Cultural Policy Studies and the Problem of Political Representation

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Since the 1980s, writiers in cultural policy studies have used Michel Foucault's writing on governmentality to rethink the relationship between intellectuals in the humanities and liberal (or neoliberal) states. One of the founding members of the Australian cultural policy studies school, Tony Bennett, has argued for a model of intellectual as a cultural technicisn who works with the state bureaucracies. This article uses Bennett's work as an entry-point into questions about the role of critical intellectual, the nature of state power and bureaucracy, and function of culture. It argues that if cultural policy studies is going to claim to be doing bureaucratic work for the sake of politics (rather than for purposes of self-interest), then it will have to supplement governmentality with other theories that help sort our relationships among intellectuals, political constituencies, and the state.

Ever since there were liberal states to think about, left intellectuals have had a variety of agonized relations with them. To draw out the broad contours of the history, Zygmunt Bauman (1992) has argued that humanistic intellectuals have moved from "legislators" who legitimized the workings of governments to "interpreters" whose work is largely irrelevant to the functioning of contemporary states. In Bauman's simultaneously tragic and comic view, the modern state started out needing its intellectuals, but by the end of the 20th century it worked best by ignoring them.

Cultural studies scholars, meanwhile, have had a variety of theoretical and practical orientations to the state. Many of the putative father and mother figures of the field—Raymond Williams, Stuart Hall, and Angela McRobbie, to name a

diverse set of three—have had various roles in organized politics and governmen-
tal policy initiatives at one time or another (see e.g., McGuigan, 1993). Yet the
strongly Marxist (or at least Marxish) influence in cultural studies always carried
with it a healthy and thoroughgoing suspicion of "official" state politics.

For those of us in communication studies, this split between left intellectuals
and the state should sound familiar. We are used to the idea of "administrative"
research that derives its funding and orientation from governmental or private
interests, and "critical" research that does not. Yet even this is an exaggeration.
When Paul Lazarfeld first coined the terms in 1941, he meant them to designate
ends on a continuum, two general tendencies in the field (Simonson, 2001). To-
day we have ossified Lazarfeld's categories into an ontology of research methods
and philosophical dispositions: critical intellectuals are supposedly suspicious of
a state that is supposedly accepted without question by administrative intellectu-
als. But of course this is a caricature. Some of the communication scholars who
most stridently self-identify as critical have accepted money and research agen-
das from governmental agencies. Some communication scholars involved in policy
work are thoroughly engaged with so-called critical scholarship. Still, there re-
mains considerable anxiety among left intellectuals—regardless of field—about
the terms on which we should or should not engage the state, and to what ends
that work will be put.

This article explores one particular moment when a group of Australian cul-
tural studies scholars chose to directly engage the state and questions of policy. In
the late 1980s and early 1990s, Australian cultural policy studies came together
around the idea that cultural studies should engage policy bureaucracies. Writers
in this field directly challenged what they saw as an unwarranted suspicion of the
state and official politics in cultural studies. But they took a remarkably circui-
tous route to the policy position, using Michel Foucault's writings on
govenmentality to provide theoretical justification—at both the epistemological
and ethical levels—for cultural studies' "move toward policy." By focusing on the
work of Tony Bennett and a few of his colleagues in the late 1980s and early
1990s—in what he and others have come to call "the cultural policy debates"—I
argue that their particular reliance on Foucault's notion of governmentality re-
quires them to bracket issues central to their project, like the problematics of
political representation and specific outcomes of the machineries of power. This
article thus considers the theoretical foundations of the cultural policy school
especially as they appropriate Foucault's governmentality writings.

Think of the question this way: What kinds of relationships are possible
between left intellectuals and liberal or neoliberal states? Under what conditions
should we seek to promote a particular policy agenda? Under what circumstances
should we instead orient ourselves toward broader concerns of social transforma-
tion? Of course, the answers to these questions in practice will always depend on
the context—and anxiety over relations to the state can be read as yet another
replay of the neverending "reform vs. revolution" debate among left intellectuals

and activists. But to say that this is a practical issue is merely to defer the philosophical issues until the moment when a decision must be made. The moment when cultural policy studies first comes into its own is interesting precisely because it rightly treats the relationship of left intellectuals and the state as a theoretical problem *and* a practical problem. But, as I will argue, the move to cultural policy is shot through with an unreconciled contradiction between a humanist philosophy of political reform and liberation (however modest or modulated) and an antihumanist philosophy of power that undermines the very politics of representation that the practice of cultural policy studies aims to effect. The result is, predictably, something of a split between theory and practice. More importantly, the split leaves unasked crucial ethicopolitical questions about the representational politics of cultural policy studies itself. If we are to intervene in state, national, and international policy, whom do we claim to represent, and on what terms? Are intellectuals in cultural policy studies to work for others' interests beside their own, and if so, how will they deal with that relationship? Foucault's governmentality writings, the primary authorizing framework for cultural policy studies in its early phase, provide little guidance to these thorny and eminently practical questions.

Tony Bennett's work is of paramount important here, because he was perhaps the most strident advocate of the Foucauldian "governmentality" position in his theoretical writings on policy. As Toby Miller (1998, p. 72) points out, Bennett's curriculum vitae is relevant, since he was well known as an exponent of Gramscian cultural studies before his move to policy. In *Outside Literature* (1990) and later work, Bennett almost wholly renounces this Marxish position for a Foucauldian one, making this moment in his work a particularly rich site for the questions driving this article. The adaptation of Michel Foucault's work by Bennett and others in cultural policy studies offers a classic case study of the uneasy relationship between poststructuralism and progressive politics rooted in a more humanist tradition, and this is why I wish to consider the problem here. Foucault's work has often been characterized as antihumanist, yet it retains a kernel of the humanist political vision. Although he refused to make programmatic statements in his books, and although one of his most significant contributions to social thought is the genealogy of subjectivity, Foucault nevertheless holds on to ideas of liberation. As Amanda Anderson (1992) argues, Foucault's work appeals "at some level to a vision of unalienated relations and undamaged forms of social life" (p. 64). Otherwise, why make a critique of prison reform or so-called sexual liberation? In both cases, his criticism is that they did not do what they said they were doing. There is, then, some residual promise of liberation in Foucault's work even as he declares the "death of man" and offers a genealogy of subjectivity. This contradiction between holding on to the possibility of some form of social and subjective transformation and the desubstantialization of subjectivity is perhaps one of the most productive tensions in Foucault's work. Inasmuch as cultural policy scholars have pursued a Foucauldian position, I argue that they inherit this contradic-

tion from him. The tension between a suspicion of the idea of liberation and a commitment to left ideals predicated on some notion of political liberation thus haunts cultural policy studies' project.

Carlo Ginzburg (1980) has argued that this tension in Foucault's thought leads to a "populism with its symbols reversed. A 'black' populism—but a populism just the same" (p. xviii). Ginzburg suggests (and I extend his suggestion below as "negative populism") that by refusing to represent those people excluded by traditional history, who were in the institutions that Foucault analyzes, he leaves aside any *specific* ethical or political claims in exchange for a diffuse populism. In other words, instead of the classic populist position of "whatever the people do is good," Ginzburg sees Foucault's willful silence on the question of "the people" as its own kind of undifferentiated representation of "the people." Gayatri Spivak's (1988) criticism of Foucault (and Deleuze) is based on a similar claim: the refusal to represent is itself a kind of representation. Others have argued that Foucault's politics represent a kind of poststructuralist anarchism (May, 1994). One could also make compelling arguments for strands of liberalism and Marxism in his thought, which both demonstrate his debt to humanism (e.g., Foucault, 1991b). His two final full-length studies (Foucault, 1985, 1986) also indicate a willingness to revisit the political and ethical questions posed by humanist thought.

Regardless of one's opinion of this debate on Foucault, the nature of the problem changes when his thought is applied to Australian cultural studies. Cultural policy studies began as a movement among Australian cultural studies writers who sought to engage critically with the policy apparatus of the Australian government. Like other nations responding to the massive U.S. culture industry, Australia has a ministry of culture and has at times actually engaged with academics in the humanities and "critical" social sciences. The model of cultural policy initially developed by cultural policy scholars was specific to the kind of nation that Australia represents. As Graeme Turner (1993) argues, Australian cultural policy is shaped by the fact that Australia is a "small and economically weak nation . . . torn between adjusting what it does in order to compete internationally. . . or alternatively maintaining a close relation between its activities and a sense of national identity—even when this incurs economic penalties" (p. 70; see also Miller, 1998, p. 84 on the "local flavor" debates). Turner's point is that Australia is unique in having some potential autonomy in cultural policy because of its geographical isolation, but that it is at the price of its position in the international culture industries.

