

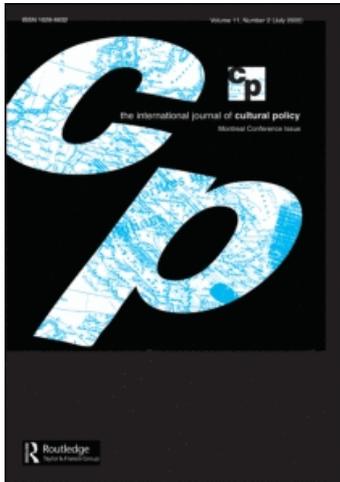
This article was downloaded by: [De Montfort University]

On: 19 October 2009

Access details: Access Details: [subscription number 769788345]

Publisher Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



International Journal of Cultural Policy

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title-content=t713639985>

COMMODIFICATION AND INSTRUMENTALITY IN CULTURAL POLICY

Clive Gray ^a

^a Department of Public Policy, De Montfort University, Leicester, UK

Online Publication Date: 01 May 2007

To cite this Article Gray, Clive(2007)'COMMODIFICATION AND INSTRUMENTALITY IN CULTURAL POLICY',International Journal of Cultural Policy,13:2,203 — 215

To link to this Article: DOI: 10.1080/10286630701342899

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10286630701342899>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Full terms and conditions of use: <http://www.informaworld.com/terms-and-conditions-of-access.pdf>

This article may be used for research, teaching and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, re-distribution, re-selling, loan or sub-licensing, systematic supply or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The accuracy of any instructions, formulae and drug doses should be independently verified with primary sources. The publisher shall not be liable for any loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

COMMODIFICATION AND INSTRUMENTALITY IN CULTURAL POLICY

Clive Gray

Cultural policy has been changing in similar ways across many countries in recent years, with these changes placing an increasing emphasis upon the use of "culture", and particularly the "arts", as instrumental tools for the attainment of non-cultural, non-arts, goals and objectives. It is argued that this process is closely related to a broader set of societal changes – specifically the establishment and acceptance of a commodified conception of public policy – and that the future shape of cultural policy cannot be fully understood without reference to these changes. The fact that the precise nature of both the cultural policy and societal changes that are taking place differ considerably between nation-states implies that arguments concerning the "globalisation" of culture and cultural policy require reformulation to take into account the specific variations that are generated by governmental choices.

KEYWORDS commodification; instrumental policy; globalisation; political choice

Introduction

Politics in a literary work are a pistol shot in the middle of a concert, a crude affair though one impossible to ignore. We are about to speak of ugly matters. (Stendhal, *The Charterhouse of Parma*)

The increasing emphasis that has been placed upon the "need" for arts and cultural policies to demonstrate that they generate a benefit over and above the aesthetic, has become a major development within political systems. The search for at least alternative, if not actually superior, justifications for the creation of cultural and artistic policies has led to an increasing "attachment" (Gray 2002) of arts and cultural policies to other sets of policy concerns in an instrumental fashion. This instrumentalisation of arts and cultural policies has a clear and specific set of consequences for both their design and for the intentions that underlie them. These, in turn, are associated with alternative forms of service delivery to those that have been commonly used in the past, as well as with different connections between states and their citizens.

The development of this tendency in arts and cultural policies is part of a wider set of political, social and economic changes that have been taking place over a period of time stretching back to the late 1970s/early 1980s. These changes effectively led to a commodification of public policy through the creation of the ideological conditions within which exchange-value becomes increasingly favoured over use-value in the creation, implementation and evaluation of policies (Gray 2000). This commodifying process occurs within the specific context of each political system, leading to the generation of a variety of responses

to common underlying developments. The process by which commodification leads to a seemingly inexorable instrumentalisation of arts and cultural policies requires examination to identify both the causal mechanisms through which it takes place and the reasons for the creation of differential responses between nation-states.

It is not the intention in this paper to deal in detail with specific arguments either for, or against, the instrumentalisation of cultural and arts policies (see, for example, McCarthy *et al.* 2004 on this subject). Instead the intention is to identify the processes by which instrumentality has become an important feature of these policies in recent years, and to explain why this shift in policy emphasis has taken place.

Forms of Cultural Policy

Before undertaking this investigation it is important to clarify the extent to which instrumentality is actually a new phenomenon within these sectors. If the claim that instrumentality is a consequence of relatively recent developments in the frameworks within which governments are operating is to hold true then there needs to be some basis upon which it can rest.

