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CHAPTER

4 What Is Policy and How Does It Relate to Anthropology?

The Many Meanings and Contexts of Policy

An understanding of policy and its analysis is essential for the application of anthropology. In fact, most of the topics contained in this book are really subtopics of policy analysis, and most examples describe or critique the development of actual policies. Anthropology can be quite effective for policy analysis because issues and topics within the domain of policy are almost as all-encompassing as those in culture and society.

Policy is a complex, dynamic, and somewhat amorphous subject constantly shifting in content and emphasis. Members of the public (and even some experts in the field) frequently associate policy with government—lawmaking, bureaucracy, and other legal or administrative actions. Here policy is perceived as formal and limited in scope, the work of professional or elected policy makers who are specialists in generating laws, plans, and programs. They have the authority, personnel, financial resources, and the organizational means to implement them. This type of policy reaches into the economy, social welfare, external relations, communications, transportation, energy, and the environment.

Policy has these connotations, but it also involves much more. Policy suggests plans, principles, guidelines, directives, intentions, and an anticipation of future actions and results or the avoidance of undesirable circumstances. Significantly, policy assumes that thoughtfully directed social action can lead to desirable outcomes. Policy implies foresight and planning; policies provide blueprints for actions.

Policy formulation and implementation are complex social processes that extend beyond visible legislative and bureaucratic spheres. There is much below the surface, and only the tip can be observed in any legislative or bureaucratic activity. Policies always emerge out of a much wider and deeper context of social action and cultural expectation. For example, we could ask what brought a particular issue to the fore, to make it of public concern, and then ask how it is approached with laws, planning, and funding. Following implementation, what are the day-to-day consequences of new policies on sectors of the society? Do they improve lives? Are there unintended consequences? Who are the publics involved in any policy issue, and do their interests compete? What are their possible points of agreement

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and alliance? Who controls the power in such situations and what is the power-holder's agenda? How is the issue socially constructed and then acted upon before it is legitimized and becomes policy—what are the advocacy or lobbying processes? What are the explicit, formal, and institutional dimensions of policy? For anthropologists, what are the informal, less visible dimensions of policy-making? Also—and very significant for anthropologists—how do values and cultural ideologies exhibit themselves in the policy process?

On one level, policy is associated with formal institutions and organizations. In contemporary nation-states, especially industrialized First World countries, such formal institutions and organizations predominate and are made manifest through bureaucracy. Cultural assumptions of rationality, efficiency, and the need for explicit planning pervade such institutions. Since World War II and especially in the emerging "Information Age" of the 1980s and 1990s, there has been even more emphasis on policy as a continuous process. The various levels of policy formulation and planning are carried out within special units that gather and process information for those making the policies. Change is a preoccupation of policy-making. Sometimes the act of changing policy is seen as a rapid "catchup" to circumstances that have left an organization ill-prepared or unresponsive. Other times the intention is "proactive," to anticipate future events and adequately prepare for and even influence such changes. There are expectations that an institution's policies will be adapted or maybe even completely rewritten. This could be to meet changes in fiscal realities, changing social expectations, or the coming to power of elected officials with a whole new set of expectations of how society should work and a new mandate to change the directions of policy.

Policy is similarly pervasive within private-sector organizations such as corporations. Executives have board and planning meetings, where they formulate long- and short-range plans. They decide on new products, services, and markets that they should target, restructuring strategies that they might take, and so on. Policy also concerns nongovernment, charitable organizations dealing with social and health-related functions. Internationally oriented NGOs such as the Red Cross or Oxfam build policies as do environmental groups like the Sierra Club and the World Wildlife Federation. In any North American city, hundreds of small-scale organizations deal with immigrant resettlement, services to the disabled, poverty reduction, improving the well-being of children, and countless other things. Beyond these more formal organizations, people may mobilize themselves at a grassroots level for advocacy, lobbying, or self-help. Some of these groups are rudimentary in organization; others are highly developed, but all have to be concerned about policy at some level or another.

