice. Piven, in reminiscing his student years in the 1950s, exemplified the 'odd beliefs' that held sway in the profession, "that planners did not take sides in community conflicts, but rather worked for something sometimes called 'the community as a whole,'"¹⁰ and that "another odd belief was concerned with what planners did to advance the goals of the community as a whole. City planners, we were taught, were the rational facilitators of urban development."¹¹

⁸ ibid. 236.

⁹ ibid.

¹⁰ Piven, Frances Fox "Planning And Class Interests" Journal Of The American Institute Of Planners 41:5 (September 1975): 308.

¹¹ ibid.

From Piven and others like him, it became clearly evident by the 1970s that two major criticisms emerged against the model: one against the notion of 'rational' and the other against the notion of 'comprehensiveness'. On 'rationality', papers contended planning was either distinct from pure science¹² or that applications of pure science to (i.e.) social planning had neglected consideration of values and ethics. On 'comprehensiveness', papers portrayed the fallacy and mis-use of the public interest concept.¹³ In short, the model paradigm

¹² *See Rittel, H. W. J. and Webber, M. M. "Dilemmas In A General Theory Of Planning" Policy Sciences 4:2 (June 1973): 155-169 for the distinction; Hoch, Charles "Doing Good And Being Right: The Pragmatic Connection In Planning Theory" Journal Of The American Planning Association 50:3 (Summer 1984): 335-345 concerning morality and politics and the concepts of "doing right" and "being right"; Bolan, Richard S. "Mapping The Planning Theory Terrain" in Godschalk, David ed. Planning In America: Learning From Turbulence American Institute Of Planners Washington D.C. (1974): 13-34 for a general discussion and Bolan Op. cit. "Emerging Views Of Planning".

¹³ *See Ylvisaker, Paul N. "Diversity And The Public Interest: Two Cases In Metropolitan Decision-Making" Journal Of The American Institute Of Planners 27:2 (May 1961): 107-118; Barton, Stephen E. "Conflict Resolution As Necessity, Practice And Ideal" Journal Of Planning Education And Research 4:2 (December 1984): 96-103 and the problem, but supported, notion of the public interest with modifications in Friedmann, John "The Public Interest And Community Participation: Toward A Reconstruction Of Public Philosophy" Journal Of The American Institute Of Planners 39:1 (January 1973): 2-13; Harvey, David "On Planning The Ideology Of Planning" in Burchell, Robert W. and Sternlieb, George eds. Planning Theory In The 1980's The Center For Urban Policy Research Rutgers University New Jersey (1978): 213-233, and Moffitt, Leonard "Value Implications For Public Planning: Some Thoughts And Questions" Journal Of The American Institute Of Planners 41:6 (November 1975): 397-406. It is interesting that an article by Branch, Melville C.

was highly criticized with the general consensus that planning theory was both 'in trouble',¹⁴ and in 'crisis'.¹⁵

This thesis examines the utilitarian principle and its limitations that has informed planning thought and practice. As a divergence from the mainstay tenets of utilitarianism, phenomenology is presented as an alternative. The advent of the phenomenological school of thought at the turn of the century presents a possible alternative to planning. Its recognition of subjectivity and a common sense interpretation of the everyday world are examined, and contrasted with utilitarianism.

The central questions addressed are:

What is phenomenology? What are its basic tenets? How can phenomenology help planning thought and practice? How does phenomenology improve planning knowledge?

"Critical Unresolved Problems Of Urban Planning Analysis" Journal Of The American Institute Of Planners 44:1 (January 1978): 47-60 denoted the public interest as the first of "twenty-three critical unresolved problems of urban planning analysis".

¹⁴ Krieger, Martin H. "Some New Directions For Planning Theories" Journal Of The American Institute Of Planners 40:3 (May 1974): 156.

¹⁵ Dyckman, John W. "Three Crisis Of American Planning" in Burchell, R.W. and Sternlieb G. eds. Planning Theory In The 1980's New Jersey n.d. 279-296.

In examining the problem, this thesis is divided into four Chapters including this introductory Chapter: a) Chapter II examines the utilitarian roots of modern planning and its impacts; b) Chapter III overviews the nature and major tenets of phenomenology; c) Chapter IV provides concluding remarks on phenomenology and planning.

Chapter II. Utilitarian Roots Of Modern Planning

I. Introduction

Although Jeremy Bentham's significant works, The Book of Fallacies, Essays On Political Tactics,¹⁶ The Limits Of Political Jurisprudence¹⁷ and his Introduction To The Principles Of Morals And Legislation¹⁸ were written scatteredly and unordered, his sense of society contrasted sharply: it was to be an ordered collection of individuals as a single indivisible being with a single mind and will.¹⁹ As he claimed in his famous Introduction the "interest of the community then is, what?--the sum of the interests of the several members who compose it."²⁰

¹⁶ Bentham, Jeremy Essays On Political Tactics London (1791).

¹⁷ Bentham, Jeremy The Limits Of Jurisprudence Defined Everett, C. W. ed. Columbia University Press N.Y. (1945).

¹⁸ Bentham, Jeremy An Introduction To The Principles Of Morals And Legislation Burns, J. H. and Hart, H. L. A. eds. The Athlone Press London (1970). *See also, Bentham, Jeremy The Principles Of Morals And Legislation Harrison, Wilfred ed. Basil Blackwell Oxford (1960).

¹⁹ *In Manning, D. J. The Mind Of Jeremy Bentham Longman London (1968) Manning claims that this "is the expressed desire of this body that brings the state to life." 78.

²⁰ Bentham Op. cit. An Introduction To The Principles Of Morals And Legislation 192.

Thus, since every man best knows his own interest in addition to every man's interest counting for one and no more than one, it follows that at any given time this majority's estimation of its own desires must be the "true estimation of the satiable desires of all."²¹ Utility, then, is the production of benefit, advantage, pleasure, good or happiness.

In short, there is no other standard but the judgement of individuals in a calculus for all as exemplified in Bentham's famous doctrine of "the greatest happiness of the greatest number."²² As Bentham claimed:

I recognize, as the all-comprehensive, and only right and proper end of the Government, the greatest happiness of the members of the community in question: the greatest happiness--of all of them, without exception, in so far as possible: the greatest happiness of the greatest number of them, on every occasion on which the nature of the case renders the provision of an equal quantity of happiness for every one of them impossible: it being rendered so, by its matter of necessity, to make sacrifice of a portion of the happiness of a few, to the greater happiness of the rest.²³

²¹ Manning Op. cit. 78.

²² Rosen, Frederick Jeremy Bentham And Representative Democracy: A Study Of The Constitutional Code Clarendon Press Oxford (1983): 201. *This was later reformed into the "greatest happiness of the greatest number maximized." ibid.

²³ Bentham, Jeremy Parliamentary Candidate's Proposed Declaration Of Principles: Or Say, A Test Proposed For Parliamentary Candidates London (1831): 7.

In summary, Bentham believed in an ordered society with a 'golden rule' to maximize decision-making. The interests of 'all' as opposed to those of 'individuals' was deemed far more important in making judgments. With the principle of maximization introduced, the next section outlines the origins of utilitarian theory and its scientific tradition.

II. Scientific Tradition In Planning

The importance of the natural sciences and mathematics to Bentham cannot be underestimated. Growing up in the era of the Industrial Revolution in which the natural sciences were making rapid strides, he believed he developed a "principle capable of serving for the establishment of a synthetic science of the phenomena of moral and social life."²⁴ In comparing his ethical investigations of the Principles²⁵ with pure mathematics, Bentham became a disciple of a very

²⁴ Brogran, Sir Denis "The Intellectual In Great Britain" in Macdonald, H. Malcolm ed. The Intellectual In Politics The Humanities Research Center Of The University Of Texas Austin (1966): 64.

²⁵ Bentham Op. cit. An Introduction To The Principles Of Morals And Legislation.

scientific spirit.²⁶

In the scientific tradition, Bentham criticized existing ethical systems as dogmatic and without an objective criterion for settling moral arguments. Existing ethical systems were falsely based on customary, spontaneous and emotional actions. Similar to the build-up of scientific laws, Bentham proposed to "elucidate the proper procedure in questions of morality, law and politics by demonstrating how complex problems may be reduced to their constituent parts, and how each of these might be tackled with the aid of established generalisations."²⁷ "Real knowledge," wrote Bentham, "depends to a great degree upon being able...to distinguish from each other causes, obstacles, and uninfluencing circumstances."²⁸

Under the superiority of his own doctrine, a man's knowledge of the goodness and badness of actual pleasure and pain could be confirmed every time he experiences them since every man can assess the value of his actions from calculating the

²⁶ *Steintrager claims that "he was to be the Newton of the moral world. His moral calculus would do for morals and legislation what the Newtonian calculus did for the laws of motion and the science of the physical world in general." Steintrager, James Bentham Cornell University Press Ithaca N.Y. (1977): 12.

²⁷ Manning Op. cit. 11.

²⁸ Bentham Op. cit. The Book Of Fallacies 215.

quantity of pleasure and pain they produce. Human affairs could, therefore, be based upon a premeditated calculation of interest and consequence.²⁹

As an orthodox empiricist,³⁰ Bentham believed that our knowledge of the external world consisted of mental images and patterns printed on the mind by a continuous flow of sense impressions.³¹ "The business of knowing is simply a matter of observation, inference and verification with a view to finding out what things are like."³²

²⁹ ibid. 33. *Mill reflected this further on Bentham's work: "Words, he thought, were perverted from their proper office when they were employed in uttering anything but precise logical truth." See Mill, J.S. Mill On Bentham And Coleridge Leavis, F.R. intro. Chatto & Windus London (1967): 95.

³⁰ Bentham stated that "observation and experiment--in these...may be seen the sources of all real knowledge." See Bowring, John ed. The Works Of Jeremy Bentham II Vols Edinburgh William Tait (1938-1943): 116.

³¹ *The origins of empiricism need not be discussed at length here. For reference, however, see especially Ayer, A.J. Lanugage, Truth And Logic Dover Publications N.Y. 1952 concerning the positivistic view of knowledge; Hume, David A Treatise Of Human Nature Selby-Bigge ed. Oxford University Press Oxford (1951); Locke, John An Essay Concerning Human Understanding Dent London (1947) and Berkely, George Three Dialogues Between Hylas And Philonous Turbayne, M. ed. Liberal Arts Press N.Y. 1954) concerning criticisms against empiricism.

³² Manning Op. cit. 9.

Bentham, therefore, believed pleasures were quantifiable and thus devised the famous 'felicific calculus'³³ as a means of measuring the relative values of proposed actions. Although the concepts of pleasure and pain were intrinsic and not necessarily empirically verified, Bentham felt that every man held the experience of pleasure to be intrinsically good, and that of pain to be intrinsically evil. Thus, "every man is...under a moral obligation to promote pleasure and to diminish pain; and this affirmation is one that cannot be derived from the former axiom, that all men seek to pursue pleasure and avoid pain because they desire the one and fear the other."³⁴

This bold perception of human nature was not uncritically accepted, however--even by Bentham himself. An initial dilemma confronted the notion of individual inference. How could pleasures and pains be the same for everyone? Bentham, himself, noted that "in the same mind such and such causes of pain or pleasure will produce more pain or pleasure than such

³³ *It should be noted that the concept of hedonism is similarly used as Bentham's felicific calculus. See, for example, Mitchell, Wesley C. "Bentham's Felicific Calculus" in Parekh, Bhikhu ed. Jeremy Bentham: Ten Critical Essays Frank Cass London (1974): 168-187. Hearn defines hedonism as "the view that pleasure is the only thing having intrinsic value, and that whatever else is valuable is so because it results in pleasure." Hearn, Thomas K. Jr. ed. Studies In Utilitarianism Appleton-Century-Crofts N.Y. (1971): 122.

