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The once and future school of public policy

AARON WILDAVSKY

I have two partially complementary and partially opposed views. One is that schools of public policy as they now exist will continue much as they are. The other is that social developments, particularly the growing polarization of elites, will substantially alter their character. In the course of elaborating both views, I shall pose the usual questions—Where were these schools before? How did they get there? Where are they now? What will and/or should happen to them?

The Great Society and public policy schools

The immediate impetus of graduate schools of public policy was undoubtedly the Great Society. Suddenly new major social programs were there, and, almost as quickly, many of them were widely judged to have performed poorly. Why? Perhaps they were evaluated too early or held to too high standards. Perhaps social science research is flawed so that negative rather than positive results are more likely to be reported. Perhaps.

But more substantive reasons can be given. For one thing, people are difficult to change; where the change that is sought inheres in people (decreasing crime, increasing reading) rather than in the government (building bridges, mailing checks) program effectiveness declines. Since the natural human resistance to being molded in

other people's images impedes dictatorships as well as democracies, this difficulty is not all bad. For another thing, no policy has effects in just one direction. It is hardly possible, for instance, to alleviate misery without simultaneously encouraging it. People above the poverty line may slacken their efforts, seeing that those just below are doing better on welfare. People already poor are encouraged to stay poor. Now who would voluntarily stay on subsidy instead of taking gainful employment, were that available? Very few; but that is not the real story. When the choice is between a low-paying job and welfare, a series of small choices may well keep poor people where they are instead of where they and their government would have wished them to be. This is not a decisive argument against welfare programs, only an acknowledgement of the principle that when you subsidize something, you are likely to get more of it.

For whatever reasons, by 1968 serious doubts were being expressed by evaluators (stipulated objectives were not being met) and by politicians. On the political right, social programs were damned for increasing dependency (and at high cost), on the left for buying off protest too cheaply while actually perpetuating institutions that oppressed the poor. Analyzing public policies to see what went wrong, to learn how to do better, and to teach this understanding was the major motivation for establishing graduate schools devoted to the analysis of public policies (in the United States, at least, though not nearly to the same degree elsewhere—a subject to which I will return).

Inventing a new kind of school

Taking a step back in time, we can talk about schools of public policy originating in what they were against as well as what they were for. They were against existing schools of public administration, area studies, and uni-disciplinary work. Whether these schools were wonderful or terrible, their reputation was low. I recall this very well, because, when our Chancellor asked me to form a new school, I said, "What kind?" and he replied, "Not an old school of administration." (Indeed, a whole new field called "organization theory" had to grow parallel to the field of public administration, covering most of the same terrain, in order to make it respectable again.)

Much the same was true of foreign area studies. It had become apparent that learning little facts about Bungado did not get us very far. And as people became more experienced in dealing with policy, there was disenchantment as well with single disciplines. Now this may have had nothing to do with the discipline. It may be that we

always have to know more than we can ever find out; or that everything interesting intersects at least two disciplines; or that whatever one is studying (economics or politics or public administration) is not the right field for the purpose.

So what were the schools for? One thing they had in mind was a vague analogy to schools of business. These had status on the campus. They were tied to external constituencies. They received support. Their graduates were employed. My worry as dean was whether newly-minted policy analysts could find work. As things have turned out, there have been very few unemployed alumni of the Graduate School of Public Policy in Berkeley, and I believe this is true of the other schools as well.

In general, schools of policy were designed to be organizations that would do for the public sector what business schools had done for the private sector: produce students to colonize the bureaucracies, to criticize what those bureaucracies were doing, and, in a modest way, to set things right. By seeking agreement on avoiding the worst, the analytical movement seeks to improve the quality of the policy process. To get money from the Establishment for criticizing its behavior was the ideal. "Think tanks" provided positive identification. They joined practical problems to intellectual power; they were multidisciplinary. Tied into centers of power, they got their kudos from inventing new policies. Persuading people in government that whatever they were doing could not be right was their forte. After all, if agencies were doing the right thing, what would they want from analysts? Nor were the think tanks far from a certain academic intellectual style. In the field of nuclear weapons, for instance, the purpose was (and is) to imagine extremely unlikely states of affairs in order to make sure that we never, never, have empirical experience with them. And for whom is this mode of abstract thought more appropriate than for the academic?