Policy-making organizations invariably show concerns beyond their internal matters. For example, such organizations have to deal with external relations among groups like or unlike themselves. Policies of advocacy groups are shaped in the ways that they are allied and opposed to each other, and then they influence planning by government agencies. The policy directions of society as a whole (or certain institutional sectors like health care or education) will be shaped by the interaction of organizations in an atmosphere of both competition and cooperation. Policies will be shaped by the rational attempt to formulate them in the style of procedural "blueprints," but they will often actually be shaped by failures, incomplete formulations, or most frequently, brokered compromises. Beyond such interactions among organizations, policies are often influenced by many outside factors. Popula-

tion changes, shortages of resources, threats of disease, and other disruptions or social forces can rapidly redirect policy.

What does this cursory overview tell us? It suggests that policy is almost as broad a study as that of contemporary society itself. Policy studies cannot then be seen as limited to the well-established policy sciences such as political studies or economics. Anthropology and sociology are as relevant as these other subjects and are not simply auxiliaries.

Policy-making and implementation are not just political and social processes; they are also cultural. Once again, the anthropological connection should be quite clear. The rules, intentions, and aims of policy are always ideological; they are more systematic formulations of the way people assume that society works or should work and how consistent action within institutions will maintain or bring about desirable situations. Through their cultural assumptions, people seek desirable outcomes in their interactions with each other, their environment, and their technology. People are guided in these formulations by their culture, and policy statements are themselves cultural products.

What lines within anthropology might distinguish policy from nonpolicy research? Among the societies that anthropologists have studied, there is certainly variation as to the presence or absence of policy-making activities. Many nonstate societies, at the village, band, or other social level, operate with long-established traditional consensuses. Decisions are revealed within frameworks of consistent belief and action, and there may not be frequent or prolonged public discussions about future expectations or desired changes. In contrast, industrialized, highly urbanized societies with many formal organizations and dominated by ideologies that stress future orientations, planning, bureaucracy, rationality, and efficiency will all be preoccupied by policy. There is a wide range of possibilities in between these polar types.

But with such dichotomizing, we may be guilty of facile stereotyping if we said that "traditional" societies lacked institutions of policy and planning. It may be more appropriate to see procedures for the equivalent of policy planning as embedded in other institutions and assumptions rather than explicit within bureaucracies. When such peoples make long-term decisions—to participate in land reform, to move the site of a village, to enter into an alliance with other villages, to accept a missionary into their presence, and so forth—the cultural equivalents of policy planning and dialogue surely come into play. These actions might be consensus building, interfamily discussions, open village debates, and even the use of rituals of divination and other ceremonial mechanisms. Such societies might not have formal planning and policy institutions, but, ironically, they may have the capacities for making better policies because they are closer to the roots of the issue and the possibilities of consensus. Some sort of group decision-making (or policy) is always present. What we have learned from traditional societies about the nonformalized and holistic dimensions of decision-making can be transferred to the study of policy-making in the more bureaucratic institutions of contemporary society. Here, informal practices and unstated but understood assumptions may be just as significant in policy development as are formal bureaucratic mechanisms. Thus, we may say that policy-making is present in all societies and human institutions at all times. When a husband and wife get together to negotiate ways of raising their children, they are setting family policy. However, to be fair to the difficult enterprise that we are trying to deal with here, I think that we should realize that certain societies and institutions pay more direct attention to policy-making than other types do.

Policy as a Process

Borrowing from the political scientist Charles Jones (1977), it is useful to consider policy as a process rather than as a set institution or finished product. Broadly, Jones suggests that policy is "behavioral consistency and repetitiveness associated with efforts in and through government to resolve problems" (1977: 5). Policy is very dynamic at any time. When we look at what seems to be policy, we actually see a stage or phase in a sequence of events contributing to consistency and repetitiveness of action. Policy is in the process of emerging over a long time rather than a sudden, finished product. Jones (1977: 10) suggests a set of stages for tracing the development of policy in government settings.