³⁴ Manning Op. cit. 23.

or such other causes of pain or pleasure: and this proportion will in different minds be different."³⁵

The solution, Bentham offered, lay in the "majority opinion, for or against the action and its agent, [which] will then be the most objective that men can adopt."³⁶ "Of this constitution," Bentham added, "the all-comprehensive object, or end in view, is, from first to last, the greatest happiness of the greatest number; namely, of the individuals, of whom the political community, or state, of which it is the constitution, is composed; strict regard being all along had to what is due to every other...."³⁷ Utilitarianism thus "seeks to open discussion about morality or immorality of a given action and to settle that discussion by appealing to an external standard, namely, the feelings of those real persons whose interests will be affected by the consequences of the

³⁵ Bentham Op. cit. The Principles Of Morals And Legislation 164. *Bentham regarded "the experience of playing pushpin [is] as good as that of reading poetry." Smart, J. J. C. and Williams, Bernard Utilitarianism: For And Against Cambridge (1973): 12. The authors add that "our preference for poetry over pushpin is not one of intrinsic value, but is merely one of extrinsic value. Perhaps strictly in itself and at a particular moment, a contented sheep is as good as a contented philosopher." 15.

³⁶ Manning Op. cit. 23.

³⁷ Bowring Op. cit. 18-19.

action."³⁸

In summary, Bentham provided a scientific calculus of values so that a moral agent (i.e. the planner) could have a reliable means of discovering what should be done. It is clear that the scientific mode of thought pervades Bentham's works. Rationality, empiricism and quantification thread his thesis.

III. The Impact Of Utilitarianism

In linking Bentham's ideas to modern planning, various authors have argued that the rational-comprehensive model is the application of utilitarian principles. Also known as 'synoptic planning', this model has often been denoted as the "dominant tradition, and the point of departure for most other planning approaches."³⁹ The fundamental ingredients of the model include:

(1) stabilized, well-known symbols; (2) well-understood rules of the game; (3) an available objective perspective; and (4) opportunity for consensual validation of decisions and actions.⁴⁰

³⁸ Steintrager Op. cit. 29.

³⁹ Hudson, Barclay M. "Comparison Of Current Planning Theories: Counterparts And Contradictions" Journal Of The American Planning Association 45:4 (October 1979): 388.

⁴⁰ Dyckman Op. cit. 299.

In the dominant tradition, planners have often been ascribed as social scientists-cum-practioners in the arena of public policy. Relating themselves as methodologists, planners often subordinated theories of substance for theories of scientific procedure.⁴¹ This is perhaps best summarized in Petersen's note that:

[T]here is a parallel between the present ubiquity of 'planning' and the conquest of eighteenth century thought by 'reason,' or of nineteenth century thought by 'science.' ...The victory of 'science' has been all but total--not over nonscience, but over the clear thinking that is based on meaningful distinctions, which constitute an indispensable prerequisite to an efficient choice among policy alternatives.⁴²

⁴¹ *A discussion of this can be found in Hudson Op. cit. 394. It is notable that Hudson claims that "a planner who is primarily a methodologist will likely be stuck on one or another of these levels of explanations. A planner who is grounded in substantive theory, however, can press beyond the limits of particular methods to see problems in their entirety." 394. See also, the interesting distinction between "theory-in-use" and "espoused theory" presented in Bolan Op. cit. "Emerging Views Of Planning". Interestingly, Bolan concludes that "the orthodoxy of the comprehensive plan still emanates from official announcements of the corporate profession, and is still written into federal and state laws. Under multitudes of strains, however, the theory-in-use of the institutionalized profession seldom coincides with this orthodoxy." 263.

⁴² Petersen, William "On Some Meanings Of Planning" Journal Of The American Institute Of Planners 32: 3 (May 1966): 131.

Planning, therefore, became a technical activity justified by its models and techniques. As Hoch states, "predictability and probability become the criteria of effective plans. Proponents of being right focus on the methodological or technical qualities of planning activity, and they defend their actions by referring to the validity and reliability of the analytical procedures used to justify them."⁴³ Similarly, Dyckman adds that "the planner has argued that he is capable of understanding community values, that he understands (he may even argue, uniquely understands) the environment in which action takes place, and that he is capable of inferring from these a 'public interest.' These ingredients, he feels, add up to a composite rationality."⁴⁴

Significantly, these ingredients have paved the way for planners to rely on rational decision-making procedures towards 'efficient' ends. Rittel and Webber state, for example, that as early as the "industrial age, the idea of planning, in common with the idea of professionalism, was dominated by the pervasive idea of efficiency. Drawn from the 18th-Century physics, classical economics, and the principle of least-means, efficiency was seen as a condition in which a specified task could be performed with low inputs of

⁴³ Hoch Op. cit. 335.

⁴⁴ Dyckman Op. cit. 299.

resources...planning was then seen as a process of designing problem-solutions that might be installed and operated cheaply."⁴⁵

This, of course, was based on the "belief in the 'makeability,' or unrestricted malleability, of future history by means of the planning intellect--by reasoning, rational discourse, and civilized negotiation."⁴⁶ Guided by "a set of procedures, an attitude towards the use of information, and above all for a commitment to rationality,"⁴⁷ an ethic of rational action provided guidance to planning. In short, science converged into the planning professionalism to become the established instrument for achieving the 'moral purpose'⁴⁸ of the greatest happiness for the greatest number.

To some, this convergence has promoted an 'intellectual elite' in the planning profession. Rittel and Webber state, for example, that "with arrogant confidence, the early systems analysts pronounced themselves ready to take on anyone's perceived problem diagnostically to discover its hidden

⁴⁵ Rittell and Webber Op. cit. 7.

⁴⁶ ibid. 5.

⁴⁷ ibid.

⁴⁸ Smith Op. cit. 200.

character, and then, having exposed its true nature, skillfully to excise its root causes."⁴⁹ Moreover, planners articulated and directed their findings based on the 'public interest'. According to Hoch, for example:

Those interested in doing good refer to planning as a predominantly moral and political preoccupation. They justify planning activity in terms of the good effect it will have...in fact, most of the arguments in defense of the master plan (and even the plan with comprehensive plan) tended to rely heavily on principles that linked the plan with the public good.⁵⁰

Thus, "with arrogant confidence, the early systems analysts pronounced themselves ready to take on anyone's perceived problem diagnostically to discover its hidden character, and then, having exposed its true nature, skillfully to excise its roots causes."⁵¹

With the backing of the 'public interest', planners led a number reforms in housing⁵² and health against 'congestion'. These reforms centered on imposing order in a 'chaotic world'

⁴⁹ Rittel and Webber Op. cit. 8.

⁵⁰ Hoch Op. cit. 335.

⁵¹ Ibid. 355.

⁵² *See especially Heap, E. An Outline Of Planning Law Sweet And Maxwell London (1969) and Benevolo, L. The Origins Of Modern Town Planning Routledge & Kegan Paul London (1967).

by remolding social processes towards efficiency. Land use⁵³ policies and zoning, for example, were typical examples in the regulation of private property. Similar reforms were attempted through urban design as found in Howard's 'Garden City'⁵⁴ and Haussman's 'City Beautiful'.⁵⁵ These attempts are well documented and common in planning literature.⁵⁶ The significant point here is that planning was a technocratic means to invoke order: incongruous land use, overcrowding and other 'public' crises were to be returned to a 'normalcy' of an organic⁵⁷ order of stoic harmony,⁵⁸ visual unity and civic

⁵³ *See, for example, Babcock, R.F. The Zoning Game University Of Wisconsin Press Madison Wis. (1966), Olson, S. H. Baltimore: The Building Of An American City Johns Hopkins Press Baltimore (1980) and Robert Goodman's critique After The Planners Simon And Schuster N.Y. (1971).

⁵⁴ Howard, E. Garden Cities Of Tomorrow Faber And Faber Ltd. London (1960).

⁵⁵ *Interesting insight into the goals of Haussman can best be found in Saalman, Howard ed. Paris Transformed George Braziller N.Y. (1971) and Evenson, Norma Paris: A Century Of Change 1878-1978 Yale University Press New Haven (1979).

⁵⁶ *A good historical summary can be found in Hall, Peter "The Turbulent Eighth Decade: Challenges To American City Planning" Journal Of The American Planning Association 55 3 (Summer 1989): 275-334.

⁵⁷ *A discussion of organism as it relates to this overview can be found in Stalley, M. ed. Patrick Geddes: Spokesman For Man And The Environment Rutgers University Press N.B. N.J. (1972).

⁵⁸ *See, for example, Sitte, C. City Planning According To Artistic Principles Phaidon Press London (1965).

grandeur. Decisions towards reaching this order were significantly backed by the utilitarian principle.

IV. Contemporary Problems In Planning

Despite the historical impact on much of planning's tradition, utilitarianism faces a number of conceptual, measurement and ethical problems and limitations. First, critics maintain that the goal of 'maximization' must be made clear. Lewis concludes, for example, that "until the planner can say precisely what it is that he is seeking to maximize (or minimize) the use of optimizing techniques other than for purely exploratory purposes is bound to result in a 'simple-minded' plan."⁵⁹ This methodological failing is supported by Dyckman who states that "planners' dependence on rationality has sometimes proven less persuasive than the folk knowledge of politicians and the experience of bureaucrats. In the pragmatic world of public program formulation, rational decision theory does not count for much, but for planning it is a tempting norm."⁶⁰ This is perhaps best summarized in Ylvisaker's conclusion that:

⁵⁹ Lewis, J. Misused Techniques In Planning No. 1--Linear Programming Occasional Paper No. 1 Centre For Urban And Regional Research University Of Manchester (1969).

⁶⁰ Dyckman Op. cit. 299.

Touchstones have never been easy to find.... [T]he metropolis assaults two of our ethical Shangri-las, (1) the idyll of a homogeneous community insulated by time and distance from conflicting value systems; and (2) the comforting notion of a public interest which like a jigsaw puzzle will unite self-interests into a rational whole while leaving the pieces severally intact.⁶¹

Utilitarianism also faces the major problem of obtaining complete information--through comprehensive analysis--to achieve optimal planning.⁶² Utilitarianism, as was shown earlier, required decision-makers to have knowledge of individual interests to formulate policy for the whole. Pleasure and pain were somehow identified and reckoned with in calculating the hedonistic calculus. It can be assumed, then, that in order to anticipate all questions (in order to anticipate all information required for resolution ahead of time) all knowledge of all conceivable interests must be collected. But, is this possible? Although critics such as Smart and Williams recognize the appeal of the utilitarian calculus, they summarize that:

[U]tilitarianism has an appeal because it is, at least in its direct forms, a one-principle system which offers one of the simplest and most powerful

⁶¹ Ylvisaker Op. cit. 107.

⁶² *A discussion of various levels of problems can be found in Carwright, T.J. "Problems, Solutions And Strategies: A Contribution To The Theory And Practice Of Planning" Journal Of The American Institute Of Planners 39:3 (May 1973): 185.

methods possible for eliciting a result.... It does, however make enormous demands on supposed empirical information, about people's preferences, and that information is not only largely unavailable, but shrouded in conceptual difficulty; but that is seen in the light of a technical or practical difficulty, and utilitarianism appeals to a frame of mind in which technical difficulty, even insuperable technical difficulty, is preferable to moral unclarity, no doubt because it is less alarming.⁶³ (That frame of mind is in fact deeply foolish....)

