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Facing In: Researchers and Academia

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Any researcher looking at policy questions must undergo several negotiations in the course of her work. In addition to developing relationships with the institutions that are the subject of study and the publics to whom one communicates the results of one's research, a researcher must negotiate with him or herself regarding the nature of the object of study and the motivations for undertaking it, and with one's colleagues regarding the legitimacy and scholarly value of the work.[1] The very extensiveness of the scholarly literature discussing problems raised for communication researchers engaged in policy-related work is testimony of the power of such issues.

Much of the tension raised by doing policy research from an academic setting is pragmatic. While examining the policy implications of research results and bringing those insights to the attention of policy-makers may have great value to society, doing so can impede the career of an academic by taking time and energy away from the peer-reviewed publications that are the primary criterion for tenure and promotion. Even when the scholarly content is rich and irrespective of the rigor of the research involved, publication in venues accessible to policy-makers or intended to stimulate and enrich public debate on issues of public-wide concern usually counts only as "service" at best. The internal contradiction that this presents to universities has recently become a matter of open debate within academia, for as administrators face growing budgetary constraints they increasingly question the value of supporting communication departments if those units are unable to help resolve the pressing policy issues raised by changes in the nature of the information environment.

An intriguing suite of three pieces by Australian cultural policy analyst Stuart Cunningham offers a picture of what negotiations with academia can look like when the tensions they produce are expressed to different audiences. Cunningham is operating within a context in which cultural policy is at the top of the national agenda because of Australia's need to define a cultural home for itself within its essentially Asian economic and political region, so the political matters he addresses are widely viewed as pressing. In one piece he translates policy analysis produced for government regulators into the terms of scholarship to make his policy-related work comprehensible to colleagues within academia.[2] In another, he directs an explicit justification for his participation in policy work to his academic colleagues.[3] And in a third he struggles to redefine the scholarly turf in such a way that policy-related work would fall inside rather than outside of it by definition—rather than requiring special justification. Thus he pleads with the global cultural studies community to incorporate the problem of television violence into their research agendas.[4]

There are substantive issues as well. Debates over the impact of the policy context on scholarly work deal both with the question of whether it advances or impedes the development of theory and with the quality and design of research that results. There is a spectrum of possibilities: Carey[5] argues that policy analysis is destructive to the study of communication because it inclines scholars away from the most fundamental questions about the nature of society that should drive any analysis of communication. Cunningham[6] makes the opposite argument, claiming that the need to deal with policy-based problems forces theorists to engage with the full complexities of the world rather than selecting only certain isolated features for attention. Hawkins[7] falls in between, taking the position that since all scholarly research takes place within a political, institutional, social, and economic context that affects the nature of the questions asked and the ways in which they are pursued policy research is no different in this regard. And Katz[8] suggests that a policy orientation has no impact on theory development either way.

Negotiating Theory: Policy Impact on Theory Development

Many believe that the relative marginalization of communication among the social sciences is a result of the fact that it has no theory of its own.

Though early in the twentieth century a number of sociologists believed that communication was key to understanding all other social processes, subsequent work has largely focused either on media as technologies or on trying to figure out how to make something specific happen (sales, or elections, or economic development). Particular policy-related ideas may have such power that in themselves they impede both further theory development and research into the phenomena and processes with which they deal.[9]

Policy Research as a Barrier to Theory Development

For James Carey,[10] the most important problem facing scholars in the field is understanding communication as a fundamental social force, a task that must start from and contribute to theories of society. Doing that, he suggests, is the most useful support that can be provided to policy-makers. The danger in focusing more narrowly on specific policy issues, he believes, is that it draws attention away from the fundamental questions and thus eviscerates the intellectual effort. Policy research as a result eviscerates the ability to draw strong thinkers to the study of communication therefore damages the field as a whole. There is historical support for his argument, for as Peters[11] notes, when the field turned to policy questions in the 1970s doing so merely added items to a list of topics without introducing new ideas or forcing theoretical development.