The eclipse of "macro-macho" analysis

Another element in the social context was the kind of theory then in vogue. This was a time when microeconomics replaced sociology as the great scavenger of the social sciences. Just as there once had been a sociology of practically everything (sociologists, alas, suffered a calcification of the theoretical arteries, as a reading of their journals from the 1960s suggests), in its place came microeconomics as the theory of rationality. One form this took was "program budgeting." Before there were schools of policy, there were in fact curricula in program budgeting, generally nine months long

and giving birth to very little—an experience which taught something about teaching technique without providing an intellectual context in which to put it or a mechanism of socialization to solidify its impact.

A second, highly favored field was operations research, with its variety of optimization methods, especially linear programming. During World War II it turned out there were simple problems like bombing patterns or convoy patterns that were amenable to a few armchair analysts who understood a little about optimization methods. When people with practical experience fail and theorists succeed, the enterprise of abstract modeling receives reinforcement.

The origins of the "macro-macho" version of policy analysis—the belief that large national problems, from defense to welfare, are susceptible to solution through applications of economic analysis—were rooted in the intersection between economics, statistics, computing, and the defense "think tanks" of the early 1960s. The real costs of computing went way down, thereby suggesting that models with dozens of variables, big enough to capture real-life complexity, were then, or would soon be, feasible. The capacity to build big models implied the ability to understand large national problems by measuring (and then minimizing) the loss of economic efficiency among the various alternatives to existing policy that were considered.

The real loss was innocence. Experience showed that our intellectual ability to measure failure was far greater than our collective capacity to cause success by altering human behavior. Clear-cut solutions did not emerge from systemic analysis, moreover, because sufficient agreement about objectives as well as knowledge of their consequences could not be obtained. In an amazingly short time (within a decade), therefore, a counter-reaction set in: Flushed with ostensible success in defense policy, analysts might have taken as their ethos the centralized, large-problem focus of program budgeting. Instead, sobered (made too timid, some would say) by failure, the teaching and the practice of analysis took on its contemporary characteristics—incremental as opposed to radical change, smaller rather than larger problems, decentralized, bottoms-up analysis dealing with diverse preferences, not the centralized, top-down preference of a single decision maker.

The earliest substantial manifestation of analysis was evaluation of social programs. The evaluation industry (and it is an industry) employs many more people than have ever been graduated from schools of policy analysis. One thing evaluators learned was that most analysis is rejected by the organizations that sponsor it. But if

policy analysis was to have practical importance—intended to be, as it was, an applied subfield—it had not merely to be done but to be used. One way of bridging the gap was to develop a new specialty called “implementation”; a parallel effort was devoted to the utilization of policy analysis. Hence emphasis shifted to the political uses and abuses of analysis.

Connecting economics and politics, in a way very important for schools of policy, was one of these minuscule elites that do not show up in anybody's survey of mass opinion, but which are nevertheless significant; namely, the “public choice” movement, composed of social scientists who apply economic analysis to politics. These are the people behind the balanced budget-spending limit amendment, behind the flat tax and variants thereof, behind the rationalization of limited government. When public choice theorists started developing persuasive models of organizations, their influence loomed large. Schools of public policy needed some way to connect politics, economics, and organizations, and public choice was what there was.