In recognizing the limitations of collecting information on the public interest, scholars have revised the model. Without extensive elaboration here, these are well known in the modified rational models of Lindblom's⁶⁴ 'root' approach of 'disjointed incrementalism' and the criticisms by Simon,⁶⁵ Caiden and Wildavsky,⁶⁶ Friedmann⁶⁷ and Schoeffler's⁶⁸ early

⁶³ Smart And Williams Op. cit. 137.

⁶⁴ Lindblom, Charles E. The Intelligence Of Democracy: Decision Making Through Mutual Adjustment Free Press N.Y. (1965). *See also Braybrooke, D. and Lindblom, C. E. Strategy Of Decision Free Press N.Y. (1963).

⁶⁵ Simon, Herbert Administrative Behavior 2nd ed. Free Press N.Y. (1957).

⁶⁶ Caiden, Naomi and Wildavsky, Aaron Planning And Budgeting In Poor Countries Wiley-Interscience Publications N.Y. (1974).

⁶⁷ Friedmann, John Retracking America: A Theory Of Transactive Planning Doubleday-Anchor Garden City N.Y. (1973).

work.⁶⁹

Despite these modifications, critics such as Klosterman claim that "there is no general definition of the 'public interest' which could be adopted as a measure or guide for proposed actions. Those who use the phrase to justify some specific action assume that carrying out the action will automatically add what it provided to the definition of public interest...besides the illogic of creating and defining a condition by adding up the prescriptions which have been written for it without knowing its nature...would be so lengthy and tortuous an accumulation that it could hardly serve as a practical measure or referent."⁷⁰ Rittel and Webber add that as high-scale societies become increasingly heterogeneous and differentiated, unitary conceptions of the

⁶⁸ Schoeffler, S. "Towards A Central Definition Of Rational Action" Kyklos 7 (1954): 248-265.

⁶⁹ *A good summary of these various alternatives can be found in Hoch Op. cit., Hudson Op. cit., Bolan Op. cit. "Emerging Views Of Planning" and Alexander Op. cit..

⁷⁰ Klosterman, Richard A. "A Public Interest Criterion" Journal Of The American Institute Of Planners 46:3 (July 1980): 326. *Various writers, from the field of Political Science have attempted to define the "public interest" but have encountered similar problems in their search. See, for example, Schubert, Glendon The Public Interest Free Press N.Y. (1960); Held, Virginia The Public Interest And Individual Interests Basic Books N.Y. (1970) and Meyerson, Martin and Banfield, Edward C. Politics, Planning And The Public Interest: The Case Of Public Housing In Chicago Free Press (1955) especially between pages 322-329.

public welfare are anachronistic and pre-industrial. They state that:

We do not even have a theory that tells us how to find out what might be considered a societally best state. We have no theory that tells us what distribution of the social product is best...there is no aggregate measure for the welfare of a highly diversified society, if this measure is claimed to be objective and non partisan. Social science has simply been unable to uncover a social-welfare function that would suggest which decisions would contribute to a societally best state. Instead, we have had to rely upon the axioms of individualism that underlie economic and political theory, deducing, in effect, that the larger-public welfare derives from summation of individualistic choices. And yet, we know that this is not necessarily so....

As a partial solution, various attempts have been made to measure quantitatively the public interest that are "demonstrably reliable; sufficiently precise for comparison over time for a single city and also among different cities; and acceptable as a basis for executive, legislative, and judicial decisions."⁷² 'Social indicators,' for example, have been proposed as a statistical measure of the public interest. Modern economists have also suggested that 'utilities' can be measured by the observation of individual ordered preferences of goods and social states.

⁷¹ Rittel and Webber Op. cit. 24-25.

⁷² Branch Op. cit. 49.

Yet, although these attempts aim at "collecting all the available facts and drawing responsible conclusions, relating expertise, promoting goals and collaboration among those concerned with urban development, and formulating plans for the future which can contribute significantly to identification of the public interest and achievement of the good life in metropolitan areas,"⁷³ they cannot be claimed to define the preferences of the public. Quantification or the "expression in numbers does not make them intrinsically more accurate or meaningful if their derivation is imprecise, if their significance is limited because they represent only one aspect of the municipal condition, or because their usefulness depends on interrelationships with other urban elements which cannot be determined reliably."⁷⁴ In short, similar to criticisms put forward by advocates of anti-scientific approaches, the "classical Utilitarian doctrine has been found to be unworkable because it is impossible in practice to measure, compare, or aggregate pleasures and pains which are

⁷³ Beckman, Norman "Our Federal System And Urban Development: The Adaptation Of Form To Function" Journal Of The American Institute Of Planners 29:3 (August 1963): 154. *It should also be noted that the first words of the American Institute Of Planner's first canon are "a planner serves the public interest primarily." For further reference, see Branch Op. cit.

⁷⁴ Klosterman Op. cit. "A Public Interest Criterion" 326.

only mental states of individuals."⁷⁵

Interestingly, these criticisms touch on the extensive debate of the validity of empiricism itself. For our purposes, it is sufficient to recognize the contention that "man is frequently irrational in his moral thinking."⁷⁶ Although the ordinary man may think he can weigh up probabilities in making prudential decisions, it does not mean that there is really any sense in what he is doing. If this were the case, a method of numerical probabilities could in theory, be assigned to any imagined future event. Smart and Williams point out, for example, that:

[C]an we give a numerical value to the probability that a new war will break out, that a proof of Fermat's last theorem will be found, or that our knowledge of genetical linkage in human chromosomes will be much improved in the next five years? Surely it is meaningless to talk of a numerical value for these probabilities, and it is probabilities of this sort with which we have to deal in our moral life.⁷⁷

To Master Plans, Moffitt adds that "the social and ecological

⁷⁵ ibid.

⁷⁶ Smart and Williams Op. cit. 40.

⁷⁷ ibid. 39.

systems we live in are anything but linear."⁷⁸ Consequently:

Master Plans for change are futile if they are regarded as representations of ultimate goals. They make sense only as symbols of milestones of future progress. And, since goals crystallized into specific terms such as housing densities or playground standards are also sure to shift as time goes by, such goals embodied in Master Plans are less significant as absolutes than as measures of the direction of desirable planned change. Let us be careful, as we draw our maps and issue our reports, not to mislead either our clients or ourselves that we offer the final answer.⁷⁹

In summary, planning's utilitarian legacy has been criticized for neglecting 'human' criteria of values and subjective concerns. Like politicians and others who attempt to serve a broad public interest, "without direct contact with the people served, technical elites (or power elites) tend to typify people and derive stereotyped images of what is called 'the community' or 'the general public,' thereby creating a wide chasm in the planning process."⁸⁰

Rational planning models require the processing of enormous amounts of information which has not been attained in the

⁷⁸ Moffitt Op. cit. 400.

⁷⁹ Howard Op. cit. 64.

⁸⁰ Bolan Op. cit. "Mapping The Planning Theory Terrain"
29.

social sciences. Not only is the collection of all information necessarily desirable, it is in reality impossible because of the constant dynamics of individual preferences and values.

V. Problems Of A Neutral Planning Action Role

Although Bentham did not envisage the evolution of planners in his focus on legislators, he advocated representative democracy and the election of neutral decision-makers. In his intention, planners would be politically neutral in making decisions for 'the community as a whole'. As rational facilitators of urban development, planners' special role was to assess the needs and goals of the city over time, to survey relevant action alternatives in the areas of land use and physical development, and to assess the future impact of these alternative development strategies on community goals.

Historically this has been the case with planning's association with the dogmas of municipal reform and its inherent antipolitical bias. Hudson claims, for example that:

Politics is still a dirty word despite attempts to clean it up. Its association with planning presents the same image of incongruity and bad taste as the ward boss arm in arm with the city manager. Like civil service, planning has reflected a civic virtue of weak constitution, requiring special protection from the rude hands of the unenlightened and the

selfish.⁸¹

The implications of this have profoundly effected planning roles. First, as Howard states, "in drawing the organization chart, the planner must never be put into position to decide the goals for his planning."⁸² Moreover, Piven adds in his reflection of planning in the 1950s that "it was also not true that planners played a large role in the decisions that shaped the form of our cities."⁸³ Thus it can be assumed that Bentham's belief in representative government undermined contemporary interpretations for an active planning role since "it seems to be contrary to the ideals of representative government and the protection of individual liberties for non-elected professional planners to use concepts such as the public interest to impose their views on the public at large."⁸⁴

Notwithstanding, planning evolved like a civil service, depending on its "limited efficacy on a special brand of

⁸¹ Long, Norton E. "Citizenship Or Consumership In Metropolitan Areas" Journal Of The American Institute Of Planners 31 1 (February 1965): 167.

⁸² Howard Op. cit. 64.

⁸³ Piven Op. cit. 308.

⁸⁴ Klosterman Op. cit. "A Public Interest Criterion" 324.

politics, the politics of a do-gooding elite, of middle-class respectability, of newspaper support, and of a widespread acceptance that planners have a special wisdom akin to that of Platonic philosopher kings."⁸⁵ Under this belief, the politics of planning have resided mainly in the development and implementation of the Master Plan under the conviction that planners service to "the benefit of all."⁸⁶ Ideals of the fabled 'super-planner', empowered with all the knowledge and skills for planning for others were common, and formed "more or less unconscious elitism."⁸⁷ Consequently, planners worked towards campaigning the press and civic elite for the adoption of their rationally-developed Plans.

Nevertheless, the internal relations between planners and the implementers or decision-making elite have evoked criticism against notions of "value-free, true-false"⁸⁸ Plans. First, it was recognized that Plans are policies and policies, in a democracy at any rate, spell politics.⁸⁹ In the broadest

⁸⁵ Long Op. cit. 167.

⁸⁶ Piven Op. cit. 308.

⁸⁷ Dyckman Op. cit. 294.

⁸⁸ Rittel and Webber Op. cit. 26.

⁸⁹ *Dyckman states that "planning is in politics, and cannot escape politics, but it is not politics." Dyckman Op. cit. 295.

sense, plans represent political philosophies of the good life and therefore, "no longer can the planner take refuge in the neutrality of the objectivity of the personally uninvolved scientist. His plans are action programs that are in no sense value-neutral in the large."⁹⁰ Thus, the presence or absence of some adequate conception of the good life determines the moral basis of the community and the claim to power on the part of its leadership. According to Rittel and Webber, "the classical paradigm of science and engineering--the paradigm that has underlain modern professionalism--is not applicable to the problems of open societal systems...the cognitive and occupational styles of the professions--mimicking the cognitive style of science and the occupational style of engineering--have just not worked on a wide array of social [and philosophical] problems."⁹¹

Moreover, in contrast to synoptic planning which "typically creates a division of labor between planners (experts) and politicians--a split which casts planners as technicians who can simply ignore political considerations of the public

⁹⁰ Long Op. cit. "Planning And Politics In Urban Development" 168.

⁹¹ Rittel and Webber Op. cit. 9-10.

interest,"⁹² planners, it is argued, are not merely searching for technical relationships and objective realities to the exclusion of subjective and emotional discussion. Planners, it is argued, are committed to a set of values since the "expert is also the player in a political game, seeking to promote his private vision of goodness over others."⁹³

Similarly, organizational theorists suggest that the institutions and organizations where planning takes place and where decisions are made do not conform to the premises of the rational model either. The political actors (i.e. planners and legislators) can rarely be thought of as purely rational actors. Rather, "organizational decision making and behavior may be the result of bureaucratic politics, organizational 'satisficing', or even the simple limits of individual and institutional attention and information processing capability, leading to decision making 'by avoidance'."⁹⁴ This especially becomes evident when the Master Plan, once adopted becomes "holy writ" in a "battle...fought along the lines of piecemeal

⁹² Hudson Op. cit. 392.

