Creativity and Academic Activism
Instituting Cultural Studies

Edited by
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**Josephine HO** founded the Centre for the Study of Sexualities at National Central University in 1995. She has been writing both extensively and provocatively on many cutting-edge issues in the Taiwanese context, spearheading sex-positive views on female sexuality, gender/sexuality education, queer studies, sex work studies and activism, transgenderism, and most recently body modification. The author/editor of more than two dozen ground-breaking books, Josephine Ho has become a champion of sexual dissidence. Her academic website was forced out of the academic net space in 2001 because of its sex-positive stance on teenage sexuality. In 2003, a total of thirteen conservative NGOs banded together to bring a lawsuit against Josephine Ho for two hyperlinks on her massive sexuality studies databank that led to zoophilia websites. With the support of students, scholars, and activist groups, along with a widespread international petition drive, and her own articulate self-defence in court, Josephine Ho won the court case in both the District Court and the High Court in 2004. For her tireless efforts in resisting bigotry and prejudice, and her work on human rights and sex rights, she was selected as one of the thousand women from all over the world who were collectively nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. Josephine Ho was one of the founding scholars for the Cross-Campus Program in Cultural Studies at the University System of Taiwan, and has been working on networking and scholarly exchange among Asian institutes since 2003. She was elected President of the Cultural Studies Association of Taiwan in 2005.

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Introduction

Instituting Cultural Studies

Meaghan Morris and Mette Hjort

[W]hat is essential to creation is not “discovery” but constituting the new: art does not discover, it constitutes; and the relation between what it consti-tutes and the “real”, an exceedingly complex relation to be sure, is not a relation of verification. And on the social plane, which is our main interest here, the emergence of new institutions and of new ways of living is not a “discovery” either but an active constitution.

— Cornelius Castoriadis¹

[One] way to create institutional reality often is to act as if it already existed.

— John R. Searle²

This is a book about the role played by creativity, collective invention and imaginative academic activism in “instituting” Cultural Studies as a new disciplinary practice over the past twenty years. More broadly, it is also a volume of stories in which internationally well-known scholars in the humanities and social sciences look back on what they now consider to be key moments of their trajectories as institution-builders, in the process reflecting in often personal terms on the art of the possible in academic life. Variously based in Australia, mainland China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Taiwan, the United Kingdom and the United States, the contributors are all noted researchers whose scholarly work covers a wide range of fields, from film, popular music, literature, art and media to museum and urban cultural studies, political and intellectual history, and cultural policy studies. What brings them together here is that they are figures whose very notability rests also on their institutional inventiveness — be this as activists, researchers, teachers, editors, practitioners or all these things at once. Along with shared experience in developing new undergraduate degrees, these authors have built significant research centers (Tony Bennett, Josephine Ho, Tejaswini Niranjana, Wang Xiaoming) and postgraduate schools
(Dai Jinhua, Koichi Iwabuchi), edited field-shaping book series (Stephen Chan Ching-Kiu) and journals (Kuan-Hsing Chen, Douglas Crimp), established an international artist-in-residence program (Mette Hjort) and helped to found social activist networks (John Erni, Audrey Yue). The aim of the book, then, is to explore in some detail the many different ways in which the practices of cultural pedagogy and research can be a matter of forging — at times in contexts of considerable adversity — the types of institutional spaces where important questions can be asked, where networks and communities can be created and where, ultimately, progress on a number of socially significant issues can be made.

These emphases on practical detail and a plurality of ways to create “institutional reality” ground the book in an unusually constructive approach to the opportunities for action afforded by particular institutional locales. In part, this is a matter of disciplinary inclination: Cultural Studies attaches a great deal of importance to local contexts, both as objects of study and as the medium in which effective practices in cultural politics need to be conceived. Accordingly, fifteen years ago Ted Striphas proposed that we set aside discussions of the pros and cons of “institutionalization” understood abstractly (and thus, by implication, those narratives of the formation of Cultural Studies written in terms of a history of ideas) in order to look closely at actually existing programs, documenting “the strategies by which they have gone about institutionalizing, and how they respond to the ongoing challenges that institutionalization brings.” While much has happened internationally in the intervening years, direct responses to this call have been fairly scarce, and upbeat or optimistic accounts of institutional experiment have been rare — especially ones fully bringing the rapid growth of new programs in non-Western and non-Anglophone contexts into the discussions of the discipline’s future that are staged in the North American, British and Australasian heartlands of English-language scholarship.

Certainly, these have been hard years generally for humanities and social sciences initiatives in public universities assailed by strategic budget cuts and escalating enrolments within a “New Public Management”-inspired reform aiming to remodel the university on “a corporate enterprise whose primary concern is with market share, serving the needs of commerce, maximizing economic return and investment, and gaining competitive advantage in the ‘Global Knowledge Economy’.” Since the 1985 Jarratt Report on “efficiency studies in universities” in the United Kingdom recommended introducing the
corporate model and the language of new managerialism to higher education (a move rapidly exported around the world to widely differing national systems and cultures of education), traditional disciplines and new “studies” areas alike have been forced in difficult circumstances to reinvent their rationales and rhetorics of value, as scholarly “reasons for being” became “reasons for getting resources.” Yet as Simon Marginson and Mark Considine point out in their classic study of the “enterprise university,” casual references to managerialism or corporatization in universities gesture at what are actually “titanic struggles for a new future” in which academic enterprise may better be understood as a “complex achievement of public purpose and economic energy.” Cultural Studies has an overt commitment to public purpose at the heart of its self-conception, and in places where it has been able to thrive the discipline should be contributing to at least some aspects of that “complex achievement.” Many of the following chapters analyze situations in which that has indeed been the case, asking where, how and why. We see these questions as having more than disciplinary relevance. If Cultural Studies has taken shape as a distinct area of inquiry and practice in the midst of these titanic struggles, it has no monopoly on public engagement and no claim to a singular creativity in finding energetic ways to inhabit the new university landscape. Just as our contributors come to Cultural Studies from lives in other disciplines (including English, Chinese, Art History, Comparative Literature, Cinema Studies, Communication and Sociology) and other occupations (Douglas Crimp has been a curator and an editor; Koichi Iwabuchi worked in Japanese television for ten years; Audrey Yue was a full-time activist in Melbourne, supporting migrant women from Asia), so the value of their positive institutional stories and their analyses of achievement against the odds can travel to other contexts.

The project for this book began, however, not with the discovery of a “gap in the literature” but with a happy convergence of two empirical occasions for celebration and thought. One of these was a birthday. In 2006, the Department of Cultural Studies at Lingnan University, Hong Kong, completed six years of activity as the first such department in the Chinese-speaking world and one of the few stand-alone programs worldwide to deliver a full BA Honors in Cultural Studies. To mark the occasion and to stimulate thinking and future planning in Hong Kong’s complex cultural and educational situation as a unique system of governance within the People’s Republic of China (PRC), Lingnan’s Kwan Fong Cultural Research and Development Programme hosted an international symposium, “Cultural Studies and Institution,” on the relations between
Cultural Studies and the process of “institution” itself. The invited participants were asked for critical reflections on institution-building across a range of cultural institutions, of which the university might be only one example; on the ways in which they saw social and historical contexts shaping the concrete possibilities and problems of institutionalization with which they dealt; and on the relationship between the potential of Cultural Studies as a discipline and the diverse institutions in which it dwells or could dwell in future. The essays published here have been developed from that symposium, and they respond to one or more of these three sets of questions.10

More diffuse in time, the second occasion for celebration and thinking was a friendship formed by institutional encounters. Having met at lively conferences in China and Hong Kong, the two editors found themselves working together from 2004 at Lingnan University, where Mette Hjort is now Chair Professor and Head of Visual Studies and Meaghan Morris has been Chair Professor of Cultural Studies since 2000. While sharing a base in cinema studies and the experience of postgraduate study in France, educationally we came to Hong Kong from different backgrounds. Schooled in Kenya, Holland and Switzerland, Mette had worked in Canada and Denmark while Meaghan arrived from Australia after itinerant teaching in the United States and more than a decade of involvement in the Inter-Asia Cultural Studies movement (discussed below by Kuan-Hsing Chen). Our disciplinary orientations also differ: Mette has worked with cognitive film theory and analytical as well as continental philosophy, while Meaghan (for some years a freelance writer) is an interpretive critic of rhetorical practices in popular culture. What led us to collaborate was none of these things but rather our sense of wonder in finding at Lingnan — a small, undergraduate-oriented liberal arts university — a milieu where teaching was valued, research encouraged without cut-throat competition, scholarly community promoted rather than scorned as an old-fashioned management model, and the handling of internal reforms and external threats alike approached through patient consensus-building.

