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# Accounting for Culture: Thinking Through Cultural Citizenship

CAROLINE ANDREW AND MONICA GATTINGER

This book, like the conference which gave life to it, represents a partnership between people interested in research on culture and people interested in cultural policy. But much more complex and interrelated than that, it brings together people interested in rethinking cultural policy in the light of understanding changes in culture, changes in relationships between citizens and governments, and changes in ways governments operate. Its objective is to look both at the bases of cultural policy in this changing environment and the interrelations between statistical tools and conceptual tools. Therefore cultural indicators and cultural citizenship form the poles around which, and between which, ideas bounce. This introductory chapter's aim is not to describe the content of the discussions—the individual chapters are there to do that—but to articulate at somewhat greater length the ambitions of this project to rethink the basis for cultural policy.

The first question we want to explore is why the present moment seems so particularly well chosen to re-examine the bases for cultural policy. We would argue that there are a number of separate, but interrelated, transformations that make this kind of very broad rethinking both necessary, and exciting. Without for the moment trying to explain their interrelated nature, one can point to changes in governance (or the transformation of the ways societies take decisions and particularly in the number and types of actors taking part in these decisions), changes within government and in the relations between government and citizens, and changes within culture, both in terms of cultural products and cultural participation. Each one of these transformations is, by itself, a massive field to map and analyze, and understanding their points of intersection and reciprocal influence adds to the complexity.

We start with governance, used in the sense of designating a shift to societal decision-making processes that involve a large number of actors, not only governmental but also from the private and non-profit sectors. In addition, governance refers to processes of decision-making using information flows and networks of relationships between the relevant societal actors. The shift to governance has been explained in a number of ways, from social actors wishing to be more involved in decisions, to

governments wishing to be less involved, to the influence of globalization and the ways in which the rescaling of political and social action is taking place at the present time.

Governance obliges governments to connect in new ways with non-governmental actors and to create the networks and structures for successful decision-making. As Gattinger points out, this is an extremely important area and one that requires clear and strategic thinking on the part of governments and civil society. As she points out, engagement in the process is essential and the importance of engagement has often been underestimated. Building trust relations between participants is a necessary stage, particularly in fluid, network-based decision-making structures and this can never be an automatic process.

The delicate balance of government engagement without government domination is one of the major challenges of governance processes. Paquet insists on the importance of this for the cultural field as his argument, is that governments should “tread lightly” in this field, recognizing that the major actors are those directly involved in cultural activities. Paquet argues that government’s role is important but that government must recognize that culture can’t be imposed by the state.

The exact nature of the relationships to be established needs more systematic reflection and analysis. Gattinger’s case studies begin the work of understanding how leadership exercises itself, and how civil society and government can engage.

Another way of understanding governance in the cultural area is suggested by Straw’s analysis of pathways and patterns of interaction that create networks of meanings. His case studies suggest the ways in which elements of cultural policy, Canadian content for example, bubble up from the interactions of creators and intermediaries. By following these pathways, understanding the energy created and the networks of meanings, the context for cultural policies can be understood. Drawing on Straw’s use of inertial and accelerative trends, governance structures such as those studied by Gattinger, can be understood in terms of their use of the known patterns of interaction (inertial) or of structures that attempt to transform previous patterns of interaction (accelerative). Thinking in terms of governance, decision-making can be understood as well from looking at creators and intermediaries (Straw) as from government policy-makers (Gattinger).

Governance also incorporates the new demands of citizens and groups to be involved in decisions that affect them. This creates challenges for governments, as we have discussed, in thinking about appropriate structures and processes, but it has also changed the methods of citizen involvement. If citizens and civil society groups want to have influence, they have to make use of techniques that governments can understand. As Mercer so eloquently puts it, counting is crucial. This is one of the interesting points of possible interaction of government and citizens—governments being under pressure for greater accountability and transparency and citizens wanting ways of intervening that have resonance with the bureaucracy as well as with elected representatives. At the federal level, this can be seen in the increasing emphasis on performance measurement and the development and use of results-based management and accountability frameworks. The push for greater accountability is well described by Poirier, particularly the *adéquation* (correspondence) or not of government objectives and evaluation tools. As he describes, Quebec’s cultural policy combines economic, social, and national identity and other dimensions and yet the indicators have been almost exclusively economic. The European, and particularly the United Kingdom’s, experience has been towards greater *adéquation* of objectives and measurement, having gone further in the formulation of evaluation criteria that are not uniquely economic.

Another way of understanding the intersections of governance and the field of culture is to think in terms of policy paradigms and the shifting policy paradigms that capture policy-making, good policy, and good cultural policy. Policy paradigms offer a way of understanding shifts in governance, shifts in the aim of public policies, and shifts in our understandings of culture. Mercer talks about the movement from data to information to knowledge, and finally to wisdom, as a way of understanding the path from statistics to policy. Duxbury discusses the paradigm shift from quality of life to community indicators. Others, including Mercer, also reflect on the significance of policies being seen as place-based. Cunningham looks at the transformation of the production of culture, arguing that the cultural industries paradigm had been replaced and/or should be replaced by an innovation paradigm as this was the best entrance into active government intervention for industry shaping. Whereas other authors move from economic justifications to quality of life paradigms, Cunningham's suggestion is to remain in an economic development paradigm (as being the language of government action) but to shift to innovation and the creation of a knowledge-based society. Murray describes paradigm shifts with three potential policy paradigms competing in the cultural field: social capital, cultural diversity, and cultural citizenship, a rights-based formulation.