⁹³ Rittell and Webber Op. cit. 27. *An excellent theoretical discussion from Karl Mannheim's writings concerning "functional rationality" and the "intelligensia" can be found in Zeitlin, Irving M. Ideology And The Development Of Sociological Theory Prentice-Hall Inc. Englewood Cliffs N.J. (1968) Chapter 16.

⁹⁴ Alexander Op. cit. 64.

engagements as the facts of power, the pressures of economics, and the tastes of the populace force a patchwork desecration"⁹⁵ to the original plan.⁹⁶

This argument has often been found in the writings of critical theorists who contend that advocates of comprehensive planning are "committed to the values of growth and development, and to the economic and political interests in the city that prospered through growth and development. Planners did indeed take sides and they sided with the powerful, with city builders."⁹⁷ Marcuse, for example, believes rationalization is a guise for establishing the conditions for a positive rate of accumulation. He states that:

The planner seeks to intervene to restore 'balance' but the 'balance'...is that which is necessary to reduce civil strife and to maintain requisite conditions for the steady accumulation of capital.... [T]he role of the planner, then, ultimately derives its justification and legitimacy

⁹⁵ Long Op. cit. "Planning And Politics In Urban Development" 167.

⁹⁶ *Hudson states that this is even the case in the non-adoption of plans. He claims that "rational comprehensive planning is vulnerable to the criticism that its plans never reach the stage of implementation. Master Plans are written and filed away, except in rare cases when vast new sources of funding become available in lumps and allow the planner to design programs from scratch, thus putting real clout into Government-by-Master-Plan." Hudson Op. cit. 393.

⁹⁷ Piven Op. cit. 308.

in intervening to restore that balance which perpetuates the existing order.... [T]he whole tradition of planning is progressive in that the planner's commitment to the ideology of social harmony...is perverted or corrupted in some way--always puts the planner in the role of 'righter of wrongs', 'corrector of imbalances' and 'defender of the public interest.'⁹⁸

Similarly, Klosterman claims that planners attempt "to promote a collective public interest revealed to serve primarily the needs of civic and business elites,"⁹⁹ and that their "attempts to employ scientific techniques and professional expertise are seen as helping legitimate state action in the interest of capital by casting it in terms of the public interest, neutral professionalism, and scientific rationality."¹⁰⁰

Whether or not the critical theorists's arguments are to be accepted is of less significance than the understanding that the rational planning model has come under severe attack for failing to recognize the fundamental constraints on organizational decision-making and the inherently political and ethical nature of planning practice.

⁹⁸ Marcuse, Peter "Professional Ethics And Beyond: Values In Planning" Journal Of The American Institute Of Planners 42:3 (July 1976): 223.

⁹⁹ Klosterman, Richard E. "Arguments For And Against Planning" Town Planning Review 56:8 (1985): 13-14.

¹⁰⁰ ibid.

VI. Ethics In Planning

In addition to the problems outlined above, Utilitarianism faces three problems of an ethical nature: integrity, consequentialism and the future. As previously stated, utilitarianism is inadequate in its attempt to provide a value-free decision-making device. Based on given intrinsic notions of man, utilitarians follow that what is the 'greatest good for the greatest number' is always the right choice. This, however, is questionable in itself.

Consider, for example, a planning decision that involves measures which cause misery and death to tens of millions today would result in saving greater misery and from death hundreds of millions in the future. Under utilitarianism, necessary atrocities that sacrifice tens of millions today would be carried out for hundreds of millions of tomorrow. Yet, this is all under the questionable certainty of the future--that hundreds of millions would be saved in time. This assumption would be a truth only to the utilitarian if this were empirical fact. Given this logic, and the belief that truth is never sacred (i.e. paradigms), such a sacrifice would not necessarily bring about the desired utopian result. This point can be easily grasped from even a cursory examination of past technological advances that cannot be linearly

graphed and predicted. Who would know, for example, that a panacea of the future would have saved millions sacrificed earlier. In short the progress of science and technology could yield many cases positively deviant to the end result.

The goal of greatest pleasure over pain is also not necessarily the correct one at the individual level. Smart and Williams present a strong illustration of this point in their reference to an imaginary pleasure process of penetrating electrodes in various regions of the brain to elicit behavior characteristics of pleasure when a current is passed through an electrode:

Suppose...that a man could (and would) do his full share of work in the office or the factory and come back in the evening to a few hours of contented electrode work, without bad aftereffects. This would be his greatest pleasure, and the pleasure would be so intrinsically and so easily repeatable that its lack of fecundity would not matter. Indeed perhaps by this time human arts, such as medicine, engineering, agriculture and architecture will have been brought to a pitch of perfection sufficient to enable most of the human race to spend most of its time electrode operating without compensating pains of starvation, disease and squalor. Would this be a satisfactory state of society? Would this be the millennium towards which we have been striving?

[W]e just do not want to become electrode operators. We want other things...we are not satisfied at being told that we would be in a certain state from tomorrow onwards, even though we may know that from tomorrow onwards we should be perfectly

satisfied.¹⁰¹

On the issue of consequentialism, certainly the brutalization of tens of millions cannot be justified for the future. Of course, if one were a utilitarian in the greatest sense, this should not matter--no integrity is necessary for such a sacrifice. Yet, is this necessarily right? To the moralist, such a sacrifice would not be.

Related scenarios that face planners can be found in biological engineering towards development of a "super species" and positive eugenics (the search for methods to increase the intelligence of the whole human race). One simple scenario can be found in the imaginary case of a sheriff making a decision in after a murder in a small town. Suppose the sheriff could prevent a riot from developing in which hundreds would likely be killed by framing and executing a scapegoat. Under utilitarianism, the execution would be granted for the saving of hundreds of lives that would outweigh one innocent individual. Yet, again, as in the above cases, such a sacrifice is not morally right for justice is not entered into the decision to execute.

¹⁰¹ Smart and Williams Op. cit. 20-21. *This idea is further purported through their concept of 'integrity'. See pages 82, 99 and 103 for further reference.

In conclusion, planning's utilitarian legacy faces numerous problems in its legacy of 'valuelessness' and amorality.¹⁰² Since the values of individuals continually change,¹⁰³ any quantitative approach to value reckoning applied linearly (i.e. as in predicting the future) is false hood.

In short, utilitarianism loses the criteria of 'people':

[P]eople are people, and not logical machines...they will accept change slowly, and not always the 'right' changes, or for the 'right' reasons.¹⁰⁴

102 *An excellent discussion against comprehensive planning for the public interest can be found in the arguments by the anti-planners. To a large extent, their criticisms are against the imposition of planner's values on others as in Howard's Garden Cities, 'grand designs' and rationality. See, for example, Fishman, Robert "The Anti-Planners: The Contemporary Revolt Against Planning And Its Significance For Planning History" in Cherry, Gordon E. ed. Shaping An Urban World Mansel Publishers London (1980): 243-253 and Jacobs, Jane The Death And Life Of Great American Cities Random House N.Y. (1961), Sennett, Richard The Uses Of Disorder Alfred A. Knopf N.Y. (1970) and Levi-Strauss, Claude Tristes Tropiques Antheneum N.Y. (1967).

103 *Ylvisaker confesses, for example, that "it is this characteristic of the modern metropolis which most intrigues and troubles me--its constant division into insulating compartments of life brought on by the unending efforts of its citizenry to break an almost incomprehensible diversity into understandable and manageable pieces of homogeniety." Ylvisaker Op. cit. 108. See also, Bolan Op. cit. "Emerging Views Of Planning" 234 and Bolan Op. cit. "Mapping The Planning Theory Terrain" 29.

104 Howard Op. cit. 64.

Chapter III. The Phenomenological Alternative

I. Introduction

In Chapter One, the planning discipline was discussed to be in 'crisis'. The 'trouble' lay in its failing to acquire a solid founding theory of guidance at resolving methodological and ethical problems.

Two articles in the Journal Of The American Planning Association have hinted at the possibility of a significantly divergent theoretical option. Krieger's insightful 1974 article, entitled "Some New Directions For Planning Theories"¹ recognizes the problem planning faces that each effort at providing new solutions "is more tragic as the quality gets better and the circles become more vicious."² As a possible solution, the article introduces phenomenology with language philosophy, linguistics and social studies. However, only brief introductory summaries of major works on the subject are provided without a substantive detailed presentation.

More recently, Lim and Albrecht reintroduced phenomenology in their 1987 article entitled "A Search For An Alternative

¹ *The full reference is Krieger, Martin H. "Some New Directions For Planning Theories" Journal Of The American Institute Of Planners 40:3 (May 1974): 156-163.

² ibid. 156.

Planning Theory: Use Of Phenomenology".³ The authors, limit their treatise, claiming that:

[I]n the area of the planning process, insofar as planning is viewed as a process concerned with intervention and reform, an effective professional practice requires a framework and theory of human action that deals with the constitution of values, intersubjectivity, and critical self-reflection. Phenomenology, in the tradition of Husserl and Schutz, provides a useful framework and theory to reconstruct knowledge in planning dealing with values and intersubjectivity.⁴

Considerable attention to the social phenomenologist Schutz's experiential action and the narrow application of phenomenology and the environment is the mainstay of the article. Little is presented in the way of directly counterposing the major tenets of phenomenology with utilitarianism.⁵

Given the apparent hiatus in linking phenomenology to planning theory,⁶ this Chapter explores phenomenology as an alternative grounding to utilitarianism in planning.

³ Lim, Gill-Chin and Albrecht, Johann "A Search For An Alternative Planning Theory: Use Of Phenomenology" Journal Of Architectural And Planning Research 4 1 (March 1987): 14-30.

⁴ ibid. 26.

⁵ *Although Lim and Albrecht do not take a position on utilitarianism per se, they claim its close derivative is a 'division'. This division is the "scientific approach, which favours the use of positivism...." ibid. 14.

⁶ *It should be noted that the articles were written 13 years apart in 1974 and 1987.

What follows is an examination of phenomenology's major methodological and ethical principles. Major areas include: a) the importance of subjectivity; b) the common sense approach; c) the open-minded method; d) the goal of typification; e) the method of bracketing; f) the role of experience and g) the confirmation of typifications by social action. These topics will be synthesized as a possible grounding for planning theory in Chapter IV.

II. The Origins Of Phenomenology

Phenomenology's major contributor was Edmund Husserl who wrote six voluminous works entitled the Logical Investigations at the turn of this century.⁷ Through these works, Husserl conceived a founding movement that shunned traditional and doctrinaire investigations of phenomena. It was his intention to supplant all previous modes of inquiry including traditional science.

Husserl's central thesis lay in the simplicity of common-

⁷ *Husserl's Volume I and II provide good foundational insight to phenomenology. See, especially, Husserl, Edmund Logical Investigations Vol. I.--Prolegomena To Pure Logic Findlay, J. N. trans. Humanities Press N.Y. (1900) and Husserl, Edmund Logical Investigations Vol. II--On The Theory Of Wholes And Parts Findlay, J. N. trans. Humanities Press N.Y. (1913).

sense inquiry of the everyday world⁸. It was his belief that the everyday world was finality and totality and lay prior to all theorizing: "that which is seen cannot be explained away, and is the final standard in all truly philosophical thought."⁹

With this notion, Husserl sought to deconstruct built theories and logical positivism.¹⁰ It was his conception that such theories were artificial and circular since they were founded on mathematical and logical assumptions and not of direct intuitive inquiry. Such theories were also never 'true', since they were based on the "prejudicial imposition of conceptual

⁸ *The phenomenological German claim 'Zu den Sachen!' ('To the things!') is commonly cited and used interchangeably with the 'mundane' and the 'intramundane'.

⁹ Farber, Marvin The Aims Of Phenomenology: The Motives, Methods, And Impact Of Husserl's Thought Harper & Row Publishers N.Y. (1966): 48.