As in most universities today, some of the structural changes that we witnessed or carried out were hard and controversial while some of the threats (amalgamation, possible crippling budget cuts and repeated exhausting “reviews,” for example) were serious and time-consuming. However, having seen up close the miserably dysfunctional academic contexts inflicted on many of our colleagues in different types of institutions around the world by local modes of implementing “enterprise” university policies, we were astonished to
find ourselves happy academics at Lingnan — at a time when the profession at large was becoming increasingly stressful for those over-employed within it and unattractive to junior staff who found a secure career path into it inaccessible. So for two years we conducted a small research project to try to work out what institutional conditions make for happy rather than wretched academics in today’s university environments. We were interested in the material aspects of university culture that seemed able to shape some places affectively as “livable institutions” for teaching, learning and research while other places facing similar or identical external constraints and policy imperatives became hell-holes of burn-out, exploitation, cynicism, precariousness and illness — both mental and physical. After conducting interviews with senior academics responsible for the well-being of others in different countries and regions of the world, asking in particular what values or practices they would not sacrifice in the interests of competitiveness, and what models or ideas they found inspiring in their work, we came to focus on “below the radar” features of discrete university cultures — not the top-down protocols, exportable models of good practice and the monotonous institutional bragging about “excellence” familiar from official university discourses, but rather the ways in which the local social bond is effectively imagined on a daily basis across the dense network of micro-practices that together in any institution articulate a story that people can “live by” (or not).

For example, although Lingnan University’s management at the time of our project was dominated by economists and business professors, and while we were busy like everyone else in Hong Kong’s universities with performance indicators, role differentiation, quality assurance and the RAE (the government’s policy settings being much the same for all), the primary story shaping the cultural practices of the institution was not about the corporation or a pseudo-business, but rather “the Lingnan family.” Mary Douglas argues that institutions stabilize and legitimize themselves by analogies ultimately founded on “their fit with the nature of the universe.” In a Chinese society, the family is a powerful institution with its own naturalizing claims, and while this potentially patriarchal story was not for everyone (it did not encourage research celebrity-seeking at the expense of undergraduates, for example), it gave plenty of scope for skepticism, humor and conflict, and for those who could live by it “the Lingnan family” was an engaging rather than a debilitating or demoralizing story. Above all, the micro-practices of sociability, accessibility, and care that it authorized (discussed by Mette in her chapter) bound staff and students
together in ways that gave meaning and collective purpose on a daily basis to our shared academic life. In turn, that sense of meaning and purpose was a source of energy for coping imaginatively with the tasks imposed by Hong Kong’s version of new managerialism “with Chinese characteristics.”

After this research, we contend that creating the conditions for energy to be produced rather than depleted by academic life on an everyday basis is key to what Castoriadis calls the “active constitution” of “new ways of living” in universities today. There are many critiques of the adverse impact of marketization and managerialism on the academy (“the university in ruins,” in Bill Readings’ famous phrase), and of the toll taken by the hours of paperwork required by “audit culture,” not only on academic morale but on the overworked bodies and souls of scholars forced to remake their professional subjectivities along more bureaucratized and instrumental lines. However, as Barak Kalir and Pál Nyíri point out, such critiques tend to be unreflexively nation-specific, abstracting and homogenizing as “neo-liberal” the processes they address; in ignoring differing responses to similar pressures enabled by the “highly divergent departure points” of diverse academic cultures, they encourage “a certain fatalism — mostly in Europe and Australia — that mistakes particular managerial fads for the single and inevitable path into the marketized future, whether welcomed or loathed.” By editing this volume together, our aim is to provide a set of positive case studies that show — concretely we believe — how energetic groups and movements have been able to create multiple paths towards their own preferred futures across a variety of contexts and circumstances, some of them highly unpropitious.

For example, drawing on a very different natural analogy from that claimed by the patriarchal family, Josephine Ho describes how a group of feminist “parasites” were able from 1995 to establish and maintain a Center for the Study of Sexualities at National Central University in the face of active hostility from both the mainstream women’s movement and the traditional disciplines around them in the turbulent political conditions of post-martial law Taiwan. Crucially, they did this in part by seizing as an opportunity the Taiwan government’s political need to promote the country’s visibility internationally by signifying in Western terms the academic competitiveness and quantifiable research excellence of Taiwan’s universities — academic goods that these “parasites” could amply provide, trained as many of those in their generation were in advanced studies at United States- or United Kingdom-based universities. The over-production of refereed articles and books for audit purposes is
a coercive feature of new managerialism that today is widely experienced by scholars as an alienating burden; nonetheless, Ho and her “sex-positive” colleagues used their professionalism imaginatively in Taiwan’s geo-political situation as an opportunity to make institutional space and create legitimacy for the cause of “marginal subjects” in public as well as academic life — albeit at a high personal cost to scholar activists living in conditions of constant embattlement while producing those refereed publications and social criticism for local newspapers as well. Indeed, Ho’s account of what she calls “institutionally embedded activism” concludes that one of the most pressing practical issues in her context is to find viable ways to sustain and reproduce — especially for young scholars — the energy “to withstand the onslaught of disciplinary pressure or conservative retaliation.”

Presupposing a long-term commitment to shaping the future through institutional work, this question of sustainability after an initial opportunistic energy burst is addressed, in one way or another, by several contributors. For Kuan-Hsing Chen, the issue for intellectuals involved with social movements anywhere is “how to emotionally maintain intellectual vitality, integrity and intensity” in institutional work, while Stephen Ching-kiu Chan argues that in the ambiguous “post-colony” of Hong Kong today, an ongoing problem for pedagogy is to “release cynical subjects from the trap of negativity” — a trap that the routine practice of cultural critique may simply reinforce. Discussing the difficulties in “brand nationalist” times of popularizing a concept of Japan as a multicultural society, Koichi Iwabuchi wants scholars to become “critical administrators,” willing to promote long-term dialogue with media policy-makers and the general public; and in the context of Singapore’s pragmatic “illiberalism,” Audrey Yue argues that maintaining an ambivalent state between complicity and resistance has worked for the country’s leading feminist NGO, Aware, as an operational logic, a political resource and a source of longevity for more than twenty-five years.

Josephine Ho’s local “survival story” is thus not simply Taiwan-specific, although it is a premise of her contribution and of the book as a whole that the art of the possible in institution-building requires exactly a lucid grasp of what Chen calls “the shifting conditions of practices” in the local, understood relationally as a formation that is multi-layered historically as well as connecting with other places on varying scales of interaction.19 In his questioning case study of the Inter-Asia Cultural Studies (IACS) project — a movement that has grown over the past twenty years from relatively small, self-constituted
gatherings of activists and scholars to generate a refereed journal, a large biennial conference, a multinational network of research centers and now an international consortium project—Chen suggests that Cultural Studies is a useful site for scholars in Asia to compare the diverging circumstances within which we confront similar institutional problems because it can be “the most locally driven” of disciplines in terms of the motivating of research and action priorities but also “the most internationally and regionally linked” organizationally and as a matter of communicative practice. This high degree of multilateral linkage has not emerged because of official university globalization policies (helpful as these are for framing and funding activities), but rather because a distinct form of solidarity has emerged in the region over time between those locally engaged scholars who “use institutional space and opportunity to advance critical possibilities.”

In other words, Cultural Studies has developed across Asia from the outset as a dialogue between diverse locales and varying modes of local engagement, with the Inter-Asia project acting as a convergence space for reflecting on this diversity and its changing cultural and educational conditions. This dialogue has never been nationally grounded — or indeed bounded by a containing “regional” mission. Inter-Asia is an internationalist project, albeit one not based in the West, and scholars from Africa, Australasia, Britain, North America and South America have participated from the beginnings of the Inter-Asia movement with the first “Trajectories” conference (subtitled “Towards A New Internationalist Cultural Studies”), held in Taipei in 1992. Conversely, most of the Asia-based authors in this volume have spent varying periods of time studying and working in other regions of the world, including the Anglophone West. We emphasize Asia in this volume not only because our own lives as teachers and researchers are bound up now with this region, but because we strongly believe that contemporary Asian initiatives in cultural institution-building have over the years developed an exemplary value in the Derridean sense of exemplarity: the accounts in this book of producing spaces for both using and criticizing institutional logics offer us examples that are “without precedent” in the sense that they are inventing a cultural politics as they go along rather than illustrating or replicating a prior model of what a politically and scholastically correct institutional form should look like.

Complexity of circumstance here is a given, and this complexity includes the now extensive international dialogue between academic policy-makers and administrators that adds a new layer of intensity to the need for Western
and Asia-based scholars to bring their reflections on institutional experience to the same plane of discussion, as we do in this book. On the one hand, universities across Asia participate strongly in the regime of globalized policy- and posture-sharing that Marginson and Considine call “inter-institutional mimicry, growing marketing dependence and genuflection to content-free generic corporate models.” To a degree that nationally isolationist scholars may fail to appreciate, this regime brings a similar audit culture and common problems to institutions around the developed and developing worlds, making it more important than ever to initiate trans-regional as well as transnational discussion of ways to work through that culture and those problems. On the other hand, widely differing national education systems and scholarly cultures across Asia, as in many parts of the postcolonial and developing world, must continue to build on the uneven legacies of their colonial and/or revolutionary pasts, while striving to service rapid economic development and respond to the socio-cultural upheaval that such development entails. Necessarily, then, dissimilar intellectual priorities and genre protocols proliferate across a shared plane of discussion about similar problems, sometimes inducing a “difference shock” in participants working from within their own perspectives to establish norms of relevance for deciding the narrative and argumentative “point” of a critical intervention. For some of our readers, the generic mix of essays in this volume may have that effect.