Pick (1988, pp. 113–128) identified a range of motives behind governmental involvement with arts and cultural policies, giving rise to the creation of distinct policy forms for each basic motive. These motives, ranging from the promotion of “national glory” (p. 114), through to the maintenance of “order and control” (pp. 127–128), are marked by the primacy that is attached to them as arts and cultural policies in the first place. The underlying motives that are employed are largely a secondary concern compared with the specific content of arts and cultural policies *per se*. This effectively differentiates them from instrumental cultural and arts policies which are intended, *ab initio*, “to use cultural venues and cultural investments as a means or instrument to attain goals in other than cultural areas” (Vestheim 1994, p. 65). The central importance that is attached to the cultural and artistic content of policies provides Pick with a stick to beat governments with for involving themselves in areas where, it is argued, they do not rightfully belong: either for reasons of irrelevance (pp. 115, 122), or that arts and cultural policies cannot achieve what governments want, or that they achieve it at an irresponsible cost (p. 114), especially as they are intended to achieve cultural and artistic objectives before any others. Any spill-over into other policy intentions is a more-or-less unintended consequence of this intention, and the idea that arts and cultural policies can be deliberately utilised for instrumental ends is seen as being intrinsically flawed, either because they are not intended for these ends (pp. 123–127) or because states cannot control what artists and cultural activists will do in practice (p. 120), with this independence making political control otiose. (An almost identical argument is advanced in Thatcher 1993, p. 632, indicating that it had a wider acceptance, especially amongst political leaders, than is, perhaps, commonly perceived.)

Bennett (1995) has similarly discussed the justifications that have been utilised for supporting state involvement with the arts in the British context, identifying how the arts could contribute to such themes as “national prestige” (pp. 204–205) or “the welfare state” (pp. 211–213). The collapse of these justifications, dating from the 1970s, is seen to have opened the way for the increasingly common view of the arts as simply another policy arena that must be subsumed to the wider, instrumental, interests of governments (such views have a long, if contested, history within Britain – see Minihan 1977). The focus within this shift is away from the role of arts and cultural policies within their own sectoral terms and towards their location within an instrumental framework.

These discussions of the bases upon which governments can justify the existence of cultural policies are significant in so far as they implicitly recognise that policies can be seen to have a wider set of secondary effects than simply those affecting arts and culture. It is the way in which these effects are utilised that would appear to have the greatest impact on how arts and cultural policies are actually used by governments. In this respect the intention that lies behind the policies that are pursued becomes a central feature of how they are to be understood. It also implies that there is always an element of instrumentality in public policies (they are, after all, designed to achieve *something*): what is important is the form of this instrumentality.

The current concern with the use of arts and cultural policies for non-arts and cultural reasons (purely "instrumental" policy in Vestheim's (1994, p. 65) terms) is effectively a concern about changing governmental attitudes towards, and uses of, cultural and artistic resources within society. The changing nature of the justifications that have been given for governmental action within these areas, with stresses upon the role of culture and the arts in terms of, for example, community redevelopment (Stanziola 1999) and urban regeneration (Evans & Shaw 2004) has certainly become more common in many different political systems in recent years (see Bianchini *et al.* 1996, p. 299; Protherough & Pick 2002, ch. 5; Caust 2003, p. 52) and would seem to indicate that a shift is in the process of taking place from the cultural and artistic component of policies towards the secondary, purely instrumental, aims that can be associated with them. What is significant is not necessarily that this instrumentalisation of arts and cultural policies is taking place – given that an element of this, *pace* Pick (1988) and Bennett (1995), has always been present in these sectors – but, rather, the direction in which it is taking them.

Volkerling (1996) and Gray (2000) both argue that changes in the way in which states intervene in cultural and arts policies are a consequence of other developments that are taking place within societies, shifting the focus of attention away from the content of these policies themselves towards the context within which they exist: "cultural policy does not operate in splendid isolation from broader pressures within society" (Gray 1996, p. 218). Both argue that cultural and arts policies are the result of conscious choices that are made by political actors, either to garner support from particular class fractions (Volkerling 1996) or in response to a perceived need to manage the changing, and competing, pressures arising from broader re-structurings within societies (Gray 2000). In each case, however, there is an expectation that there will be shifts in the policy forms that state (and non-state) actors will produce and pursue in response to the changes that confront them. Equally, the development of instrumental cultural policies in Scandinavia has been explicitly seen as arising from "the changed economic conditions and the economically harder times of the 1980s" (Vestheim 1994, p. 64). This argument asserts that significant changes in cultural policies are clearly related to broader changes within societies themselves. It has not, however, demonstrated that the development of "pure" forms of policy instrumentalism is particularly new, nor that it is associated with any sets of societal changes in particular, even if both are implied.

