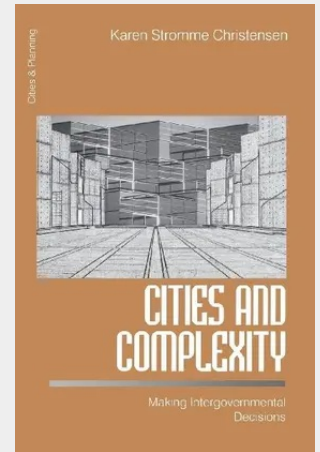


Cities and Complexity

Making Intergovernmental Decisions

Planners hate uncertainty. The objective of their work is to devise a course of action that will reduce uncertainty on a public scale. However, complicated intergovernmental systems often make their work complex and difficult. The planning profession is founded in quandries: How can we know the future? What is the public interest? How can we know which values are right? What is the relationship between means and ends? This book addresses the mismatch between the assumptions of planning and the actual operations of the intergovernmental system. Basing her work not only on empirical research but on years of personal experience in complex governmental agencies (specifically HUD), Karen Stromme Christensen presents a new theory of the underlying structure and dynamics of the U.S. intergovernmental system. It is designed to help planners and policy makers clarify the obstacles to effective action on behalf of the public good. Moreover, it suggests ways to preserve and restore the strengths of federalism and to adjust aspects that have become counterproductive.

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