Carey was moved to consider the problem by Elihu Katz's[12] report to the BBC in response to a request from that public service broadcaster for a research agenda. This event was a turning point for communication policy research, for after long rejecting research input one of the most important broadcasting organizations in the world had a change of heart, a policy matter because the BBC is in essence an entity of the British government. Looking back on the disagreement after almost twenty-five years, Carey[13] comments,

> I suppose I have not changed my mind in any essential way, though the issues are more complex than I admitted at the time. In a brief review of a particular monograph and a particular moment in the history of communications I inevitably oversimplified. In retrospect, events in the meantime give some plausibility to what I was trying to say. Beginning not long before I wrote, neo-conservatives began an assault on conventional assumptions governing

communications at both the theory and policy levels and they have proven decisive. This was not done by concentrating on the policy questions directly but rather by developing a new understanding of social theory, that is, how it is societies are put together. William Buckley later explained the success of neo-conservatism about as follows, though what is quoted is merely paraphrased. Conservatism was always clear about its views of the economy and state. Indeed, its understanding of these two issues came directly from the Enlightenment itself. However, conservatives had no understanding of social theory and no articulate view of social problems beyond the market and the authority of the state. The bringing of sociologists into the conservative movement (at the moment he was thinking of Moynihan, Glazer, Kristol and Bell, though not all those stayed) taught us we had to develop a powerful theory of society or our policies for reform of the economy and the federal government would fail and be unpersuasive. The analysis they provided was worked out in journals such as *The Public Interest* (founded by the above sociologists) at the interstices between the educated/policy oriented public and the academic community which did the actual work.

The response of the left has been in intellectual terms unavailing and unconvincing. The old left has simply kept repeating the story of industrial concentration. While the story has truth nothing of interest has been added to it in fifty years. I once heard Herb Schiller asked, after a typically blistering condemnation of the "media" the following question: What kind of market in communications do you want anyway? He had no answer. He obviously didn't want a market of any type but how then did he believe the resources of communications should be allocated or what types of intellectual analysis were necessary to justify alternative institutional arrangements. But there was nothing there. The new left—the cultural studies left—had a hundred different analyses of ideology and of the ideological effects of the media but they didn't have an ideology of their own except as negative dialectics. That is, they were against everything but for nothing; they lacked a theoretically informed vocabulary that pointed in policy directions because they were not attacking fundamental intellectual problems.

The neo-conservative views are now tired and producing undesirable side effects but we still lack a viable alternative. So, my original critique largely stands. You get progress when people attack significant intellectual problems which derive from the central issues in social theory and only then do you get significant policy research and applications.

Structural schisms within academia exacerbate the problem. In most cases those in political science will have nothing to do with those in policy fields, and vice versa—political scientists treat the policy folks as "merely" professional, while those regularly involved with the policy world consider political scientists to be working so abstractly that often their work simply does not pertain to the daily world of political decision making. Communication researchers who incorporate ideas about

the nature of the political process in their policy work may find that their alignment with one or the other of these disciplines may make their institutional lives more difficult. The consequence is that those in political science committed to development of theory often remain several removes away from the empirical ground of their ultimate subject matter and from the experience of working with it, while those trying to think about how to cope with immediate and pressing policy problems may never be exposed to the very theories they most need.

Policy Research as a Stimulus to Theory Development

Each of the theoretical perspectives identified as a barrier to policy research briefly introduced in chapter 1, "The Long View," however, suggests a way in which attending to policy might in fact move theory forward. The critique that those who analyze the law in terms of its social effects fail to influence policy because they lose sight of fundamental constitutional issues may begin with a misunderstanding of that work but also might be responded to by theoretical efforts to include the constitutional dimension into anaysis of social processes. The claim that policy analysts tend to underestimate the number and range of variables that influence policy-making processes suggests the need to develop theories of the communicative aspects of decision-making and negotiation that incorporate all of the factors encountered empirically. Issue analyses that fail to have any effect because they do not take into account the institutional environments within which those issues—and decision-making about them—unfold provide a positive impetus to work on three types of theoretical problems: developing ways of linking theories at different levels of analysis in general, relating institutional analysis to other types of social theory in particular, and expending more effort on mid-level theories that link abstractions with what happens on the ground.

Though Katz was criticized by Carey for providing recommendations to the BBC, the Katz oeuvre, like Carey's, models the value of the development of communication theory as the necessary foundation for any useful policy work. The fact that Katz was asked to propose a research agenda to the BBC marked a real turn in that governmental organization's attitude towards input from researchers, for only a few years earlier its director-general described using television license fee funds to support

academic research as picking people's pockets to peer into their heads. The change of heart may have been due to the fact that Katz had been a broadcaster himself, while the chairman of BBC served as what Martin[14] describes as a "broker" for research, having been an academic himself. There had been fear of official criticism for not paying more attention to what researchers have learned, the need for new decisions to be made in response to social change, and decline in the power of the norms that had traditionally guided public service television programming. Katz suggests that competition—between the BBC and the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA)—provided the extra stimulus necessary to drive the BBC to use any resources it could acquire.