¹⁰ *It should be noted that Husserl's attempt was neither completed by Husserl himself nor followed out systematically by his leading disciples. As Casey and Carr claim:

The most frequent and successful use of the phenomenological method came from its application in areas only peripherally related to natural science, logic, or mathematics. Thus the affinity between phenomenology and these disciplines was typically neglected or even denied. Phenomenology and especially its existential outgrowths often became associated with radically anti-scientific--or more accurately, anti-scientistic--currents of modern thought.

Carr, David and Casey, Edward S. eds. Explorations In Phenomenology: Papers Of The Society For Phenomenology And Existential Philosophy Martinus Nijhoff The Hague (1973): 4-5.

and ideational frameworks upon that experience."¹¹ Based purely on the build up mathematical relations at the exclusion of examining the common-sensical everyday world, traditional science does not have a basis for simple qualification making it impossible to prove all presuppositions. Developing full explication of assumptions underlying scientific laws is impossible since "as meanings are revealed, the assumptions being made in the analysis must also be explicated, and this further explication, involving additional assumptions, would also need to be explicated, and so on ad infinitum."¹² The interpretation of an event or text depends on an infinite set of interpretations. In short, phenomenologists criticize traditional science for obscuring the basic common-sense reality of the everyday world.

Husserl's theory is thus exceptional and differs profoundly from conventional philosophies. Formal definitions and postulates of mathematico-empirical deduction are not pertinent in phenomenological inquiry. According to Walsh, for example:

¹¹ Attig, Thomas "Existential Phenomenology And Applied Philosophy" in Hamrick, William S. ed. Phenomenology In Practice And Theory Martinus Nijhoff The Hague (1985): 175. *See also, Farber, Marvin "Values And The Scope Of Scientific Inquiry" in Natanson, Maurice ed. Phenomenology And Social Reality: Essays In Memory Of Alfred Schutz Martinus Nijhoff The Hague (1970): 16 and Kuhn Op. cit..

¹² Psathas, George "Introduction" in Psathas, George ed. Phenomenological Sociology: Issues And Applications John Wiley & Sons N.Y. (1973): 11.

The phenomenologist, as opposed to the phenomenalist, examines and then describes phenomena as they present themselves, studiously avoiding assumptions, prejudices and presuppositions of any kind while doing so. [T]he ultimate source of all statements is a 'seeing' of the things immediately given in consciousness (without any effort to decide whether the thing that is there is a reality or an appearance). The phenomenological method consists in pointing to what is given and elucidating it. It elucidates it by pointing to the necessary and invariant features, the essential structure, or 'essence', of the object.¹³

Thus, in contrast to conventional empiricism, rationality and science, phenomenological inquiry has been termed a 'new empiricism',¹⁴ that demands a "radical reversal of our total existence reaching into our depths, a change of every pre-scientifically-immediate comportment to world and things as well as the disposition of our life lying at the basis of all scientific traditionally-philosophical attitudes of

¹³ Walsh, Martin J. A History Of Philosophy Geoffrey Chapman London (1985) 519.

¹⁴ *Zaner states that phenomenology "is 'transcendental', one can say, because it is foundational, seeking to uncover and explicatively to analyze the necessary presuppositions of every actual and possible object and process of consciousness, leading ultimately to the grounds for philosophical reflection itself. It is therefore also 'idealism' because, as criticism, it is obliged to turn to consciousness itself as a complex of acts and processes by and through which alone are objects of any and all types whatever presented, experienced, or otherwise made known...." Zaner, Richard M. "On The Sense Of Method In Phenomenology" in Pivcevic, Edo ed. Phenomenology And Philosophical Understanding Cambridge University Press Cambridge (1975): 140.

knowledge."¹⁵ The next sections elaborate phenomenology's distinctive tenets.

III. Central Tenets Of Phenomenology

1. The Importance Of Subjectivity

The idea that private experience is the sole foundation of knowledge pervades all works on phenomenology. This, Husserl often cited, was his "first principle of cognition"¹⁶ or the 'natural attitude'.¹⁷ Although a disconcerting fact is that philosophers who regard themselves as 'phenomenologists' often radically differ in their handling of key philosophical issues, they are united on the principle that the analysis of experiences must be from the point of view of those who have them. The view that the meaning-structure of human action is from the "standpoint of man as actor (that is, as attaching meaning to his action) rather than spectator,"¹⁸ is

¹⁵ Fink, Eugen "What Does The Phenomenology Of Edmund Husserl Want To Accomplish?" in Sallis, John ed. Research In Phenomenology Vol. II Humanities Press N.Y. (1972): 6.

¹⁶ Bidney, David "Phenomenological Method And The Anthropological Science Of The Cultural Life-World in Natanson Op. cit. Phenomenology And The Social Sciences 109.

¹⁷ Voegelin, Eric "The Eclipse Of Reality" in Natanson Op. cit. Phenomenology And Social Reality: Essays In Memory Of Alfred Schutz 186.

¹⁸ Jung, Hwa Yol "A Critique Of The Behavioral Persuasion In Politics: A Phenomenological View" in Natanson Op. cit. Phenomenology And The Social Sciences 145.

consistently held. All phenomenologists believe the human subject possesses the ultimate capacity of being a "knower, inquirer and moral agent."¹⁹ The actor, "being the principle source of information about the social world, has the primal endowment of meaning and verification through immediate conscious experience or inner perception."²⁰

Consequently, in contrast to empiricism, phenomenology avoids the illicit assumption of the validity of the deductive model of science.²¹ The logical positivistic²² separation of fact

¹⁹ *Cahoone claims that phenomenology "is the only rational systematic inquiry into the essential structures of all phenomena and the acts of consciousness in which the phenomena appear--e.g., perception, imagination, memory, etc.." Cahoone, Lawrence E. "The Interpretation Of Galilean Science: Cassirer Contrasted With Husserl And Heidegger" Studies In History And Philosophy Of Science 17 1 (1986): 5.

²⁰ *Husserlian perception is explored in detail in Drost, Mark P. "The Primacy Of Perception In Husserl's Theory Of Imagining" Philosophy And Phenomenological Research 50 3 (March 1990): 569-582.

²¹ *This argument is highlighted in Pietersma, Henry "The Problem Of Knowledge And Phenomenology" Philosophy And Phenomenological Research 50 1 (September 1989): 27-47. Pietersma clarifies the phenomenologist concern for 'doubt' in his claim that:

Husserl does not mean that any claim to seeing an object itself is beyond criticism and infallible. A particular person claiming that such and such an object is itself given may very well have been wrong. As critics may be able to demonstrate, he or she may have been hasty or lazy in the exercise of his or her cognitive powers, so that more inquiry is called for. 35.

²² *See Sternlieb, George "Seven Hills On The Way To The Mountain: The Role Of Planning And Planners" in Burchell and Sternlieb Op. cit. 297-309 for criticism of modern planning based on analytical tools, mathematics and planning elitism

and value which "in the name of the norm of value...are kept apart and considered to be (logically) heterogeneous,"²³ is erroneous.²⁴ Human life is not analogous to the barrenness of a 'lunar landscape'²⁵ or the strict operationalization of a

through such headings as "Numbers Do Not Read Themselves", "Have Regression Will Travel", "How High The Silhouette?" and "A World I Never Made".

²³ Jung Op. cit. 159. *See Jacob Bronowski's: The Common Sense Of Science Harmond University Press Cambridge Mass. (1961); Science And Human Values Harper & Row N.Y. (1965), and The Ascent Of Man British Broadcasting Corporation London (1974) on the importance of the accumulated, common sense knowledge in planning principles, rationales and standards.

²⁴ *Taylor notes, for example, that intersubjective meanings expressed in the language and descriptions constitutive of institutions and practices, "do not fit into the categorical grid of [the] mainstream.... This allows only for an intersubjective reality which is brute data identifiable. Any description of reality in terms of meanings which is open to interpretive question is only allowed into...scientific discourse if it is placed, as it were, in quotes and attributed to individuals as their opinion, belief, attitude." Taylor, Charles "Interpretation And The Sciences Of Man" in Carr, David and Casey, Edward S. eds. Explorations In Phenomenology: Papers Of The Society For Phenomenology And Existential Philosophy Martinus Nijhoff The Hague (1973): 99. Taylor generally writes on the field of political science. See also, Faludi, Andreas Planning Theory Pergamon Press Oxford (1973) especially on page 106 on his discussion of the political implementation of survey data in Great Britain.

²⁵ *Baum claims that the "technical-political debate is a contest between two hypothetical worlds in which the protagonists of each argue that planners should attempt to act as if the particular assumptions of their world were true.... The technical landscape is lunar; all settings look pretty much the same." Baum, Howell S. "Caring For Ourselves As A Community Of Planners" Journal Of The American Planning Association 56 1 (Winter 1990) 64-65.

computer.²⁶ Instead, in phenomenology, there is recognition of a pure ego rather than an empirical ego.²⁷ Only through the realm of pre-conceptual (i.e. pre-scientific) intuited phenomena can access be made to the pure presentation of the phenomena of consciousness.

Thus, it is erroneous to attempt proof of the existence of a natural (mundane) world outside immediately intuited phenomena. Any separation of subject and object leads "inevitably to the well-known epistemological problem which was formulated for the first time by Descartes."²⁸ The notion of a "disembodied consciousness [as in Cartesianism] is an essential absurdity."²⁹ As Zaner claims:

²⁶ *This is a common criticism. Jung states, for example, that: "Phenomenology has now shown conclusively, I think, the qualitative differences between the information-processing of a computer (which, by the way, must have a 'body' in order to 'think') and the intelligence of a fully embodied agent.... Because it [the computer] is capable of handling only 'unambiguous, completely structured information', the machine is incapable of handling the ambiguous and 'ill-structured data' of the human daily life-world." Jung Op. cit. 170-171.

²⁷ Van de Pitte, M. M. "Is There A Phenomenological Method?" Metaphilosophy 8 1 (January 1977): 29.

²⁸ Kockelmans, Joseph J. The World In Science And Philosophy The Bruce Publishing Company Milwaukee Wisconsin (1969): 140-141. *See also, Stroh, Guy W. "The Concepts Of Mind And Spirit In The Philosophy Of James K. Feibleman" Tulane Studies In Philosophy 25 (1976): 79-81 on the contemporary Cartesian debate.

²⁹ Zaner, Richard M. The Way Of Phenomology: Criticism As A Philosophical Discipline Pegasus N.Y. (1970): 130.

The 'empiricist' feature of Husserl's philosophy consists in this: that this philosophy insists that positing anything beyond all possible experience of any kind is sheer nonsense, and that it is to the 'things themselves' of experience, and precisely as experienced (in whatever way), that one must ultimately appeal for all evidence and knowledge. But it is a 'new' empiricism, because 'experience' has been critically disclosed as manifestly richer and enormously more stratified and differentiated than any tradition empiricism understood it to be.³⁰

In short, the world is not of objects independent of humans who experience them, nor subjective experience independent of objects, events, and activities. Phenomenology's perceptual model is therefore:

not that of a container with an 'inside' and an 'outside,' hooked up by wires to receive messages from the 'real' world, nor is it the consequence of a separation between mind and body, a case still pending before the philosophic domestic relations court. Rather, for phenomenology, consciousness is conceived of as a unity in which the 'subjective' is already in direct connection with the objects of its intentional concern because those 'objects' are parts of the unified structure of the streams of consciousness--not 'things' but meant correlates of the acts which intend them. To turn to consciousness, then, is to locate the essential features of meaning-structures whose universality is guaranteed, in part, by the fact that no predication of existence, ontological status, or psychological specificity is either being made or is at issue in the phenomenological attitude.³¹

³⁰ Zaner Op. cit. "On The Sense Of Method In Phenomenology" 140.