Instrumental Policy in Culture and the Arts

Culture was altogether unknown territory for most of the senators. The ... members of the board were proud of the fact that since their childhood they had never opened a book. (Klaus Mann, *Mephisto* (1983, p. 244))

Examples of the development and increasing use of instrumental forms of cultural and arts policies can be found in many countries. Indeed, the prevalence of this policy form has led to the British Minister with responsibility for the sector to argue that “politicians have enough reasons to support culture on its own merits to stop apologising for it by speaking only of it in terms of other agendas” (Jowell 2004, p. 17). The United Nations’ *Declaration on Cultural Diversity* (2001, Article 8, emphasis added) further argues that cultural “goods and services ... *must not* be treated as mere commodities or consumer goods”, implying that such an approach, valuing cultural products for their economic status rather than for anything else, already exists and should be resisted.

The explanations that have been given for this development have ranged from a simple “privatisation” argument (Wu 2002) whereby arts and cultural policies have increasingly had to generate their operating funds from their own, and private sector, sources, rather than rely on the state (and consequently have to demonstrate their utility for donors in more than cultural and artistic terms, such as for reasons of prestige or marketing), to a more complex structural argument (Gray 2002) in which the lack of political interest and power associated with the sector, particularly at the local level, leads to the development of policy “attachment” strategies whereby funding for the sector can be gained by demonstrating the role that it can play in the fulfilment of the goals of other policy sectors. In this case an instrumentalisation of arts and cultural policy is the consequence of a conscious strategy pursued by policy makers to generate the support that is needed for them to pursue their own objectives, and the development of instrumental forms of policy is a side-effect of the intention to produce “effective” (however this may be defined, and whoever it is being defined by) cultural and arts policies in the first place.

The development of this “attachment” strategy is a clear consequence of the choices that are made by political actors in the conditions of structural weakness that are associated with the cultural and arts sectors, but the increasing use of it only makes sense within a context where the justifications for policy have themselves shifted (see also Craik 2005 on this point). The increasing determination of governments to demand particular forms of justification for continuing to spend money on arts and cultural policies indicates that views about these policies *have* changed. The dominant forms of justification that are increasingly demanded by governments are, firstly, economic and, secondly, social in orientation. Thus governments have increasingly emphasised the role of cultural and artistic resources as contributors towards subjects as diverse as the encouragement of economic growth (dating back in Britain, for example, to the later-1970s; Arts Council of Great Britain 1977), reduction of public debt (Benedikter 2004), urban regeneration (Bailey *et al.* 2004), the remedying of social exclusion (Belfiore 2002), and the creation of social benefits from personal development to community empowerment (Matarasso 1997) – regardless of the evidential basis for these.

The ultimate consequence of this reference to non-arts and non-cultural requirements has been seen in England where the development of cultural strategies by local authorities required them to take into account

at least five different central government departments, four separate task forces, and ten “arm’s-length” “sponsored agencies”, as well as at least ten statutory plans and five non-statutory ones, alongside the local authority’s own corporate strategy, best value plan, [and] individual service strategies and plans, and more or less anything else up to and including the planning kitchen sink. (Gray 2004, p. 40)

While this may simply be indicative of the conception that “culture” relates to everything that organisations, whether public or private, may do (see Stevenson 2004 for criticism of this position), it also indicates that there is a burden of expectation that cultural policies should provide a host of solutions to problems that are originally economic, social, political or ideological (or some combination of these). Whether this adds a burden that cultural policies are simply unable to carry is open to debate, but shifting the focus away from the “cultural” component of such policies and viewing them as instrumental means to non-cultural ends is likely to become an increasing concern for policy makers and makes an understanding of why this instrumentalisation of cultural policy has taken place of some significance.

A policy-centric view of cultural policy would see the policies that are created within a sector as only ever arising from the internal concerns of that sector itself, with any other policy outcomes being either a result of unanticipated consequences (see Bevir & Rhodes 2003, ch. 7); the result of inter-sectoral power struggles (thus explaining the central role of national finance ministries; Denters & Rose 2005, *passim*); or the outcome of some process of policy learning between policy sectors (see Craik *et al.* 2003, p. 29: “globally, the direction of policy, we have argued, is influenced by trends in other sectors”). The first two such views largely downplay the extent to which developments within policy sectors can be seen as the result of not only endogenous factors, but also as arising from non-sectorally based, systemic, factors that transcend individual sectors.

The consequence of accepting such a view of the motors of policy change would be that the sources for the development of instrumental forms within the cultural and arts policy sectors must be anticipated to be located within both these sectors themselves *and* within the meta-sectoral, structural, level as well. The precise factors that give rise to policy change will depend upon the circumstances that provide the context for existing forms of policy, and how actors respond (or feel forced to respond) to the pressures arising from both endogenous and exogenous factors. This implies that the policies that are produced develop from political choices that are made by actors within circumscribed structural limits.