We believe, however, that it is vital now for the discursive and communal basis for international debate about the art of the possible in institutions to be broadened (that is, to become more international itself), and we hope that a collection shaped by, but by no means solely “about,” locations in Asia may contribute to furthering this. In a famous essay on “Culture and Administration,” Theodor Adorno speculates in the course of a highly qualified discussion of “the unique vital force of tradition” (and the best conditions for its negation) that “it is only there where that which was is still strong enough to form the forces within the subject and at the same time to oppose them that the production of that which has not yet been seems possible.” As the stories of experiment in this volume suggest, the turbulent collision of historical forces in Asia today throws up rich opportunities for the active constitution of the new and the “possible” in education, as in other areas of life. At the same time, though, this turbulence creates formidable obstacles for institution-builders to overcome, and powerful constraints within which they must work — all the more so in that a great deal of not necessarily hospitable invention goes on around their
work in the name of cultural tradition as well as economic development. Along with the five specific program or project case studies with which we open the book (studies of projects based in or launched from the cities of Bangalore, Taipei, Hong Kong and Shanghai), the nationally inflected dimension of the essays by Tejaswini Niranjana (India), Josephine Ho (Taiwan), Stephen Ching-kiu Chan, Dai Jinhua and Wang Xiaoming (China), Koichi Iwabuchi (Japan) and Audrey Yue (Singapore) bring out the complexity of these varying conditions with particular clarity.

However, how the often local and fleeting opportunities afforded by those conditions may be seized by critical scholars to create “institutional reality” — sometimes by boldly acting within the constraints as though that desired reality already existed, as John Searle suggests — is a question that frames these stories as of far more than national and regional importance. This book is not an “area” survey of Cultural Studies in Asia, but a work of Cultural Studies that seeks to trace the ways in which problems are transformed and solutions translated across differing contexts, in the process enabling a collective invention of new norms of relevance and unexpected zones of commonality. Thus the four essays grouped at the end of the volume explore the potentials of a performative institutional realism in sites where academic work on culture interacts with other cultural institutions: fashion, design and the modernist art museum (Douglas Crimp’s spiraling memoir of a key moment for the practice of “institutional critique” in late 1960s New York); human rights movements and public law (John Erni); the “gateways” for cultural citizenship formed in illiberal societies by the turn to creative industries (Audrey Yue); and the “metacultural” affiliations of Cultural Studies itself (Tony Bennett) as it seeks to understand the relation between culture, institutions and conduct, and thus the limits as well as the possibilities of its own practices.

Given those aspects of academic globalization that bring new constraints as well as opportunities to locally invested scholars in non-metropolitan sites of intellectual life (for example, the obligation to publish in United States- or United Kingdom-based refereed journals and in English), the multilingual as well as international regional space of Inter-Asia is often much more open to direct engagement with the critical thought and experiences developing in other parts of the world than is the relentlessly Anglophone Western academy. Contributing to the vitality of the institutional initiatives we see taking shape around us, such openness is not in itself a new feature of non-Western and/or post-colonial contexts where the creative local uptake of ideas, values, customs,
and institutional forms introduced or imposed from elsewhere is a historically complex practice long reflected upon by scholars engaging with colonial and nationalist histories. As Jennifer Lindsay notes in a study of cultural policy and the performing arts in Southeast Asia, this complexity of uptake allows policy itself to be understood as “part of cultural expression;” governmental structures and practices are not only “superimposed upon indigenous, regional, traditional, infranational cultural forms, but are themselves also formed by the context within which these forms exist.”

The essay by Tejaswini Niranjana that opens the volume sets out some of the rich implications for thinking about the potentials of disciplinarity as well as institution-building that follow when we take seriously the variable historical formation of institutions in which “the culture question” is asked. In India and some other post-colonial situations, she argues, critical thinking about culture has always been central to “third world” nationalism, and thus to the very process of creating new and modern institutions. Tracing a genealogy of Cultural Studies in India on this basis, she suggests that the discipline’s relationship to institutions there may differ “in a foundational way” from that presumed by many British or US accounts; in India there is little room, for example, for projecting an idealized critical spirit “outside” the institution. However, Niranjana’s own story of institutional creativity is enabled by the emergence in the 1970s and 1980s of a critique of Indian nationalism, one closely linked to the Indian social movements of the time and that precipitated a break with earlier modes of thought about culture and institutions. Risking a break of her own, she left a major Indian university in the mid-1990s to help establish the Centre for the Study of Culture and Society, a privately funded research institution in Bangalore. Paradoxically, while formally now “outside” the Indian university system, she is asked to intervene centrally in curricular issues across the humanities and social sciences — not only in traditional universities and colleges, but in basic science institutions and schools of management, design, and law.

Niranjana’s account of innovation in post-colonial conditions begins a discussion of situated practice that threads through the volume before becoming the main focus in that last group of essays on the “institutional conditions and affiliations” (in Tony Bennett’s terms) of Cultural Studies as a discipline. So while we have framed Niranjana’s experience as in a sense “foundational” for some of the sorts of questions that we are asking here (what might the potentials of Cultural Studies look like, for example, if Western institutional
genealogies were not always used as a default frame of reference in English-language scholarship but shared that frame with others?), it does not follow that we have edited this volume to affirm a charismatic post-colonial, non-Western or inter-Asian “difference” in historical situation and institutional opportunity in the early decades of the twenty-first century. However catchy that might be as a claim pitched to readers in Western public university systems undergoing serious assault in the wake of the global financial crisis of 2007–09, we have precisely not chosen to focus in that way on an exclusively “Asian” experience. Such an appeal to the “doxa of difference” would do more than reiterate tacitly the old division of knowledge production (“the West and the rest”) that fictively redraws absolute cultural boundaries that both capital and colonialism have erased. Even more significantly for our purposes here, it would ignore not only the singularity of these stories of making institutional space in hard places and times (they differ from each other) but also their exemplary value as models of aspiration and realization amenable to creative local uptake elsewhere.

For example, the question of disciplinarity is handled throughout the volume in an active and energetic as well as highly situated fashion. Faced with barriers and discouraging opposition at various levels of their practice, these authors have not simply imported a pre-existing conception of the discipline to their own institutional situations, and then tried to make that conception fit local conditions. Rather, they have worked with those conditions from the outset in a process of imagining and realizing a project for Cultural Studies that is capable of working productively for the local context and of taking new directions as those conditions change. To put this in another way, they practice a small-scale version of what Tony Bennett here calls (following David Toews) a “compositional perspective” that brings “historically specific ‘gatherings’ of varied elements … into provisional associations with one another.” Happily described by one reader as a “forward-looking coda” to the book, Bennett’s essay functions for us as a methodological account of what happens in the course of the volume and within its individual chapters. Clearly, this compositional method is not Asia-specific or an exclusive product of post-colonial difference. The method of provisional association does, however, explain why the discipline of Cultural Studies itself looks a little different from chapter to chapter in this volume as local imperatives redefine and extend the discipline’s capacities.

Some authors take a historical approach to understanding how the disciplinary project has come to differ from itself over time in particular places.
Thus Douglas Crimp’s reflection on the last-minute removal of the artist Daniel Buren’s work from the 1971 *Guggenheim International Exhibition* explores a doubly foundational moment for Cultural Studies, one firmly located in New York and at the same time familiar in other forms to many scholars who have come to Cultural Studies from a background in the arts. In one movement of differing in that moment, a critique of institutions predicated on the imagined externality of the critic is challenged by a more nuanced understanding of the subjective and social implication of critical works in those very institutions (as it was by the way Buren’s art too powerfully functioned materially as a critique of its own placement in the museum itself). In another movement of differing, the pull of a more popular, “decorative” aesthetic renounced by Western high modernism (but explored in the bastions of that modernism by the works of Buren) begins to up open fields of “critical potential” in architecture, fashion, design and domestic everyday life.\(^{29}\) In another historically oriented chapter, Stephen Ching-Kiu Chan follows disciplinary transformations unfolding across time instead of those condensed by a single event. His account of the emergence of “pedagogy” as central to both culture and education in Hong Kong between 1989 and 2012 further traces a shift of emphasis from cultural critique to cultural planning and heritage issues for a version of Cultural Studies that remains integrally linked to Hong Kong’s geopolitically complex identity debates and vibrant social movements. This too is a turn in Cultural Studies that has taken place in other contexts (Australia and the United Kingdom, for example), but Chan’s analysis suggests that it is the critical work of understanding the local reasons for this shift and the stakes involved in participating that gives this intellectual movement its social as well as scholarly rationale.

Other authors focus in a more sociological spirit on how an agenda for Cultural Studies as a university-based project can be shaped by the work of identifying social needs, on the one hand, and analyzing dominant values that must be negotiated on the other. Wang Xiaoming, for instance, meticulously shows how specific theoretical priorities have emerged for the Program in Cultural Studies at the University of Shanghai. Established in response to the massively complex social impacts of twenty years of economic reform in China, the Program’s activities have in turn induced a series of “tough questions” for practice and theory to address. Wang’s account brings out the way in which the choice of themes for research and of emphases for teaching in the Program is integrally linked to working on major problems such as how to deal with the centralized power of “the establishment” in China’s universities;
how an academic discipline that deals with culture can contribute to positive social reform; and how a Cultural Studies embedded in contemporary Chinese experiences might develop a “a sense of care towards the world.”

