

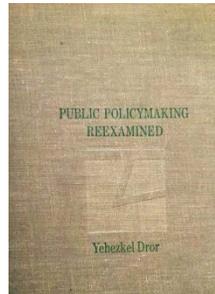


5C. The Policy Sciences of Yehezkel Dror

The beginnings of Policy Sciences as a new academic interdisciplinary occurred, after World War II, in 1951 with the publication of “The Policy Orientation,” by Harold D. Lasswell (1902-1978), Professor of Law at Yale University.¹

Later in the 1950s, a number of statistical, mathematics, and economic tools and techniques for decision analysis were independently developed and improved. Government decision-making studies increased, and problems of choice were investigated—primarily in nuclear strategy, business, and individual choice. Systems theory and cybernetics were being developed in the biological and mathematical sciences and in information theory. Management sciences were at a take-off point. The 1960s saw the acceptance of policy analysis on a wide scale throughout US Government agencies. That stimulated the creation of American research centers and think tanks that devoted focused multidisciplinary professional attention to problems of national defense, economic planning, technological development, Space exploration, urban growth, education, poverty, and other social domains.

By the end of the 1960s, Yehezkel Dror was a senior staff member of the RAND Think Tank in the United States, and he had published *Public Policymaking Reexamined*:²



Through the 1970s, Dror became the world’s most energetic, articulate, and productive advocate of the Policy Sciences. In the Foreword to the Robert M. Krone’s 1980 book, *Systems Analysis and Policy Sciences*, he wrote:

Any serious thinking on contemporary and emerging problems and issues leads to the conclusion that present assumptions, perspectives, orientations, institutions, knowledge, and methods are inadequate and increasingly obsolescent. Energy and food scarcities, erosion of governmental authority, ethnic conflicts, Crazy States, growing hiatus between haves and have nots, new aggressive ideologies, proliferation of mass weapons, global multichannel communications, potential blessings

¹ Harold D. Lasswell, “The Policy Orientation,” in Daniel Lerner and Harold D. Lasswell, eds., *Policy Sciences*, Chapter 1 (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1951).

² Yehezkel Dror, *Public Policy Reexamined* (San Francisco: Chandler, 1968).

and curses of genetic engineering, interaction between more than 150 nominally sovereign and independent states—these are just a few of the features that make the present quite different from the past and that promise to make the future even more different from the present. Historic discontinuities, trend mutations, catastrophic (in the technical sense) jumps, and accelerating ultrachange do make traditional modes of incremental policymaking and piecemeal social intervention at best inadequate and frequently counterproductive. Required instead are order-of-magnitude transformations in human and governmental capacities to appreciate situations and design innovative grandpolicies. I think it is not exaggerated to speak about the need for a novel decision-culture, that is essential if humanity is to handle its increasingly difficult problems.³

Editors' Notes: Readers of this special issue of the *Journal of Space Philosophy* dedicated to the legacy of Yehezkel Dror will observe that by 2018, those views have not changed. He has further documented and expanded his scope, diagnostics, and professional works over the past two decades. And Earth's problems have advanced as he predicted. If you read all the articles in this issue, you will understand the facets of Yehezkel Dror's Policy Sciences, his concerns and prospects for humanity, and the real possibilities that if his prescriptions are ignored by global decision makers, the huge black clouds forming put humanity's future at risk. ***Bob Krone and Gordon Arthur.***

³ Yehezkel Dror, "Foreword," in Robert M. Krone, *Systems Analysis and Policy Sciences* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 1980), ix.