Katz responds to Carey's critiques by unpacking what happens once a commissioned report is submitted, an elaborate process in itself involving multiple players, interests, and constraints that are so important that those studying policy processes should include such informal negotiations in their definition of the subject. He closes, however, with perhaps the most astonishing and absolutely the most depressing defense of any ever offered by communication researchers who do policy analysis—Carey should not be critical of the BBC report, Katz says, because his work will have no impact at all.

Theory as a Barrier to Policy Research

Theory itself can actually serve as a barrier to policy research. Work that starts from the assumption that it is individuals in the audience, not the message producer, who create meaning has suggested to many that a corollary is that policy work is meaningless and doomed to be ineffective. Robert Entman[15] makes the stunning argument that reliance upon the First Amendment can itself impede the ability of researchers to influence policy because of its totemic power: Once the First Amendment is raised, all other questioning stops and as a result there is neither development of theory nor research. The consequences are felt throughout communication policy, though all federal agencies are required to meet evidentiary standards to support their regulatory decisions, for example, the FCC has in practice been exempted from this requirement.

This is an extraordinarily important argument. It offers one among the reasons for the reliance of the FCC on microeconomic analysis to the

exclusion of systematic examination of the effects of its decisions upon the public sphere, and it provides a challenge to researchers to direct more energy to the effort to examine such effects. Other scholars also point to unexamined assumptions underlying communication policy—see, for example, Streeter's[16] analysis of the role of liberal thought. At times the ideas that serve as blinders to research come from researchers themselves, as when ideological biases prevent academics from analyzing policy positions in their entirety and their complexity.[17]

No theory in itself requires abandonment of the policy enterprise. Work on participatory development, for example, is an explicit attempt to apply a respect for audience production of meaning to the processes by which decisions about the nature and uses of a community's information infrastructure are made. Theorization of the global information infrastructure as produced through local practices[18] provides support for community-based policy efforts.[19] Once the research-stopping effect of the First Amendment is recognized it is possible to go on to serious research with the goal of improving national capacity to act upon the principles the First Amendment embodies.

Negotiating Research: Policy Impact on Research Design and Implementation

The policy context often adds methodological constraints as well. In some cases there has been concern that the deadline and other internal pressures of regulatory agencies may force researchers to drop their standards for rigor.[20] The disjuncture between the research and policy discourses means that researchers often find it difficult to cast their theoretical questions in ways that can get at the empirical matters of concern to the policy world, let alone to present the results of their work in genres accessible to the lay reader with little time.

Administrative versus Critical Research

The shaping of research questions even once an area of shared interest between the research and policy communities is identified may also be affected. Lazarsfeld's[21] distinction between administrative and critical research has provided a focal point for much of the field's debate over

the impact on research of a policy orientation, though he was neither the only nor the first to call for critical work.[22] These categories still provide the poles around which debate over ways in which research and policy relate to each other revolves. Lazarsfeld presented the distinction as a contribution to self-reflection within a relatively new area of social science. Briefly, administrative research is that which intends to improve the functioning of a communication system within existing parameters, while critical research is that which strives to provide insights that will lead to parametric change in the communication system.[23] As Lazarsfeld puts it, administrative research looks at messages that exist, while critical work looks at those that do not. The value of critical research, he argues, lies in looking at media in new ways, expanding the range of questions asked, and enlarging the realm of subjects of which those questions are asked.

Though most who have used or written about the distinction since the original piece see the two types of research in opposition, Lazarsfeld believed the two could usefully be combined. Doing so, he believed, would provide intellectual stimulation as well as moral leadership. Less ambitiously, administrative research could answer questions addressed to it by critical research and vice versa.[24] In demonstration of this conviction, Lazarsfeld published books on both qualitative research methods[25] and on quantitative research methods,[26] and both types of researchers pay tribute.[27] Despite this openness to qualitative research methods, most assume that Lazarsfeld's inability to work with Theodor Adorno[28] was due to the latter's interest in qualitative aesthetic issues rather than questions addressable by quantitative survey research.[29] However, Lazarsfeld had no difficulty working with at least one other scholar whose focal interest was aesthetic (Rudolf Arnheim)[30]—suggesting the problem may instead have been personality driven.