In a third approach to instituting disciplinarity, Dai Jinhua and John Erni imagine the potentials of Cultural Studies in relation to concrete if daunting political tasks that are national and international respectively. Dai discusses the intricate difficulties of translating such keywords as “popular culture” and “mass culture” from English to Chinese, and of doing so in the context of China’s “vastly different history and reality.” Situating the timing of the arrival of Cultural Studies within the intellectual as well as social upheaval of Chinese globalization and its attendant modes of class stratification and de-politicization (especially of the culture-consuming new middle class), she argues that the promise of Cultural Studies is to reactivate a politics that “is not only about critique, but reconstruction.” John Erni envisions a “relocation” of Cultural Studies in a closer relation to public institutions active in international struggles for social justice. By situating the discipline in relation to formalized “institutional rules of engagement” — in particular those of international human rights law — Erni envisions a metamorphosis of its worldly practice into one that perhaps invests as much in professional training and public participation as it does in critique.

Erni expresses the hope that making such a move towards an area of rights-based activity and a legal space that Cultural Studies has generally avoided or regarded with critical mistrust can “open a door for critical scholarship to flow” (and Niranjana’s account of the Law and Culture program at the Bangalore CSCS provides an example of how such a door can open). We believe that Erni’s outside-oriented vision of a critical scholarship willing to be transformed as it moves into new areas of practice is shared by the other contributors to this volume, and that this externalizing spirit can generate models as well as stories to think by in other places — perhaps not least in those Western universities now suffering the effects of strategic financial constriction and program demolition. Consistent with this spirit, in preference to talking about the “institutionalization” of Cultural Studies we want to emphasize the active and purposive, fully verbal sense of the term “institution”; this is a book about choosing to institute new spaces, practices, and activities.

Tony Bennett noted some years ago an “embarrassing tendency within Cultural Studies for those whose objective position is that of salaried government employees (that is, academics) … to write of Cultural Studies as if it
were somehow outside of or marginal to institutions, and to speak of ‘institutionalization’ as if it were a looming external threat.”

Within a Western (and Romantic) cultural inheritance, “institutionalization” can sound like something suspicious and probably unfortunate that happens to you; it has overtones of being confined against one’s will or settling down for want of a better choice. The negative nuances are especially tenacious in Western usage when “the academy” is at issue, as though the latter still signifies a mode of professionalism imagined (however implausibly in today’s conditions) either as enclosed in an ivory tower, detached from public and political life, or as doomed to a demoralizing state of “collusion” and “complicity” with omnipotent Powers That Be. To doubt the usefulness of thus devaluing our own workplaces at a time when the struggle to gain access to higher education or to be employed there on livable terms is increasingly harsh worldwide does not require us also to doubt that universities are indeed sites for the production of state and, increasingly, corporate benefits. On the contrary, it is clearly a premise of the chapters in this book that the work of instituting involves a sustained and practical engagement with what are often very hostile powers. It is rather the omnipotence of those powers that these institution-builders deny or contest, and they do this not simply by forming arguments about the nature of power in their societies (vital to action as those arguments are) but by forging spaces from which to implement their alternative projects and programs.

Implementation requires the formulation of concrete, nameable objectives.

We draw from this simple reminder two lessons about the art of the possible in academic life today. First, the studies assembled here suggest that it is not only good in principle but vital for effective practice to have a strong ethical vision of what kind of creativity is worth pursuing in a university context, and why, if change is to be achieved. This contrasts with the fears of those thinkers who, writing in the wake of Adorno’s critique of the entanglement of the very idea of “culture” with “the administrative view” (“the task of which, looking down from on high, is to assemble, distribute, evaluate and organize”), see a worrying evacuation of substance from intellectual projects formed in proximity to the marketing imperatives and disruptive principles of new managerialism in institutions today. For example, reflecting broadly on the “liquid” qualities of “our floating and flowing, fluid modern world,” Zygmunt Bauman muses that often “the question ‘how to do it’ looks more important and urgent than the query ‘what to do’.”

Taking this up in a critique of policy-oriented Cultural Studies, Peter Osborne observes of a conference in the United
Kingdom that it had “no sense … of a theoretical horizon beyond immediate institutional imperatives; no sense of a future any different from the most immediate institutional present;” and in an endnote he restates Bauman’s problem: “the critical question remains: ‘administration as cultural-political resource’ for what project?”

This is a question that makes no sense other than rhetorical provocation without a context to provide materials for a meaningful answer and communities to whom that answer matters. The strength of the local case studies, transformative national projects, personal detours and cross-institutional ventures described in this volume is that they are able to nominate contexts and communities that do indeed give shape and substance to the “what” as well as the “how” of institutional action. Iwabuchi’s call to promote more ethnically inclusive ideas of nationality in Japan is just one of the solid and direct answers to Osborne’s critical question in this volume. Explicitly taking up Osborne’s call for a “pragmatist dispute,” Yue’s account of sexuality and cultural citizenship in Singapore is another. More generally, each of these authors contests by their writing practice as well as their institutional work the pessimistic suggestion that certain kinds of pragmatic thinking may shrink theoretical horizons and block the imagining of a different future. Concerned as they are with building “up” collective projects, networks, and shared spaces for thought in their everyday practices (rather than “looking down from high” as Adorno’s classically vertical trope suggests), a different — and in Erni’s terms a more “just” — social and political future is variously projected from the beginning to the end of this book.

The second lesson that we draw from these studies in implementing a vision rather than resting content with melancholically dreaming a dream is that a very strong sense of agency is generated rather than presumed by institutional creativity. Some stories here begin from situations of great social vulnerability or professional marginality; their inspirational force derives precisely from the pragmatic and rigorously intellectual ways in which they show exactly how those situations have been transformed. “How” questions matter; the literature on executive leadership and change management in institutions may be as remote from the concerns of most Cultural Studies in the West as the world of human rights law, but it has much to teach us about the impact of the choices made by individual managers in effecting the differing outcomes (in our terms, the varying degrees of livability) that particular universities produce within a common policy regime. Cultural Studies is known for emphasizing consumer...
and audience agency in the use of commodities and media texts, but we often seem to have less to say (beyond copious citations of Foucault on capillary power and Althusser on our subjectification by “ideological state apparatuses” [ISA])\textsuperscript{37} about the concrete modalities within which we exercise agency in the university and what imaginative choices and creative moves we might be able to make in our varying situations and within the constraints that we face.

As editors, we are struck by a special combination of qualities shared by these contributors in their practice of institutional creativity. First, they balance persistence over time with unpredictability in action. On the one hand, these are people who have “stayed the course”; they have been involved in institution-building for a long time, producing knowledge from dealing with failure and generating critiques of their own success. On the other hand, they have eschewed a “holier than thou” approach to institutional alliances; they have forged spaces in unexpected places and achieved some of their goals through forming unusual partnerships. Second, they meld an appetite for risk with a sharp sense of timing in the art of compromise. These scholars are deeply committed to something that goes well beyond narcissistic careerism and narrow institutional reproduction, and they also can talk to and cooperate with a whole range of people. Some have paid a heavy personal price for the risks they have taken, but there is a generosity and capaciousness to the way in which all of them think passionately through their institutional dilemmas that renders their work, in our view, at once effective and admirable.

What we have here, then, is a model of academic activism that is not only inspiring but highly pertinent to the current university landscape in which accountability and relevance (positive values as these should be) are all too often conflated with a grinding version of accountancy and a dispirited or cynical conformity to every management decree.\textsuperscript{38} That several (though not all) contributors reflect on their experience through stories assumes a particular importance for us in this context. Whether a story is about a personal trajectory or the development of a center, a journal or a program, the advantage of a narrative approach is that it allows the energetic force of unpredictability and the refreshing effects of sheer, glorious \textit{accident} to enter the space of critical reflection on institutional work. All visions, plans, projects and struggles that face up to a reality test are littered (for good and ill) with mistakes, false steps, strokes of luck and other unforeseen effects of chance. As Simon Marginson points out in relation to the globalizing strategies of entire universities, “not all outcomes are intended. Global creation is not always pre-mediated, and
the relation between imagining and practices is not always happy." However, for Marginson these strategies at best are “acts of freedom,” and “if the global spatial moves made by universities fail as often as they succeed, in this they are no different to other acts of creation.”

That failure may be an outcome of grand university designs will not be surprising to anyone who reads the news, and everyone who has worked with a committee, a collective, a reading group or a network will be well aware that the wisdom of always expecting the unintended also applies to the smaller-scale “acts of freedom” committed in universities by groups of scholars working to create a space that would not exist without their efforts. This is common, everyday knowledge, yet the legacy of critical theory in Cultural Studies does not always encourage us to think deeply about what we know. As Crimp’s chapter in this volume suggests, there is a blockage from that legacy around the concept of “institution,” and it would be fair to say that debates about cultural policy have not altogether dislodged it — inclined as these have been by the work of Foucault to examine particular institutional forms (the asylum, the prison, the museum) against the powerful conceptual horizon of theories of governmentality.

