
*Narrative, Identity, and the Map of Cultural Policy: Once Upon a Time in a Globalized World* studies and attempts to define the meanings of the terms ‘globalisation’ and ‘transnationalism’ through the concept of narrative and explicates how they work out in contemporary society in the light of cultural policy and policy making in general. In the Introduction the authors describe narratives as a product of culture while accepting the view that the obverse is true too. Globalisation, they contend, is a homogenising force that is rooted in economics and often overrides anything to do with cultural values, tradition, heritage and art. Defining transnationalism in the context of cultural policy, the authors note that it embraces difference and takes in the arts and culture under its rubric along with economic concerns. DeVereaux and Griffin claim that while globalisation might seem to do away with the notion of boundaries, transnationalism works to secure the idea of a nation.

Explaining the ideas of globalisation and transnationalism, the authors raise questions as to what effect narratives have on policy: how and to what extent narratives differ, how narratives might emerge in the area of cultural policy so as to influence policies, and how narratives differ; whether and to what extent differences in terminology have practical significance and what transnationalism and globalisation have to offer to practitioners in the field of narrative. Questions are raised as to what kind of stories transnationalism and globalisation offer to practitioners working in the area of narrative. They contend that viewed through the idea of the narrative, patterns, relationships, trends, characters and situations emerge pertaining to the themes of transnationalism and globalisation.

Chapter 1, ‘Tales of Transnationalism and Globalization’ negotiates with the meaning of the two terms ‘globalization’ and ‘transnationalism’. Noting the origin of the term, transnationalism, with reference to Randolph Bourne’s 1916 essay ‘Trans-National America’, the authors use the example of the film *Mississippi Masala* as a narrative that weaves ideas of both these terms to discuss the history of the formation of national identities. It also introduces a framework for narrative in cultural policy analysis that could be applied to varied examples of cultural policy. The second chapter, ‘History, Transitions and Frameworks for Analysis’ discusses the nature of narrative, its structure and form and the nature of the relationship between the narrative to the context in which it is located. Tracing the idea of narrative to the work of French Structuralists, notably Ferdinand de Saussure, and Roland Barthes, Russian Formalists such as Vladimir Propp and American narrative theorists such as Wayne C. Booth and Robert Scholes as well as cognitive scientists such as George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, the authors note that these theorists expanded the notion of narrative to include not just literature, but also the visual and performing arts, political speeches and many other forms. It is the work of these theorists that helped understand the idea of narrative as not having a limited meaning and expanding its horizons to law, philosophy, anthropology, film, media, sociology, psychology, management and policy.

Chapter 3, ‘Case Studies: Stories in Conflict’ examines four cases in which narratives and their framing play an important role. Examining a period from 1945 to the present, from occupied Berlin to the Hopi lands in Arizona, the authors chose four examples that reveal the varying contexts of culture. In post-World War II Berlin, for instance, transnational issues are at work as world powers vie for power. This framing often takes the form of two conflicting frames that invalidates each other’s context. The authors refer to the work of scholars who have worked in the area of narrative...
analysis and its application to cultural policy like Murray Edelman, Deborah Stone, Giandomenico Majone, Frank Fischer and John Forrester, and Michael D. Jones and Mark. K. McBeth.

The diverse influence on narrative as a tool for analysis is examined in chapter 4 using an interdisciplinary approach. The history of narrative, beginning from Greek and Roman sources, is referred to here. This is how the authors expand the idea of a narrative to make it more inclusive.

The narratives we experience are not only those we read, but also those we encounter (or ‘write’) within our everyday lives. In other words, given a set of events, we order them in our minds and give them a coherence by applying a narrative structure (8).

Chapter 5, ‘Identity, Borders and Narrative Ironies’ brings in questions of points of view in both fictional and non-fictional narratives. The notion of identity as a frame for narrative and as a technique to shape or frame is discussed using specific examples. Exploring the concept of identity from a writer’s viewpoint, the authors apply the notion of identity to several other examples where notions of globalisation and transnationalism could be introduced.

The final chapter, ‘Cultural Citizenship, Narrative and Transnationalism’ examines the idea of citizenship and the question of cultural identity and how they interact. The chapter looks at the Austro-Hungarian Empire, a multi-ethnic one, Romania, a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual nation state, and the problems of Islam in the West to substantiate their argument.

The book emphasises the ways in which narrative underlies cultural and other policy decisions with the authors seeking to explore ways in which cultural policy can be formulated by an examination of the way narratives operate in the real world. This book definitely adds to scholarship on narrative, narrative theory, globalisation and transnationalism. However, it seems abstract when it brings in the notion of the operation of the way narratives might function in the formulation of (or influence) real world policy. With non-fictional narrative, this might not be problematic but in the case of fictional narratives how this could work needs to be seen. Working to lay out parameters and frameworks to explore narratives, the book, itself a narrative, as the authors describe it, seeks to develop the area of cultural policy with its set tools.

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