In practice, administrative research tends to view the media as neutral in effect while critical research is more suspicious of media-based biases.[31] The structural considerations of critical scholars often lead them to the study of policy itself rather than specific policies. For Slack and Allor,[32] critical research distinguishes itself from administrative in its concern with ways in which the control of knowledge is central to the exercise of social power. While administrative research often works at

the micro-level of analysis (focusing on effects of the media on individuals) and critical at the macro-level (focusing on effects of the media on society), often institutionally framed problems can be approached through either perspective.[33] Despite Lazarsfeld's encouragement of collaborative or complementary efforts, however, the divide between those who identify themselves as critical researchers and those who do administrative research has gotten more extreme over time. The former has been described as "emancipatory"[34] or "utopian"[35] and the latter as "repressive."

Proportionately, there has been more critical work at the international level than at the national. It may be easier to conduct critical work in that environment because researchers pursuing international questions may be less linked to specific governing structures. The approach was deliberately taken as the foundation of the UNESCO research program.[36] Blumler[37] claims European communication researchers were far more critical than were Americans through the 1970s, but this claim is based on examination of only one American journal (the traditionally empirical *Journalism Quarterly*). Blumler's view also oversimplifies a history in which key figures—beginning with Robert Park early in the twentieth century—moved back and forth between Europe and the United States.

Critiques of the administrative/critical distinction have been several. Because Lazarsfeld's earliest work was in advertising and he continued to use quantitative techniques, some felt that he did not truly understand the difference between doing research into marketing questions and studying issues dealing with power and politics.[38] Lazarsfeld himself suggested that the extreme sensitivity of the media industry to criticism made analysts in turn so nervous that it reduced the amount of critical work done.[39] The dichotomy is meaningless within a Marxist-Leninist environment (as is the distinction between basic and applied research), for under such conditions generating empirical data of the kind described as administrative in Western Europe and the United States can in itself be deeply critical.[40] Indeed, the question of which approach provides the greater challenge to existing power relations may be the reverse of what has been claimed in recent years in North America and Europe. In Poland, for example, "critical" research based on Marxist principles

served to further the government's goals while positivist empirical work produced results that were genuinely critical and often led to the destruction of scholars' careers because it turned up "inconvenient" data.[41] The distinction is also meaningless when applied to research involving living populations because of the Hawthorne effect, the effect of research upon the populations studied. Since the results of all research can and will be used by policy-makers irrespective of the desires of those who undertake it, Michaels[42] would distinguish only between research that is accountable and that which is not.

Many define *all* policy research as critical.[43] Meanwhile, ironically, scholars who positioned themselves as critical in their studies of U.S. communication policy during the 1980s and 1990s actually argued for maintenance of the status quo.[44] Some suggest a third set of alternatives between administrative and critical research. The notion of formative research[45] is prescriptive rather than descriptive or critical. The most successful use of formative research may have been in production of the children's television program, *Sesame Street*. Other approaches include attention to ethical issues on the part of empirical researchers, embedding the study of communications within the study of society, and acknowledging the culture-boundedness of most communication research.

Policy as Research Design

There are times when governments explicitly use social experimentation as a policy tool to determine which among alternative approaches might be most fruitful. This was done in Finland 1960s when Kaarle Nordenstreng's ideas about how to achieve a better informed and more engaged polity were put into practice in public radio.[46] The Japanese launched a wide variety of types of experimentation with new information technologies at the community and organizational levels as soon as the concept of the information society (which appeared there before it did in the United States) emerged in the 1960s.[47] In the United States, Department of Commerce programs such as Telecommunications and Information Infrastructure Assistance Program (TIIAP) and Technology Opportunities Program (TOP)—abandoned by President George W. Bush—encouraged community-level experimentation with the use of

networking technologies for a decade or so. Recognition of the value of such experimentation in the United States seems to come and go; while there was an upsurge of appreciation for it in the late 1970s,[48] in the Homeland Security environment of the early twenty-first century it appears to be falling away altogether.