³¹ Natanson Op. cit. Phenomenology And Social Reality: Essays In Memory Of Alfred Schutz 111-112.

2. The Common Sense Approach

Phenomenological inquiry is a primordial glance through the everyday eye.³² Matters of thought are simply accepted without the intimation of serious question with everything holding equally well from the standpoint of others. The intentional perception of images and language through terms such as "'openness', 'presence', 'encounter', 'dialogue'"³³ is neither a kind of private knowledge with regard to oneself nor an inference with respect to the purely subjective psychological states of others.³⁴

Thus, 'knowing' is accomplished through dissociating oneself from believing in the world and in the status of mental life

³² *See Bossert, Philip J. "'Plato's Cave', Flatland And Phenomenology" in Hamrick Op. cit. 63-64.

³³ Kockelmans Op. cit. 155-156. *Much of this points to existential phenomenology. See, especially: Langan, Thomas The Meaning Of Heidegger: A Critical Study Of An Existentialist Phenomenology Routledge & Kegan Paul London (1959); Cahoon Op. cit.; Foltz, Bruce V. "On Heidegger And The Interpretation Of Environmental Crisis" Environmental Ethics 6 (Winter 1984): 323-338; Westra, Laura "Let It Be: Heidegger And Future Generations" Environmental Ethics 7 (Winter 1985): 341-364; Radloff, Bernhard "Deconstructing Heidegger" University Of Toronto Quarterly 57 4 (Summer 1988): 561-563, and Gurwitsch, Aron "Problems Of The Life-World" in Natanson Op. cit. Phenomenology And Social Reality: Essays In Memory Of Alfred Schutz especially on pages 39+.

³⁴ *Existential phenomenology, in promoting such wisdom, falls squarely within the tradition of humanistic philosophy. See, Attig Op. cit. 176.

as itself in the world.³⁵ It is unformalized, varied and without preconceptions:

[We can intend it [phenomena] emptily, simply referring to it in a way that involves nothing more than understanding the words we use; or we can imagine it, thereby illustrating our intention to ourselves; or we can see a picture of it, so that it is again illustrated, but this time by means of perceiving an object (the picture) other than the one we intend; or we can infer its existence whether by interpreting some conventional sign or drawing a causal inference, where again our inference is based on some object other than the one we intend; or finally, we can just see it, or touch, hear, smell or taste it, in which case our relation to the object is not mediated by some other thing.³⁶

In short, the "Husserlian phenomenologist adopts as his fixed policy an attitude of neutrality, or self-restraint, vis-a-vis his own continuous believing in...particular intramundane things intended to and toward the world as a whole."³⁷ Perceptual experience supplies the given or the most basic self-evidence. Experience in the everyday world "will be reliable and the symbols engendered will truly refer to the known...in truth."³⁸ Common sense knowledge, therefore,

³⁵ Cairns, Dorion "What Is Phenomenology?" in Zaner, Richard M. and Ihde, Don Phenomenology And Existentialism G. P. Putnam's Sons N.Y. (1973): 44.

³⁶ Carr, David "Phenomenology And Relativism" in Hamrick Op. cit. 24.

³⁷ Cairns Op. cit. 42.

³⁸ Voegelin Op. cit. 186.

becomes a matter of "decidedly practical import,"³⁹ in which scientists must start with unexplicated and perhaps inexplicable assumptions of knowledge until proven otherwise. The canons of objectivity are relaxed in the assumption that the "more disciplined, the more rigorous the effort to apply the standard of scientific objectivity in...research becomes, tenuous grows the connection between the theoretical ideas and interest that motivate the research, and its execution."⁴⁰

3. The Open-Minded Method

In phenomenology, phenomena are taken as they are in various ways without presuppositions, assumptions, theories, beliefs or prejudices. Consequently, "phenomenological inquiry begins in silence. This silence represents a struggle to 'see' the phenomena as clearly as possible and as these are given in immediate experience, in one's own consciousness of those things."⁴¹

Without preconceptions, phenomena are viewed 'open-mindedly',⁴²

³⁹ Bittner, Egon "Objectivity And Realism In Sociology" in Psathas Op. cit. 110.

⁴⁰ ibid. 116.

⁴¹ Psathas Op. cit. "Introduction" 13.

⁴² *Phenomenologists use interchangeable terms for 'open-mindedness' including a 'phantasying ego' and viewing with 'free variation'.

in "an infinitely open multiplicity"⁴³ or "variegated range of attention, going from rich and dramatic envisagement to highly abstract and unlikely possibilities and resultants."⁴⁴ Nothing is perceived as set or concrete. That "which is actually perceived as real and that which is more or less clearly co-present but equally taken to be real, are partly permeated and partly surrounded by a dimly apprehended margin of indeterminate reality which I [subject] call the world."⁴⁵

4. The Goal Of Typification

The goal of open-minded perception is to discover the typification or essence of phenomena. In the absence of preconceptions, various interpretations are possible to discover commonplace features of phenomena. Essential features determine what make the phenomena what it is "without which the thing or event could not exist."⁴⁶ If the process "discloses that a particular feature is invariably present in all imagined examples, then an essential feature is thought

⁴³ Casey, Edward S. "Memory And Phenomenological Method" in Hamrick Op. cit. 44.

⁴⁴ Natanson Op. cit. Phenomenology And Social Reality: Essays In Memory Of Alfred Schutz 107.

⁴⁵ Kocklemans Op. cit. 136.

⁴⁶ Farber Op. cit. "Values And The Scope Of Scientific Inquiry" 11.

to have been discovered."⁴⁷

The discovery of typical features is the pivotal element of Husserl's attempt to transform philosophy into a rigorous science. In contrast with traditional science's method of studying empirically defined objects, describing their particulars and forming generalizations to all occurrences of a type or class, phenomenological analysis seeks to "develop more abstract formulations as in ideal-typical-analyses."⁴⁸

As Voegelin claims:

[A Subject] will put his imagination to further work and surround the imaginary self with an imaginary reality apt to confirm the self in its pretence of reality; he will create a Second Reality, as the phenomenon is called, in order to screen the First Reality of common experience from his view.... First, on the level of contents, a reality projected by imagination may deform or omit certain areas of reality experienced; reality projected, we may say, obscures or eclipses First Reality.⁴⁹

In summary, ideal typologies are not understood in the light of earlier theoretical idealizations, formalizations or constructions of geometry and physics. Instead, essential a prioristic particulars are discovered that typify phenomena. This makes the "distinction between the a priori pertaining

⁴⁷ Attig Op. cit. 173.

⁴⁸ Psathas Op. cit. "Introduction" 10.

⁴⁹ Voegelin Op. cit. 185-186.

to the perceptual world (lebensweltliches a priori) and the logico-objective a priori of the exact sciences"⁵⁰. In short, ideal types⁵¹ provide distinctions between the truth or falsity, clarity or vagueness, completeness or incompleteness of phenomena in phenomenology.

5. The Method Of Bracketing

From the above discussion of subjectivity, common-sense, open-mindedness and typification, it is clear that Husserl was highly critical of introspection other than that of the everyday world. It was his belief that the simplicity and originality of the common everyday world was concealed under a 'tissue of ideas'⁵² of mathematics and natural science.⁵³ Numbers, models and preconceived theories hide original phenomena. Bittner claims, for example, that the "norm of formalization of inference...provides that statements involving conclusions of any kind [of] objectivity is commensurate with the degree to which reaching them can be mathematized...there is nothing left to the unruly factor of

⁵⁰ Casey Op. cit. 47.

⁵¹ Natanson Op. cit. Phenomenology And Social Reality: Essays In Memory Of Alfred Schutz 110.

⁵² Gurwitsch Op. cit. 48.

⁵³ *See also, Ducasse, C. J. "Philosophy And Natural Science" The Philosophical Review 49 2 (March 1990): 121-141. Ducasse claims the subject-matter of the natural sciences are any facts ascertainable by ordinary external perception.

subjectivity."⁵⁴

The central task of the phenomenologist, therefore, is to unveil the reality of the everyday world by eliminating reference to an "ideal mathematical order".⁵⁵ Only what is immediately evident to consciousness must be studied. Beliefs, attitudes and preconceived ideas must be bracketed out and judgement suspended.⁵⁶ As Gurwitsch claims:

To arrive at it [inner perception], all acts of apprehension and interpretation are disregarded and their contributions discarded, which means stripping cultural objects of their cultural sense and human significance. What remains is a perceptual world, that is to say, a world given in--as we have expressed it before--pristinely pure perceptual experience. It is not a mathematized world, nor is it conceived under the perspective of its possible mathematization, nor does it have the sense of being amenable to objective scientific explanation of the specific modern variety.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Bittner Op. cit. 111.

⁵⁵ Gurwitsch Op. cit. 49.

⁵⁶ *As Zaner contends, this attitude is essential since it:

is an 'attitude': i.e., an orientation towards things (in the world), a way of regarding which is not so much an explicit action as it is an implicit informing of our lives. [I]t is, moreover, 'natural': i.e., expressive of the fundamental tendency of consciousness to 'posit' or 'take a stand toward' whatever it encounters or experiences. Zaner Op. cit. "On The Sense Of Method In Phenomenology" 126.

⁵⁷ Gurwitsch Op. cit. 58.

Nothing, however, is lost in the process since reality is only relocated within the pure consciousness of individuals. Casey claims, for example, that we "have literally lost nothing, but have won the whole of absolute being [i.e., pure consciousness], which, properly understood, conceals in itself all worldly transcendences (as intentional correlates of acts of habitual validation which ideally form a unity together), 'constituting' them within itself."⁵⁸

Thus, phenomenology is only concerned with attaining the integral relationships of experienced phenomena.⁵⁹ Gurwitsch claims, for example, that "the yellow color of the chair over there is considered a property of the thing itself and is not taken for a subjective sensation provoked by processes describable in mathematico-physical terms which impinge upon our sense organs."⁶⁰

In summary, the phenomenological bracketing of preconceptions is to lead back to origins and beginnings which have become obscured by the empirical world view. The suspension of judgement leads to the understanding of objects of experience as they be. As Casey maintains, "consciousness has a being of its own which in its absolute uniqueness of nature remains

⁵⁸ Casey Op. cit. 44.

⁵⁹ Lim And Albrecht Op. cit. 19.

⁶⁰ Gurwitsch Op. cit. 49.

unaffected by the phenomenological disconnection...."⁶¹

6. The Role Of Experience

In phenomenology, experience and history⁶² provide a means to verify the "character of the actually experienced life-world".⁶³ The process is one of continuously referencing the past to confirm the typifications of phenomena. Not "only is the whole continuity of pasts traditionalized, handed over to and into one another, and upon which the present stands, but the plastic, living present itself is also a continuous process of traditionalising."⁶⁴ Casey claims, for example, that:

Much depends, of course, on the phenomenon to be interpreted: if it is perceptual, then it will be mainly a matter of clarifying and of de-illusioning in different modes; if it is psycho-dynamic, it will involve recourse to free association or other bases of interpretive insight; if it is cultural, it will require historical/social/political considerations. But whatever mode or style of interpretation is pursued, remembering will be active and relevant.⁶⁵

⁶¹ Casey Op. cit. 43.

⁶² *Phenomenologists also term experience as a 'stock of knowledge' or a 'tradition-alization'.

⁶³ Casey Op. cit. 42.

⁶⁴ Kersten, Fred "Phenomenology, History, Myth" in Natanson Op. cit. Phenomenology And Social Reality: Essays In Memory Of Alfred Schutz 238.

⁶⁵ Casey Op. cit. 47.