The Commodification of Policy

There are a number of potential explanations for the transformation of arts and cultural policies in recent years. Globalisation, for example, has been identified as being a generic account of what has been affecting many policy areas, including that of cultural policy (Canclini 2000; Dewey 2004; McGuigan 2004, pp. 125–129; 2005), although the variations in how states react to globalising pressures (see, in terms of cultural policies, Craik *et al.* 2003; in broader, systemic, terms see Lawson 2003) cast doubts on such generalised explanatory models that have yet to develop a coherent causal account of the linkages that exist between the macro and the micro levels.

The commodification thesis (Gray 2000, ch. 1) provides an alternative basis for understanding how and why instrumental policy forms have become increasingly common in recent years. In this model the major motor for change within policy systems is associated with a shift in conceptions of value from use-value to exchange-value. This is not intended to imply that there is an absolute increase in the strict economic commodification of goods and services (see Williams 2005), rather that the conceptualisation and consequent policy development of the provision of goods and services within the public sector has undergone

an ideological re-orientation that connects policy and programme shifts to a larger pattern of change that is operating at the societal level.

Neither is this argument concerned with questions of the specific “value” of the arts and cultural policy: these arguments, as with those of Pick (1988) that were discussed earlier, are largely concerned with the ways in which these policies can be assessed in terms of their intrinsic merits (see Holden 2006). In the context of the commodification argument, “value” is associated with Marxian notions of value-form (see, in an introductory form, Howard & King 1985, pp. 44–48) and, in particular, the shift from intrinsic notions of use to extrinsic notions of exchange. In effect, goods and services are re-defined in terms of how they are to be understood, their social role is re-designed, and the management of them requires change for the most efficient and effective realisation of their exchange status.

This larger pattern of change originated in the *perceived* failure, especially amongst political oligarchies, of the post-Second World War welfare state consensus in many western societies during the economic turmoil of the 1970s. This “failure” gave rise to the conditions where not only the underlying models of state economic management were seen to require reform, but so also were the relationships between states and their citizens, and the administrative structures that existed to deliver state services. The point of these changes was to generate a new settlement between the competing demands of economic viability and social consensus within capitalist systems (Gray 2000, pp. 16–18). The changes that have been introduced, particularly since the mid-1980s, have had major impacts on the financial systems that are utilised within the public sector; the organisational structures that have responsibility for the delivery of public goods and services; the managerial ideologies that are employed to control public sector organisations; and the overall ideological structures that give sense and meaning to what is occurring within both the public sector as a whole and within specific policy areas (Gray 2000, pp. 16–19).

Many specific examples from the fields of arts and cultural policy to illustrate each of these areas can be found: the changing financial structures for culture for the old East Germany as a consequence of German re-unification (Wolf-Csanady, 1999); the re-structurings of state organisations with responsibilities for culture in Britain (Gray 2000) and Germany (Gray & Hugoson 2004); the use of “new public management” (Belfiore 2004) nostrums and the political rhetoric of “the third way” (Stevenson 2004) in cultural organisations; and the increasing emphasis on economic justifications for cultural and arts policies that is associated with perceptions of the “privatisation” of these sectors (Lewis 1990; Wu 2002). All of these disparate changes are understood within the commodification thesis as being partial responses to the systemic level changes that are occurring within political systems as political actors seek for workable solutions to perceived economic, social, political and ideological problems.

These searches for viable solutions within policy systems will be influenced by both endogenous and exogenous factors that are specifically related to each policy sector, and similarities between nation-states in terms of the changes that occur within them will be general rather than specific in nature. The variability between nation-states in terms of their starting positions when responding to perceived necessities for change will mean that exact duplication of effect as a consequence of undertaking similar types of reform is unlikely to occur. Thus, French reforms will be taking place within a particular general framework of ideas and assumptions about the role of the state, as well as a specific sectoral framework concerning the provision of cultural and artistic policies (Eling 1999; Looseley 2003). These will differ from those in Germany (Burns & van der Will 2003), just as much as they will differ

from those in Singapore (Lee 2004), Japan (Zemans *et al.* 1999, ch. 2) or the United States (Alexander & Rueschemeyer 2005, ch. 2). The result of this is that reform processes will lead to distinctly different outcomes between nation-states.

