

Fiona Cameron

## **Governing a Complex Climate Change: Liquid Governmentalities and the Climate Crisis**

Research on climate change governance across the humanities and social sciences is based on the deconstruction and critique of governance projects and the rationalities that drive them, using Foucauldian and post-Foucauldian governmentality concepts for analysis. The foci for analysis include Foucault's "biopolitics" (techniques and strategies used to manage the habits and lifestyles of humans as species bodies and populations); 'advanced liberal or neoliberal government' (neoliberal governmental strategies, market mechanisms and the entrepreneurial individual) (Foucault 1991, 2008; Oels 2005); plus various post-Foucauldian iterations (Hajer, 1995, 2010, ecological modernisation; Luke, 1999, green governmentality; Bäckstrand and Lövbrand, 2007 and civic environmentalism; Lövbrand, Stripple and Wiman, 2008, Earth system science). The dominant and performed realities of climate change governance and the analyses of strategies across a range of sectors through a governmentality frame formulate and focus on climate change as mitigation within specific and limiting governmental optics of science, technology, the market and social movements. While governmentality theory has been re-worked many times by cultural theorists such as Nikolas Rose (2008) and Larner and Walters (2004) in line with observed neoliberal, globalizing forces, approaches remain frames for deconstructive critique.

Cultural institutions and museums in particular have been framed within, and as a Foucauldian governmental apparatus following cultural theorist Tony Bennett's seminal work, *The Birth of the Museum* in 1995. When considered and analyzed within this frame and in climate change governance, the activities of museums and science centers are seen as primarily disciplinary, as sites for governing and managing citizens' habits and actions, and places for circulating normative views around nature, culture, technology, progress and the market as a solution (Cameron 2010).

In the context of the dramatic global flows of climate change, science and culture and where existing governmentality theories based on rigid, fixed and obsolete structures of analysis are increasingly problematic, new knowledge practices are required to comprehend and to formulate culturally intelligent ways to frame climate change governance options (Cameron 2010). Similarly cultural institutions are implicated in the formation, circulation and processes of governance. Here the idea of the institution is similarly framed also requiring a new ontology for the analysis and consideration of the agency (current and potential) of cultural institutions (i.e. museums and science centres) within governance processes (Cameron 2011).

The aim of this fellowship is to complete two books. The first is the monograph, *Liquid governmentalities and the climate crisis* on new 'governmentality' knowledge practices drawing on empirical research on energy (coal-fired electricity generation and the shift to a low carbon economy in Australia) and climate justice (the 'disappearing islands' - Tuvalu and Kiribati, and the notion of 'global civics' and trans-national communities of shared risk.). The second book project is an edited collection, *Climate Change, Museum Futures* (under consideration with Routledge - Taylor and Francis)

These book projects are outputs of the Australian Research Council international linkage research project, *Hot Science Global Citizens: The agency of the museum sector in*

*climate change interventions* for which I am the Chief Investigator. Partners on this project are the Centre for Cultural Research, University of Western Sydney; University of Melbourne, School of Earth Sciences; University of Leicester, School of Museum Studies UK; Museum Victoria, Melbourne; Powerhouse Museum, Sydney; Australian Museum, Sydney; Questacon: the National Science and Technology Centre, Canberra and the Liberty Science Center, New York, USA.

Link: <http://www.hotscienceglobalcitizens.net/>