

BASES

Bases:

“Implicit factors or unsupported beliefs that shape and support explicit positions and arguments.”
(Barnhill)

Compare to “preanalytic vision” (Herman Daly) and “frame analysis.”

- *What follows is not an exhaustive list. It includes only some options.*
- *Some of these options can overlap; it is not always either-or.*

Categories and examples

Choice of terms:

- efficiency, or sufficiency
- (individual) benefit, or common good
- rights, or responsibility
- standard of living, or quality of life

Definition of terms

- sustainability
- nature and natural
- growth, development, progress
- quality of life
- needs versus wants

Categories, dichotomies, and options

- “Are you for freedom and development or against them?”
- Countries have a choice of either (transnational, corporate-based, free-market) development or remaining mired in poverty.
- “There is no other option.”

Epistemology (philosophy of knowledge)

- authority and trustworthiness of reason
- the relation between reason and emotion, reason and tradition, reason and the body
- knowledge as universal or as contextual
- categorical/binary thinking, both-and thinking, “dialectical” thinking (Daly)

Time frame

- quarterly report
- 5-10 years?
- 50-100 years?
- 40,000 years?

Contemporary situation

- How bad is it?
- Who or what is to blame?

Faith or lack of it

- in science & technology (“technological optimism”)
- in experts
- in the market (“market fundamentalism”)
- in nature’s endless bountifulness (“cornucopianism”)
- in centralized control or decentralized control (political, economic)
- in individuals deciding for themselves
- in human communities
- in cultural tradition
- in “Western civilization”

Reaction to uncertainty

- Precautionary principle?

Philosophy of nature

- what nature consists of (individual things, processes, relationships....)
- how nature works (“red in tooth and claw,” symbiosis....)
- the type and degree of (moral and spiritual) value of nature: higher animals, other animals, plants, populations, ecosystems, nature as a whole
- individualism versus holism
- anthropocentrism, biocentrism, ecocentrism

Philosophical anthropology, human philosophy

- human nature
- the relationship between humans and the natural world

Social philosophy

- are we inherently discrete individuals with no intrinsic responsibility for others, or are we inherently interrelated with intrinsic responsibility for others
 - others = U.S. citizens
 - others = people in other countries
 - others = people in the future
 - others = nonhuman beings
- relationship between the economy, society, and the natural world: separate, overlapping, or one inside the other?
- economic goals
 - growth & profits
 - economic security (for whom?)
 - economic capability (the ability to do what one wants to do and ought to do)
 - development of quality of life and equality (for whom?)
- “capital”:
 - social capital?
 - ecosocial capital? (Carr, *Bioregionalism and Civil Society*)
- how the economy works best
 - individuals seeking their own gain makes the economy the strongest, which benefits all. “Trickle-down.”
 - corporations are inherently greedy, and need strong government oversight and regulation to reduce inequality.
 - to have an economy that works well, we need to make a radical change
- perspective on economic inequality
 - individualistic: those who succeed in the economy have earned it.
 - system-based: those who succeed are the ones who the economic system benefits, and the poor are those who the economic system leaves out. “Privilege.”
- the governments role in directing the economy, in particular the development of certain forms of energy, alternative transportation, etc. And the criteria for determining which ones.
- spheres: the state (political dimension) & civil society ... & economic society (the market)?
- what is the relative importance of
 - standard of living (material affluence)
 - freedom
 - equality
 - community
- “progress” and “development” and “manifest destiny”
 - natural?
 - historical inevitability? Bruce Hornsby, “The Way It Is”
 - inherently good?
- property and property rights