

of the contemporary dilemmas surrounding the management of difference for urban governance and planning. New York is used to illustrate 'indifference to difference', 20 years from Jane Jacobs. Paris illustrates the 'haunt of colonialism', with the suburbanization of immigrant population. Istanbul is used to illustrate the problems a country can face by embracing the global agenda without due sensitivity to indigenous peoples. Jerusalem shows the effect of extremes of views between the *haredi* and non-*haredi* communities. London's *Millfield's* project is heralded as a success in achieving small steps towards cosmopolis by constructing new ways to access citizenship. The examples illustrate the politics of diversity and apart from London, all are condemned for their approach. The key lessons from these examples for Cosmopolis are the need for a 'common civic culture' along with a politics of difference and inclusion which it is believed would allow multiple communities to connect with each other. Perhaps ironically, in places the book itself reverts to a language which is unlikely to be familiar to many practitioners, but nonetheless, the examples illustrate the points that are being made.

Chapter 8, although less well developed than some of the other chapters, makes a valuable contribution to the whole discussion about the kind of planning which is needed in the future. Sandercock calls for the consideration of: (1) the importance of an expanded language for planning and a re-linking to the design professions with a recognition of the importance of different ways of seeing and experiencing cities; (2) a widening of the knowledge base of planning so that it recognizes experiential, symbolic as well as non-verbal information; and (3) the transformative politics of difference in which planners are urged to work for the social project of cosmopolis in a whole range of arenas of practice, although it is quite clear that Sandercock would prefer planners to be out there supporting insurgent practices.

Leonie Sandercock cannot address the need for cosmopolis without discussing the kind of training planners would need to play an effective part in this more communicative process. Drawing on the work of Friedman, Sandercock sets out the domain of planning, the macro-social processes and multiple literacies with which planners would need to be familiar, notwithstanding that these literacies are not a-political.

Some may disagree with her tenet that planning will remain a state centred activity. Communities have after all shown an ability to plan

their own futures. There seems little doubt that planning as a statutory activity, will remain within the control of government although the level at which this happens is open for discussion. A key question must be whether planning can be state-centred without being technocratic and bureaucratic? The book encourages planners to reflect deeply on both the histories and futures of planning and as such makes a valuable contribution to the planning and related literatures.

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The Community Planning Handbook

Nick Wates

London, Earthscan, 2000, £14.95

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With 'community involvement' the new mantra for all public services, the publication of *The Community Planning Handbook* by Earthscan, in association with the Urban Design Group, The Prince's Foundation and London's South Bank University, could not be more timely.

There is no doubt that the British government has been persuaded by researchers and practitioners that involving communities, particularly the most disadvantaged ones, in developing their own agendas and plans for action is the only way to ensure sustainable and effective change. This learning has been passed down to the institutions and agencies responsible for translating government policy into action. Whilst there is much goodwill within the public sector for enabling this to happen, those responsible for making it happen often have little idea about how to go about it. There is no good reason why they should. They sally forth with questionnaires or call public meetings and are then puzzled by the lack of response.

They need the help of *The Community Planning Handbook*, a practical guide to using a wide range of participatory methods that engage local people successfully, are creative, fun and most importantly accessible.

The book is a product of research funded by the UK's Department for International Development, the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (reflecting the government's deep interest), and the European Commission Humanitarian Office. The author, Nick Wates, has drawn on 25 years experience as a practitioner, writer and researcher of community planning and design, and it shows. Contained in the handbook are 53 methods of plan

engaging communities in planning. These methods reflect best practice and have been tried and tested across countries and continents. As a result many of them are accessible by people with little or no literacy skills.

The methods are attractively laid out, each over two pages, and outline principles and methods, give checklists and sample documents. Each method comes with a short bibliography highlighting further reading for those who want to explore a particular method in more depth.

However, to quote an old cliché, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. I am currently involved in a project, begun by the local schools and churches in a small rural town in the north of England. Noticing that some of the behaviour of children is changing in a negative way, and realizing that the teachers were not always at one with parents in how to deal with that behaviour, schools and churches have started to develop a piece of work exploring attitudes and values in the local community. Having moved on from the original handful of people who raised the issue, a group of 15 local people have been drawn together to design a process for that exploration. After a process of discussing their own views and ideas they are about to take the first step in engaging other local people. It was decided to undertake the first event with parents and children in the local primary and secondary schools. The question was how to do this in as attractive and unthreatening a way as possible.

Having discussed what we wanted to achieve, we turned to the *Handbook*. Could it come up with the right sort of methodologies for what we wanted to achieve, including enabling adults and children to express their separate thoughts and ideas, and were the methodologies written and described in a way which gave novices the confidence to use them?

We chose to weave together two of the suggested methods, Mapping and the Problem Tree. The first enables people literally to build up a map of their community from their perspective. It does not require verbal skills, but is creative and will enable children and adults to build the picture together. The Problem Tree uses a visual image, that of a tree in full leaf complete with roots. People are asked to write in the leaves and branches the major problems they see within the community, and to write along each of the roots their analysis of the causes of the problems. We are also adapting 'the tree' to enable the expression of positive feelings about the community.

The novices in the group, supported by one

community development worker, felt confident that they understood both method and principles. An agenda has been drawn up, invited issued and I am confident that the combination of the people's commitment and the practical advice from the book will produce a successful outcome. This book should have no problem becoming a best seller.

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Open Moral Communities

Seymour J. Mandelbaum

Cambridge, MA, and London, The MIT Press, 2001

xiv + 242 pp, £19.95

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Seymour Mandelbaum, the ironic philosopher in the planning field of life-sustaining lies, our *Lebenslügen*, our dreams, myths, fable tales, fictions and other imaginaries, has written a guide to the world of 'communitarian sensibility'. This group of 14 essays, 11 of them previously published and here revised, is profoundly concerned with the moral core of social life. Faced with what seems to be an endless variety of answers to how to live correctly in the world, answers that are frequently in conflict, he asks: How can a semblance of public order be maintained? In an era of bloody violence over clashing lifeways and collective identities, Mandelbaum's book is a timely contribution.

"The world we see in front of us", he writes, "is crowded with communities" (p. 30). Essentially, they are of three kinds: contractual moral communities, deep moral communities, and open moral communities. The first derives its legitimacy from a *voluntary* agreement among its members that may be based on a text or an implicit understanding. The second subordinates the individual to the collective entity that is understood as an integrated and sacred whole. In these communities, the most passionate arguments often concern the conditions of entry, the punishment and even exclusion of violators, and the interpretation of apostasy. It is communities of the third kind, however, that lie at the centre of Mandelbaum's preoccupations. An open moral community is actually more like a *field* of communities that are either consensual or contractual and which, despite their differences, constitute a larger public order, such as a city or country. Such fields come into being because, in contemporary life,