So, to twist around a phrase from Marx, we ought to begin by acknowledging the "special Australian conditions." A cultural policy studies for the United States, for instance, would look different since the playing field is different in terms of what kinds of academic work are able to interface with what kinds of federal policy. It is interesting to note that in the United States, the federal government has intervened heavily in questions of cultural policy without calling it such. Bennett (1997, p. 7) cites Tom Streeter (1996) who prefers the term "law" to

"policy" given the latter's embeddedness in "technocratic assertion" (my argument in part follows Streeter's reasoning). But policy does indeed fit. What term better describes fighting for favorable export conditions for Hollywood films, reassigning the electromagnetic spectrum, and developing a comprehensive history curriculum for public schools? All these areas could come under the cultural policy rubric in another context. A historical view would include the various schemes for destroying, assimilating, and later recovering and preserving Native American cultures by the federal government, not to mention the massive and ill-fated project of Reconstruction after the Civil War.

As Bennett (1998a, n.p., 1997, pp. 6–7) relates it, cultural policy studies has moved from a hotly-debated research direction to a widely accepted approach among humanities scholars in Australia. He attributes this to three major differences between Australia and other countries: cultural studies experienced a major institutional boom during a period when the Labour Party controlled the federal government (1983–1996) and when the government entertained a strong interest in questions of cultural policy—in contrast to the legacies of Thatcherism in the United Kingdom and Reaganism in the United States; a "permeability" of relations between universities and the Australian government; and the Australian government's explicit and intensive attention to cultural policy (in contrast to, e.g., the United States—as discussed above). In other words, Australia provided a fertile testing ground for the cultural policy studies idea in its early development because of relatively favorable conditions for humanities scholars to get involved in the policy process.

I have thus chosen to focus most heavily on writings in cultural policy studies from the late 1980s and early 1990s for two reasons: 1) the particularly favorable conditions to left humanities intellectuals' involvement in Australian policy prior to 1996, and 2) this is the period when the move toward Foucault in cultural policy studies was most explicitly thematized and where Foucault was most strongly contrasted with Gramsci and other more philosophically humanistic inspirational figures in cultural studies. It should be noted that Bennett has modified his position somewhat since these early writings, once in the mid 1990s (see Bennett, 1997, discussed below), and again more recently.[1] To maintain the flow of this piece, I have written it in what anthropologists call "the ethnographic present" while acknowledging that Bennett has moved away from his initial position somewhat.

It should seem obvious enough that a turn toward policy in cultural studies is a good thing. The administration of culture is no small matter. Indeed, Adorno (1978) claims that *administration* is the only common factor binding the range of artifacts and practices that exists under the sign "culture" in modern capitalism. "Culture has always been about policy" in the hierarchies of aesthetic evaluation implicit in any form of cultural production or consumption, and in its organizational or institutional existence (Miller, 1998. p. 67). This is the ground from which Bennett (1992b, p. 395) argues that all cultural studies work has a "policy

horizon" (and he makes clear that this is not to say that all cultural studies work should be on policy). More recently Denis McQuail has argued that because "the agenda of cultural policy issues grows, if anything, longer and more urgent," there is a "need to revive an 'applied' version of critical cultural study which might shed continuing light on what is happening to media culture" (1997, pp. 40–41). Academics too often are content to seek some kind of pure political position, whether revolutionary or nihilistic, from which to strike a political pose. As I have argued elsewhere (Sterne, 1998), we have nothing to gain from self-imposed mar-ginality—beyond self-imposed marginality. But cultural policy studies argues for and directly thematizes engagement with policy bureaucracies in the name of making things better, however incrementally. While I would hope for a broader vision of social transformation guiding reformist activity, there should be no ques-tion that reform politics—that is, direct political engagement with policy bureau-cracies for the purpose of progressive reform—has to be a legitimate component of politically engaged scholarship.

But there are many different operations at work in the advocacy of a "policy turn." In particular, questions of representation and normative politics bracketed by Foucault become essential when academics seek to engage policy bureaucra-cies in order to build better policy institutions. Some vision of social justice and the good life—however provisional or partial—must underwrite the move to and through policy. Without it, there would be no ethical or political reason other than self-interest to engage policy bureaucracies. Bennett (1998b, n.p.) acknowledges as much: The analysis of culture and policy invokes "questions of an inescapably normative kind." Cultural policies inevitably promote one way of life over an-other; "whenever the question of culture is in play and whenever it is connected to policy, compellingly vital issues concerning how the relations between different human ways of living will be managed are always at stake."

While Foucault's governmentality work has proven inspirational for many writers, it is essential to understand the limits of the applicability of this work as an authorizing discourse for the very specific action of critically engaging policy bureaucracies. The focus on *logics* of power in Foucault's work limits its applica-bility in terms of accounting for one's own implication as an agent (or as part of an agent) in fields of power relations. This is because the Foucauldian paradigm brackets questions of outcome in particular contests between particular subjects, favoring instead a much broader scope: He is interested in the production of sub-jects (a distinction I further develop below). The result, insofar as Bennett casts cultural policy studies in a purely Foucauldian mode, leaves one of two apparent choices: reproducing an apparatus (albeit, for Bennett and others, in some kind of "transformed" state) or refusing to participate in the logics of power upon which it functions (which is why Foucault is sometimes called an anarchist). Moreover, by refusing to engage the very issues around political representation while seek-ing to do the work of political representation, Bennett's earlier programmatic and theoretical version of Australian cultural policy studies more or less reproduces a

bureaucratic ethos and a politics of negative populism because it refuses to directly address these issues at the theoretical level.

I am arguing two very specific issues here: the use of a governmentality approach as the sole or fundamental warrant and intellectual grounding for approaching policy bureaucracies, and its attendant bracketing of issues central to the policy enterprise. This essay is not meant as a critique of the actual policy work of people who consider themselves cultural policy studies scholars (which, to my eyes, is often very un-Foucauldian)—least of all Bennett, who has at times been quite effective at getting culture on the policy agenda both within Australia and internationally. I also have no desire to re-enter the policy debate on its own terms: Bennett (1997, p. 64) writes that early critiques of Foucault within British cultural studies were essentially claims that he "wasn't Marxist enough"—they were efforts to fit him into a Gramscian paradigm. My point here is not to measure one theoretical brand name against another, but rather to measure Bennett's application of Foucault's governmentality work to the question of policy against the engagement with the policy field he aimed to effect. In short, Foucault's governmentality may be useful but not sufficient for policy work.

The other area in which I hope to leave behind the terms of the policy debate have to do with its inflection of the longstanding "reform vs. revolution" dyad. Bennett (1997) writes that to call for reform is "a long way from some of the better known clarion-calls of cultural studies: the call to a politics of resistance, for example; the commitment to organizing an alliance of popular forces in opposition to the state . . . " (p. 61). This theme appears repeatedly in Bennett's writing. Yet this article begins from a very different place: From the ethical ground that dominant systemic power relations in our societies—capitalism, racism, patriarchy, heterosexism, ageism—are wrong and ought to be eliminated. If we start from this premise, then both calls for total social transformation *and* efforts to effect change in very specific policy domains ought to be welcomed, or at least considered on their own merits, rather than for their position in the reform vs. revolution dyad.

Theoretical Foundations of Cultural Policy Studies

That said, the reform vs. revolution dyad is a founding moment for Bennett's turn to Foucaultian governmentality. The turn toward policy cast itself against several tendencies within the field of cultural studies that gained a great deal of currency prior to and throughout the 1980s. As Bennett writes, "the 'policy debate' was itself a symptom of what was an already emerging division between revisionist tendencies within cultural studies—tendencies, that is, wishing to embrace reformist rhetorics and programs—and tendencies still committed to the earlier rhetorics of revolution and resistance" (1997, p. 191). Foremost among these was the ideology and resistance model that depends on a Gramscian model of hegemony, the state, and civil society. Adopting the Foucauldian perspective of

governmentality, Bennett (1990, p. 268) argues that "the political conspectus of Gramsci's theory of hegemony is, relatively speaking, a politics of consciousness, indifferent to the specific properties of the institutional sites in which it is conducted." Of course, this says more about Gramscians in cultural studies than Gramsci's own work: to suggest that Marxism, even "Western Marxism" is fundamentally a politics of consciousness is to miss its most essential contribution to social thought. Marxism is not about the politics of consciousness alone, but rather situates consciousness against the material conditions of life and labor.