Deep in the recesses of the minds of political scientists who took part in the formation of public policy schools was the Lasswellian paradigm, a language of policy analysis that stressed its essentially normative character: the problem-oriented; value-laden, interdisciplinary historical, contextual, and hoped-for democratic character of policy advice that Harold Lasswell stressed in teaching the importance of analysts in relation to power. His designation of the “policy sciences,” as he called the effort to bring intelligence to bear upon public policy, was suffused both with a sense of the limits of quantitative methods and of the obligation to clarify goals in the service of human dignity.

Breaking the bureaucratic monopoly

I have not mentioned something so obvious in facilitating or inhibiting the movement for policy analysis that it has largely escaped attention. The demand for analysis depends on the desire for competition in the giving of advice. There must be more than one alternative; they must come from more than a single source; and there must be sufficient dispersion of power in society so that competing sources of advice have a chance of being heard and acted upon.

It is exactly intolerance for independent advice that has inhibited schools of public policy from starting in Europe. If you have hierarchical societies, if you have legitimated the idea of bureaucracy having a monopoly of expertise in policy areas, you will not

look too favorably on the idea of think tanks. What are analysts supposed to do? If they are supposed to ratify what the government does, they are hired guns, self-serving and worse. If they are to criticize it, that means government cannot be doing the right thing; then, in the European view, the party or parties that rule should be changed. The sense that authority goes with position rather than having to be earned each moment is very European and Japanese but it is not at all American. Competition among parties (think of them as rival hierarchies) has been legitimated in Japan and Europe but not yet competition of policy ideas outside party and bureaucracy. That is why policy research, if done at all, takes place in institutes attached to political parties.

Traditionally, the main characteristics of bureaucracy are seen as security of tenure and a monopoly of expertise. The policy analytic movement in American has weakened tenure and destroyed monopoly. For every important area of policy in America, there are numerous rival centers of analysis. Are not these the same people who used to hold bureaucratic or legislative positions or who are likely to hold them in the near future? They are the rival corps of analysts in the congressional staffs, in the congressional budget office, in the legislative reference service, in think tanks, in universities, in foundations for this and institutes of social study for that.

The bureaucracy has not only lost a monopoly of expertise in defense, but also in transportation and welfare and medical care. Civil servants can no longer claim they really know better than anybody else, a claim that our bureaucracy could make in most areas of policy through the 1950s. Consequently, information about public policy—how it works now, why it might work better, which clienteles it might serve differently—while once a private preserve, has become public property; its provision has changed from monopoly to a competitive enterprise.

At any given time, half of all analysts (the "outs") are criticizing what the other half (the "ins") are trying to do. The support of government by the ins is just as crucial as the criticism of the outs. Every four years or so, many of them switch positions. Both sides think having this competitive game makes for better policy. Analysts defend government as much as they criticize it; that is what makes the game interesting.

Lacking the commitment to competition to sustain independent, non-government, non-party, non-interest group thinking, Western Europe lacks either think tanks or schools of public policy. Why, one might ask, to round out this discussion of competition, have

there been no schools of public policy in the Third World? Certainly, there is no lack of problems or of the need for talented people to help ameliorate them.

Where ruling elites are dedicated to the expansion of government, graduates of schools of public policy would be an impediment. Instead of valuing government as the agency of first resort, they are likely to consider it a vehicle of last resort. They will ask instead what incentives might be offered or disincentives removed to encourage others—private companies, community groups, semi-official bodies—to take on the task. They are interested in liberating the underutilized capacities of the populace, not in adding further to government overload. The hands-on orientation inculcated by schools of analysis is also foreign to elite corps of civil servants who value positions in the capitol. When government conceives of itself as the Great Employer (hire this one, fire that one) instead of as the employee, there is no point in looking outside for advice.

Students in a graduate school of public policy learn how to collect data under difficult conditions, make sense of it with simple models, integrate their proposals into organizational ambitions, and otherwise get and keep in touch with their clientele. This "hothouse" atmosphere creates an esprit de corps around tangible accomplishment. They are socialized to think in terms of alternatives, to care about results, and, above all, to take a "can do" attitude to a recalcitrant world. This optimism marks them as peculiarly American.