Towards this, Husserl believed that over time, multiple modes of experience⁶⁶ sedimentize like the geological layering of the earth's crust. As Ballard notes:

The view that human changes collect the way sedimentary layers do in the earth's crust implies the same principles that were operative in the founding of earlier levels or layers of experience as were operative in the later and contemporary ones.... [T]he grasp is purer...in the sense that it approaches the passively constituting subjective activity which is, presumably, the minimal presupposition of any world whatever.⁶⁷

Through reference of a previous experience, a specific memory of the past related to bear the "recollection of what lived experience is like independent of the supervening cloak of ideas."⁶⁸ De-sedimentation becomes a form of open-mindedness in which earlier experiences are synthesized and "present experiences or objects refer beyond themselves to horizons of other possible experiences, both past and future, and other aspects of the same objects."⁶⁹ Like each note in a melody, in which the subject links the total verse from past and

⁶⁶ Attig Op. cit. 169.

⁶⁷ Ballard, Edward G. "On The Method Of Phenomenological Reduction, Its Presuppositions, And Its Future" in Embree, Lester E. ed. Life-World And Consciousness: Essays For Aron Gurwitsch Northwestern University Press Evanston Ill. (1972): 117.

⁶⁸ ibid.

⁶⁹ Attig Op. cit. 169.

future phases, past experience becomes a "kind of background awareness which Husserl calls retention; and future experiences are anticipated in so-called protention."⁷⁰ Wagner claims, for example, that:

the individual grasps the existence of remoter horizons of nature and social life which stretch far beyond the reach of his immediate view, his direct experience, and his active involvements.... [I]n various degrees of vagueness, he 'knows' areas he has never seen, persons he has never met, agencies he has never visited, and so forth.... Beyond this, he is left with the 'empty' conviction that spheres 'must' exist of which he knows nothing.⁷¹

Hence, what is 'given' at a specific moment is interpreted as a function of the temporal context of individual experience. Experience is a combination of undergoing and doing. It is not simply passive reception.⁷²

Thus, in recalling past experiences into new situations, the definition of the specific situation remains 'certain' for only the moment. As Taylor notes, "essential structures illustrated in perception, negation, intention and fulfillment

⁷⁰ Carr Op. cit. 29.

⁷¹ Wagner, Helmut R. "The Scope Of Phenomenological Sociology: Considerations And Suggestions" In Psathas, George ed. Phenomenological Sociology: Issues And Applications John Wiley & Sons N.Y. (1973): 66.

⁷² Attig Op. cit. 170.

in experience, etc. ...remain valid as determinations of possible types of experience. While they are experienced, they are 'certain'; and, like any mathematical proposition, they are valid no matter what the actual world is like."⁷³ Each situation is therefore a 'biographic situation'⁷⁴ and not something fixed. The individual ego is "in constant flux, enriched or impoverished as the case may be by supervening experiences."⁷⁵ Furthermore, Zaner claims that:

Hence, where the principle asserts the necessity of 'adequate observation', this must be taken both literally and contextually: one must 'get at' the affairs themselves, observe them in the way most appropriate to them, and what kind of observation is called for will necessarily vary according to the nature of what we judge about, believe in, or seek to know.⁷⁶

7. The Confirmation Of Typifications By Social Interaction

Phenomenologists admit that different individuals have diverse perceptions of experience. Each individual has a unique perception and variations in interpretation may occur between other individuals. This occurs since fields of perception,

⁷³ Farber Op. cit. The Aims Of Phenomenology: The Motives, Methods, And Impact Of Husserl's Thought 67.

⁷⁴ Wagner Op. cit. 71.

⁷⁵ Kersten Op. cit. 243.

⁷⁶ Zaner Op. cit. "On The Sense Of Method In Phenomenology" 133.

individual experience and memory vary between individuals.

Given the above, phenomenology incorporates a 'public'⁷⁷ component to confirm individual typifications of phenomena.⁷⁸

Through social interaction, the meaning of individual interpretations are qualified with the private realities of others. Natanson claims, for example, that:

The social world is an intersubjective one in several senses: first, it is the locus of my encounter with the 'Thou'; second, it is the scene of my own action which is directed toward my fellow-men. My action reveals the world as 'ours' no less than does my encounter with you as my 'Thou.'

As fellow-man...I can share a great deal with the Other: I can gain direct access to him as a Thou in the We-relationship and I can share a certain dimension of time through the fact that my alter ego and I grow older together...but even in these immediacies, I do not 'become' the Other nor do I enter mysteriously into⁷⁹ his lived experience. Sharing is not invading.

In short, adequate interpretation requires the intervention of others to aid in the interpretive process. In a

⁷⁷ Natanson Op. cit. Phenomenology And Social Reality: Essays In Memory Of Alfred Schutz 112.

⁷⁸ *Natanson claims, for example, that "consciousness is not an idiosyncratic spring to be tapped by a haphazard or esoteric method of intuition but intentionality itself, that which by its very nature is as 'public' and as 'intersubjective' as its intimates, mathematics and language." ibid. 112.

⁷⁹ ibid. 103, 110.

'dialectical logic'⁸⁰ of interplay between individuals, individual typifications become clarified with the consensus of others. Kockelmans claims, for example, that despite all differences, "we understand that our neighbors and I together organize the objective, spatio-temporal world of real things as the world-around-us that is there for all of us to which we ourselves also belong."⁸¹

In short, although the harmonious development of the individual perceptual process can be challenged, "as when what we see in a display-window appears to be a living person and, a few moments later, a clothed dummy,"⁸² such discrepancies have "always been resolved in the course of perceptual experience, so that its coherence and inner consistency have been reestablished by means of revisions and corrections. Perceptual experience carries with it the horizontal presumption (Horizont-Prasumtion) that further experience will come into play by virtue of which all horizons will be explored, all conflicts reconciled, and the world disclosed as intrinsically concordant (einstimmig)."⁸³

This concept has been explored by post-Husserlian scholars

⁸⁰ Casey Op. cit. 47.

⁸¹ Kockelmans Op. cit. 138.

⁸² ibid. 59.

⁸³ Gurwitsch Op. cit. 59-60.

including Alfred Schutz and Erving Goffman. Schutz's phenomenology of social reality is heavily based on the concepts of subjective meaning, action, and intersubjectivity.⁸⁴ To him, meaning is subjective and intentional but requires intersubjectivity to confirm objectivity. "Each individual is continuously ordering, classifying and interpreting his ongoing experiences according to his own way of explaining them."⁸⁵ The intersubjective process verifies individual interpretation similar to Husserl's original conception.

Erving Goffman's work also stands out in this discussion of intersubjectivity. Similar to Husserl, his approach is to seek recurrent features of 'natural units of interaction'⁸⁶ (human symbols and actions) and the 'normative order'⁸⁷ prevailing within and between these units (i.e. social interaction and habits). He extends Husserl's conception through 'serious

⁸⁴ *See Schutz's work in: Wagner Op. cit.; Natanson Op. cit. Phenomenology And Social Reality: Essays In Memory Of Alfred Schutz; Grathoff, Richard The Theory Of Social Action: The Correspondence Of Alfred Schutz And Talcott Parsons Indiana University Press Bloomington Ind. (1978), and Schutz's series of Collected Papers by Brodersen, Arvid ed. Martinus Nijhoff The Hague (1967).

⁸⁵ Lim and Albrecht Op. cit. 20.

⁸⁶ Psathas, George and Waksler, Frances C. "Essential Features Of Face-To-Face Interaction" in Psathas Op. cit. 162.

⁸⁷ ibid.

ethnography,⁸⁸ or the identification of behavioral patterns of social interaction. Similar to Husserlian typification of phenomena, Goffman claims interaction is when an individual engages one's naked senses of giving and receiving messages through face-to-face communication.⁸⁹

In summary, phenomenology is both private and public. The interplay of individuals provides a consensual means to confirm individual understanding.

Given the above tenets of phenomenology, the next Chapter overviews how phenomenology can improve planning thought.

⁸⁸ ibid.

⁸⁹ *It should be noted that face-to-face communication is a metaphor. As Psathas and Waksler state, individuals "need not see, hear, or touch one another as long as at least one of their naked senses is operating and they are considered to be within sensory range of one another...they need not be literally face-to-face.... [F]ace-to-faceness of face-to-face interaction is thus seen to be a metaphor rather than a literal description of a necessary condition. Face-to-face interaction can occur even though both parties are 'faceless', not visible to each other, or turned away from each other...." ibid. 178-179.

Chapter IV. Phenomenology And Planning

In this thesis, utilitarianism has been presented as the dominant tradition underpinning the planning profession. It has been shown that its impact is substantial; a philosophical credo of the 'public interest' and a quantitative methodology to achieve it, has provided planners with direction.

From its origins, the utilitarian paradigm has also incorporated into planning the traditional scientific methods based on empiricism. From science, planners made decisions based on an ethic of scientific rationality which emphasized 'objectivity' over subjective values. The planner, it was shown, could calculate the preferences of individuals through a simple hedonistic calculus of the majority rule.

The impact of utilitarianism has been significant. Planners made decisions under the faith of the 'greatest happiness for the greatest number'. Moreover, the technical rationality of science facilitated planners with a confidence to investigate and measure the 'public interest'. As impartial decision-makers, a rational-comprehensive plan could be devised.

This thesis has illustrated, however, that utilitarianism in planning faces considerable methodological and ethical obstacles. Measurement of the 'public interest' remains

obscured by the limitations of information gathering and the dynamics of human life. Individuals are not logical-machines from which their preferences can be predicted. Moreover, the utilitarian tenets of the majority good face major ethical problems. It has been shown, for example, that making decisions under a simple calculus does not necessarily mean that a 'right' or 'good' decision has been made.

As a resolve to the shortcomings of utilitarian thought, phenomenology has been shown to provide a unique alternative for planning. Through its tenet of subjectivism, phenomenology emphasizes a compassionate and emphatic examination of human life. Unlike the artificial objectivity of scientific introspection, facts and values are not separated. Instead, the subject-observer attempts to understand social phenomena in terms of those who experience it. The perception of life in the everyday world is probed in terms of common meanings and terms. Judgements and bias are suspended in the comprehension of the way individuals act in their environment and socio-historical culture. In short, phenomenology places a greater emphasis on humanistic understanding.

This extends further into ethics. Instead of decision-making based on a rational-comprehensive conception of the public interest, individual situations are examined in terms of their moral worth. Ethical issues are situational, as opposed to the

one guiding hedonistic calculus. Through situational analysis, moral issues can be resolved based on the merits of each single case without the rigidity and problems of the majority rule concept. As a departure from utilitarianism, phenomenology can provide planning with a better understanding of human needs, aspirations and feelings.

In spite of the above, phenomenology faces numerous hurdles as an alternative grounding for planning. Critics of phenomenology usher two main charges: 1) that phenomenology lacks a fully developed and functional methodology, and 2) that phenomenology lacks a means to interpret historicity.

In the first criticism, although qualitative approaches have been used, phenomenologists do not have a formal methodology. Zaner claims, that "there can be no straightforward exposition of this 'method', the 'talk about' it is in the strictest sense an appeal for its actual performance. All talk about it, thus, is 'false' to the precise extent that it is not done...."¹ The absence of a formal methodology has led some critics to claim that the "authentic and central meaning of Edmund Husserl's philosophy is today still unknown."² In short, "there are still justificatory arguments, programmatic

¹ Carr, David "History, Phenomenology And Reflection" in Ihde and Zaner Op. cit. 161.