Cultural studies' innovation was to develop a kind of "cultural Marxism" that attended to culture as a significant site of struggle, alongside other sites. Through privileging consciousness as the primary object of study, this work winds up authenticating itself as political precisely because, as Bennett notes above, consciousness becomes the site of political struggle, or at the least the site where these scholars locate political struggle. This may well be a caricature of cultural Marxism, since it transforms the Gramscian project into an idealist exercise of achieving the properly conditioned consciousness. This is a central move in his critique: By arguing that Marxism is primarily a politics of consciousness, by turning Gramscian Marxism into a brand of idealism, Bennett is able to leave aside the large body of Marxist thought on capitalist institutions. Bennett instead claims that the Gramscian approach is itself insufficient because it cannot account for the institutional contexts in which cultural struggles emerge (see, e.g., 1992a, p. 30). This methodological insufficiency then leads, for Bennett, to a practical insufficiency as well: If the Gramscian cultural studies perspective cannot conceptualize a "cultural technology," then it cannot effectively assist in "the development of practicable forms of politics capable of affecting the actions of agents within those cultural technologies" (p. 31).

In making this argument, Bennett claims that the Gramscian model takes the conditions of possibility for political struggle as given. As a result, he concludes that the Gramscian model only allows intervention in the struggle as it has been preconstituted. At the core of his critique is the issue of agency. Bennett claims that Gramscian cultural politics has tended to promote shared perspectives among members of social groups and alliances among different social groups in anticipation of "the production of a unified class, gender, people, or race as a social agent likely to take decisive action in a moment of terminal political fulfillment of a process assigned to the task of bringing that agent in to being" (1992a, p. 32). In other words, he argues that there is a revolutionary telos to Gramscian cultural politics that rejects anything short of total revolution as insufficient. Yet the theory of hegemony is precisely about piecing together contingent and sometimes inconsistent alliances in the form of power blocs. Barring a purist-anarchist political stance where actors might struggle against hegemony per se, it is a question of what classes make up the hegemonic bloc in a given society, and what the non-hegemonic classes need to do in order to achieve hegemony (e.g., a hegemony of the working class instead of the bourgeoisie—see Williams, 1977, pp. 108–115;

Anderson, 1976–1977).

In his critique of Gramscian cultural studies, Bennett confuses a *horizon* of Marxist cultural politics with the *substance* of Marxist cultural politics. It is true that Marxist work (usually) holds out hope for total social transformation, but that work does not simply wait for that final moment. Rather, it understands historical process to be shaped by struggle. Bennett's confusion turns out to be a crucial move for his critique. As a result of his conflating Gramscians' end goal with their practice of cultural politics, he downplays their conceptualization of the importance of struggle and interest in political action *prior* to some kind of cathartic, apocalyptic moment of total revolution. The Gramscian notion of hegemony is well known to be predicated on active struggle among groups whose affiliations shift. Gramscians do not generally sit around waiting for the revolution but rather give accounts of social process as a form of struggle for power and "consent" (again, see Williams, 1977, on this point); in fact, many scholars turned to the concept of hegemony because it provided a way out of simple domination-resistance models. That said, hegemony does rest upon a notion of politics as driven by the interests and intentions of actors. Bennett is right that the standard cultural studies hegemony model can be read as assuming (or at least taking from other sources) an account of the conditions of possibility for political action rather than providing its own alternative account.

So for Bennett, cultural studies scholars have to begin by understanding institutions as agents, as acting in the name of agents, and ultimately producing the conditions under which a group could come together in the name of some kind of unified interest. In understanding agency as operating on an institutional model, interventionist scholars engage with those institutions. Engaging policy agendas and operating procedures of cultural institutions, serving specific "cultural action groups," (a phrase I will consider carefully below) and impinging on the political process in such a way as to affect the kind of administrative apparatus capable of addressing specific problems would all be strategies of a policy-oriented cultural studies. "It will mean talking to and working with what used to be called ISAs rather than writing them off from the outset and then, in a self-fulfilling prophesy, criticizing them again when they seem to affirm one's direst functionalist predictions" (Bennett, 1992a, p. 32). In other words, cultural policy scholars can neither discount the state by taking it for granted nor, otherwise, mistake a diffuse model of power for the enabling condition of a kind of atomized, individualized agency (as in a resistance model).[2]

This move also warrants some reflection, because it has implicitly changed the domain of struggle. The model of power here, though semi-Foucauldian, is still resolutely top-down: one intervenes in the institution at the level of policy (i.e., at the top level). Stuart Cunningham (1991) argued that policy studies is precisely about moving away from "rhetorics of resistance, progressiveness, anti-commercialism on the one hand, and populism on the other" toward "those of access, equity, empowerment, and the divination of opportunities to exercise ap-

propriate cultural leadership" (p. 434). This is not simply to make the move of labeling Bennett a "reformist" and thereby reject his paradigm for something purer. Any serious left politics—that is, any left politics seeking to really improve people's lives in the present—must understand reform as a necessary part of the political process. But Bennett has already traded on the false dichotomy of reform/revolution: He casts the Gramscians as starry-eyed revolutionaries, waiting for the working class to take up arms. Against that he suggests that the work of cultural policy studies be addressed to the state and related institutions. In Bennett's early tales, reformist cultural policy studies plays the down-to-earth pragmatist (which is not to say that Bennett is arguing for a philosophical pragmatism) to the spaced-out Gramscian idealist.

In setting up Gramscian idealism as a foil against a practical cultural policy studies, Bennett sells idealism short. As Jim McGuigan (1997) points out, so-called practicality is not necessarily the most effective policy strategy.

> In order to discover the sources of an effective and critical praxis, cultural studies must be imaginative, it must propose alternatives, different ways of ordering the social and cultural worlds. And, if this seems unrealistic, one only has to refer back to the unrealism of, say, British right-wing think tanks in the 1970s, who dared to think the unthinkable and had the opportunity to see some of their wildest dreams realized at the cost of great suffering. Cultural studies, then must be less restricted by its own space, recognizing that cognate work is going on in other spaces, aiming to reinvent the future, instead of becoming too bogged down in cataloguing the consuming pleasures of the present or merely assisting the grand pragmatics of bureaucratic and economic power. (p. 153)

In other words, speculative work, idealistic work, work that holds out the possibility for radical social transformation may turn out to be incredibly useful in the long run. Rather than thinking in terms of the current policy agenda, cultural policy intellectuals should take a lesson from the British (and American) right and think in terms of changes that could happen over the course of decades.

Moreover, it is possible to engage with policy questions and retain and explicitly cite the oppositional intellectual and political agenda. Toby Miller (1998, pp. 78–79) cites the work of Ruby Rich at the New York State Council for the Arts, Deborah Zimmerman from Women Make Movies, Ben Caldwell of the KAOS network, and media critic and activist Douglas Kellner as examples of left intellectuals that did not need to abandon rhetorics of resistance, progressiveness, and anticommercialism to have significant accomplishments in the policy field. There are, in other words, a variety of ideological positions from which to approach policy. In fact, the cultural policy project itself can be read as part of a long term left project for a "rapprochement between the humanities and social life" that descends from Richard Hoggart, Raymond Williams, and E. P. Thompson down

through Stuart Hall and Bennett's own earlier work at the Open University (Miller, 1998, p. 89).