Problems of theoretical precedent arise if we take “institutionality” as our object instead. On the one hand, Cultural Studies and most other areas of inquiry concerned today with issues of power, subjectivity, identity, desire and the force of social imaginaries have invented themselves, as it were, through a rigorously argued critique of the Hegelian and Scottish Enlightenment idea of human institutions “as products of human action but not of human design.” The strength of these areas of inquiry is due in part to their success in identifying social systems of intentional relation relative to, say, historical formations of race, colonialism, gender, and sexuality that were invisible to those who merely saw nature or random acts of prejudice at work. At the same time, critical studies in this tradition generally have also chosen to remain at a skeptical distance from the more cheery liberal view that “yes, obviously institutions determine our behavior, but only if we choose to obey them.” While Foucault once expressed a similar sentiment, quipping in an interview that “my role — and that is too emphatic a word — is to show people that they are much freer than they feel,” Cultural Studies projects concerned with subjectivity often have more affinity with the dark visions of institutional power as a danger to one’s very soul bequeathed to us by Marxist thinkers: Adorno gives us a memorable image of administrative thinking as a parasite or virus that “multiplies within” the
“supposedly productive human being,” while Althusser’s dystopian — even paranoid — model of ideology is that of an omnipresent voice inescapably booming through the ISAs, “‘Hey, you there!’”

Even when stripped (as they usually are) of the qualifications and the sense of difficulty expressed by the argumentatively rich essays in which they first appeared, these dark visions remain compelling, not least because they are often true to significant aspects of our experience in institutions and they link that experience to powerful explanations of large-scale social and political processes. Yet they tell us little that is helpful for understanding the positive values that people find or create as they nonetheless continue to work in institutions, and they do not offer guidance as to how a given institution might be transformed — Althusser, for example, concedes that “the class struggle in the ISAs is indeed an aspect of the class struggle,” only to move to a higher level of analysis (the ruling ideology “goes beyond them, for it comes from elsewhere”). Sociological or ethnographic accounts of involvement, rather than subjection, are more useful for grasping the potentially negative productivity of institutional life as it shapes both action and mentalities. When Hans Gerth and C. Wright Mills acerbically note that “one aspect of learning a role consists of acquiring motives that guarantee its performance,” a large margin is left free for asking what other aspects of this learning might be of value for, say, the sex-positive parasites of Josephine Ho’s research center, and for thinking more about the other motives that they bring to the performance of their academic work from “elsewhere” in their social and personal lives.

Through telling stories or anecdotes, people are able to focus analytically on the material force of chance and haphazard events while putting these on the same imaginative plane of discussion as their critique of an institution and their reflection on the latter’s transformative effects in their lives. Exemplary of this method here is Crimp’s ability to combine a serious account of the issues at stake in the 1971 removal of Buren’s work from the Guggenheim International Exhibition with two versions of a witty story that he calls “my first job in New York.” In one of these versions, the young Crimp wanders into the Guggenheim on impulse to apply for a job and finds himself, improbably, the only person in the vicinity qualified, more or less, for the job that the museum indeed happens to have. We hope that this volume as a whole may contribute to the proliferation of this kind of optimistic spirit as a precondition in difficult times for continuing the work that Kuan-Hsing Chen calls using institutional space and opportunity “to advance critical possibilities.”
One of the most eloquent accounts of the reasons for doing this is provided by Mary Douglas in *How Institutions Think*. This book gives us a chilling vision of institutional psychology and the risks of involvement with it that rivals Althusser’s scenario in its power to conjure a popular cultural imagery of fear. Douglas accepts the view that “an institution cannot have purposes;” for her, only individuals can intend, plan, and contrive. However, when analyzing the classifying work that institutions do for us and inside us, she also endows them with agency in a passage worth quoting at length:

> Institutions systematically direct individual memory and channel our perceptions into forms compatible with the relations they authorize. They fix processes that are essentially dynamic, they hide their influence, and they rouse our emotions to a standardized pitch on standardized issues. Add to all this that they endow themselves with rightness and send their mutual corroboration cascading through all the levels of our information system. No wonder they easily recruit us into joining their narcissistic self-contemplation … Institutions have the pathetic megalomania of the computer whose whole vision of the world is its own program.50

As individuals in Douglas’s sense, however, we are capable of formulating other purposes while fashioning other kinds of involvement, and thus we always have open to us the possibility of intellectual independence and resistance. For Douglas, as for Adorno, the first step in such resistance is to discover how “the institutional grip is laid upon our mind.”51 Ultimately, though, “only changing institutions can help. We should address them, not individuals, and address them continuously, not only in crises.”52

It would be fair to say that Cultural Studies has been involved in practising a great deal of that mental self-discovery entailed by the critique of “institutional grip” over the past fifty years. This book, with its “stories to live by,” is about venturing to take the further step of transforming the kinds of classifications that our universities make, not only by refusing their narcissism and megalomania but by forging within them intellectual and pedagogical spaces capable of sustaining more livable social bonds, continuously and on an everyday basis.
Notes

Introduction: Instituting Cultural Studies


3. For an elaborated account of this methodological priority, see Lawrence Grossberg, *Cultural Studies in the Future Tense* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010).


Australia have nonetheless “won significant ground in influencing how government and the university sector have conceptualised research,” see Graeme Turner, “Informing the Public: Is There a Place for a Critical Humanities?” in Proceedings (Canberra: Australian Academy of the Humanities, 2005), 136.


10. Our special thanks for their participation go to Lawrence Grossberg, Kim Soyoung, and Earl Jackson.

11. We are grateful to Lingnan University for a Direct Grant to fund the project titled “University Culture, Markets, Globalization and Norms”; Mette Hjort, PI, and Meaghan Morris. LU: DA06A7, 2005–06.

12. “Liveable Institutions: What Does It Take These Days?” was the title of Mette Hjort’s paper for the Cultural Studies and Institution conference, and is the basis of part of her chapter here.


16. The qualification “with Chinese characteristics” is widely used to signify the need to alter or adjust borrowed — usually Western — policies to allow for the cultural and historical difference of Chinese societies, and in Hong Kong it is just as widely used humorously to affirm the local subversion or détournement of that policy’s intent.


19. On the relationality of place and locality, see Doreen Massey, Space, Place and Gender (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1994).

20. See http://www.inter-asia.org/ for an overview of the movement’s activities.

21. See Kuan-Hsing Chen, ed., Trajectories: Inter-Asia Cultural Studies (London: Routledge, 1998) for publications based on this conference and a subsequent meeting in 1995. Authors coming to the project from “outside” Asian locations at the time were Ien Ang, Leo Ching, Kenneth Dean, Stuart Hall, Meaghan Morris, Stephen Muecke, Cindy Patton, Mark A. Reid, and Naoki Sakai. Among the contributors to this present volume, Tony Bennett, Stephen Ching-kiu Chan, Kuan-Hsing Chen, and Meaghan Morris attended the 1992 Trajectories conference.


28. Thanks for this nice phrase to an anonymous reviewer for Hong Kong University Press.


38. On the conflation of accountability with accountancy, see Shore, “Audit Culture and Illiberal Governance.”
49. Douglas, How Institutions Think, 92.
50. Douglas, How Institutions Think, 92.
52. Douglas, How Institutions Think, 126.

Chapter 1: The Desire for Cultural Studies

1. For early attempts to articulate this continuity, see the Journal of Arts and Ideas in the 1980s. Overlaps of concerns and authors are to be found in Tejaswini Niranjana, P. Sudhir, and Vivek Dhareshwar, eds., Interrogating Modernity: Culture and Colonialism in India (Kolkata: Seagull Books, 1993), now seen as the first Cultural Studies reader to be published in India.
2. While the Subaltern Studies historians, among others, have written about the crisis in nationalist discourse, the parallel crises in disciplines and institutions have not yet received the same kind of attention.
3. This formulation, which emerged in CSCS (Centre for the Study of Culture and Society) discussions in the late 1990s, owes much to the work of Partha Chatterjee.
6. A key figure here is Sir William Jones, an early Indologist who founded the Asiatic Society in 1784 and whose work is still reprinted, and revered, in India. For a critical account of Jones’ work, see Tejaswini Niranjana, Siting Translation: History, Post-structuralism and the Colonial Context (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1992).
7. For a lucid account of the development of this critique, see Susie Tharu’s Introduction to Vol. II of Women Writing in India (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1993).
9. Deshpande, Contemporary India.
12 For the discussion in this section, I am indebted to the inputs of CSCS colleagues and the many proposals and reports we have assembled over the last ten years.

13. The Master’s program in Cultural Studies was introduced at the behest of Kuvempu University, a local state university that has had a long-standing engagement with CSCS. After one successful year of the program, the Kuvempu University administrators ran afoul of the Open University system in Karnataka, which claimed that no other institution could offer distance learning courses. The MA in Cultural Studies has since been suspended.