Analysts are decentralizers. Given the endemic uncertainty, the paucity of reliable data, and the absence of knowledge, it is, on average, better to do small rather than large projects, tap the dispersed information of people in the field, try tiny experiments, and learn from experience. For all this, the incremental, implementing, field-oriented world of analysts is superior. The operational style of the analyst is also morally desirable in that it favors modest improvement over calamity. It leaves many moderately better off and few worse off. "Steady as she goes" may not be as glamorous as "full speed ahead," but it is protective of mankind's modest capacity for virtue disciplined by intelligence. It is in this dual sense—working within the limits not only of mankind's cognitive but also its moral capacities—that policy analysis is profoundly conservative.

Analysts do sing more than a single tune. They are aware of the defects of decentralization. Hence, they may support centralization to expand the size of markets, to internalize externalities, to take advantage of increasing returns to scale, and otherwise to do better nationally what is less well-done locally. But their instinct, their

bias if you will, is to be more skeptical of centralized solutions. Besides, there are others whose cast of mind fits them better to be proponents of large, expensive, uniform, and, quite possibly, irreversible policies.

The power of the centralizer is known by the fact that he is always in his office in the capitol, though, to be sure, it is always difficult to see him; whereas the efficacy of the analyst is judged by how little he is home, how often he is in the field, and how accessible he is to people in the localities. The centralizer's conversation is concerned with how the new plan is more ambitious than the old, while the analyst's conversation is about learning from field experience to modify existing projects. One compares plans in the capitol, the other implements projects in the field.

The schools flourish

There are many schools of public policy in the United States—how many I do not really know, anywhere from 20 to 100, depending on how you count. They have similar curricula. They teach microeconomics, quantitative modeling, political and organization studies, and either a practicum on some area of policy or a practicum combined with an effort to teach "political economy"; that is, principles for or against government intervention in different contexts. They also sponsor apprenticeships of their students to practicing analysts.

More important than their curriculum, in my opinion, is their ethos. From the first week, students are placed in an active position. They analyze, grub for data, reformulate problems, write and write again to communicate with clients. Fieldwork is their forte. An analyst with clean hands (in the general sense of that term, as we shall see) is a contradiction in terms.

Schools differ, of course, but in my opinion, they differ marginally. Some, like Carnegie Mellon, do a great deal of quantitative work. Others, like Berkeley, do more political and organizational analysis or economic theory. Duke has an undergraduate program. The Rand Corporation offers collaborative research on its projects as part of the course of study at its graduate institute. Some schools (the Kennedy School at Harvard and the School of Public Affairs at Maryland come to mind) are starting to give greater emphasis to management. At the moment, this means adding marginally to the regular curriculum by offering courses in public sector accounting and finance (collecting revenues, borrowing money, servicing debt, investing capital, controlling internal operations through expendi-

ture allocation). By substituting one word, namely, "administration" for "management," the old world of public administration is being revived under the new rubric of "public management." How much or how little, we may ask, is involved in the small but growing movement toward public management?

Teaching leadership, like inculcating entrepreneurship, is difficult, perhaps impossible, to do. No one knows how to teach others to become creative. Going the other way, however, a technocratic approach—the manager's task is to achieve clear, consistent, and pre-ordained objectives—is rejected by adherents of public management. And not only because objectives of public policy, arrived at by negotiation, are typically multiple, conflicting, and vague. Grasping the nettle with two hands, they wish to be both more technically able and more politically sophisticated. Unwilling to give up any aspect of the policy analyst's craft, they wish to graft on to this preexisting branch of applied social science such tasks as guiding consensus behind managerial objectives or, if these are judged inappropriate, acting to secure political support for changing them. "Entrepreneurial administration," as Colin S. Diver put it, "is self-promotion, power politics, risk-taking, broken field running." Since such blatant power-seeking appears to be at odds with democratic norms, which rest on responsibility in elected officials accountable to the citizenry, the search is on to replace this with, in Robert Behn's phrase, "a less amoral model."