The specificity of effect in each nation-state will lead to different emphases between political systems in terms of which parts of the major areas of change (financial systems, organisational structures, managerial approach, and ideological framework) will be tackled, when they will be tackled, and the shape of reform that will be adopted. These differences will depend upon the particular circumstances that each nation finds itself to be (or, more importantly, *perceives* itself to be) confronting. The impetus to reform financial and organisational systems within Germany, for example, cannot be understood without reference to the national reunification process; in Britain, on the other hand, the changes that have been taking place in the arts have to be located in the context of the ideologies that central governments have been espousing, and the core values that are maintained by the dominant oligarchies that exist within that sector (Gray 2000). Likewise, the attempts to “modernise” management systems in the public sectors of different countries have given rise to quite distinct local variations that have developed out of national circumstances and particularities (see, for example, Capano 2003 on Italy; and Hendriks & Tops 2003 on The Netherlands).

At the same time that these specific effects are developing there is also a range of generalised impacts (created through the larger processes of systemic change) that have little to do, directly, with specific policy sectors but which have an impact on them. An example of this would be the economic pressures that the French state (and, particularly, its social security system) is currently in the process of reacting to. Whilst these economic pressures are sometimes portrayed in parts of the French media (and by some French politicians) as being created by some form of Anglo-American economic imperialism, there is also the view that factors such as rising unemployment and an ageing population have placed increasing pressure on the social security system, and it is these endogenous, rather than exogenous factors, that have led to pressures to contain costs (see Kilkey 2004). One consequence of such pressures has been to generate demands for changes to the French taxation and social security systems that would, as a side-effect, affect the benefit rights of workers within the cultural and arts sectors. This unintended consequence has, potentially, large-scale implications for the delivery of arts and cultural policies in France even though it has its roots outside of these sectors altogether. The similar pressures that surround the social security and taxation systems of most other advanced economies (the general elections in both Japan and Germany in 2005, for example, were accompanied by similar arguments about financial reform) have the potential to generate further unintended consequences for the cultural and arts sectors.

Clearly this makes any attempt to present a simple model of change within policy sectors difficult, but it does indicate that within the parameters of national variability it is possible to identify a combination of general and specific factors that lead to seeming international similarities. In the case of the development of instrumental forms of policy for the arts and cultural policy this can be achieved through an investigation of systemic and structural features that affect these sectors in particular. Within this a key area of concern is why governments have increasingly become attached to the idea that arts and cultural policies need to justify their existing levels of state support not through reference to the artistic or cultural benefits that they produce but, instead, to their contribution to other policy concerns altogether.

Commodification and Instrumentality

It might have been a borough council, assembled out of duty, for a discussion of something not specially earth-shaking, such as a proposal for a subsidy to the civic theatre. (C. P. Snow, *Corridors of Power* (2000, p. 332))

The commodification thesis proposes that a prime reason for this change in governmental perception is that the ideological shift amongst political actors from a concern with use-value towards exchange-value serves to re-focus the attention of policy makers away from the internal detail of policy itself and towards the manner in which policy as a whole contributes towards commodified forms of exchange relationships and social behaviours. The instrumentalisation of policy embodies this ideological change by ensuring that considerations that are external to the content of the policy sector itself receive much greater attention than had previously been the case, and become much more central to the consideration of what public policies are meant to achieve. This necessarily involves a shift in the focus of policy towards concerns that would more traditionally have been considered to be largely, if not utterly, irrelevant to the functional requirements of the sector: thus, the opening of Tate Liverpool in 1988 was largely discussed in terms of urban regeneration and social cohesion and it took some time before more traditional concerns of the museum system, such as curatorship, began to be considered for their significance in the context of this development (Lorente 1996, p. 3).

The systemic nature of this commodification has not taken place in a policy vacuum however. The structural weaknesses of cultural and arts policies – limited political interest amongst the majority of policy makers and the general public, and both limited expenditures by governments on these sectors and a lack of political significance in comparison with other policy areas (e.g. taxation, education or defence) (the results of these are apparent in the British context – see Gray 2002, 2006; some preliminary international comparison can be found in Gray 2000, ch. 8) – serve to make these policy sectors ripe for the development of instrumental policies. If sectoral development, or survival in the worst case, depends upon the extent to which policy areas can demonstrate their real contribution to a range of other concerns that are perceived to be of greater political, social or economic significance to policy-makers, then it is not surprising that there will be a shift in policy emphasis towards these new requirements, particularly if the dominant actors within the policy sectors in question do not have the range of political and structural supports that would enable them to withstand such external pressures in the first place.