Chapter 2: Social Movements, Cultural Studies, and Institutions

1. Inter-Asia Cultural Studies, also known as the Movements project, is a trans-border collective undertaking to confront Inter-Asia cultural politics. Among other networking activities it publishes a refereed journal, *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, links research centers and organizes a biennial conference. See http://www.inter-asia.org.


3. In January 2006, a five-day Teaching Cultural Studies Workshop was held at National Central University, Chung-li, Taiwan. Without prior preparation, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by friends who represented eleven different institutions in the region. For details, see Josephine Ho, “Forging the Trail: Teaching Cultural Studies Workshop, Taiwan, 2006.” *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 9(3) (2008): 429–32.


6. These journals include Seoul-based *Creation and Criticism* (Changbi), Tokyo-based *Contemporary Thought* (Gendai Shiso) and IMPACTION, Beijing-based *Dushu*, Taipei-based *Taiwan: A Radical Quarterly in Social Studies*, and *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*. A conference on Historical Culture of the Cold War took place in Kinmen in November 2010.


Chapter 3: Life of a Parasite

1. The term “gadfly” was used by Plato in the *Apology* to describe Socrates’ role of dissent in stinging the complacent establishment into action. Cultural Studies, as a
gadfly, could be said to direct its sting at the power bloc, the status quo or popular beliefs.

2. These pockets, all active in the field of Cultural Studies, include the Graduate Institute of Building and Planning at National Taiwan University (est. 1988), the Center for Asia-Pacific/Cultural Studies at Tsing-Hua University (est. 1992), the Center for the Study of Sexualities at National Central University (est. 1995), the Graduate School for Social Transformation Studies at Shih-Hsin University (est. 1997), and a vibrant group in the Department of Psychology at Fu-Jen Catholic University (est. 2000). Established or operated by left-wing scholars who had returned to Taiwan after the lifting of martial laws in 1987, but who refused to dance to the tunes of nationalist politics, such critical gatherings, scattered in many different fields, have maintained active involvement in Taiwan's various social movements not only by sharing their own social respectability — and thus legitimacy — with marginal groups, but also by producing critical discourses and research results, as well as non-conforming students, to challenge mainstream academic mechanisms of knowledge production.

3. “Democratization” has been considered a liberalizing, liberating restructuring of society, but I am putting the word in quotation marks exactly to point to the inimical dimensions of such a seemingly benevolent process.

4. My own clandestine slogan of “We want orgasms, not sexual harassment,” uttered in the 1994 anti-sexual harassment march in Taipei, followed by my controversial book *The Gallant Woman: Feminism and Sexual Emancipation* (1994), not only opened up discursive space for female sexuality but also resulted in a silent purge of my membership from feminist scholarly organizations henceforth. As one weathered feminist put it in a private conversation: “It took us so many years of effort to reach this level of social acceptance, we cannot afford to have it tarnished by any controversy.”

5. Other members came from the Graduate Institute of Philosophy at National Central University and the Chinese Department of National Tsinghua University, but most of us were concentrated in the English Department of National Central University. The title of the Center was chosen to demonstrate our resolve to discuss gender issues without losing sight of sexuality as well as other social differences, such as class, race, age, and so on. We chose to put a slash in between *xing-bie* (性別, which means “gender” in Chinese, but taken apart, the two characters signify sex and difference) to mark our position. The Center’s English title was later changed to the “Center for the Study of Sexualities,” not only for the sake of brevity but also to mark the stalemate in gender studies as mainstream women began sharing state power in 2000, and as the rapid development in sexuality studies as activism in the area of marginal sexualities took off.

6. Since the establishment of our center in 1995, I have often been asked by the curious but friendly: “Has the university given you any trouble? Is there any opposition to your Center at your university?” The frequency of such questions is a constant reminder that although gender has marched on to the university map and national
policy, we are still faced with the difficulty of dealing with a subject — sexuality — that easily evokes shame, guilt, fear, ignorance, and consequently anger and bigotry. And our difficulties are doubled because of the against-the-grain approach we are determined to embrace.

7. To intervene in the rapid development of mainstream gender education, the Center organized a series of gender equity education workshops in 1998 and 1999 that not only provided platforms for progressive middle school teachers to address and influence their peers but also, because the workshops were funded and certified by the County Bureau of Education, helped boost respectability and credibility for the Center. We also published various kinds of teacher training materials, as well as gender education material for middle school students in the form of a popular manga. All materials, in Chinese, are now available online (http://sex.ncu.edu.tw/course/young/young.html).

8. In 1997, at the urging of mainstream women’s groups, Taipei mayor Chen Shui-Bian revoked the licenses of the last remaining 128 prostitutes in order to demonstrate his resolve to purify the city of vice. Unexpectedly, the middle-aged, illiterate prostitutes rose in protest, and labor groups as well as sex-positive feminists came to their support, thus igniting a wave of fierce debates among feminists over the issue of sex work. The debates had other practical and tangible consequences. Staff members at the Awakening Foundation, the most prominent feminist group at the time, who worked tirelessly to support the sex workers as well as advocating for lesbian issues, were collectively fired later that year for “ignoring their work assignment and disobeying the orders of the Board of Directors.” The discharged activists formed Gender/Sexuality Rights Association of Taiwan (GSRAT) two years later to continue their fight for marginal genders and sexualities (http://gsrat.net/en/aboutus.php). In contrast, mainstream women’s groups that stood with the city government in 1997 have since been rewarded generously with both funding and political power of influence as mayor Chen became the president of the country in 2000. As their assistance in consolidating governance is both effective and necessary, President Ma’s regime since has also maintained good relations with these women’s groups.

9. The Chinese term “state-feminism” was first used by feminist scholar Yu-Xiou Liu in a 1996 interview. Liu believes that feminist ideals are to be carried out by none other than housewives becoming political agents through entering the public realm of the state apparatus en masse. The sheer presence and number of women would then swallow up the public realm with the private realm, thus feminizing the state and forcing it to take up the job of caring, while the self-professed “philosophy queen” dethrones the “philosophy king.” See Yu-Xiou Liu, “From Women Ruling the State to Gender Liberation: Subverting Familial Patriarchy with State-Feminism.” Stir Quarterly 2 (1996): 23–4 (in Chinese). It is with this vision in mind that mainstream feminists developed an unusually high interest and investment in the project of state-building.

11. This leftist bent was later noted as our work was seen as continuously producing “a body of indigenous Marxist writings that mobilizes different senses of ‘queerness’ to demonstrate that the official celebration of diversity and human rights [in Taiwan] has actually further alienated and disempowered sex workers, promiscuous homosexuals, gay drug-users, and other social subjects that are considered to be a threat to the liberal-democratic order.” See Petrus Liu, “Queer Marxism in Taiwan.” *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, 8(4) (2007): 517–39.

12. The influx of such writings totally transformed the *Fu-kan* (literary supplement) of major newspapers, turning the space for creative literary writing to that of critical expository writing. This was the key site for Cultural Studies during that period of time, and helped popularize the approach and analytical style of Cultural Studies. Cf. Yin-Bin Ning, “Cultural Politics as ‘Real Politics’ and Cultural Studies as Applied Philosophy: Cultural Criticism in Taiwan.” Paper presented at the International Conference on Cultural Criticism, Chinese University of Hong Kong, January 2, 1993.

13. One review committee member insisted that our conference theme and content “looked very much like a conference for social movements,” which I would not have disputed at all. I am sure that at one time or another some may have even considered us “parasitic” on the English Department.

14. Ironically, the English Department of National Central University has since become well known for its strengths in gender/sexuality studies and film studies. However, being recognized as a Cultural Studies stronghold, the department has suffered repeated defeats in its efforts to launch a PhD program, as reviewers were assigned by the Ministry of Education along traditional disciplinary lines and reviewers in English studies do not look upon Cultural Studies kindly. A fourth attempt to launch a PhD program is now under discussion within the department.

15. The third proposal, drafted by someone who was more closely related to the actual organization of the sex workers in their struggles, still could not pass the appeals review despite a strong rebuttal.

16. In that sense, the lifting of martial law in Taiwan in 1987 was likewise necessitated by the crisis that followed upon its booming economy. In other words, political liberalization was necessitated by a desperate need to liberalize the market as well as the capital so as to attract international investment while shifting the manufacturing industries to regions with lower wages.

17. Research teams making their collective presence felt at international conferences is highly encouraged; conventions or congresses of international academic organizations are solicited to hold their conferences in Taiwan; executive positions in such organizations are deemed equal to academic merit.
18. The number of visits by international scholars now constitutes one important figure on the quantified assessment table required of all research-oriented universities in their annual evaluation.


20. Our speakers included such illustrious names as Cindy Patton, Fran Martin, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Judith Halberstam, Jose Neil Cabanero Garcia, Leslie Feinberg, Minnie Bruce Pratt, Jamison Green, Ann Bolin, Laura Kipnis, and Katrien Jacobs.