In addition to its evident effort to provide a public sector analogy to private business (or, more accurately, business schools), the public management approach, as I see it, is a reaction to the limits placed on policy analysts. Just as evaluators are trying to become utilizers, so their work will not be rejected as frequently, public management people, in order to better control their fate, seek broader conceptual hegemony. They have a point. It can be frustrating to observe that those who have power seemingly lack intelligence and those who seemingly have intelligence certainly lack power. All else failing, the next move may be to train politicians to be analysts. Whether we want public officials to know so much about what is intelligent and correspondingly less about what is acceptable to other participants, gets to the heart of the objections of worried observers who fear a denigration of the political arts in a democracy.

What can we say about how successful graduate schools of public policy have been? They are honored on their campuses. Their students have tremendous mobility. They are coming into the academy; doctoral programs have apparently turned out people worthy

of being hired as professors. By any reasonable indicator of success in this work, including the dedication of the faculty, the capacity to attract talented students, the willingness of people to do research, the demand for this service in society, schools of public policy have made it. They have also proved to be recession-proof institutions. When government is expanding, it needs more of everything so it might as well have analysts. When times are tough, agencies need people to tell them how to cut back. Either way, it is apparent now that our graduates will do all right. But are they doing right?

Virtues of "value-free" analysis

Living in a quite different milieu, where the advantages of hierarchical and the disadvantages of market organization appear far greater than in America, European observers are likely to wonder how education for public service in the United States can thrive on such a restricted ideological base. Because it lacks conflict between socialist and capitalist parties, they see America as ideologically homogeneous. Can there be real competition, they wonder, if the values governing economic and political competition are not questioned? Instead of considering politics a constraint on good policymaking, as Americans do, they think it would be more democratic to inquire, first and foremost, into what is politically desirable, and then to treat economic factors as possible constraints. Creating consensus, in politics, depends on acknowledging the value-laden character of public policymaking. The fiction of analytic impartiality has blinded Americans to the influential policy analysis that is done in Europe, not because of its uneven quality but because of its location in interest groups and political parties. By making policy subordinate to politics, Europeans prefer to give up efficiency for legitimacy.

The virtues of American schools of public policy in training people for public service may be appreciated by considering the vices of which they are accused. When radicals claim that policy analysts sell out to the Establishment, reactionaries contend that they subvert it. It is said that schools of policy analysis lack values. Of course this cannot be, since analysis requires choice and choice involves criteria based on preferences. These schools are accepting of the democratic institutions in which they find themselves, basing change both upon popular consent and elite understanding, each of which is in short supply. Thus left-wing critics are correct in observing that schools of policy are not concerned with large changes. They

are schools of micro-policy, not schools of macro-policy. It is not the economy as a whole but the effects of specific changes in market prices and governmental practices that they observe and attempt to alter. There is little knowledge of how to transform institutions overnight except by force, and none on how to cope with the consequences.

When it is said that schools of public policy teach the practice of incrementalism, I can only respond: "Guilty as charged." They are meliorative, seeking to move away from known bads rather than toward grandiose goods. The models students make are generally based on the existing situation, moving beyond them in order to test the possibility of making modest improvements.

Besides being incrementalist, schools of policy are also parochial. They do not study the whole but the parts. They do not necessarily fix the entire difficulty but only those portions over which their clients have some measure of control. Should 90 percent of the difficulty lie elsewhere, products of schools of policy are likely to ask how the remaining 10 percent may be altered so as to better achieve the desired outcome. Thus policy analysts are localists at heart. They want to know what is happening in some small and therefore manageable part of the country.

Analysts are empiricists. They are, to refer to the usual animadversion, data grubbers. If the data do not exist, they will create rough approximations, even if they have to stay in uncomfortable positions for days making rough counts. Should data be missing, they will do without or fill in using rough, proximate methods. Where theory fails or is inapplicable—in other words, most of the time—they will resort to brute empiricism, trying one alternative after another until a better fit is achieved.