Bennett's particular institutional emphasis also betrays the "special Australian conditions" informing this early work. Put simply, Bennett privileges the state as a cultural institution—probably because the Australian state was at the time a particularly amenable site for cultural policy studies. The one kind of institution noticeably absent from his analysis is the corporation. I believe this is the result of his reliance on Foucault for his theoretical authorization, since Foucault more or less takes for granted the development of capitalism as one of the backdrops against which he writes his own histories. And I use "takes for granted" deliberately. Despite Bennett's binary opposition between Gramscian and Foucauldian approaches, Foucault himself repeatedly asserts in his interviews with Duccio Trombadori that Marx's thought is central to his writings (see Foucault, 1991b). As Carrie Rentschler argues, in taking capitalism for granted, Foucault offers no account of corporate or economic power. Thus, Foucault's governmentality could be generously read as sympathetic to critiques of corporate power, but they require some supplementation for policy actors seeking to engage the economic or corporate fields. Moreover, attention to an economic analysis would reveal the complex interplay between cultural policy and these very economic conditions. Consider the ways in which work on academic labor in the United States has exposed the links between the politics of higher education, government funding for the arts and the humanities, the attack on the tenure system, increased reliance on adjuncts and other undercompensated academic laborers, the movement among graduate employees toward unionization, and American labor unions' new interest in academics (see, e.g., Berube, 1998; Nelson, 1997a, 1997b; Nelson & Watt, 1999; and the efforts of the online journal *Workplace*). One could say the same thing about any number of phenomena that should interest cultural policy scholars, from the sports-industrial complex to the repeated installation of new computers and disposal of old ones by all levels and kinds of bureaucracies.

Bennett would (and did) counter, that cultural policy studies goes beyond persuading institutions to change their policies; rather, it is oriented around the transformation of institutional *logics*. The goal is to change the rules of the game, rather than simply to help one side beat the other. This peculiar approach is best understood if we take a detour through the theoretical foundations of cultural policy studies. As Bennett writes, the move toward cultural policy studies is founded on two primary axes: first, a reading of Foucault focusing on his governmentality writings; second, a critical reconsideration of the idea of culture in cultural studies, and especially the work of Raymond Williams through this Foucauldian perspective.

Foucault's (1991) notion of governmentality is based on his idea that power functions according to logics— that the *how* of power is as important as who has the power (pp. 102–103). Governmentality becomes a political rationality for the

state, but a whole set of relations of institutions, practices, and discourses, which may or may not center upon the state (Foucault, 1991a, p. 104). Government is both "the conduct of conduct" and the disposition of "men [sic] and things." In other words, governmentality describes the logic by which everyday practice is organized through its, well, government. Governmentality, as the management of populations, distributes those populations differently through different contexts— prisons, schools, families—to different ends, but always acts on them through one instrument or another, never directly. Thus, from the perspective of governmentality, culture cannot develop in the abstract, but must rather be constructed through a variety of institutional contexts and toward contextually specific ends.

Bennett finds Foucault's governmentality is a useful contrast to Gramscian hegemony because of Foucault's particularly impersonal view of agency and be- cause of his implicit emphasis on the bureaucratic state in modern life. The very definition of governmentality contains a totally different notion of agency as me- chanical, a kind of impersonal force: governmentality itself *acts.* So in place of seeking out a "unified class, people, or race," cultural policy studies aims to iden- tify and transform governmental logics (Bennett, 1992a, p. 32).

The conduct of conduct and its institutionalization are Bennett's touchpoints for reconsidering Raymond Williams' conception of culture. Williams (1975) defined three major meanings of the word culture: a particular way of life, whether of a people, period, or group; works and practices of intellectual and artistic activ- ity; and the independent and abstract noun which describes a general process of intellectual, spiritual, and aesthetic development (p. 80). Bennett (1992a, pp. 25–27) argues that cultural studies scholars, in focusing on the tensions between the first two meanings of the words, have generally ignored the third. "Intellec- tual, spiritual and aesthetic development" of the individual would occur, accord- ing to Bennett's reading of Foucault, precisely under the circumstances he dubs "governmentality": These forms of development are both questions of conduct- ing conduct and the disposition of the self and ultimately the disposition of a population. Bennett's policy project can thus be understood through a critical rereading of Williams by way of Foucault: Cultural studies writers have, thus far, focused on the relation between culture as a set of artifacts (kinds of textual pro- duction) and as a set of material practices assembled as a "way of life." By reinvoking the third term, Bennett enfolds this problematic into the larger struc- ture of governmentality. If culture is indeed "a whole way of life" and governmentality takes as its object the population, then culture itself must be the product of various governmentalizations.

Through this logic, cultural policy studies takes culture as its object—but it understands culture as itself an object of administration. This has produced two main strands of scholarship within the field. A broadly historical and genealogi- cal direction is exemplified by Bennett's work on museums (1995) and literature (1990). Bennett's work on museums considers at great length how they changed from private elite institutions in the 18th century to public, municipal institutions

in the 19th century aimed at culturing the working class through a variety of regulations and practices. Similarly, Ian Hunter's (1988, 1992a) work considers the uses of literary aesthetics and the study of English to produce a set of "relations to the self," to turn personality into a "vocation"—that is, the way in which the humanities (especially through literary studies) aim through their pedagogy to produce a certain type of individual. Toby Miller's *Well-Tempered Self* (1993) extends Hunter's insights in a slightly different direction, arguing that modern government and polics is aimed at producing incomplete subjects in need of supplementation, correction, molding, and cultivation.

The other major thrust of cultural policy studies work to date has been a more directly interventionist approach, where individuals coordinate their work with larger institutions and projects. Such work is devoted to specific policy development, involvement in government process, and consultancy. Bennett (1992b, p. 406) offers two examples: the regulation of broadcast content by bodies like the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal, and the monitoring of the cultural resources available to minority ethnic groups of the kind undertaken by the Office for Multicultural Affairs. A quick tour through the newsletters produced by the Key Centre for Cultural and Media Policy presents an impressive array of concerns such as gun control, new media, indigenous citizens' rights, land rights and tourism, and censorship (e.g., Goggin, 1996; Hippocrates, 1996; Trotter, 1997). Even these examples show the special Australian conditions that shaped Bennett's vision of the possibilities for cultural policy. About the same time that Bennett's example of the Australian Broadcast Tribunal appeared in print, the agency was dismantled in favor of the more deregulatory Australian Broadcast Authority, which appears to be moving Australian media regulation into line with other deregulatory approaches, like that of the FCC in the United States.

So the initial mission of cultural policy studies can be described as apprehending the histories and mechanics of individual cultural institutions toward the end of influencing their functioning in the present. In these terms, the study of cultural policy doesn't sound all that different from an oft-heard litany in the humanities and social sciences: "We study culture so we can change it!" Policy studies, however, understands its commitment to changing culture as one that compels it to engage with various "policy-making" institutions because it understands these institutions as primary sites of agency within culture. But writers like Bennett, Hunter, and Cunningham, while supporting the above formulation, are careful to reserve for themselves the possibility of opposition. To this end, they cite Foucault's advocacy of a "governmental logic of the left," based on the hopeful formulation that to the extent that the governed are engaged by the government, governmental rationality becomes an affair of the governed. Foucault, making a move that foreshadows much of the rhetoric of policy studies (and is frequently called upon to support it), claims that "to work with government implies neither subjection nor global acceptance. One can simultaneously work and be restive. I even think that the two go together" (quoted in Gordon, 1991, p. 48).

The result is that cultural policy studies has to walk a fine line. It wants to reserve for itself a position of dissidence while at the same time entering into dialogue with powerful cultural institutions. This, in no small part, has to do with the long tradition of socialist politics associated with cultural studies (at least in its British incarnation); Bennett is quick to point out that such major figures as Williams and Stuart Hall have themselves been active in policy questions. At issue is the relationship of academic practitioners of cultural policy studies to the institutions they hope to affect. In other words, to what extent and under what conditions can one both work with the government and be restive?

The Bureaucratic Ethos and Negative Populism: Aporias of Cultural Policy Studies

This is where we begin to see the limits of Foucault's governmentality paradigm for informing policy work. In the policy context, "any attempt to uncouple the pragmatic from the ethical is dubious" at best (Miller, 1998, p. 37). While it provides a theoretical foundation for the policy turn, it cannot ground an ethic of practice on its own; nor can it begin to account for the specifics of either the internal political logics of institutions *or* the relation between cultural policy studies' position in the academy and its interventions in other institutions. This is because Foucault's work is highly specific, and because it tends toward questions of mechanics while bracketing outcomes.