² Fink, Eugen "What Does The Phenomenology Of Edmund Husserl Want To Accomplish?" in Sallis Op. cit. 6.

statements and exhortations to the reader, and explanations of why it is important that this approach be used."³ Husserl's claims presently stand on their own without a book of rules.⁴

Critics also question in what sense can the examination of the everyday world yield principles which are really a prioristic. It remains unclear as to how bias can be completely bracketed out to achieve the pure typification of a phenomena. Winthrop, for example, claims that in "what sense of this meaning of a priori the eidetic correlates of psychological experiences in the 'real world'...are a fulfillment it is hard to see."⁵ In short, critics do not believe that a pristine a priori natural attitude can be achieved without any influence of sense-impressions. As Winthrop claims, "transcendental essences, no matter how bloodless, from the structuring of analytic refinements, will never possess a 'validity' [that is] independent of all impressions of sense where these are essences of perceptions, judgments, and feelings, which take their very source from impressions of sense."⁶

³ Psathas Op. cit. "Introduction" 17.

⁴ *Interestingly, Van de Pitte claims that "Husserl did not live long enough to work out a methodology appropriate to the task of criticism of transcendental self-experience." Op. cit. 24.

⁵ Winthrop, Henry "Phenomenological Method From The Standpoint Of The Empiricist Bias" Journal Of Philosophy 66 3 (February 1949): 63.

⁶ ibid.

Critics, also "agree that Husserl failed to produce a viable theory of intersubjectivity."⁷ How typifications are necessarily confirmed through intersubjectivity remains unclear. Phenomenologists have simply dismissed the omission as "insoluble on the basis of Husserl's point of departure"⁸ or that Husserl "merely postponed the transition from the subjectivity of the lonely ego to the recognition of the social Other...."⁹ Winthrop summarizes the problem in the following three questions:

[C]ertain questions have to be raised regarding the consequences of the 'epoche'. (1) Is the transcendental description of any essence to be intersubjective in the sense of the natural standpoint, before it may be declared to have finally been qualitatively and structurally described? (2) if the answer is in the negative, how are the conflicting descriptions of the essences of the same 'real' intentions, upon the part of several transcendental 'observers', to be resolved, so as to find the 'right' or 'most adequate' description? (3) If the answer is in the affirmative, what are the techniques of attaining intersubjectivity in the naturalistic sense for experiences essentially 'private'?¹⁰

Critics, including post-Husserlian phenomenologists are also unclear as to why, if the attitude is a priori,

⁷ ibid.

⁸ ibid.

⁹ Wagner, Helmut R. "The Scope Of Phenomenological Sociology Considerations And Suggestions" in Psathas Op. cit. 63.

¹⁰ Winthrop Op. cit. 65.

intersubjective confirmation is even required. Originally, Husserl went against relativistic notions in his claim that the typifications of the everyday world were a prioristic or 'authentic'. Against relativism, Husserl argued that earlier conceptions of the truth failed in their dependence on the psychological make-up of human beings as a species (i.e. anthropologism).¹¹

In contrast to Husserl, Post-Husserlian scholars have moved towards relativism. Carr claims, for example, that "it may seem surprising that later heirs to the phenomenological tradition move steadily toward more or less explicit versions of relativism."¹² In moving towards relativism, phenomenologists leave the interpretation of phenomena open and variable. The 'authenticity' or 'realness' of perception is relegated. Instead, perceived or imagined objects are granted the ontological status as 'real' in a "mode of being entertained by consciousness but not real in the sense of being taken as actually existent or having in fact transpired as a mundane event."¹³ Farber points out, for example, that the subjective experience may be even 'unreal':

¹¹ *See Husserl, Edmund Philosophy As A Rigorous Science G. Allen & Unwin London (1910).

¹² Carr Op. cit. "Phenomenology And Relativism" 26.

¹³ ibid. 106.

The possibility that the starry heavens might be a dream object, or an illusion, may be dismissed as of interest to philosophical neophytes alone. If the stars are dream objects, then so is the entire subjective realm, apart from the actual, direct content of a passing experience.... [T]he purported past experience may also be illusory, a trick of the memory.¹⁴ Thus one could not claim anything absolutely.

In further illustrating this point, Attig further adds the example of pink rats:

But if one says that, e.g., within the hallucinatory experience of seeing pink rats climbing the walls the rats are taken as real, one is describing an element of the experience itself, and not saying that, independent of the experience, the rats really exist. Thus, in describing the hallucination of the pink rats, the existence of the rats has been bracketed (we are not concerned with whether they are real).¹⁵

In short, "a margin of latitude is left for variations, deviations, and fluctuations."¹⁶ This, however, has led critics to claim that phenomenology lacks precision. Phenomenologists, it is claimed, have a naive trust of superficial observation in the absence of rigorous inquiry. Thus, critics such as Winthrop ask "can there be any meaning to the mandate that intersubjectivity with respect to the

¹⁴ Farber Op. cit. The Aims Of Phenomenology: The Motives, Methods, And Impact Of Husserl's Thought 69.

¹⁵ Attig Op. cit. 167.

¹⁶ Gurwitsch Op. cit. 56.

nature of essences should be established?"¹⁷

Phenomenological method has been criticized for its vagueness and lack of formal methodologies to carry out its goal of discovering and confirming the everyday world. It appears Husserl only stated his phenomenological ideals without stating a technique at attaining them.

The second assault against phenomenology rests on phenomenology's lack of historicity. It has been shown earlier that an individual's stock of knowledge provided a means to clarify phenomena. Through the memory and recollection of prior experiences, a present experience is made relevant. As Carr claims:

Somehow Husserl wants to say both that we are always already in the life-world--not that we have left it behind and are cut off from it by history--and, on the other hand, that we as philosophers must go through history in order to get at the life-world.... The preconceptions deriving from our historical situation--in our case those inherited from the scientific tradition--stand for us and the direct access to the essence of our own experience that reflection was thought to provide.¹⁸

In other words, the temporal present experience becomes a synthesis of prior experiences. In the context of the immediate temporal experience, it is a given that an

¹⁷ Winthrop Op. cit. 65.

¹⁸ Carr Op. cit. "History, Phenomenology And Reflection" 173.

individual need only to have knowledge of a previous historical period without ever experiencing that period itself to come to terms with present. Knowledge of prior history therefore provides a reference for present understanding.

Critics, however, maintain that phenomenology is historically naive. Since each historical epoch has its own concepts, norms and world view, it remains an enigma as to how each epoch can be understood in its actual terms. This point again refers to the critics' contention that the natural attitude is always pervaded by some influence and is never 'bare' without bias. Critics, therefore, do not believe that a true conception of a historical epoch can be made. Consequently, "any pretence toward showing the universality of a given world is dropped altogether and the strong suggestion is made that the world may vary, if not from individual, then perhaps from one community or historical period to another."¹⁹ Carr, for example, asks:

But how are we able to understand Galileo's accomplishment--we who live in an age so thoroughly dominated by this thought? [We] can only succeed if we have access not only to Galileo's intellectual accomplishment of mathemization but also to the world which he confronted and sought to deal with in this way. In other words, we must place ourselves in a world which preceded Galileo's accomplishment in order to be able to 'reproduce' it in ourselves and thus to understand it in the way it must be understood.

¹⁹ Carr Op. cit. "Phenomenology And Relativism" 26.

We are justified in continuing to seek to escape in the sense of seeking to arrive at insights that are not historically relative. But we must resign ourselves to the unsettling recognition that we can never be sure we have succeeded.²⁰

Thus, in the examination of the everyday life-world, historical ideologies may actually cover or distort perception. Carr notes, for example, that the distinction between the life-world and the scientifically interpreted world is blurred "in the spell"²¹ of scientific concepts; "we can no longer separate the world we live in or directly experience from the world envisaged by our scientific concepts."²² This criticism has been recognized by others including Lim and Albrecht in their claim that there are difficulties in distinguishing presumed universal a priori structures from those that are influenced and altered through historical development. It is their conclusion that phenomenology lacks a method to critically evaluate the development of norms and values. Phenomenology's contribution, therefore, "appears to be limited to an uncritical interpretation of values and a facilitation of interpersonal

²⁰ Carr Op. cit. "History, Phenomenology And Reflection" 168, 174-175. *It should be noted that Husserl considered Galileo's mathematization of nature a great achievement on its intuitive 'strangeness'. See Cahoon Op. cit. especially on page 8 for elaboration of this point.

²¹ ibid. 162-163.

²² ibid.

processes."²³

As a solution to the problem of intersubjectivity, phenomenologists have moved towards relativism. In moving towards relativism, objects, facts or even perception of the world cannot be made without reference to whose objects, whose facts and whose world. Thus, in contrast to universal claims, cultures are examined as separate entities. Zaner claims, for example, that:

whatever may be the modality of certainty or uncertainty with which a particular claim is asserted, and whatever one may say as regards its clarity, adequacy, or truth-value, it is doubly contextual. Precisely to that extent, any claim is problematic. This is not to say that it is questionable or dubious (in the manner of scepticism), but rather that the epistemic claim as claim is essentially open to inquiry. It opens up questions bearing on its inner and outer contexts.²⁴

Thus, in accepting relativism, the perceptual world is not the same for all human beings.²⁵ Each socio-historical group is

²³ Lim and Albrecht Op. cit. 22.

²⁴ Zaner, Richard M. "The Phenomenology Of Epistemic Claims: And Its Bearing On The Essence Of Philosophy" in Natanson Op. cit. Phenomenology And Social Reality: Essays In Memory Of Alfred Schutz 18.

²⁵ *George H. Mead has adopted this discussion of the problem of universals in terms of the roles of the generalized other and the 'specific other'. Apart from the generalized other there can be no universality of a self that excludes social status. See Mead, George H. Mind, Self, And Society The University Of Chicago Press Chicago (1938) and O'Neill, John "On Simmel's "Sociological Apriorities" in O'Neill Op. cit. Perception, Expression, And History: The Social Phenomenology

confronted with its cultural world which is its life-world, a world apperceived, apprehended, and interpreted in a specific way.²⁶ In short, all cultural objects are defined by the sense embodied and embedded in them in reference to "mental life, to the plans, projects, designs, intentions, and the like of makers and users."²⁷

In summary, phenomenology faces numerous hurdles as an alternative grounding for planning. Perhaps the greatest hurdle lies in the development of a formal methodology to achieve its tenets. It is ironic that despite Husserl's claims towards attaining the typification of phenomena without bias, no means to achieve it were ever provided. Although qualitative field work has been suggested by post-Husserlian scholars, no adequate formula or recipe of procedures exists. Furthermore, how the confirmation or typifications through social interaction is done is missing. Utilitarianism, on the other hand, provides its 'greatest good for the greatest happiness' ethic as a guide. Phenomenology has no such model.

Phenomenology has also been criticized as historically naive.

Of Maurice Merleau-Ponty especially on pages 152-153.

²⁶ Gurwitsch Op. cit. 52. *See also, Filstead, William J. "Sociological Paradigms Of Reality" in Garvin, Harry R. ed. Phenomenology, Structuralism, Semiology Bucknell University Press London (1976).

²⁷ Gurwitsch Op. cit. 51.

The impact of historical influences by various phenomena (i.e. discoveries, ideology or world-views) can be mis-interpreted in the examination of a socio-historical group. In short, the criticism is directed in the skepticism of bracketing bias and judgement. Critics maintain that the impact of phenomena cannot be completely understood and that any claims of returning to a pristine understanding of a phenomena (i.e. an event or a particular situation) is not possible.

In conclusion, phenomenology offers a significant humanism to the planning field. Its subjectivistic criteria provides a different way of looking at phenomena than traditional science. In relegating quantification and the subject/object dichotomy of traditional modes of inquiry, phenomenology recognizes the limitations and false nature of scientific generalizations. Yet, as a new underpinning to planning, many methodological hurdles must be overcome before a paradigm shift is to occur.

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