The articulations of paradigm shifts both permit further understanding of governance processes and the roles played by government actors, cultural creators, civil society groups, the private sector, and citizens. Policy paradigms must engage governments, both politicians and policy-makers, and they must also engage the other participants in the governance process. Governments have to be engaged, in order to commit resources (monetary, legal, and political) and other participants have to be engaged, to commit their resources which include the time, energy, and mobilization to put sufficient political pressure on governments to convince them to commit public resources. At the federal level, government-wide interest in developing social capital and building social cohesion in Canada can represent a meaningful opportunity for the cultural sector. The potential contribution that cultural policy and programming can make to the development and strengthening of social capital and social cohesion can serve to attract policy-makers' interest in supporting and resourcing cultural policy.

Policy paradigms also allowed participants to link the discussion of governance processes with reflections on cultural processes, or the transformations in cultural practices. Policy paradigms are likely to change along with changes in culture. Straw's use of inertial and accelerative trends emerges in a variety of ways, highlighting the continuation of past practice and transformative elements. The transformative nature of information technology is highlighted in this volume in a number of ways, from Cunningham's description of the producers of culture, to Garon and Foote with their analysis of factors transforming patterns of cultural consumption. Garon reports on the major shifts in patterns of cultural consumption in Quebec over the past twenty years, illustrating the importance of generations, of policies of democratization, of information technology, and of education. Although there has been a major decline in traditional practices, cultural practices are still a marker of social distinction. Garon sees possibilities for culture being a way to link to the recent immigration in Quebec and therefore playing a role of integration.

Karim takes a less optimistic view of the possibilities of integration of recent immigrants through culture. Indeed, for him, culture is the zone of exclusion for those not of the dominant cultures. Increasing diversity in Canada has led to exclusions as cultural competencies define themselves in speech, in jokes, and in the full range of daily life. Recent arrivals can only hope to operate in what Karim considers "public

sphericules,” as full public space is closed to them. Cultural diversity is transforming Canada but equal access to public space is not a reality. Changing culture, as changing policy paradigms, is explained by a variety of factors: technological, economic, increasing ethno-cultural diversity, demographic shifts, changing patterns of interaction between creators and intermediaries and by, to quote Cunningham quoting Lash and Urry, the “culturalization of everyday life.”

After a discussion of this rich mix of changing patterns of culture, policy paradigms, government strategies, and governance strategies it seemed that this was a moment for rethinking the basis of cultural policy. Not that everything was known or understood about these shifts—right away the research agenda began to take form—but there did seem to be a convergence around the interest of reflecting on cultural citizenship. This idea resonated with the shifts we have been describing, the idea of citizenship being linked to processes of participation, to building feelings of belonging and identity, to the kind of processes described as governance. There is a tension in citizenship, between a movement from below and action from above and, again, this tension resonated with the shifts described earlier. The shifts in culture also create interesting links to citizenship in the suggestions about links between cultural participation, social capital and feelings of identity.

Therefore the second major task of this book is that of thinking through cultural citizenship, in the light of all the shifts described. For some of the authors, cultural citizenship refers to an attribute of an individual. For Karim, it is a capacity to participate as an effective citizen, a set of cultural competencies that individuals had or did not have. Garon’s typology is also linked to individual traits but the different categories in his typology related also to class, gender, and age characteristics. His category of the engaged citizen makes the link between cultural participation and cultural citizenship in that the engaged citizen not only goes to cultural events but creates institutions and projects that involve his or her community in cultural participation. Murray, too, sees cultural participation, not as cultural citizenship, but as a building block to cultural citizenship. For her, cultural citizenship has a collective dimension that goes beyond individual participation. Sherman’s dialogue with cultural citizenship also espouses this link between individual participation and culture, exploring the interest of artists in engaging with the culture and communities around them, thereby shaping and contributing to the cultures they live in and to notions of cultural citizenship.

Different dimensions that help to construct a concept of cultural citizenship are not only individual and collective, they can also relate to different intellectual traditions. For example, Jeannotte’s analysis of social and cultural capital allows her to compare the formulations of Putnam and Bourdieu and, equally importantly, those authors following on Putnam and Bourdieu. This comparison allows a rich analysis of the role of social and cultural capital in the production of citizens and, in this way, supports the interest of continuing to theorize cultural citizenship. Jeannotte highlights the role of cities in creating the meaning of cultural citizenship. A concrete example of this comes from Straw’s examination of the alternative press as an example of milieus of social energy and networks of meaning. The alternative press, an urban phenomena, is, as Straw describes, breaking down the distinctions of night and day and in this way creating a more inclusive urban public space, one in which a greater number of urban residents can integrate their work, family, social, political, and cultural lives. The patterns of interaction described by Straw reinforce networks of meaning and create spaces and processes that can lead to greater feelings of inclusion, to greater cultural citizenship.