While Foucault's work can certainly be read as theory, it is also very historical, whether in its genealogical or archaeological incarnations. Yet the specificity of his work is vague: He uses terms like "the West" and "modernity" at the same time that he draws the majority of his sources and examples from France.[3] In any case his work clearly does not address itself directly or specifically to present incarnations of individual institutions. Rather, Foucault's work has always been most concerned with institutions as generalized logics or mechanisms (disciplinarity, medicine, psychiatry, prisons, sexuality).

In privileging the principles underlying the production of social contexts—questions of logics and apparatus—this orientation simultaneously brackets the question of any *specific* outcome of those logics and apparatus. Bennett (1997) illustrates the benefits of this approach through his discussion of Nancy Armstrong's history of conduct books aimed at domestic women. To cut to the chase:

> the domestic woman was, in short, the very model of the auto-inspecting, self-regulating forms of individuality required by liberal forms of government. The intelligibility of her functioning in this regard, however, depended precisely on her placement at the intersection of a series of overlapping antinomies (female-male; high-low; private-public; state-civil society) and her ability, in relation to each of these, to function as part of a reformatory gradient through which that which lies outside the

sphere of culture and government (male boisterousness) is to be brought into it and refashioned. (p. 81)

This analysis provides an interesting account of gender in the production of subjectivity. What it does not provide is a neat way of talking about relations among particular men and women. In other words, if we were to look at a particular struggle over women's conduct in public (see, for example, Ryan, 1990, pp. 131–170), we would have to get back into questions of which women could speak in public and on what terms. These questions are in fact crucial ones—as much today as they were in the 19th century—for policy analysis. Of course, to ask Foucault for the latter kind of analysis (dare I say sociological?) would be to miss the point of the former; but this latter, more particularist analysis is crucial to interventions in the policy arena where there are clearly winners and losers with each major policy decision. Indigenous people are either granted certain formal rights or they aren't; women are treated as fully political subjects or they aren't. It is this smaller, contest-specific, and perhaps sociological sense of outcome—crucial to actually existing policy questions—that is not well explained or analyzed by the analytic of governmentality.

In other words, one can attend to the mechanisms of power and still wind up mystifying the field of differential relations produced by these mechanisms. Remember, one of the founding premises of cultural policy studies is working *with* "what used to be called ISAs." In a way, this mystification of struggle is much like the error that Bennett finds in Gramscian cultural studies: Questions of immediate struggles are put aside in the service transforming—now—institutional logics. Questions of interest, disposition, justice, and oppression are entirely bracketed, even though these are the very political grounds upon which cultural policy studies work authorizes itself. To put it more succinctly, Foucauldian governmentality provides no mechanism for determining the difference between working *with* the government and working *for* the government.[4] "One can simultaneously work and be restive" appears in cultural policy studies work more as a axiom than an argument. The point here is not to recover a position of authentic resistance, but rather to have some understanding of the terms of engagement in the first place. The alternative is not very promising, and is well illustrated by Christopher Simpson's (1994) work on the history of our own field: During the 1940s and 1950s, "psychological warfare" and "communications research" were semantically identical in some contexts. That is to say, a good deal of apparently objective research in communication was actually defined in terms of very definite military and propaganda goals. Just as there has been a debate over the purpose of communication research, there also needs to be a debate about the ultimate purpose and shape of cultural policy studies. For all their antihumanism, Bennett, Hunter, and other advocates of the Foucauldian approach ultimately render the relations between intellectuals in cultural policy studies and policy institutions a personal, rather than a structural issue.

Foucault's assertion about government—a fairly humanistic notion that one can work with the government while being fundamentally opposed to it—relies on a notion of a (at least semiautonomous) subject that is constituted outside the institution within which it is working. In other places, Foucault argues for a struggle against power in all its forms (cf. 1977b, p. 216).[5] It is one thing to contradict oneself—everybody does—but it is another when this contradiction is then taken up by third parties to provide ethical justification for a project. Cultural policy studies work has, to some degree, used Foucault as an authorizing discourse for its policy move—which would be fine—except that it uses Foucault's "being restive" comment programmatically. Even this would be fine if its extent were clearly delimited. Perhaps Foucault so often demurred on questions of instruction and programmatics—"What should we do?"—precisely because his work gave him no answers to such questions.

While work in cultural policy studies (and other related Foucauldian strands of cultural studies) has produced numerous and thorough critiques of cultural institutions from a "logics-of-power" perspective (literary education, the museum, libraries, schools, the regulation of pornography, etc.), there is very little discussion of the specific position of the policy practitioner[6] nor have I found any genealogical work done on the relation of academics to policy processes and apparatuses, especially as this relation is enacted through cultural policy studies. Though Toby Miller (1998) has rightly pointed out that anxieties over engagement with policy apparatus are somewhat unique to humanities intellectuals—colleagues in the social sciences and sciences have long been doing research funded by governmental agencies—he has not gone on to consider the questions raised by left intellectuals in those fields about the status of work driven by governmental policy interests.

For his part, Bennett (1993) offers a gesture toward a genealogy, but one that locates cultural studies as an outgrowth of English, thereby effacing the development of cultural studies in other fields such as comparative literature, education, American studies, sociology, geography, and anthropology. As Stuart Hall puts it, the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies received hate mail from people in both literature and sociology.[7] Locating cultural studies as an outgrowth of English allows Bennett a certain set of rhetorical gestures that would otherwise be unavailable. Two are of primary concern here. His advocacy of a policy turn gestures toward an "outside" of the discipline. To the extent we allow that cultural studies is an outgrowth of literature, he is right—English professors, as a group, do not get very involved in policy (although he would also rightly point out that people like Williams and Hall *were* concerned with policy questions). Policy lies outside the theoretical-practical continuum within the discipline of English as it is traditionally conceived. But other disciplines have an ongoing connection with, and history of relations with, policy apparatus: anthropology, communication studies, geography, and even some national literatures (for instance, Russian language programs). Insofar as cultural studies emerged out of an interdisciplinary field,

these other disciplinary histories have to be acknowledged, and ultimately, understood. For instance, an advocacy of policy-orientedness in anthropology has to reckon with the discipline's own history (to take one example, its role in the Vietnam War in the United States). In the case of geography, there are two sides to the policy coin: a large subfield designed to train planners, and also a tradition of radical planning scholarship. Russian language and area studies programs in American universities were often tied to well-defined military and state department objectives. Of course, one could also find many examples of humane and progressive connections, for instance between scholars interested in educational policy and progressive changes in educational practice. But there is a huge and complicated history of engagements between intellectuals and policy institutions. By claiming that cultural studies is an outgrowth of English, Bennett and Hunter (who has on several occasions argued for bureaucratic values over literary-aesthetic values—see Hunter, 1992b) free themselves from the burden of considering the ethical and political implications of academic work that has engaged policy over the last 60 years. While academic work on policy can lead to progressive ends, it is far from a foregone conclusion that it will, even if the academics in question have the best of intentions.

Bennett's use of the ideology of science is also rooted in a disciplinary history that presumes English as the point of origin for cultural studies. As Toby Miller (1998) argues, cultural policy studies "has an account of past and present textual criticism as a practice, but—as we shall see—no account of its own emergence in relationship to the wider domain of analyzing policy. Its autobiography continues to be articulated against aesthetic critique" (p. 71). As Miller goes on to point out, Bennett takes up positions that would be impossible were he to successfully "breach the space between the humanities and social sciences." Were Bennett to locate the history of cultural studies in relation to, say, sociology or communication studies, he would have to consider the long debates within those fields about the role of "science" in social and political thought (see, e.g., Mills, 1959). Despite assurances that he is not proposing "that cultural studies aspire to the status of a science," (Bennett, 1993, p. 218) Bennett idealizes science through a rhetoric of meritocracy. In response to posthumous praise of Raymond Williams' personal integrity, rather than the technical merit of his work, Bennett (1993) writes:

> My purpose, then, is to ask what kind of discourse of the truth enables (indeed requires) the utterance of remarks of this kind. For it is clear that the discourse and the opposition which organizes it—essentially that between a knowledge whose truth claims are based on criteria of technical competence and one which seeks its basis in the personal qualities of the intellectual—*would have no pertinence in other spheres of intellectual inquiry: math, engineering, economics, or political science for example.* (p. 230; emphasis added)

The problem here is that Bennett's assertion—that prestige in science is accorded on purely meritocratic terms—is simply untenable. From the blurbs on "great mathematicians" in introductory math textbooks, to cults of personality surrounding figures like Edison and Einstein, personality—the "greatness" of the individual— is clearly an issue. (In fact, several studies have shown that prestigious journals in physics and psychology rejected articles they had previously published by well-known full professors when that work was repackaged and resubmitted as the work of unknown graduate students.)