Let us make a quick gloss of them. First of all, there has to be a perception that there is some social problem to solve. Whatever the issue, it has to be defined and assessed, and attention has to be paid to it for it to enter into the policy arena. Anthropologists study how issues percolate out of society through the media, special interest groups, advocacy, and citizen concern to become matters of formal public concern. Applied anthropologists can directly contribute to the stages of problem perception and definition through involvement in research and advocacy. Next is a stage, aggregation, that involves the identification of those portions of the public who are concerned about the issue and who go about finding each other and then organize to influence the issue. Representation follows—involving the ways that the organization and issues reach the attention of legislators.

At the stage of action in government, first a broad formulation of policies attending to problems is developed. Examples are formulations developed to address the need for affordable housing, regional economic development, disease prevention, and many other topics through processes of debate and research. Then specific programs are ultimately designed and formally funded. Depending on the level of government and the domain in question, anthropologists may also be involved during this stage. Next, more specifically formulated policies and programs are enacted for actual social settings. These might include the details of bringing about improved low-rental housing programs in particular communities, retraining programs in others, and countless other examples. Anthropologists might sometimes be involved in the direct delivery of services or in the actual implementation and administration of programs (say, as civil servants), but this is less frequent than the other stages of policy. The next stage is more consistent with applied and practicing anthropology's traditional skills of evaluating or appraising the effectiveness of programs or assessing needs. Findings from anthropology can be very useful in the resolution or reformulation of programs.

Such a policy process, as hastily sketched, can be exceptionally complex and at any stage could involve many thousands of people, depending on the scope of the issues under consideration. Jones' formulation is intended for the study of public policy, but the reader can intuit how similar schemes related to process could be constructed for private and nonprofit sectors.

The Significance of Anthropology for Policy

The first thing to consider is that anything marked for policy planning always has a significant human component. The ingredients of issues in fisheries, forestry, technology, medi-

cine, and so forth are always cultural. For instance, saving fish stocks is not simply a biological issue, because even the definition of what is considered a fish is a cultural process. Also, humans can be categorized into very many different publics based on differing interests. These many interests are dictated by differences in social structure, values, goals, and perceptions of the future. Among other things, multiculturalism is a fact of life for just about every country in the world. Even if a country seems more or less ethnically homogeneous, a kind of de facto multiculturalism will be present with differences of region, socioeconomic status, gender, occupation, and other important variables.

Any policy planning needs an accounting of such factors. It is important to disaggregate the public into as many subpublics as are relevant to the issue, to try to determine what their needs are in reference to the issue in question, to map out potential conflicts, and to assess the reactions of different publics to proposals. One of the roles for anthropologists would be to assist in the making of more specific policies and programs that are compatible with the varieties of publics. On the other hand, governments live in times of scarce resources, so it is very difficult to fund policies and programs that are tailored to all of the minute publics that we could identify. So, there is a prevailing pressure to come up with public policy solutions that can cover the needs of as many of the publics as possible. Even beyond that task, there is currently more pressure to find ways to combine policies that are relevant to several areas of human activity all at once. Health promotion and illness prevention might be linked to economic development, job creation, pollution control, and dimensions related to the environment. So seeking out the linkages among those various institutional domains can be a key role for anthropologists.

A significant activity for anthropologists is finding what is common among many publics relevant to any policy question. A "textbook" example (see Scaglion 1987) relates to the exceptionally pluralistic setting of Papua New Guinea. In that emerging nation, there are at least 750 languages spoken and about a thousand different customary legal systems among 3,500,000 people. In the midst of such diversity, consider the frustrations of trying to design a noncolonialistic and widely compatible legal system. Richard Scaglion, an anthropologist in charge of a research team working for the National Law Reform Commission, examined diverse tribal conflict resolution systems to identify the most common themes of solving conflicts so that they might be used in developing an effective common code of criminal justice for the entire country. A database was established dealing with issues like customary compensation, polygamy, domestic violence, and so forth. Some practices were drafted into law, such as the recognition of certain types of compensation in wealth and services for claims of death, injury, and personal damage (Scaglion: 103). Thus a knowledge base generated by an anthropologist was directly useful in the design of national laws and policies.