The French minitel experiment is a famous example of social experimentation as a policy tool. Just as the Socialists were voted into power in the early 1980s, the country was shocked by the conclusions of the globally influential report to the French government on the "computerization" of society by Nora and Minc[49] that suggested, among other things, that U.S.-based corporations controlled the European information infrastructure. In response, the Socialists sought to use culture and communication as tools for social change with the goal, as President Mitterand put it in 1981, of democratizing computers rather than computerizing society.[50] In a dramatic move, the government launched the "minitel," a dumb computer terminal that would be cheap enough to produce that they could be distributed by the government to French citizens for free. The intention was to serve multiple policy goals at once: If successful, the minitel program would support a domestic industry that could provide an export niche for France in the global economy; it would encourage the "informatization" of French citizens; and it would stimulate the development of a French information service industry by creating a market for the industry from the point of launch. In the end, however, the difficulties of correctly guessing about trends during periods of rapid innovation and of launching massive programs rather than small experiments were vividly demonstrated: It took far longer than projected to produce enough computers to distribute them as widely as had been intended; while an information service industry did develop, its strongest sector was pornography; and by the time production capacity was sufficient to support exports, the personal computer had come into use and dumb terminals were no longer of interest.

Whether or not specific policies are intended to serve the purposes of experimentation, however, researchers may treat them as such. Thus Dewey reverses the typical relationship between research and policy: While most assume that research comes before policy-making as an input into the process, Dewey believes policies should be considered experi-

mental interventions into social life and the job of researchers is to evaluate the results. For Dewey, the very point of social science is to make a policy difference by opening up new ways of thinking about how to organize society. The position that social scientists can usefully support the development of policies, he argues, is a "complete error,"[51] for the social sciences should be complementary to lay analyses of a "self-guiding society" rather than providing authoritative truths for a "scientific society."[52] Research is a means by which people can come to understand that their individual actions have consequences for others besides themselves and thus understand the need to commit to society as a whole.[53] Social sciences therefore should serve diagnostic and normative roles in addition to prescriptive. Dewey did not convince everyone; Toulmin[54] described this position as "destructive" to the entire project of philosophy.

Research, too, can be a form of social experimentation that can be used as a policy tool. The International Development Research Centre (IDRC), a Canadian nonprofit organization heavily involved in trying to improve access to the Internet and other telecommunications services throughout the developing world, foregrounds the Hawthorne effect in its work. Rather than denying its reality, the IDRC argues that the Hawthorne effect enhances the utility of conducting research in support of policy goals by turning the research itself into another policy tool. The organization has found this to be a particularly valuable argument for persuading host policy-makers in the developing world who would otherwise not see the point to include research as an important element of the process by which policies are developed and evaluated.[55]

Policy Impact on Research Practices

Designing research for policy purposes, especially when undertaken within the government, can have an impact on research practices as well. Preston[56] found the experience of working inside the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) filled with both "peril and promise" after life as a researcher in an academic institution. Though scholars who had earlier had the same experience found their work underutilized, by the time Preston arrived there had been changes in the FTC in terms of its receptivity to research and the types of research it would support. The most

important shift in the latter area was a turn away from looking just at the content of advertising in making their determinations about deception to looking at how they were actually perceived. The FTC not only began to pay more attention to research in the course of its internal deliberations but was also more likely to use research as evidence in the courtroom, whether prosecuting or defending themselves. Improvement in the quality of advertising research and interest in corrective advertising were mentioned as possible reasons for these shifts. Unfortunately, however, Preston reports that academics who get involved in research on advertising for use in the courtroom at times are still so swayed by the environment or the money that they may produce interpretations of results that run counter to what those whose audiences are solely academic find. Academics contributed to the rising interest in consumer protection by the FTC during the 1960s by applying what had been learned about communications to advertising issues and urging the regulatory agency to take up the use of survey research as a means of refining and applying their policy tools.[57] After a couple of decades of effort in this area, guidelines for researchers began to develop.[58]

Disjunctures between Policy and Research Discourses

Even the most casual discourse analysis shows that policy-makers and researchers speak in different tongues. Reeves and Baughman[59] read the history of U.S. communications research through the lens of its interactions with the policy world, identifying several factors that may have prevented the results of research from having more impact. Researchers rarely link their work to actual legislation under discussion, for example, and tend to underappreciate the degree to which government interest in the effects of the mass media can actually alter the behavior of media corporations. Policy-makers were also to blame, being much slower to take up research dealing with communication policy than were decision makers in many other areas.