Most importantly, Bennett's willingness to embrace an ideology of science ignores the institutional biases of the sciences surrounding major axes of differ-ence (e.g., the mantra of gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, and class): In the case of gender, there is no guarantee that a woman doing the same quality of work as a man will be accorded the same position in the laboratory, in the author line of a manuscript, or in the scientific profession at large. The problem with overtures to objective evaluation in the humanities is that they tend to mystify the very real power differentials that affect scholars and students' academic opportunities (Aisenberg and Harrington, 1988; American Institutes of Research, n.d.; Blier, 1988; Caplan, 1993; Nieva and Gutek, 1980; Parr, 1989; Peck, 1978).

Bennett's and his colleagues' emphasis on the objectivity of evaluation in scientific fields (and even the so-called "softer" social sciences like political sci-ence) suggests the continued relevance of the epistemological, methodological, and political questions that feminism has posed to cultural studies: We are not working in a "post-feminist" moment. This is not a critique unique to cultural studies. Insofar as intellectuals (regardless of field) are willing to cling to unre-constructed and needlessly abstracted indicies like technical competence—and mystify these concepts in an institutional structure without doing the hard work of actually ensuring equality of opportunity for everyone in the institution before-hand—their work will be unable to reconcile with, address, or surpass the ques-tions posed by feminism and other politics based on the shared experience of social groups.

Bennett's invocations of scientific language to legitimate his positions are somewhat typical of cultural policy studies work of the late 1980s and early 1990s. In another example, Hunter, Williamson, and Saunders (1993) claim a certain kind of objectivity for their study of pornography—a discursive position that is neither tenable in their case nor desirable in general, since both women and men can be assumed to have an "interestedness" in the subject matter. In fact, this study of pornography is particularly instructive because of the authors' dismissive and monolithic view of feminism: Rather than recognizing a long feminist tradi-tion of debate around pornography and sexual representation, they erroneously take the Dworkin-MacKinnon antipornography position as representative of femi-nism *as such.* Far from taking an objective position on the question of pornogra-phy, Hunter, Williamson, and Saunders clumsily restate a particular position within

a larger debate as if it were the debate as such. Because they have not grappled with the local and positioned struggles within what they term "the pornographic field," they are unable to truly get outside its logic to analyze them. Once again, it seems that unfinished business with feminism (and other position-based critiques) is a prior condition for cultural policy studies scholars' overtures to objectivity.

Similarly. Stuart Cunningham describes his own research as empirical, a claim that Meaghan Morris criticizes, given that Cunningham's *Framing Culture* offers exactly one empirical example, and his other case studies are in fact "thumbnail theoretical critiques of an assortment of texts" (Morris, 1992, p. 549). In fact, Cunningham's own use of the term "empirical" was to distinguish his argument about the relation of cultural theory to policy processes—which he says is based on "empirical observations"—from Tom O'Regan's, which comes from "his own fine work . . . "—that is, from personal experience.

This brings us to the vexing question of what is valued in Bennett's vision for cultural policy studies. I showed above how cultural policy studies founds its own claims on a critique of a Gramscian politics of consciousness. Specifically, he argues against understanding politics as a process that has the formation of a unified group ("class, gender, people, or race") as an agent capable of taking positive action in its own interests in a "moment of terminal political fulfillment" (1992a, p. 32). At the same time, cultural policy studies appears to understand itself as an agent acting in the name of less powerful groups.

> Cultural studies might envisage its role as consisting in the training of cultural technicians: that is, of intellectual workers less committed to cultural critique as an instrument for changing consciousness than to modifying the functioning of culture by means of technical adjustments to its governmental deployment. (1992b, p. 406)

Similarly, in a footnote to a citation of Stuart Cunningham, Bennett asserts that the role of the policy studies intellectual should be one of "cultural facilitation" in that "intellectuals should play more of a technical and co-ordinating role in enhancing the range of available cultural resources and facilitating more equitable patterns of access to those resources" (Bennett, 1992b, p 407, n2). In other words, Bennett's ideal intellectual is the cultural technician; the cultural technician, however, is very close to the cultural bureaucrat.

Bennett's work takes up the language of bureaucratic technicism and efficiency—via a detour through its invocation of Foucault's governmentality as a logic of power—in the name of providing an alternative to a politics of consciousness. I should make clear that this is not meant as a defense of the politics of consciousness, but rather as a critique of the terms that Bennett chooses to oppose it. As Barry, Osborn, and Rosen (1996) argue, "the opposition [between the rise of the technical and aspirations to the realization of full human potential] hampers

thought about our present and its ethical character—it must be refused. . . . Human capacities are, from the perspective of these investigations, inevitably and inescapably technologized" (pp. 12–13). This much is clear. But Bennett in fact swings the pendulum in the other direction, rejecting the humanist model of a nontechnologized subject in favor of technique as an affirmative and desirable model of political action. In so doing, he embraces the bureaucratic model of politics: one that prizes efficiency and function—hence his frequent invocations of "technicians" and "tinkering." Far from being a positionless critique of the conditions of possibility for politics, Bennett's writing appears as a clearly *positioned* critique of politics from the perspective of a state bureaucracy. Michael Pusey (1991, p. 125) remarks on bureaucratic officials' willingness to privilege technical considerations over political factors, and furthermore, their general assent that there are times when the technical concerns of government predominate over value and principle. As Denise Meredyth points out, these responses themselves indicate the presence of a bureaucratic ethos: a "distinctive combination of the intellectual, the technical and the ethical" (1992, p. 502). While there is certainly nothing inherently wrong with combining the intellectual, the technical, and the ethical, my concern is that Bennett's invocation of technique mimics the occupational ideology of state bureaucracy. So it is to the question of bureaucracy that I turn—specifically to Max Weber's classic discussion of bureaucracy.

Weber's approach clearly resonates in Foucault's work, though Foucault diverges in important ways and almost never uses the term "bureaucracy." Bureaucracies predate capitalism for Weber (for instance, he discusses Egyptian bureaucracy), but he clearly depicts the rise of the modern nation-state as a precondition for the explosion in the size and intensity of bureaucratic forms. Like Foucault's governmentality, Weber's bureaucracy is a logic of functioning abstracted from any particular result. In fact, it is in some ways the purest expression of function abstracted from its specific manifestation; bureaucracy is by definition a mechanical, desubjectified form of social organization.

> The fully developed bureaucratic apparatus compares with other organizations exactly as does the machine with the non-mechanical modes of production. Precision, speed, unambiguity, knowledge of the files, continuity, discretion, unity, self-subordination, reduction of friction and of material and personal costs—these are raised to the optimum level in the bureaucratic administration. (Weber, 1968, p. 973)

These are, not coincidentally, the very values Bennett upholds as an alternative to the "politics of consciousness" implied by Gramscian cultural studies. Bennett's vision of the de-personified "cultural technician" equally at home in front of the literature class and in the policy apparatus is also a core element of bureaucratic reasoning in Weber's schema.

> Bureaucratization offers above all the optimum possibility for carrying through the principle of specializing administrative functions according to purely objective considerations. . . . "Objective" discharge of business primarily means a discharge of business according to *calculable rules* and "without regard for persons." (Weber, 1968, p. 975, italics in original)

Insofar as we believe Weber has a relatively accurate characterization of bureaucracy and the bureaucratic ethos, Bennett—via his reading of Foucault—appears to actually argue *for* the values of bureaucracy as an alternative to other value-systems for cultural studies. But bureaucratic values are clearly consonant with the administrative apparatus; they do not in and of themselves provide an oppositional stance from which to approach policy-making organizations. On the contrary, the bureaucratic ethos is a kind of accommodation before the fact. As John Frow (1992) points out, higher level bureaucratic workers, by the very virtue of their positions, play an "ideological" role in policy shaping (p. 515). For instance, carrying out the work of a bureaucracy "without regard for persons" (one possible bureaucratic value) may or may not be an ethical course of action in any given instance, but it certainly could have an ideological impact on the formation or implementation of policy. This ideological role suggests that policy work cannot operate at a purely technical level—"tinkering with mechanisms"—but must also continue in some form the "struggle over consciousness" with which Bennett wants to dispense. In other words, bracketing the questions of outcome, ethics, politics, and positionality is entirely consonant with a certain bureaucratic mentality. For Weber, it is one of the primary goals of bureaucracy.