Domains of Policy Activities within Anthropology

Enumerating some of the broad areas in which anthropologists have contributed or have the potential to contribute more in policy and practice should orient the reader to the practical potential of the subject. Scanning the bibliography at the end of the book will provide the reader with references covering most of these and other topics.

Socioeconomic Issues

Sustainable and culturally appropriate economic development, both domestic and international, has long been an applied area for anthropologists. Anthropologists' contributions can take many forms, one being impact assessments of mega-projects that were originally intended to create profits and improve economic infrastructures for depressed regions. The anthropology of development, or the critique of modernization efforts, has been a significant part of anthropological policy analysis. Similarly, there has also been an anthropology of work and the workplace that examines such occupational subgroupings as long-distance truckers, miners, longshoreman, "pink-collar" workers, and many other examples. The anthropology of work will probably generate more anthropological interest in the future because of the extensive transformations in the economy and in the expectations surrounding labor. For instance, how does the workplace respond to family needs when there are so many pressures on working parents for more productivity in an atmosphere of job insecurity? A growing anthropology of business is related to both development and work. What are the regional and cross-border implications of the North American Free Trade Agreement? What are the implications of international migratory labor on the laborers and their families who are not provided services of social assistance, education, and health during seasonal movements?

The Environment and Resource-Based Industries

Anthropology has helped to make farmers' desires relevant to the marketing strategies of governments in Third World regions. Also, anthropologists are assessing the roles and needs of women, who are at the very forefront of agricultural production in many Third World cases. Anthropologists, for example, investigate the effects of the reduction of fish stocks off the Grand Banks of Newfoundland, the moratorium on fishing, and the impacts on communities, fishermen, and their families. Anthropologists have examined attempts to use aquaculture systems as substitutes for offshore fishing. Anthropologists provide research and advocacy on behalf of Northern Indians and Inuit who have been harmed by fur boycotts implemented by European governments that, in turn, have been under the pressure from environmental lobbyists. Disaster and risk assessment is another dimension of environmental policy research. Anthropologists have been studying and providing recommendations relevant to natural and man-made disasters such as oil spills, hurricanes, or famines. Environmental risk assessment is a relatively new but important field for environmental anthropology. It calculates and accounts for cultural perceptions of the risks associated with, for example, nuclear reactors, nuclear waste and chemical dumps, and other hazards in local communities. Anthropology's involvement in social impact assessment of development projects such as dams, highways, and petroleum projects has been well established for the past thirty years.

Technological Innovation

Related to economy and the environment are the many dimensions of technological innovation and the impacts of their introduction. An extensive literature discusses policy implica-

tions of the introduction of very diverse items like steel axes, snowmobiles, and massive hydroelectric and irrigation projects. Current anthropological concerns are the profound effects of computers, the Internet, fax machines, and so forth on the workplace and society as a whole. In business and industrial anthropology, anthropologists study the effects of automation and other production strategies on the workforce.