A movement towards the commodification of public policies has clear implications for the structure and content of such policies, as well as for the processes by which they are made (Gray 2000, pp. 20–33; see also Freedman 2003 on the significance of local level negotiations for the liberalisation of trade in the audio-visual sector). In terms of instrumentality it is the content of policy that is of most significance, and it is predicted that there will be an increasing emphasis on the benefits of public policies for individual “consumers” at the expense of the broader social collectivity, leading to the development of a fragmented set of policies that are increasingly focused on the demands and interests of individuals. (An example of such an approach would be the changes in the Dutch *Beelende Kunstenaars-Regeling*, which has increasingly shifted the focus of arts policy attention away from a form of generalised social welfare support and towards issues of individual artistic quality: see Rengers & Plug 2001: see also Alexander & Rueschemeyer 2005, p. 122, on similar changes in Norwegian

policy). Such a shift in focus requires both organisational and managerial re-structurings to allow change to become effective.

Secondly, and arising from this individualisation of policy, public policies can be predicted to become both more selective (in terms of their intended audiences) and more directed (in terms of their intended impact). In both cases there arises the need to gather new forms of management information that will allow for the effective assessment of whether policy is achieving its intended ends, with the introduction of ideas from the “new public management” being a clear example of this (Belfiore 2004).

Thirdly, as a consequence of the shift from use-value to exchange-value, the financial mechanisms that are involved in funding policies are predicted to undergo changes, both to avoid the perceived problems of the public financing of policies (not only arts and cultural policies, but *all* policies), and to open the possibilities for new, non-state, funding mechanisms altogether. In this respect the case of the United States – which has consistently relied heavily on the financial support of individuals and private sector companies rather than the state – is potentially an informative example, particularly in the context of the seeming increase in the use of the arts for instrumental, economic development, ends at the local level within individual states themselves (see Strom 2003).

The structural weaknesses of arts and cultural policies means that the responses that are created to meet these new, commodifying, pressures for change require a major shift in direction – a far greater one than will be evident in policy sectors that are more greatly commodified already. To demonstrate that there is a clear individual benefit from the provision of arts and cultural policies requires not only the development of new assessment and evaluation criteria (Cowling 2004) but also a shift in the focus of such policies away from some generalised conception of “the public good” and towards an individualised conception of the content and nature of public policy (Vestheim 1994, pp. 62–63, 67). In practice this coincides with a range of other public policies that states are already pursuing in other sectors, and re-directs the attention of policy makers towards arenas that would not necessarily have been previously perceived as an appropriate location for arts and cultural policies to be attached to. To justify such attachment, cultural and arts policy makers need to demonstrate that there is a clear benefit to be gained not only for their own policy sector but also for the sectors to which they are attaching themselves. Given that these other policy areas (such as urban development and re-development or social cohesion and inclusion) generally have the structural strengths that the arts and cultural policy sectors normally lack, particularly in terms of political salience and support, it is not surprising to find them in a dominant position in policy terms, with arts and cultural policies adopting a secondary, contributory, position in comparison with them.

The instrumentalisation of cultural and arts policies, therefore, develops from a combination of the endogenous weaknesses of these policy sectors in comparison with others, and the exogenous shifts in policy expectations that have arisen from the commodification of public policy. The development of a new policy environment as a consequence of the shift towards more commodified forms of policy creates the structural conditions within which policy makers must operate. Within these, primarily ideological, constraints, however, policy makers are free to choose whichever strategies and tactics are the most appropriate for the particular contexts within which they are located. The development of instrumentalised forms of cultural and artistic policy is therefore not something that has been inevitable: it is, instead, a particular choice that has been made within the circumstances that policy makers have found themselves.

Conclusions

Thousands have lived without love, not one without water. (W. H. Auden, *First Things First* (1979, p. 236))

The variations that exist between the cultural and arts policies that are present within differing political systems implies that there is no single explanation that can account for policy choice in all cases: the commodification thesis predicts that there will be international policy variation not only in terms of outcome but also in terms of process. The example of the instrumentalisation of cultural and arts policies across nation-states demonstrates that such variation is explicable through the differences in endogenous (particularly the structural context surrounding these sectors) and exogenous variables (particularly the shifts in ideological perception that have taken place) between systems. As such it is important that analyses of developments within these sectors take into account not only the fine detail of policy processes at national, regional and local levels, but also examine the structural context within which they are located. Either of these levels of analysis can provide valuable information about the politics of arts and cultural policies but it is only by combining the two that effective explanations of national variations in policy choice are likely to be developed.

