

**Title:** Investigation of the dynamics of cultural policy formation: the states' patronage of film production in Australia 1970-1988

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**Abstract:**

In Australia, the decades of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s were times of a great nationalist revival and cultural self-discovery. In the visual arts, theatre, popular and classical music, and especially in cinema and television, a distinct Australian voice could be heard that was accepted as culturally valid and nationally relevant. The renaissance of local production for cinema and television was reliant on the patronage of the state, first the Commonwealth government with the establishment of the Australian Film Development Corporation and the Experimental Film and Television Fund in 1970 and, later, the Australian Film and Television School. Then from 1972 to 1978 each Australian state established a film support agency to extend that patronage and assure the state of a role in the burgeoning film industry. This thesis relates the stories of the creation and development—and in some cases demise—of those six state film agencies over the period 1970 to 1988. It identifies the influences that directed the creation of each state agency and proposes a qualitative model of the relationships between the influences. It then argues the applicability of the model to the formation of cultural policy in general in a pluralistic democratic society. It also argues that the state film agencies were more influential on national film industry policy than has hitherto been recognised.

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Analysis of state contributions to Australian cultural policy has been stimulated by Jenny Menzies and Chris Bowen from Arts Queensland. I am also grateful to Claudia Scott and the ANZSOG masters students in Designing Public Policies and Programs (intakes 2004, 2005, 2006) for the opportunity to air many of the themes in this monograph. Re-Visioning Arts and Cultural Policy, forum on the future of arts funding in Australia (ABC 18/04/07, http://www.abc.net.au/lateline/content/2007/s1900941.htm). This ‘arts club’ seeks to reproduce earlier forms of patronage under the guise of new governance, relying on self-serving arguments reminiscent of old-style lobbying. A. The production of culture perspective focuses on the ways in which the content of symbolic elements of culture are shaped by the systems within which they are created, distributed, evaluated, taught, and preserved. Some authors have found it convenient to understand the dynamics of production in terms of six constraints or facets which include law and regulation, technology, industrial (field) organization, organizational form, career dynamics, and markets. (See sections D. and E. below.) 1993. “State Patronage in the German Democratic Republic: Artistic and Political Change in a State Socialist Society.” Pp. 209-234 in Paying the Piper: Causes and Consequences of Art Patronage, J. H. Balfe editor. Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press. Rushton, Michael. Overall, cultural policy and practices of the past 30 years have been overwhelmed by new neo-liberal discourses and ideologies, namely: economic rationalism, monetarism, neo-conservatism, commodification of culture, managerialism and performativity. Examining each of these in turn, it becomes apparent that a market-driven, neo-liberal approach to UK cultural policy has largely failed in each of its stated aims: economic growth, artistic excellence, increased access to the arts, and social justice. Cultural policy of the time reflected this atmosphere. In the first decades of state patronage of the arts, the Arts Council saw itself ‘not as a source of direction, not as a source of artistic policy, but as a kind of enabling body’ (Stevens, 1998: 10, quoted in Caust, 2003, p.52).