Analysts are mini-economists. The value of a good or service is what is given up to get it. This immersion in "opportunity costs" stresses alternative use of resources. Thus the negative as well as positive part of change, costs as well as benefits, receive attention.

Completed work is the aim of the analyst. The implementation of analysis—its acceptance by the client organization, its conversion into programmatic action, its execution in the field, evaluation of its operations, and its subsequent modification to better achieve desirable results—is the success the analyst seeks.

A self-study done at the Graduate School of Public Policy at the University of California, Berkeley, provides findings that I believe to be widely applicable. Students report that their course of study prepares them well for their future work. A sampling of positions

they occupy suggests that (a) many are doing what they studied for, and that (b) some have moved to top jobs.¹

Challenges to the analytic enterprise

Why, then, should these schools change? My account, thus far, has veered away from unresolved conflicts. After all, every organization has difficulties, experiences contradictions, cannot cope with everything equally well. And in the past, these contradictions have not mattered much because they have not reached down to the foundations on which schools of public policy rest. Nonetheless I believe schools will change because now their foundations are shifting.

Chances are, however, that this change will be incrementalist, as in the model taught by the schools themselves. The best bet always is that the future will be like the past plus or minus 5 percent. And to be sure, there is not at this moment any imposing reason why schools of public policy should change. Indeed, we can be certain they will maintain a lot of what they do—they will still teach similar subjects in their core curriculum; they will still be fieldwork-oriented. Why? Because it works and because it is essential. Even so, I think they will also change.

Let us begin anticipating change by talking about certain strains that have been part of these schools almost from the beginning, anomalies that will grow so sharp as to call forth efforts at remedial action.

Students are liberal. Why does one go to a school of policy? It cannot be because he thinks everything is just wonderful the way it is; if so, he would go to a school of business. Our students are change-oriented. This can lead to a creative form of despair; they love to do good but discover that they (or the project on which they are working) are doing poorly. I have held many counseling sessions with students on the difficulty of helping. It is, as the saying goes, up to the wise to undo the damage done by the good. Other matters are not so easy to resolve.

From the beginning students have requested that important matters of values, of what is desired, be considered, not just the status quo. Every school deals with this in some way. Eventually a course in moral problems of public policy appears. There are the

¹ Among the job titles given by the graduates were the following: Professional Staff Member, Congressional Committee; Program Review Analyst; Foreign Services Officer; Legislative Analyst; Partner, Solar Center; Management Consultant; Supervising Analyst; News Producer; Deputy Attorney General; Chief Economist (bank); Chief, Finance Office (city); Fair Housing Specialist; Division Director (state energy program); and Lobbyist.

moral problems of the analyst: When do I resign? Is it right to take clients' money and undermine them? Can I work for organizations that are not as pure or egalitarian or as intelligent as I would like? Discussing the professional problems of policy analysts, however, is only a beginning.

The next step is to give course work on moral problems of public policy in which deep differences in values become apparent. Topics vary but abortion, affirmative action, and the siting of dangerous facilities are favorites. Schools need resilient and dedicated faculty members who can take a lot of abuse, who are patient as well as analytical. It is not easy to find faculty to do this but eventually it gets done.

The problem is that piecemeal discussion of value conflict is all right so long as the range of agreement in society is substantial. Analysts can then feel that they act as critics; they criticize the status quo, plus or minus 5 percent; when they are more critical, maybe 12.5 percent. When differences among elites grow to a substantial size, however, criticism becomes difficult to manage. The wider the disparity in values, the fewer facts each side is willing to certify, the more problematic knowledge becomes. Hence the analytical enterprise, which depends on taking most things for granted so others can be analyzed, becomes precarious. It is the growing polarization of elites, I believe, that will spur change in schools of public policy.