The development of instrumental approaches to policy development in the arts and cultural policy sectors depends upon a combination of not only ideological changes but also the structural weaknesses of these policy sectors. These weaknesses provide a suitable context for the introduction of new approaches to policy formation and implementation for arts and culture as they effectively make policy flexibility an essential part of ensuring their political survival. Given the increasing emphasis on exchange-value as a consequence of the developing commodification of public policy, this flexibility is unlikely, however, to generate more than some slight extra room for manoeuvre for policy makers who believe that the arts and culture are not simply reducible to questions of economic value, particularly when confronted with policy makers who think that they can, and should, be so treated. The results of developing an instrumental approach to arts and cultural policies have serious implications both for what is produced and how it is produced in these sectors: understanding why and how this is occurring is only the first step towards a full analysis of the consequences of these changes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks to Vivien Lowndes, Paola Merli and Cecile Doustaly and two anonymous referees for their comments on earlier versions of this paper, and to Eleanora Belfiore and Jennifer Craik for useful references. Thanks also to all those who asked questions or otherwise commented on the paper at the ICCPR conference in Vienna. Responsibility for any failings in the paper remains with me.

REFERENCES

- ALEXANDER, V. & RUESCHEMEYER, M. (2005) *Art and the State: The Visual Arts in Comparative Perspective*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke.
- ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN (1977) *Value for Money: Thirty-Second Annual Report*, Arts Council of Great Britain, London.

- AUDEN, W. H. (1979) 'First things first', in *Selected Poems*, Faber, London.
- BAILEY, C., MILES, S. & STARK, P. (2004) 'Culture-led urban regeneration and the revitalisation of identities in Newcastle, Gateshead and the North East of England', *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 10, pp. 47–65.
- BELFIORE, E. (2002) 'Art as a means of alleviating social exclusion: Does it really work? A critique of instrumental cultural policies and social impact studies in the UK', *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 8, pp. 91–106.
- BELFIORE, E. (2004) 'Auditing culture: The subsidised cultural sector in the new public management', *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 10, pp. 183–202.
- BENEDIKTER, R. (2004) 'Privatisation of Italian cultural heritage', *International Journal of Cultural Heritage*, vol. 10, pp. 369–389.
- BENNETT, O. (1995) 'Cultural policy in the United Kingdom: Collapsing rationales and the end of a tradition', *European Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 1, pp. 199–216.
- BEVIR, M. & RHODES, R. (2003) *Interpreting British Governance*, Routledge, London.
- BIANCHINI, F., TORRIGIANI, M. & CERE, R. (1996) 'Cultural policy', in *Italian Cultural Studies*, ed. D. Forgacs & R. Lumley, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp. 291–308.
- BURNS, R. & VAN DER WILL, W. (2003) 'German cultural policy: An overview', *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 9, pp. 133–152.
- CANCLINI, N. (2000) 'Cultural policy options in the context of globalization', in *The Politics of Culture*, ed. G. Bradford, M. Gary, & G. Wallach, New Press, New York, pp. 302–326.
- CAPANO, G. (2003) 'Administrative traditions and policy change: When policy paradigms matter, the case of Italian administrative reform during the 1990s', *Public Administration*, vol. 81, pp. 781–801.
- CAUST, J. (2003) 'Putting the "art" back into arts policy making: How arts policy has been 'captured' by the economists and the marketers', *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 9, pp. 51–63.
- COWLING, J. (ed.) (2004) *For Art's Sake?: Society and the Arts in the 21st Century*, Institute for Public Policy Research, London.
- CRAIK, J. (2005) 'Dilemmas in policy support for the arts and cultural sector', *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, vol. 64, no. 4, pp. 6–19.
- CRAIK, J., MCALLISTER, L. & DAVIS, G. (2003) 'Paradoxes and contradictions in government approaches to contemporary cultural policy: An Australian perspective', *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 9, pp. 17–33.
- DENTERS, B. & ROSE, L. (eds) (2005) *Comparing Local Governance*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke.
- DEWEY, P. (2004) 'From arts management to cultural administration', *International Journal of Arts Management*, vol. 6, no. 3, pp. 13–22.
- ELING, K. (1999) *The Politics of Cultural Policy in France*, Macmillan, Basingstoke.
- EVANS, G. & SHAW, P. (2004) *The Contribution of Culture to Regeneration in the UK: A Review of the Evidence*, London Metropolitan University, London.
- FREEDMAN, D. (2003) 'Cultural policy making in the free trade era: An evaluation of the impact of current world trade organisation negotiations on audio-visual industries', *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 9, pp. 285–298.
- GRAY, C. (1996) 'Comparing cultural policy: A reformulation', *European Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 2, p. 213–222.
- GRAY, C. (2000) *The Politics of the Arts in Britain*, Macmillan, Basingstoke.
- GRAY, C. (2002) 'Local government and the arts', *Local Government Studies*, vol. 28, no. 1, pp. 77–90.