In some cases, however, the impact of communication research on policy-makers has been surprising and perhaps antithetical to that intended: Reeves and Baughman report that it was Newton Minow's reading of the 1961 Schramm study of television that made him realize there were potentially prosocial as well as antisocial effects, with the

consequence that his critique of television was blunted. They also suggest that for most of the twentieth century communication researchers and policy-makers were "out of sync" with each other, asking questions of the media so different that the two discourses did not meaningfully link up. The failure of communication researchers to enter the policy conversation regarding digital technologies would be an important contemporary example of this.

Brown[60] argues that more attentive reading of the policy discourse by academics could lead to engaging more fully and productively with policy-makers. When then-FCC Chair Mark Fowler provided an intellectual justification for the shift to a market orientation as the principle that would guide broadcast regulation in a law review article published in 1982,[61] there was enormous outcry from scholars whose theoretical position, ideology, and/or simple reading of the law felt that in doing so the regulatory agency was abandoning its mandate to make decisions in accordance with the public interest. Brown's analysis of the Fowler argument and academic responses to it showed that while Fowler had presented a complex set of ideas that included acknowledgment of the limits beyond which such an approach need not go, scholarly discussion dealt only with the first point of many. In so doing, Brown argues, those opposed to the shift in regulatory stance actually provided support for the move by permitting discussion of the limits of the marketplace approach to drop away rather than forcing Fowler and others to carry through on all dimensions of the position as first articulated.

Discussion

The study of policy analysis itself, what Browne[62] calls the "analysis of analysis," and Dutton[63] refers to as "metapolicy," places a larger frame around the frustrations researchers who would like to see the results of their work inform policy experience on a daily basis. From this perspective, three features of the discussion about the intellectual impact of engagement with policy matters become of interest. In each case it becomes clear that the limitations of policy-oriented research lie not with the subject matter or the endeavor, but with the intellectual equipment brought to bear upon it.

First, both ends of the spectrum of positions in the debate over whether or not a policy orientation impedes or stimulates theoretical development assume that those engaging in policy analysis must limit their intellectual scope in particular—though never discussed—ways. Such oversimplifications fail to map onto the history, let alone the possibilities for future work. Schon and Rein[64] provide a review of several stages in the history of policy analysis, each of which added another layer to the range of analytical tools used. "Policy science" as developed by Lasswell and others following World War II treats the choice among approaches to the resolution of specific problems as the central question, tends to assume the policy-maker is a rational actor, and relies heavily upon techniques such as cost-benefit analysis. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, a tradition of political analyses of policy problems arose in which policy-making came to be seen as a process of contention among multiple interest groups vying for the control over definition of the policy problem and the allocation of resources in their resolution. Viewed in this manner, policy outcomes are the products of a competitive political game such as the "ecology of games" described by Dutton.[65] A third approach began to appear in the late 1970s that flourished in the 1980s, which started from the assumption that policy-making is a game of conflicting interests and powers and developed theories of mediated negotiations for analytical use. Once attention had turned to the negotiation as critical to understanding how policy issues are resolved, discourse analysis became important. Schon and Rein add an additional layer of analysis of the frames within which policy discourses are cast, and Foucault's approach to governmentality adds another layer of cultural analysis as the context for discourse frames. Today the entire range of social theory is being used in the course of policy analysis, with each critique serving to direct attention to what may have been previously unexamined assumptions.

Second, policy analyses are often critiqued as intellectually thin because they often address only one piece of the complex picture that is the stuff of policy-making processes. Salmon[66] notes, for example, that though campaign theory is often turned to policy ends, such as the design of campaigns to achieve health goals like reducing the incidence of AIDS, it most often stands alone in reseachers' hands. Pointing out that most

analyses of health campaigns treat them as independent variables that might be manipulated to achieve different outcomes (what he calls theory "for" campaigns), Salmon suggests they are also dependent variables that are the outcome of particular configurations of social, political, and ideological forces peculiar to a social system at a given point in time (theory "of" campaigns). Combining these two types of analyses can provide insights regarding just when campaigns are likely to be more or less effective than other types of policy tools and enable policy-makers to evaluate them relative to other options.