The point is not simply to resist bureaucracy as some kind of inherent evil—the slow-moving institution can be a useful alternative to more autocratic and impulsive institutional models in many circumstances. But Bennett's advocacy of the politics of technique does not occur in a vacuum. On the contrary, unless we assume that his choice of metaphors is essentially meaningless and without context, Bennett's bureaucratic language ought to be read against bureaucracies' self-descriptions. In other words, his move to a language of technique risks uncritically reinstantiating the occupational ideologies of state bureaucracies. There may well be reason to sometimes go along with these occupational ideologies, but it is at least as dangerous to privilege a priori a politics of technique as it is to privilege a priori a politics of consciousness. Bennett (1997) is right when he says that intellectuals—and especially cultural studies writers—who think they aren't already implicated in an institution are misleading themselves (pp. 2–3). But emphasizing our institutional groundedness is not the same thing as working through our agonistic relations with academic or policy institutions. Without a critical analysis of intellectuals' relations to the state, cultural policy risks becoming no more than "a wistful urge for intellectuals to have more importance than they actually have," to borrow a phrase from Bronwen Levy (1992, p. 553).

Whose Cultural Policy?

By engaging (or at least addressing) the policy field, cultural policy studies work portrays itself as providing a service—acting in the name of helping someone. Cultural policy studies writers can orient themselves toward service of policy institutions—(e.g., "to make museums run better") or they can orient themselves toward service of the populations these institutions act upon (e.g., "to make the museum serve Native Americans better"). Notable in Bennett's invocation of "the cultural technician" is the lack of any indirect object for verbs like "facilitating." In fact, the only indirect object Bennett uses in this earlier theoretical work is the purposefully vague "cultural action groups." In other words, in whose name does cultural policy studies work act; whom does it represent? The issue is not that all politics should be about representation but rather that questions of representation are especially important in terms of how academics authorize themselves within the policy field. To put it another way, representative democracies always demand that policies be made in the names of constituencies (even when those constituencies may not in fact even really exist).

Bennett studiously avoids naming the object of his benevolence; cultural policy studies will work *with* policy institutions and cultural action groups, but it is never clear *for whom* it will work. This is not to suggest that cultural policy studies scholars need to name once and for all their politics—they can, as have writers in cultural studies, work in a variety of domains toward a variety of changes. However, questions of the stakes of political representation are altogether bracketed in the work of Bennett and other influential scholars in the field. Oddly enough, Bennett does not seem to evaluate cultural policy "on behalf of those affected by it" but rather by technical criteria—how well it can be implemented by the government. "No indication is given of the ethical technology for distinguishing among cultural projects, between huge grants to ballet and small ones to street theater, no explanation of the precepts that govern the population, or of how the graduates in literature who run the institute [for cultural policy studies at Brisbane University] deem themselves qualified to do so" (Miller, 1998, pp. 73–74). Cultural policy studies offers a populist position without a populace.

Herein lies the negative populism at the base of cultural policy studies: despite the attempts to avoid questions of interest, positionality, ethics, and politics in cultural policy studies work: "cultural studies is being told to pursue the popular under the sign of governmentality and the [generalized] cultural citizen" (Miller, 1998, p. 72). Bennett's political claims are characterized by a refusal of any political positioning beyond a generic "Left"; the only commitment we find in his writing on cultural policy is an unwillingness to represent the people he claims to represent. Since I have characterized him as a negative populist, Bennett's own writing on populism and the popular is instructive here.[8] In an essay commenting on struggles over the definition of popular culture, Bennett (1986) argues that we cannot abstractly fill in the category of the people or the popular: "I shall argue in

favour of an approach which keeps the terms *definitionally* empty—or, at least relatively so—in the interest of filling them *politically* in varying ways as changing circumstances may require" (emphasis in original, p. 8). Bennett's pragmatic answer to the philosophical problem of "the people" has an appealing ring to it, yet one must also ask at what point and by whom these terms will be filled and defined politically. Given that politics is always in process, we would expect that certain prevailing definitions exist and that some might be preferable to others. To this end, Bennett's essay explores the classic populism of socialist workerism and several other versions of "the people," all of which he rejects. While I am very much in sympathy with a position that says we cannot simply define the protagonists of a political struggle before the fact, and that one might see multiple populations (themselves with conflicted and conflicting interests) rather than a unified people as political protagonists, total agnosticism on the question suggests that anything *could* fill the definition. Extending this early line of thought into his writing on cultural policy presents a real problem. If the people are never defined, and cultural policy scholars are to act on people's behalf in the policy field, should we simply depend on the whims of the cultural policy studies scholars as to whom they will represent in the policy field? This is, of course, a position that Bennett could propose. But it is only a plausible political position if cultural policy studies does not claim to be particularly *left* in its political orientation, and if it puts aside Foucault's critique of institutional logics in order to argue for a rational, self-knowing subject (in this case, the cultural policy scholar) who will make the decision when he or she is good and ready to do so. This is why I characterize Bennett as a *negative* populist: According to him, cultural policy studies is to operate in the name of groups whose definition will be defined later—in a final instance that never arrives. He represents the people as an undifferentiated whole, an anticipated constituency, by refusing to represent or differentiate them. Because cultural policy studies aims to represent someone other than itself in the policy field without specifying that someone, the very liberationist humanism it claims to reject returns through the back door. "The problem of speaking in the name of the popular is that it has not encouraged us to radically question the discourse and politics of representation" (Canclini, 2001, p. 27).

Stuart Cunningham (1992), in his advocacy of policy, is much more willing to align himself with specific social groups.

> I strongly support the articulation of opposition when communities of interest refuse the common sense of the dominant culture—in gay and feminist cultural politics, in the politics of the disabled, of race and of youth. Some of the best outcomes in equity and access may arise from these articulations of opposition. (p. 542)

But as Meaghan Morris (1992, p. 549) points out shortly thereafter in the same volume, his actual theory of political representation seems to be a reproduction of

the very traditional paternalistic narrative of political representation that cultural policy studies claims to reject. In other words, Morris criticizes Cunningham because his political program ultimately falls back into a kind of vanguardism, where the enlightened few will lead the many. Again, it is possible that cultural policy studies could—in theory—advance a new kind of "limited" or "strategic" vanguardism for policy intellectuals, but it has not done so. Cunningham (1993, p. 134) has gone on to argue for the value of a "social democratic view of citizenship and the training necessary to activate and motivate it"—in other words, a model of citizenship not based in consumerist or identity politics. Similarly, Jim McGuigan (1996) has argued for grounding cultural policy studies in a modified "public sphere" model. While these are clearly both normative models, both still beg the question of political representation: for whom does cultural policy studies take its stand in the policy field?

An understanding of the logic of the representative politics would seem to be essential to the cultural policy studies project. Pierre Bourdieu (1991, p. 248) argues that representative democracies (like Australia or the United States) operate through a logic of transubstantiation: since an entire group cannot act within the political field, it designates a spokesperson. But an agent with access to the political field can also "create the group that creates him [sic]." In other words, by speaking for a group, the speaker hails them in a particular way, and if enough people identify with the speaker (and not necessarily what is being said in their names)—or even, under some circumstances, simply fail to refute the hail, for example by ignoring it or taking an apathetic stance toward it—then that speaker can operate as though she or he was speaking *for* the entire group. The process can go either way. Even when clearly acting in their self-interest, agents within the political field must present themselves *as though they were acting in the interests of the groups that they purport to represent.* Cultural policy studies work, by refusing to address the question of representation directly, ultimately cannot justify its position vis-à-vis any group it purports to represent. This is especially a problem given Cunningham's (1992) call for a "cultural politics that situates the power or effect of academic discourse within communities of interest where it does not have priority, but must establish its credentials" (p. 542). Because cultural policy studies work offers no theory of political representation, and instead confines its discussion of politics to Foucault's governmentality, it cannot offer any kind of systematic explanation or justification for its position. The policy field into which Bennett wants to move also operates on a similar logic: it operates as though unified interest groups existed, and that political representatives could speak for them. Thus, if Marxist literary criticism has a lesson for cultural policy studies, it is a rather simple one: if you're going to play politics on the terms of the policy-making field, you need a theory of political representation.