There has been a social revolution in our time, a redistribution of power in relationships between men and women, white and black, parents and children, to mention just a few of the great social-cum-value changes. These are not peripheral matters. They are central to how we live with each other. And the direction of change, so far, is clear: People who believe in equality of condition are much stronger (I did not say dominant) nowadays than they have been for a hundred years. But, at the same time, there is also a stronger pro-market, libertarian group, which talks about incentives, about reduction of marginal tax rates, about removing regulatory restrictions, about market alternatives to practically everything the government does, from school lunches to social security. The difference between now and the 1940s and 1950s is that free marketers are much more vocal and much more literate. F.A. Hayek, for example, hardly heard of before, is now their exemplar. You could not have a Jack Kemp or a Newt Gingrich or even a Gary Hart without the deeper dedication to market principles that we have seen.

The social conservatism found among religious fundamentalists is gaining strength as well. Their views are manifest in discussions

of prayer and abortion. Their vision of social and moral differences being larger and less negotiable than they have recently been is not widely popular but, like its rivals, is becoming more strident. Just as the belief in greater equality of condition implies opposition to authority (diminution of differences between all sorts of people, including public officials and citizens), so does belief in authority imply that society ought to enforce codes of acceptable behavior. Though egalitarian and fundamentalist elites are alike in their fervor, they differ in the direction of their passions; the former would regulate business but deregulate, so to speak, social relationships among consenting adults; the latter would deregulate business, viewing it as part of the natural order of things, so long as it did not oppose the re-regulation of personal behavior.

It can be argued with considerable merit that the mass of the population is far less polarized than elites. Certainly, party activists are far more extreme in their views than are party identifiers in the population. Individual members of interest groups are more moderate than their leaders. Readers and listeners are less polarized than reporters and commentators for the major media. Yet it is these activists, leaders, and media personalities who shape the consideration of issues. They are the ones, together with politicians, who determine which policy alternatives receive credence and which do not. We have to be concerned with elites and the institutions they operate because it is these party, interest group, and media institutions that are the intermediaries between citizens and government.

Schools of public policy do not deal with, have never dealt with, and were never designed to deal with large-scale social change. One reason is that social change is one of the least understood subjects of all time. Academics have made reputations by trying to talk about large-scale social change. Like the talking dog, however, it is not so much what they say but the fact they say it at all that is remarkable. Another reason, when you are talking mostly about students at the master's level, is that there is no market for radical change. After all, big change, if considered at all in democratic societies, is reserved for politicians. Nor are most people likely to pay others to do them in—not knowingly, anyway. Still, even if there is no demand for analysts to sponsor radical (or, for that matter, reactionary) change, the fact of change, indeed of conflicting desires for change, poses a fundamental challenge for schools of policy.

As elite differences grow larger, analysts are going to have to answer a critical question: How might they bring people together so there can be agreement on a minimal basis for collective endeavor?

For the analytic enterprise rests on sufficient agreement within society to bring data to bear on modest departures from whatever exists.

Can the center hold?

Polarization is the enemy of moderation. Extremism in the defense of liberty, to take a slogan from the 1964 presidential bid of Barry Goldwater, can be a vice if it precludes cooperation with other groups. Since it is no more possible to maximize simultaneously in opposing directions in policy than in engineering, the term "trade-offs" has been used to signify the necessity of giving up part of one's preferences in order to realize others. Seeking solutions without acknowledging the necessity for tradeoffs, a taboo in policy analysis, is a standard sign of extremism. So is making tradeoffs itself a term of abuse, uttered only by the weak-kneed and mealy-mouthed. Unremitting hostility toward government or markets, denigration of policy based on either one, or a combination of both, not only makes political compromise difficult, it all but excludes the possibility of policy analysis. If there is to be only a single criterion of choice and only one instrument of policy, there is no need for analysts, only for people able to count up to one.