Health

Medical anthropology has undergone enormous expansion over the last thirty years and has made many contributions to policy. In Canada, for instance, the federal government has been transferring control of health services for Native people from the Department of Health and Welfare directly to First Nations governments. The transitions have required policy studies that carefully monitored local needs in prevention and care and recommended how best to make use of local resources and to design more effective delivery systems. In general, health care systems have been forced to curtail expenses and to put more emphasis on preventive approaches. Anthropologists engaged in health promotions research seek linkages in the community, society, and culture that can be seen as synergistically related to peoples' health. Appropriate cultural ways to ensure peoples' well-being through health education and local collaborations are sought. For example, anthropology can evaluate health needs or the effectiveness of early diagnostic programs for prostate or breast cancer in ways that are culturally appropriate. Anthropologists do many other types of health-related research, such as looking for linkages related to beliefs, behaviors, and specific health problems such as drug and alcohol abuse and rehabilitation, specific diseases and disabilities, and the care of the elderly. The policy implications of medical anthropology are enormous.

Education

The anthropology of education has been significant for curriculum design and the evaluation of programs, especially in the United States. As anthropologists have frequently demonstrated, much of socialization or education occurs outside of the class. Enculturation is a comprehensive sociocultural phenomenon, and there are ethnically preferred and traditional ways for training the young that have to be considered in order for formal education to be effective and complementary to local styles. Furthermore, it is advisable to have children's education rooted in contexts that will enhance their pride and identity. Given the significant pluralism that we find in countries like the United States and Canada, this calls for attention to the needs or possibilities of designing cultural variations on curriculum. Then, in turn, these experiments have to be evaluated. Ethnographic evaluation in classroom settings has become a major field within educational anthropology.

Social Policy

Social policy, including issues of welfare, unemployment, poverty, and housing, has been a key part of anthropology, especially as associated with race relations. Anthropologists, in addition to examining the underlying social and cultural dimensions associated with poverty for many different urban populations, have evaluated programs to alleviate unemployment

and poverty. There are studies about single motherhood, the family, the status of children, and so forth. Related to poverty has been the anthropological study of urban planning as in the design of urban low-rental housing projects, which run the risk of being social and cultural disasters when improperly planned. Anthropologists have been looking at other dimensions associated with social policy such as divorce, domestic abuse, the welfare of children, and many factors related to gender.

A significant subdomain of social policy concerns immigration and refugee relocation. Millions of people are being displaced by wars, political events, natural disasters, economic upheavals, and combinations of these variables. International efforts at relief and refugee resettlement have motivated anthropological evaluation and policy consultation because of the multitude of cross-cultural differences and conflicts involved. Continuing to maintain the United Nations Convention on Refugees requires that countries annually provide sanctuary for hundreds of thousands of refugees in First World countries like the United States, Canada, Australia, and Germany as well as millions in states bordering on the disruption. Anthropologists and other social scientists have been monitoring and advising governments and nongovernmental organizations on the details of such resettlement into host communities. Similar policy research surrounds voluntary migration or regular immigration. Issues associated with multiculturalism as a continuing byproduct of immigration are yet another aspect of policy anthropology.

Indigenous Peoples

Our earliest (and sometimes most controversial) policy contributions have related to the administration of Aboriginal, Native, or tribal peoples in such diverse places as Australia, the United States, Canada, New Zealand, India, the Pacific Trust Islands, Africa, Papua New Guinea, Brazil, and other countries. Anthropology's contributions here have been well established, and in most cases anthropological involvement has been benign and supportive of the aspirations and needs of tribal peoples. Today anthropologists are active in supporting indigenous self-government.

Emerging Fields

Anthropologists have also been involved in public policy research in cultural preservation, recreation, and the role of national parks and public-owned lands. The establishment of parks may come in conflict with local or traditional usages whether or not they are aboriginal. Proposals for the use of public lands in the American Southwest have conflicted with American Indian perceptions of their sacred or "holy" lands. Land use planning and tourist development in national, provincial, and state parks may involve needs assessments related to potential recreational use as in finding ways of stimulating local economic development through tapping tourist resources while not disturbing the local environment or disturbing local cultural authenticity.