21. The tendency of quantification in neo-liberal, market-oriented professionalism may be faulted on many fronts, but it has helped the Center survive on its own impressive quantity of academic output. The university is then left with a sense of strong ambivalence toward us: we could be problematic in our public statements and involvements, yet we are too valuable an asset to do without. Our choice to remain administratively under the jurisdiction of the English Department, where members of the Center make up the most senior faculty, also ensures the complete autonomy of the Center’s functioning. It is this delicate status, and our self-determined accountability, that have ensured the Center enjoys a rare combination of academic professionalism and social activism.

22. In the meantime, publishing sites and spaces are rapidly dwindling due to commercialization. This crisis has prompted the editors of newspaper literary supplements to define their pages in a purely literary fashion that would stave off cultural commentaries. All these developments have worked to a certain extent to discourage the crossing over of the academics and their progressive ideas into other social realms.

23. In the more practice-oriented disciplines, such as social work or urban planning, such packaging is widely practiced by the expatriated left-wing scholars. Among all the pockets of Cultural Studies, the Department of Psychology at Fu-Jen Catholic University has been the most effective in opening up the department to marginal students. Its graduate student pool includes members from the sado-masochism, sex work, and transgender groups, and the program has been training them to become professionals who serve marginal populations.

24. The project is headed by Kuan-Hsing Chen, the tireless champion of inter-Asia Cultural Studies.

25. We succeeded in gathering delegates from twelve Cultural Studies programs across Asia to sign a Memorandum of Understanding of cooperation in the 2006 Teaching Cultural Studies Workshop held at National Central University, Taiwan. As the universities seemed to be slow in responding, another Memorandum of Understanding of cooperation — this time involving eighteen institutions spread across Asia — was signed at Tokyo University in the summer of 2009. The banding together of otherwise isolated pockets of Cultural Studies proves to be quite inspiring. Delegates from these participating institutions gathered in Seoul to launch
the Inter-Asia Cultural Studies Consortium on July 2, 2010. This was viewed as a monumental step toward regional collaboration and was carried further in ensuing Cultural Studies conferences and colloquia in the region.


Chapter 4: The Assessment Game

6. All citations are from *120th Anniversary of the Founding of Lingnan University & 40th Anniversary of the Re-establishment of Lingnan University in Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Public Affairs Office, Lingnan University, 2007). See also Huang Ju-yan, ed., *Modern Education in Guangdong and Lingnan University* (Hong Kong: Commercial Press, 1995).
12. Mok Ka-ho, *Education and the Market Place in Hong Kong and Mainland China* (Hong Kong: Department of Public and Social Administration, City University of Hong Kong, 1998), 5.

Chapter 5: Three Tough Questions of Cultural Studies

2. These courses are taught by Cultural Studies scholars from the five universities/institutes mentioned above. Proposed new courses are “Selected Readings in Modern Chinese Thought,” “Analysis of the Modern Dominant Culture,” and “Methodology of Cultural Studies.”
3. An anthology of the seminar’s reports is published as a teaching resource: Wang Xiaoming, ed., *Cultural Studies in the Chinese World* (Shanghai: Shanghai Bookstore, 2010).
4. To this day, the Ministry of Education in China does not include Cultural Studies in its “first class subjects” list.
5. There are three elective courses in this category: “Introduction to Cultural Studies,” “Introduction to Selected Cultural Studies Theories,” and “Theory and Practice of Cultural Studies.” These courses target third- and fourth-year undergraduate students. From 2009, another undergraduate version of “Introduction to Cultural Studies” became one of the four core courses for all Arts Faculty undergraduate students of Shanghai University. The “elective” nature of the course remains, as students are only required to choose two from the four core courses.
6. The Master’s degree programs offered by the Program in Cultural Studies are subordinated to five majors: “Chinese Modern and Contemporary Literature,” “Literature Studies,” “Anthropology,” “Film and Television Studies,” and “Media Studies”; the PhD programs are subordinated to “Sociology” and “Chinese Modern and Contemporary Literature.”
7. The number of forums varies according to real teaching schedules. Usually, lecturers post the lecture outlines and reading list on the corresponding forum; some would post the lecture notes too. Students’ posts are mainly reflections on the lectures (including questions) and electronic files of some readings.
8. Apart from research objects and methodology, you must have an outline of the analytical theory in order to establish Cultural Studies as an independent “subject.” Our preliminary efforts in this regard are outlined below.

9. For example, from the late 1990s to the mid-2000s, Wen Tiejun and others set up a “Village Construction College” in Ding County of Hebei Province.

10. Modern society is highly permeated by ideology. A young person from a village in Eastern China might not know a term like “modernization,” but nonetheless acts and treats his or her daily experience according to a vulgar version of modernization theory acquired from television and secondary school textbooks: the city equals progress, the village equals backwardness, the meaning of life is to escape from the village and enjoy the life of a city dweller.

11. “The three-dimensional rural issues” include agriculture, rural villages, and farmers. From 2003 to 2006, discussion of these issues overwhelmed the whole country and finally led to the abolition of the agriculture tax. Zhi jiao is short for “village education support,” and this program is mainly about organizing university students, including postgraduates, to teach in village schools for short terms and to help establish schools and libraries.

12. The establishment of the People’s Republic of China in 1949 was the first epoch-making triumph of the “Chinese revolution.” During the 1950s, the many radical policies implemented by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to remake society continued this revolution. However, from the mid-1950s the “socialist” project led by the CCP gradually turned sour. Conflicts within society became serious and led to the beginning of the Cultural Revolution; the failure of the Cultural Revolution triggered the “Reform” in the 1980s, and this resulted in the “Fourth of June” tragedy in 1989. By this point, all energy for the intellectual and social movements of the “Chinese revolution” was used up and society as a whole turned to the right. China entered into the first “anti-revolution” or “post-revolution” phase, dominated by the right wing in its modern history. From this perspective, the 1950s to the 1970s was the period when the Chinese revolution started to decline. Therefore, this article fixes the end of the high tide of the Chinese revolution in the mid-twentieth century.


Chapter 6: Doing Cultural Studies

1. As David Harvey explains, the latest trend in “the neo-liberal turn” has also resulted in developments that affect the Asia-Pacific region to a great extent. See Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); especially Chapter 5, “Neoliberalism with Chinese Characteristics,” 120–51.
2. Stephen Chan, “Mapping the Global Popular in Hong Kong: Re-Articulations of the Local, National and Transnational in Contemporary Cultural Flows.” In *Re-Inventing Hong Kong in the Age of Globalization*, edited by Yee Leung et al. (Hong Kong: Chung Chi College and Faculty of Social Sciences, Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2002).


4. Chan, “Mapping the Global Popular in Hong Kong.”

5. Erni, “Like a Post-Colonial Culture.”


20. See 著作家引用 The Legacy and Rupture in Social Movement: Interview with Lau Sai-Leung.” In Kwong, Standing on the Side of the Eggs, 47.


25. Bennett, Culture: A Reformer’s Science, 231.

26. According to the Four-Year BACS Programme Review (2003), the aims of the BA (Hons) Cultural Studies program at Lingnan University are:

(i) to engage actively in the contemporary analysis of culture; to become sensitive to, and critical of, the issues of identity, value and affection about which the various forms of culture they study are concerned; (ii) to be aware of the complex interplay between the modern self, society and history through intensive work in an inter-disciplinary curriculum; to learn how the multiple perspectives with which people see the world today are crucial to our understanding of contemporary cultural realities; and (iii) to open themselves intellectually to the wide-ranging texts and contexts that have been transforming the contemporary age, so as to develop independent judgement on the cultural practices and social institutions they must deal with now and in the future.

27. See, for example, “The Legacy and Rupture in Social Movement: Interview with Lau Sai-Leung.” In Kwong, Standing on the Side of the Eggs, 47.


30. Bennett, Culture: A Reformer’s Science, 224.


33. Bennett, Culture: A Reformer’s Science, 17.

34. Bennett, Culture: A Reformer’s Science, 51.

35. See Stephen Chan: “Under the current system, ‘excellence’ cannot serve as a carrier of content, for it seems capable of drawing one single boundary, that of ‘the unrestricted power of the bureaucracy’ (Bill Readings). Worse, it permits exhaustive accounting, often taken to mean the same as accountability. In short, it would appear that the quest for ‘excellence’ works only to tie the university into an ‘excellent’ net of bureaucratic institutions.” In “Building Cultural Studies for Postcolonial Hong Kong: Aspects of the Postmodern Ruins in Between Disciplines.” In Cultural Studies: Interdisciplinarity and Translation, edited by Stefan Herbrechter (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2002), 224–5.

36. Chan and Hui, “Cultural Studies through Education.”

Chapter 7: Coordinates, Confusions, and Cultural Studies

1. In January 1993, the Department of English at the Chinese University of Hong Kong organized the first international Cultural Studies conference in the Chinese-speaking territories. During the same period, some universities in Hong Kong and Taiwan introduced courses on Cultural Studies. In 1995, the Comparative Literature and Culture Research Centre of Beijing University set up the Cultural Studies Working Group and introduced Cultural Studies courses. In 1999, the Cultural Studies Association was established in Taiwan; Lingnan University of Hong Kong established the Department of Cultural Studies; while many comprehensive universities in mainland China started to organize Cultural Studies programs, publications and websites. In July 2004, Shanghai University established the Program in Cultural Studies.