Increasing (but, of course, not total) polarization will make scholars in schools of policy more acutely aware of the presuppositions under which they operate. Not least of these are toleration, moderation, and what follows from them, namely, a modicum of objectivity. In other words, what had been assumed—substantial consensus over values—will, in a context of elite polarization, become problematic. Hence attention will have to be devoted to what makes analysis possible and fruitful, to its necessities and not, as now, to its luxuries, like whether existing policies ought to be moved a few degrees in this or that direction.

In the aftermath of the Civil War, the bloodiest war of the 19th century, attention in the United States turned to such subjects as citizenship and compromise. Political parties became an object of attention precisely because it was the breakdown of their integrative capacities that had opened the way to internal strife. Considering that every large-scale institution in American life, whether these be trade unions, the big churches, the houses of Congress, or the national political parties, is in trouble today, concern with them is long overdue. For who, then, will take over the integrative function of reconciling divergent views? And why, in the absence of reconciliation, should the contending factions care about research other than as a weapon in ideological combat?

Schools of policy will have to find ways in which evidence matters. Therefore they will have to find ways in which polarized elites can talk and make sense to one another, thus making empirical inquiry worthwhile. If getting in touch with something out there does not matter or matters very little, then schools of policy will not matter. For self-preservation, if for nothing else, they will begin to study larger-scale social change. They will become more reflective in trying to understand the conditions of democratic life that would make schools like them possible. And they will also become more meliorative in trying to (re)create these conditions.

To the extent that these predictions prove false, that is, to the degree the current consensus remains or is strengthened, schools of public policy should remain much as they are today. Should polarization grow, however, I expect these schools to add on to their curricula a methodological concern with penetrating other cultures and a philosophical interest in the relationship between facts and values in society and, therefore, in policy analysis. Political subjects—once taken for granted as part of the background assumptions of analysis and, therefore, safe from scrutiny—will be reexamined. Among such subjects will be democracy, consensus, authority, legitimacy—the corpus of political philosophy.

Will schools of policy be absorbed into political science, much as schools of business have become more extensive departments of economics? That depends, I think, on whether the field of policy analysis is capable of, or interested in, a second intellectual revolution. The first revolution merged economics and politics through the study of public choice. Without this development, essentially a modern revival of classical political economy, the economists and political scientists who make up the bulk of the faculty would have had far less in common to sustain their collaboration.

The second revolution, if it is to come about, must join political economy to political culture, must move from the achievement of given objectives to their formulation. When economists are asked where objectives (read preferences, desires, values) come from, they say that these are "exogenous"—given outside of the system being investigated. Thus the very reasons for allowing or encouraging economic markets, the desire to lead a life of bidding, bargaining and self-regulation, are presumably outside the scope of economic analysis. So long as there is widespread consensus on the desirability of accepting the results of market transactions, taking them for granted does little harm. But when it is precisely their desirability rather than their operation that is at issue, when the morality of markets is

one of the poles around which conflict centers, treating the contested as incontestable leaves a great deal to be desired.

Were the field of policy analysis to treat values as "endogenous"—emerging from the processes by which people construct, modify and reject the institutions that comprise the shared values and social practices of their cultures—the formulation of preferences and the attempts to better realize them would be joined together in theory, as they are in practice. The fact of elite polarization would be seen as an opportunity to move from a one-sided emphasis on the realization of given objectives to an equivalent concentration on their formulation. Once the way people organize themselves is seen as a source of preferences, moreover, different types of organizations can be associated with the characteristic biases that impel them to define problems (or, better still, what is problematic) differently. Problem solving will still be an essential characteristic of policy analysis, but it will be joined by its twin, problem finding—the study of what comes to be defined as a problem of public policy for adherents of different political cultures. Should it survive this cure, policy analysis, along with the schools that attempt to inculcate it, should emerge intellectually chastened—more variegated, more self-critical, and more aware of its dependence on social relations.