Anthropology has also had policy-relevant roles in communications and transportation. During the 1970s, anthropologists examined the consequences of the twenty-four-hour extension of satellite communications (including TV) on isolated communities in Alaska and the Canadian Arctic. How were local Native people affected by almost completely one-way

intrusions of foreign culture into their lives? Were there ways that local communities could have their own input into these powerful communication media for the purpose of enhancing their own culture? Transportation has been a growing domain for public policy studies with, for instance, research into the subcultures of long-distance truckers and the ways that they cope with government regulations and perceptions of occupational safety.

This section outlined in very broad brush strokes some areas in which anthropologists have participated in policy. It is incomplete. New areas are constantly being generated, and anthropology will always have important things to reveal about human activity. That will also apply to the actual process of making policy itself. The anthropology of bureaucracy and of the nature of organizations is itself part of policy analysis. Also, the categorization of policy areas here is somewhat static and does not effectively characterize the many overlaps and elaborations. Furthermore, most of the policy topics raised in this overview relate to public policy domains covered by the activities of national, state, provincial, and municipal governments. Much more could have been written here about anthropological roles in the private sectors of policy, business, and industrial anthropology; international non-government organizations such as the Red Cross or Oxfam; and the role of anthropology in policy as pertaining to community-based nonprofit agencies engaged in human services. It should be clear that anthropology is definitely a policy science contributing to a multitude of domains.

Some Roles Taken by Anthropologists in Policy Analysis and Practice

The range of roles taken by anthropologists in policy is broad. At one end of a continuum, there is the more academic style of policy analysis. This can be exemplified by the work of the late Sally Weaver (1981). Her book *Making Canadian Indian Policy: The Hidden Agenda* analyzes policy planning directed toward Canada's Aboriginal people during the late 1960s and early 1970s. She explored the underlying cultural assumptions that upper-middle-class, senior civil servants had about policy. Their naive, well-intended assumptions were that assimilation and the transfer of services and jurisdictions to the provinces would better serve the well-being of Native people than continuing federal reservation-based Indian policies. Such policies were proposed in spite of the already well-documented disaster of federal termination policies in the United States when treaty rights were similarly overturned. Other uncommissioned academic policy analyses have provided critiques of existing policies while advocating reforms. For example, Charles Valentine's work, *Culture and Poverty* (1968), reviewed the various theories from anthropology and sociology that attempted to link poverty in the United States to subcultural differences of behavior and attitude or show how poverty itself generally perpetuated a unique culture. Out of all of this, he developed a set of policy recommendations informed by anthropological theory (e.g., revitalization movements, political economy) that would provide a national policy agenda for ameliorating poverty in the United States.

In other cases, anthropologists have been directly commissioned to do more focused policy and applied research through direct employment, contracts, and participation in commissions. That work might involve supervision and research in a major task force that is

investigating an issue like immigrant health, Native self-government, or public health. Anthropologists might be hired as consultants to evaluate programs designed to meet a social group's needs; they might serve as expert witnesses in court inquiries that are meant to legitimize or guide the formulation of new policies or directions. They might be hired to assist in the design and implementation of new programs relevant to community and economic development in the Third World or aboriginal communities in North America. And they can work as full-time researchers and administrators with government agencies designed to deliver services in health, education, or welfare.

Practicing anthropologists may do policy work through consulting and contracts, often through companies that they own. A good example is the work of Robert Winthrop who manages Cultural Solutions in Ashland, Oregon. Winthrop offers general applied research and other policy-relevant services, such as cultural conflict resolution, cultural preservation, and cultural aspects of community and organizational development. In one such study, Winthrop acted as a coordinator of a contract provided by the U.S. Forest Service, and he, in turn, subcontracted it to the Karuk tribe. Although Winthrop provided technical support, the completed report provided a policy statement on how the tribe preferred to manage resources in the Klamath National Forest according to its own values and traditions. Another project assessed the impact of a 170-mile pipeline construction on Indian land, including negotiating acceptable compensation strategies. Other projects focused on Euro-American jurisdictions. One helped an Oregon city review its management effectiveness and improve city planning. Winthrop (personal communication) stresses that practitioners doing these kinds of policy work need to phrase findings in language that is understandable to the noninitiated and to have good analytical skills permitting them to understand the larger picture in such rapidly changing scenarios. They also must know how to truly work collaboratively (especially when the clients are Indian tribes) and be able to effectively manage client relations.