- GRAY, C. (2004) 'Joining-up or tagging on? The arts, cultural planning and the view from below', *Public Policy and Administration*, vol. 19, no. 2, pp. 38–49.
- GRAY, C. (2006) 'Managing the unmanageable: The politics of cultural planning', *Public Policy and Administration*, vol. 21, no. 2, pp. 101–113.
- GRAY, C. & HUGOSON, R. (2004) 'Culture', in *Handbook of Public Policy in Europe*, ed. H. Compston, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, pp. 365–372.
- HENDRIKS, F. & TOPS, P. (2003) 'Local management reforms in the Netherlands: Fads, fashions and winds of change', *Public Administration*, vol. 81, pp. 301–323.
- HOLDEN, J. (2006) *Cultural Value and the Crisis of Legitimacy*, Demos, London.
- HOWARD, M. & KING, J. (1985) *The Political Economy of Marx*, 2nd edn, Longman, Harlow.
- JOWELL, T. (2004) *Government and the Value of Culture*, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, London.
- KILKEY, M. (2004) 'Social security', in *Handbook of Public Policy in Europe*, ed. H. Compston, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, pp. 290–300.
- LAWSON, L. (2003) 'Globalisation and the African State', *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, vol. 41, pp. 37–58.
- LEE, T. (2004) 'Creative shifts and directions: Cultural policy in Singapore', *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 10, pp. 281–299.
- LEWIS, J. (1990) *Art, Culture and Enterprise*, Routledge, London.
- LOOSELEY, D. (2003) 'Back to the future: Rethinking French cultural policy, 1997–2002', *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 9, pp. 227–234.
- LORENTE, P. (1996) 'Introduction' in *The Role of Museums and the Arts in the Urban Regeneration of Liverpool*, ed. P. Lorente, Centre for Urban History, Leicester University, Leicester, pp. 1–6.
- MANN, K. (1983) *Mephisto*, Penguin, New York.
- MATARASSO, F. (1997) *Use or Ornament? The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts*, Comedia, Stroud.
- MCCARTHY, K., HENEGHAN ONDAATJE, E., ZAKARAS, L. & BROOKS, A. (2004) *Gifts of the Muse: Reframing the Debate about the Benefits of the Arts*, RAND, Santa Monica.
- MCGUIGAN, J. (2004) *Rethinking Cultural Policy*, Open University Press, Maidenhead.
- MCGUIGAN, J. (2005) 'Neo-liberalism, culture and policy', *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 11, pp. 229–241.
- MINIHAN, J. (1977) *The Nationalization of Culture*, Hamish Hamilton, London.
- PICK, J. (1988) *The Arts in a State*, Bristol Classical Press, London.
- PROTHEROUGH, R. & PICK, J. (2002) *Managing Britannia*, Brynmill Press, Harleston.
- RENGERS, M. & PLUG, E. (2001) 'Private or public? How Dutch visual artists choose between working for the market and the government', *Journal of Cultural Economics*, vol. 25, no. 1, pp. 1–20.
- SNOW, C. P. (2000) *The Corridors of Power*, House of Stratus, Thirsk.
- STANZIOLA, J. (1999) *Arts, Government and Community Revitalization*, Ashgate, Aldershot.
- STEVENSON, D. (2004) "'Civic gold rush": Cultural planning and the politics of the third way', *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 10, pp. 119–131.
- STROM, E. (2003) 'Cultural policy as development policy: Evidence from the United States', *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 9, pp. 247–263.
- THATCHER, M. (1993) *Margaret Thatcher: The Downing Street Years*, Harper Collins, London.
- UNITED NATIONS (2001) *UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity*, UNESCO, Paris.
- VESTHEIM, G. (1994) 'Instrumental cultural policy in Scandinavian countries: A critical historical perspective', *European Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 1, pp. 57–71.

- VOLKERLING, M. (1996) 'Deconstructing the difference-engine: A theory of cultural policy', *European Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 2, pp. 189–212.
- WILLIAMS, C. (2005) *A Commodified World? Mapping the Limits of Capitalism*, Zed Books, London.
- WOLF-CSANADY, E. (1999) 'Cultural regions: A model of innovative public financing of the arts?', *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 5, pp. 255–268.
- WU, C. (2002) *Privatizing Culture*, Verso, London.
- ZEMANS, J., KLEINGARTNER, A. with M. Wyszomirski, M. Watanabe & Associates (1999) *Comparing Cultural Policy: A Study of Japan and the United States*, AltaMira Press, Walnut Creek.

Clive Gray, Department of Public Policy, De Montfort University, Bosworth House, Leicester
LE1 9BH, UK. Tel: 0116 257 7787; E-mail: cjg@dmu.ac.uk