4. This was a cultural debate on vernacular Chinese, colloquial Chinese, and literary Chinese in Shanghai in 1934.


7. In 2005, the lifestyle magazine New Weekly dedicated an issue to the discussion of the phenomenon of the “drifting generation.”


Chapter 8: Uses of Media Culture, Usefulness of Media Culture Studies


3. As was the case with the Western Orientalist gaze on Japan in the construction of national identity, the above-mentioned American observations are still crucial for the confirmation of the “cool Japan” phenomenon within Japan. And as with traditional culture such as Ukiyoe, Western appreciation has a determining power on the international quality of Japanese culture. The fact that Japanese popular culture has been much more actively and massively received in East Asia has never spurred the same extent of euphoria. In this sense, the “Cool Japan” discourse still testifies to Japan’s appreciation of the Western Orientalist gaze and complicit uses of it to enhance the sense of national pride both domestically and internationally. In this sense, “Cool Japan” is basically a Western phenomenon. See Koichi Iwabuchi, “Complicit Exoticism: Japan and Its Other.” *Continuum* 8(2) (1994): 49–82.


31. See, for example, Ae-ri Yoon, “In Between the Values of the Global and the National: The Korean Animation Industry.” In Cultural Studies and Cultural Industries in Northeast Asia: What a Difference a Region Makes, edited by Chris Berry, Jonathan D. Mackintosh and Nicola Liscutin (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2009).


40. See Iwabuchi, Bunka no taiwaryoku.

41. See Iwabuchi, Recentering Globalization.


44. McGuigan, Rethinking Cultural Policy.

45. Williams, “State Culture and Beyond,” 3.

46. McGuigan, Rethinking Cultural Policy, 5.


Chapter 9: Way Out on a Nut


3. I paraphrase Buren here from my notes.


12. Buchloh continues to apply this early=pure/late=decadent view to Buren. In a roundtable discussion for the catalogue of the exhibition *Flashback*, an exhibition looking at the art of the 1980s, the following exchange takes place:

*John M Armleder:* … In the seventies, [Buren] is not the same as in the eighties or nineties. If you follow a linear construction, then you have to ask how his work changed.

*Benjamin H. D. Buchloh:* Buren in 1970 is like Picasso in 1912, and in 1980 how Picasso was in 1930. In the 1990s Buren is like Picasso was in the 1950s and 1960s. Do I think Buren is the best artist? Yes, sure. Absolutely, until 1975.


15. This essay initially was occasioned by an invitation to participate in the educational programming in conjunction with *In the Eye of the Storm: Works in Situ by Daniel Buren*, March 25–June 8, 2005, and was further developed for the conference Cultural Studies and Institution, co-organized by the Department of Cultural Studies and the Kwan Fong Cultural Research and Development Program, Lingnan University, Tuen Mun, N.T., Hong Kong, May 26–28, 2006.


38. I refer here to Hal Foster’s *Design and Crime (and Other Diatribes)* (London: Verso, 2002), in which the author asks more than once, and with an answer already firmly in mind: “To what extent has the ‘constructed subject’ of postmodernism become the ‘designed subject’ of consumerism?” (xiv), hoping to finally be rid of contemporary theory’s interest in both subjectivity and design by linking them to the evils of global capitalism.

39. During the restoration of the building that was completed in 2008, “conservators stripped away 11 layers of paint from the landmark building’s exterior and found that it was originally coated with a light brownish-yellow shade.” The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission decided nevertheless to “maintain the same light-gray paint shade it has had since 1992, when a major expansion of the museum by Gwathmey Siegel & Associates Architects was completed.” One dissenter on the Commission, Pablo E. Vengoechea, was quoted as saying, “I’ve heard arguments that the lighter color is less jarring, less controversial and so forth, but I think that that really doesn’t persuade … This building was designed to stand out.” (Sewell Chan, “Pale Gray or Light Yellow? A Ruling on Guggenheim.” *New York Times*, November 21, 2007.

Chapter 10: Who Needs Human Rights?


7. Grossberg, *We Gotta Get Out of This Place*, 385.

8. Grossberg, *We Gotta Get Out of This Place*, 391.

9. Grossberg, *We Gotta Get Out of This Place*, 391.


16. In 2005, the author completed a Master of Laws specializing in human rights at the University of Hong Kong.


19. See Andrea Durbach, Catherine Renshwa and Andrew Byrnes, “‘A Tongue but No Teeth?’: The Emergence of a Regional Human Rights Mechanism in the Asia Pacific Region.” *The Sydney Law Review* 31 (2009). I also thank Meaghan Morris for her help with this idea.


27. See, for example, Emily Grabham, Davina Cooper, Jane Krishnadas, and Didi Herman, eds., *Intersectionality and Beyond: Law, Power and the Politics of Location* (New York: Routledge-Cavendish, 2009).


34. Grossberg, “Does Cultural Studies Have Futures?”, 5.


Chapter 11: From Gatekeepers to Gateways


22. Osbourne, “‘Whoever Speaks of Culture,’” 38, 43. Italics in original.


35. In the region, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Hong Kong, Korea, and China have also embarked on this developmental path. For a list of the current thirty-five countries in 2009 with such cultural planning policies, see Graeme Evans, “Creative Cities, Creative Spaces and Urban Policy.” *Urban Studies* 46(5/6) (2009): 1003–40.


41. Florida’s work focuses on the creative capability of talent by showing how industries are attracted to places that nurture creative people. See Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class* (Melbourne: Basic Books, 2002). Howkins emphasizes...
how creativity can flourish when intellectual property is recognized. He argues that marked economic growth is generated not from the actual products, but from the exploitation of products through distribution and trade. See John Howkins, *The Creative Economy* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2001).


46. This perspective is also promoted by leading scholars such as Stuart Cunningham. See, for example, Stuart Cunningham, Michael Keane and Mark David Ryan, “Finance and Investment in Creative Industries in Developing Countries.” Paper presented at the Asia-Pacific Creative Communities: A Strategy for the 21st Century Senior Expert Symposium, Jodhpur, India, February 22–26, 2005.


57. Television serials in this genre include *Rouge* (2004), a fourteen-episode female action comedy drama produced by Mega Media in partnership with MTV Asia, and starring five actresses from the Philippines, Singapore, the United States, and Vietnam; *Tao Shu: The Warrior Boy* (2004), a fifty-two-episode animation series from Peach Blossom Media, a company renowned for creating the world’s first Asian originated cartoon series *Tomato Twins* for the Nickelodeon channel; and *House of Harmony* (2005), a S$10 million dollar German–Singapore telemovie, with a cast from China and Hong Kong, that was screened on free-to-air German television to an audience of about fifteen million viewers.

58. For a further study of this film, see Yue, “Hawking in the Creative City.”

59. Ling is a Shaw Brothers veteran; Chang’s early career as a Taiwanese teen star of Mandarin romance melodramas in the 1970s received an unprecedented boost after she appeared in New Wave and comedy classics such as *The Secret* (Ann Hui, 1979) and *Aces Go Places 1 and 2* (Eric Tsang, 1982); Q is an Hawaiian-born American-Vietnamese model whose film career was launched with *Gen-Y Cops* (Benny Chan, 2000) and *Naked Weapon* (Ching Siu-tung, 2002); Yan is a diasporic Canadian Chinese food celebrity who is famous for his cooking shows on Hong Kong cuisine.


61. For a further study of this film, see Audrey Yue, “Film-Induced Domestic Tourism in Singapore: The Case of *Krrish*.” In *Domestic Tourism in Asia: Diversity and Divergence*, edited by Shalini Singh (London: Earthscan, 2009).


63. For statistics on these visitations, see Yue, “Film-Induced Tourism in Singapore,” 276–7.


73. Ong, *Neoliberalism as Exception*, 3.


98. Field Reporter, “LIVE from Suntec.”


101. The Rascals Prize is a biennial award for the best research work related to the subject of gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and trans-genders, and Singapore. It commemorates a seminal event in local gay history when police raided and detained all the patrons at gay nightclub Rascals on May 30, 1993. The indignation over the raid galvanized the gay community into action and the country’s leading activist group, People Like Us, was born. See People Like Us, “People Like Us Launches the Rascals Prize.” August 2, 2008. http://www.plu.sg/society/?p=121.
Chapter 12: Culture, Institution, Conduct


18. See, for an exceptionally alert navigation of this difficult territory, Chris Healy, Forgetting Aborigines (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2008).


20. There is an extensive literature here, but for an authoritative distillation of its implications, see Bruno Latour, Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).


27. See Stuart Hall, “Unsettling ‘The Heritage’: Re-Imagining the Post-Nation.” In Whose Heritage? The Impact of Cultural Diversity on Britain’s Living Heritage (London: Arts Council of England, 1999); and Tony Bennett, “Culture and


32. Notwithstanding his criticisms of Cultural Studies, Eagleton has never unsubscribed from this aspect of its formation. See, for example, his discussion of the common culture in his The Idea of Culture (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000).


35. For a fuller elaboration of this position, see the introduction to Material Powers: Cultural Studies, History and the Material Turn, edited by Tony Bennett and Patrick Joyce (London: Routledge, 2010).
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