Throughout the struggles to think through cultural citizenship, the very meaning attached to culture varied from author to author. Stanley makes the most systematic

attempt to define different meanings of culture, using a typology of three faces of culture. The three meanings for Stanley are culture in the sense of everyday life meanings, culture in the sense of heritage (the best of human achievement), and culture as creativity. For Stanley, culture is a strategic good in that it increases the capacity of citizens to manage change and therefore to govern themselves. It is this kind of role in building cultural citizenship that, for Stanley, offers a justification for government to invest in culture and formulate cultural policy.

Indeed, a number of the authors think through cultural citizenship by contrasting traditional, or earlier, rationales for cultural policy and for government support for culture to emerging paradigms such as cultural citizenship. Stanley's argument is that the new rationale offers a continuation of traditional rationales, both continuing and strengthening the argument for cultural policy. Meisel, on the other hand, begins his text by contrasting traditional and recent visions but ends by arguing that a fusion of the two is possible, exemplified for him by the Kingston KISS project. Cunningham, as noted earlier, feels that economic development arguments are the best to elicit government support but feels that innovation, and the construction of a knowledge-based society, is a better rationale than the earlier cultural industries argument. Gregg offers a rationale, not unrelated to cultural citizenship, whereby culture could be used to rekindle Canadians' faith in politics. His argument is based on the relationship between two sets of facts: public support for investment in culture and the arts is very low and public confidence in politics is at an all-time low. Making an economic argument for culture is pointless, according to Gregg; a citizenship argument has more reality and more weight. Canadians need to feel that governments can be productive, that public action can lead to the goal of a more progressive society, the goal Canadians want to see. Participation in culture can lead to greater feelings of confidence in public action and the efficacy of citizenship.

For Mercer, new policy rationales differ from the traditional ones, not so much by content but by method and process. For him, the essential difference needs to be one of rigour, of making arguments that can be empirically substantiated. It is only in this way that governments will, and should, pay attention to the culture community. Governments are increasingly faced with difficult financial choices and with pressures for greater accountability. In this context arguments for greater public support for culture have to be made in a way that public officials can understand. In this way Mercer links the discussion of new policy rationales to that of the tools for building cultural policy, cultural indicators. What is the state of cultural citizenship? What is the state of cultural participation? What is the impact of public policy? All these questions call for indicators so as to know where we are, in order to know where we are, or should be, going.

But indicators play an even more central role in the book and in the conference, and, as was stated earlier, cultural citizenship and cultural indicators are the two poles around which theorization built. This reflects an intellectual stance, research in the context of practice, which is a very strong thread across the participants and which implies a curiosity about the ideas behind the tools and the practices implied in the concepts. The project of thinking through cultural citizenship involves thinking about cultural indicators—what they now indicate, what they should measure and how they influence the formulation of policy.

This turns out to be an area that greatly expands the agenda of research that needs to be done. Duxbury reviews both the evolution of the lens for cultural indicators—from quality of life and sustainability to community indicators, with culture as one area within community indicators. Based on her review of studies from the United States, she argues that there is no conceptual research base for work on indicators. Given their importance, this is definitively a research priority.

Poirier also makes an argument for more research on indicators with his analysis of the *adéquation* between the objectives of Quebec cultural policy and the indicators used to examine it. Clearly more work needs to be done on establishing indicators that can correspond to the social, national, and identity-building objectives of the policy.

Finally, indicators link back to governance and to relationships between citizens and governments. Indicators are important to governments in trying to meet new pressures of accountability and transparency. Indicators are important to citizens, particularly groups that want to actively participate in policy-making, because they offer a way of talking to governments, of talking truth to power. To the extent that good indicators, the kind more research will allow us to get closer to, can facilitate the kind of trust relations, of engagement in governance that Gattinger describes as crucial, they are indeed steps to cultural citizenship.

The book is organized in four sections. The first examines the evolution and broadening of cultural policy rationales in recent years, focusing attention on the shifts in substantive focus for government intervention in the realm of cultural policy. The second section offers reflections from some notable voices in the cultural sector who have been involved as commentators, scholars, creators, and policy-makers. In the third segment of the book, the chapters examine new practices and approaches in a changing cultural environment, including contributions on innovations systems, social and cultural capital, cultural competencies, and pathways of cultural movement. The volume's final section focuses attention on governance and indicators, with chapters on each of these topics, respectively. The volume also features an annex that chronicles enduring debates and evolving research priorities for the cultural sector, and serves to give additional context to the colloquium from which this volume emerged. The concluding chapter reflects on the volume as a whole, drawing out the paradoxes and contradictions of cultural citizenship and offering potential pathways forward for cultural policy.