Third, oversimple analyses of policy positions are another way in which engagement might impede theoretical development but this, too, is a matter that is in the hands of researchers rather than necessarily determined by the policy environment itself. In an example discussed above, evidence of this can be found fairly early in the conversation about whether or not the market should govern FCC decision making regarding broadcasting. That discourse quickly became polarized, with the loss to the discourse of complexity and nuance.

In sum, policy analysis is not limited in its theoretical richness and at its best grapples as profoundly with fundamental questions about the nature of society as does any other specialization within the social sciences. Critiques of policy analysis that does not reach this level need to be heard; the most useful response to this critique is not to walk away but rather to struggle to bring the best that social theory has to offer to the effort to resolve social problems.

The institutional problems facing researchers who wish to engage with the world of policy are more difficult to resolve because the solutions are not within the hands of individuals. The same technological innovation that has created such a need for the input of communication researchers into policy-making, however, is forcing universities to reconsider their functions and their relations to related institutions such as publishers and libraries. As relations among these information industries are renegotiated and the boundaries redrawn, it is a relatively good time to introduce into the discourse the need to reevaluate treatment of policy work by scholars so that personal career considerations might become less of a barrier.

Notes

1. Gay Hawkins, Writing on the edge of history: Documenting cultural institutions, *Media Information Australia*, 73 (1994): 35–44.

2. Stuart Cunningham, Television and violence: From critique to policy, *Australian Journal of Communication*, 16 (1989): 87–100.

3. Stuart Cunningham, Cultural critique and cultural policy: Handmaiden or no relation? *Media Information Australia*, 54 (1989): 7–12.

4. Stuart Cunningham, Cultural critique and cultural policy.

5. James W. Carey, The ambiguity of policy research.

6. Stuart Cunningham, Cultural critique and cultural policy.

7. Gay Hawkins, Writing on the edge of history.

8. Elihu Katz, Get out of the car: A case study on the organization of policy research, *Gazette*, 25, no. 2 (1978): 75–86.

9. Robert M. Entman, Putting the First Amendment in its place: Enhancing democracy through the press, *The University of Chicago Legal Forum* (1993): 61–82.

10. James Carey, The ambiguity of policy research: Social research on broadcasting, *Journal of Communication*, 28: 2 (1978): 114–119.

11. John Durham Peters, Institutional sources of intellectual poverty in communication research, *Communication Research*, 13: 4 (1986): 527–559.

12. Elihu Katz, *Social Research on Broadcasting: Proposals for the BBC*, British Broadcasting Corporation, London, 1977.

13. James Carey, personal communication, April 2, 2001.

14. Martin, 1984, *op cit.*

15. Entman, 1993, *op cit.*

16. Streeter, 1990, *op cit.*

17. Duncan H. Brown, The academy's response to the call for a marketplace approach to broadcast regulation, *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 11: 3 (1994): 267–273.

18. Susan Leigh Star & Karen Ruhleder, Steps toward an ecology of infrastructure: Design and access for large information spaces, *Information Systems Research*, 7: 1 (1996): 111–134.

19. The nonprofit association Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility (CPSR), for example, has organized two workshops in 2002 under the leadership of Andrew Clement of the University of Toronto—one in the United States and one in Europe—to strengthen the capacity for participatory policy work around the information infrastructure.

20. Ivan L. Preston, Researchers at the Federal Trade Commission: Peril and promise, in James H. Leigh and Claude R. Martin, Jr., eds, *Current Issues &*

Research in Advertising, The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1980, pp. 1–15.

21. Lazarsfeld, 1941, *op cit.*

22. Hanno Hardt, The return of the "critical" and the challenge of radical dissent: Critical theory, cultural studies, and American mass communications research, *Communication Yearbook*, 12 (1989): 558–600.

23. William H. Melody and Robin E. Mansell, The debate over critical vs. administrative research: Circularity or challenge, *Journal of Communication*, 33, no. 3 (1983): 103–116.

24. Todd Gitlin, Media sociology: The dominant paradigm, *Theory and Society*, 6 (1978): 205–253.

25. Paul F. Lazarsfeld, *Qualitative Analysis* Allyn & Bacon, Boston, 1971.

26. Paul F. Lazarsfeld, *Mathematical Thinking in the Social Sciences* Russell & Russell Publishers, New York, 1969.

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