Conclusion: Cultural Policy Studies—Moment, Movement, or More?

Through examining the ways in which early writings in cultural policy studies—most notably those of Tony Bennett—ground the move to cultural policy in a bureaucratic ethos, I have attempted to clarify the limits of their appropriation of Foucault's governmentality work and antihumanist philosophy more generally for political work. Although Bennett is able to raise questions of the institutional position of intellectual practice, and is able to address the logics of power underlying some of the disciplinary formations of English and cultural studies, he is ultimately unable to address the more practical questions and outcomes that are directly relevant to specific contests and policies. He offers a fairly confused ethical position concerning "staying inside" versus "getting outside" various logics of power: the political technology of the individual (as created by literary criticism) is something to be avoided, but the ideology of science—and most emphatically meritocracy—is to be emulated. The direct questions of political representation are left unasked. My concern here has not been so much to criticize Bennett for being inconsistent, but rather to use that inconsistency to point out the practical incompleteness of the theoretical paradigm he advocates. And this problem arises directly from the confrontation between antihumanism and humanism in the work of cultural policy studies.

Two qualifications are in order at this point. First, this resolute silence on the part of earlier cultural policy studies writers regarding constituencies and politics may have been an artifact of the field's emergence under a Labour government: even if specific scholars had differences with government policies, there was some sense of a shared mission (at least on questions of reform) that could be left implicit. Second, my criticism of Bennett's theoretical grounding of cultural policy studies is not meant to be a criticism of the practice of cultural policy studies. On the contrary, cultural policy scholars—and Bennett himself—seem to have been quite willing to engage in the wars of position and struggles over hearts and minds that Bennett criticizes in his theoretical work on governmentality and policy.[9]

In fact, Bennett's own writing in its more practical moments has never fully embraced his theoretical stance. At the conclusion to *Culture: A Reformer's Science* (1997), Bennett responds to Richard Miller's (1984) criticism of the Open University Popular Culture course. Bennett's response is instructive here because he blends a governmentality approach with political analyses more properly belonging to the pre-Foucauldian cultural studies. For instance, when Miller criticizes the course for not allowing students to go beyond the regurgitation of facts from the course for exams, Bennett rightly points out the class basis of Miller's critique: forms of examination that favor the acquisition of knowledge from outside the classroom favor students with a middle class (or higher) background (Bennett, 1997, p. 225). Later, Bennett takes an explicitly antipopulist stance in responding to Miller's assertion that students' own narratives ought to be affirmed

in pedagogical situations: "it supposes that all such narratives should be affirmed and that their being spoken will be a productive and useful activity for all concerned" (p. 227). He goes on to illustrate his point anecdotally: An upper-class student of his was revolted at the idea of learning how the yobbo working classes of the north of England spent their holidays. While Bennett says these objections must be responded to in a tactful manner, we needn't build a classroom around encouraging their expression (p. 228). My point here is simply that in matters of pragmatics, Bennett already makes clear that the governmentality approach, alone, is insufficient for analyzing and dealing with questions of policy (and in this case, pedagogy). Indeed, fairly classic formulations of class issues reappear and must be dealt with. The question, then, is how policy studies will move forward.

In a review of *Accounting for Tastes: Australian Everyday Culture* (Bennett, Emmison, and Frow (1999), Ken Gelder (2000) gives the distinct impression that the Australian academy has undergone a sea-change from semiotics to ethnography as the privileged models of analyzing popular culture. But cultural policy studies' promise is that it is more than a new school of criticism to replace the old and keep the ink fresh in scholarly journals. In the work of traditionally humanistic scholars, its promise was an actual engagement with government and policy. In that respect, we can hope that cultural policy studies is more than a scholarly moment or movement, but rather an enduring approach.

So far, the evidence is encouraging. The work of cultural policy studies has continued to grow in Australia and worldwide since the early 1990s, and has resisted a theoretical orthodoxy and monomaniacal commitment to the exclusive use of the governmentality analytic. Some of Toby Miller's writing (1993, 1998, 2001), for instance, has fruitfully continued the critical project of cultural policy studies. Other writers whose work is clearly informed by cultural policy studies have moved away from an authorizing framework that relies solely on Foucault's notion of governmentality. When Nancy Campbell (2000) confronted the implications of her own analysis of women and drug policy in the United States, she found that policy questions extended beyond Foucauldian logics—much more traditional questions of positionality and interest came to the fore and the outcomes of contests over specific laws were essential to her history. As a result, Campbell critiques both the mechanics of the policy field—its "institutional logic"—and the specific and repressive results of American drug policy. Her analyses of drug policy intelligently blend the questions posed by Foucauldian governmentality—the construction and management of subjects and populations—with the question of political representation. For instance, she shows how the occupational ideologies of legislators, the logics of legislative discourse, and struggles over representation U.S. Senate hearings on drug policy led to an early instance of "three strikes" law in this country. Her analysis is promising precisely because she so skillfully integrates the analytics of cultural politics and governmental logics that Bennett opposed to one another ten years prior. Similarly, Néstor García Canclini (2001) has forged a unique position in Latin American cultural

studies by arguing for the importance of citizenship as a category of analysis *alongside* consumption rather than in simple opposition to it.

Perhaps, since scholars are able to shift between roughly antihumanist and roughly humanist positions in practice, it is time to acknowledge as much at the theoretical level. This will require a different understanding of the relationship between those questions of representation posed by humanist political philosophy and the critique of humanism elaborated in Foucault's writings and elsewhere. The crucial work of elaborating a range of social theories appropriate to cultural policy studies has really just begun. Marx, Weber, Gramsci, Foucault, Williams—and many other names are useful for thinking through the messy work of cultural politics and cultural policy. But if our goal is political, then our loyalties cannot lie with any one of them. As we go forward in the cultural policy enterprise, our foremost responsibility is to remember *why* we're doing this work in the first place.

Notes

1. Jeremy Packer (personal conversation, April 2000) tells me that Bennett has recently turned to describing cultural policy studies as something of a "gadfly" project. I would argue that this is a long way from the "cultural technicians" vision he puts forth in his earlier work on policy.
2. The question of Gramsci's ultimate usefulness for social theory will be left open as it is beyond the scope of this article. Suffice it to say that the policy move has, in founding its own position, chosen to do so on a critique of Gramsci, especially as his work is taken up within cultural studies and Marxist literary theory. For a more direct comparison of Foucauldian and Gramscian approaches, see Bennett (1990, pp. 268–272 and *passim*) and Radhakrishnan (1990).
3. This is one of the primary contradictions running through such works as *Discipline and Punish* (1977a) and *The History of Sexuality Vol 1* (1978). For a brief discussion of his own understanding of how "specificity" plays out in his own work in terms of its domains, see Foucault (1980, 67–68).
4. This is not to say that working with and for the government are necessarily opposed, but clearly they could be—if one is opposed to the government or its policies, certainly one does not want to be working to further its ends, especially in terms of allowing the government to define the terms of the engagement.
5. For more discussion of the contradictions of humanism and antihumanism in Foucault's work, see Fraser (1989).
6. It is also interesting to note that Foucault's notion of the "specific intellectual" is generally not discussed in policy literature.
7. If we are willing to say that the CCCS is not the only or necessary point of origin for cultural studies, then we cannot reduce its history to an extension or refiguring of literary studies in British schools. This fact is acknowledged even in the histories of cultural studies that emphatically place Birmingham at the center (so to speak), such as Grossberg, Nelson, Treichler, and Baughman (1992) and Nelson (1991).

8. This earlier work comes before his explicit move to Foucault and policy, but to my knowledge none of his later writing has significantly reconceptualized the positions he advances here.

9. It should also be noted that cultural policy studies takes for granted liberal, representational democracies as the form of government. Obviously, autocracies are another whole set of issues. In fact, at an international level, neoliberalism may also raise questions about the policy studies paradigm because it is a kind of corporate and super-governmental autocracy.

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