A significant but rarer policy role is filled by managerial anthropologists. Such anthropologists directly administer government programs or manage private corporations, overseeing the implementation and evaluations of decisions developed through policy. They rarely do policy research themselves. As Martin Topper (1995) points out, most policy is formulated at higher levels by politicians and some senior-level bureaucrats. Some anthropologists have served as managerial types at this level, filling out the details of policies or suggesting new ones. When any research is needed, it is usually contracted to others. Managerial anthropologists then use that work to formulate new policies or improve old ones. In effect, they act as brokers between the consultants who did the original policy research and the higher-level policy makers.

Beyond that, as in the U.S. federal government, there are offices or agencies that oversee implementation in regions or communities. Here policy is carried out. Again, managerial anthropologists might operate at these levels, evaluating and using research contracted to other anthropologists. The object of that research is not to change policy (which was formulated at a higher level) but to improve its implementation by solving more narrowly defined local problems. Managerial anthropologists retain the anthropological capacity to do the "quick study" (although not of a research nature). They can rapidly assess the crucial working contexts of policy and incorporate anthropological knowledge and skills for the multidisciplinary decision-making normally done by teams by understanding and operating

through the organization's culture of formal and informal rules. Topper briefly mentions his own roles as a managerial anthropologist with the Indian Health Service and the Environmental Protection Agency.

A managerial anthropologist who operated at the highest levels of policy-making was Philleo Nash, who served as President Truman's White House advisor on race relations in the 1940s. There, he dealt with such issues as racial tensions, civil rights, statehood for Hawaii and Alaska, and more self-determination for Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. After his White House service, he successfully ran for Lieutenant Governor of Wisconsin, serving from 1959 to 1961. As policy, his election platform included opposition to the termination of reservation status for Menominee Indians (Nash 1989). Later he was appointed Commissioner of Indian Affairs and served from 1961 to 1966 along with Associate Commissioner James Officer, another high-level managerial anthropologist. In comparison to previous Commissioners, Nash was very successful in gaining Congressional appropriations for the Bureau, working smoothly with line staff, maintaining good relations with tribal leaders, and defending the interests of Native Americans (Officer 1989). Besides his personal qualities and dedication to public service, his anthropological perspectives were a major part of Nash's success in policy-making and administration.

Some Anthropological Stages of Policy Engagement

Wulff and Fiske (1987b: 4–9) provide us with a useful framework for policy work. Stage one involves defining the problem or information production. Anthropologists provide detailed discussion of a particular problem or issue, help to define it more carefully, and look for underlying causes and interrelationships. The second stage involves choosing an alternative or policy formulation, looking at different ways that a problem might be resolved or ameliorated. The feasibility of proposed choices may be further tested through research looking at values, costs, benefits, and other criteria. The third stage is more focused and involves deciding what to do and how to do it: it involves planning and implementing interventions. Many more specifics, resources, and human effort go into actual action and the operations of specific programs and services. The final stage involves assessing what happened, or evaluation. Here again, the research skills of anthropologists can be quite valuable.

Summary

Policy contains a variety of dimensions and opportunities for anthropological analysis and practice. Sometimes it is useful to separate policy analysis from policy practice. The former is passive, analytical, and even academic. It may go no further than a general policy critique. The latter involves action and the use of specific knowledge for dealing with human problems through laws, programs, and services. It may directly involve planning, delivery, management, administration, negotiation, mediation, collaboration, and consultation. Nonetheless, what strengths anthropologists take into such practice rest ultimately on their capacities to do policy analysis. Those strengths will be discussed in the next chapter.

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