

Systems Approaches to Planning: From Control, Self-Organisation and Power to Accidents



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Abstract

I distinguish four systems approaches to urban planning with analytical foci on control, self-organization, power and accidents. I elaborate on the last of these approaches, noting its salience to a world in which statutory urban planning continues to expand but also disappoint in its outcomes. This organizational systems approach speaks to normative questions of: whether urban planning could or should be reduced to project management; how smart 'smart city'-related interests in complexity will be in practice; the limits of 'muddling through'; and the contribution of discretion and intermediation to urban planning's normal accidents.

Biography

Nicholas A. Phelps is Chair of Urban Planning and Associate Dean (International) at the Faculty of Architecture, Building and planning at the University of Melbourne. he was previously Professor of Urban and Regional Development and Pro Vice Provost Regional at UCL. His research interests cover the economic geography of urban economic agglomeration, the economic geography of multinational enterprises and the politics and planning of suburbanization. He has published over 100 journal articles and authored and edited twelve books including *The Urban Planning Imagination (Polity)*, *Interplaces (OUP)* and *Sequel to Suburbia (MIT Press)*.