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Draft Contextual Analysis Chapter
The Economics of Socially Engaged Art
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Contextual Analysis (1960-2007)
INTRODUCTION
This chapter gives a contextual analysis of the relationship between 'socially engaged' art practices and public funding in the UK from 1960 to 2007. The research I am conducting is based on the relationship between funding and socially engaged art practices: what happens when as a practitioner I am paid to be critical, political and socially engaged? Does the contract between commissioner and artist affect the potential for critical and/or political action? Central to this enquiry into socially engaged art is the question, who is sanctioned (and who does the sanctioning) to be the producers, evaluators and critics of socially engaged art? For this reason, an important part of this study is the rise and fall of the campaign for cultural democracy in which, I would argue, socially engaged art has its roots. The purpose of this chapter is therefore to gain a greater understanding of the history of this movement, its links to the community art movement and socialism and the reasons for its apparent failure.

The chapter is broken down into a chronological overview of government policies during this period with examples of concurrent activities, both publicly funded and self-funded (such as exhibitions, projects and conferences). Focus is placed on the moments in government policy when community art (referred to as experimental art in the 1960s, participatory art by the 1990s and socially engaged art by 2000) started to be funded by the Arts Council and the repercussions this had on practice.

Key issues that are raised during this chapter include: the replacement of cultural democracy with the democratisation of culture; the funding of community or experimental art as an act of 'repressive tolerance'; the confusion over the fight for artistic freedom versus the right to practice art as a means for social change; the accusation that self-proclaimed political artists have become contracted 'sanctioned dissenters', civil servants and safety valves that distract attentions away from the real changes that need to take place in society and perhaps therefore encourage and further exclusion and deprivation through their actions rather than prevent it; how the shift towards the notion that social and economic agendas are now inextricably intertwined and co-dependent has had an effect on the way art is funded and received and how and why publicly funded, social inclusion art projects often fail to redistribute resources, decision-making and power to the 'excluded' people they aim to serve.

What also becomes apparent when reading this history is that the warning signs of becoming a de-radicalised funding-addicted practice were raised as early as 1978 (by Braden) and that many of the fears of community art becoming short-term top-down projects have come true. Indeed, in 2008 we could not be further away from the original ideals of the community art/cultural democracy movements of the 1960s. By investigating the wider social, political and economic contexts, this study is an attempt to find out why these socialist art movements failed, and eventually to discover if there is any hope (or point) in reviving them today and if so what are the issues of funding such political art practices? What do we do if we want to question the underlying assumptions and inequalities of the current system rather than merely find ways of justifying it?

1960s
The Context
The 1960s were a decade of counter-cultural movements, social revolution, civil rights, feminism and anti-war activism. By 1964 Britain had experienced thirteen years of Conservative government. In that year, Harold Wilson was voted in as the Labour Prime Minister until 1970 when Edward Heath took power back into the hands of the Conservatives. The economy in Britain during this time was in decline leading to increasing strikes by the trade unions and the devaluation of the pound in 1967. Many young people launched themselves into a collectivised attack on the increasing commodification of art and society by attempting to reclaim the tools of production from capitalism, eventually leading to the May 1968 revolution in Paris. Related actions in Britain included students occupying administration offices of universities and art colleges at Hornsey School of Art, Hull University and Oxford University where they demanded more say in the running of the colleges and protested against the exam systems.

An increase in post-war immigration to Britain of Commonwealth citizens led to racist attacks on Afro-Caribbean and Indian communities settling in Britain, such as the Notting Hill race riots of 1958[1]. Ten years after these riots, the fear of immigrants flooding the job market was still apparent and in 1968 the Conservative MP Enoch Powell gave his anti-immigration 'Rivers of Blood' speech. While this led to Powell's dismissal from government, many dockers in London went on strike in support of Powell. At the time of the race riots in Notting Hill, the Trinidadian activist, Claudia Jones, was initiating the first Caribbean Mardi-Gras festivities in Notting Hill in 1959.[2] Jones introduced the slogan: 'A people's art is the genesis of their freedom' (Sherwood 1999). These early festivities organised by local activists in the late 1950s are early examples of community arts activity that sought to celebrate local talent and cultures.

The 1960s was also a decade during which the fight for equality and anti-discrimination through the second wave feminist movement gained momentum, with the slogan 'the personal is political' (Hanisch 1969). The Cold War continued into the 1960s bringing the ongoing threat of nuclear war. The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), formed in 1958, and the more militant Committee of 100, branching off from CND in 1960, resisted the development of nuclear arms and the government's decision to manufacture a hydrogen bomb. Many of these groups were also actively demonstrating against the ongoing American war in Vietnam at the time.

Protests, sit-ins and happenings, such as the Hornsey College of Art sit-in in 1968, were also occurring in other parts of Europe and the US. It was this climate of activism that led to the Paris Uprisings in May 1968 during which students and striking workers took to the streets leading to the collapse of the French de Gaulle government. The climate of activism, uprising and urgency for change was felt by some artists who were also developing a social and political conscience, connecting their actions to the contexts in

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[1] Until the 1962 Commonwealth Immigration Act, Commonwealth citizens were able to travel and settle in the UK without restrictions.
[2] Claudia Jones was born in Trinidad and given asylum in the UK from the US from where she was deported in 1955. She was an activist and member of the British Communist Party. The events she organised were continued as the Notting Hill Carnival.

which they were working and trying to find ways of reflecting on and effecting change within those contexts.

Regeneration and urban development
Despite the down turn in the economy, the post-war period of utopian optimism and modernisation continued into the 1960s with large-scale redevelopment of Britain's towns, slum clearances and the building of new council housing (Malpass 2000, p. 134). The regeneration of over-crowded, deprived areas involved building high density, high-rise estates. The Shelter Neighbourhood Action Project (SNAP) that ran from 1969-1972 in Granby to research causes and solutions to housing deprivation, found, however, that housing and environmental improvements in the area were not going to help the situation, rather the issues facing Granby were part of the wider economy and that larger structural changes had to occur in terms of employment and housing markets (Couch 2003, p.78). Most of the housing projects at this time happened *to* rather than *with* the communities who were to be re-housed, leading to the significant (yet relatively marginalised) development of the beginnings of the 'community architecture' movement which involved residents deciding on the kinds of homes and environments they wanted to live in. In 1969, the architect Ralph Erskine, for example, when commissioned to redesign Byker in Newcastle set up an office in an old undertakers shop in the area to work with local residents on the designs of their new homes (Wates and Knevitt 1987, p.29). The community architecture movement was linked to community art initiatives at the time (although I have not yet found explicit links to have existed in practice). During the 1960s some community art projects began on housing estates by residents or local artists, such as the Craigmiller Festival Society set up by resident Helen Crummy on the outskirts of Edinburgh in 1964[3]; the Great Georges Project in Liverpool set up in 1968 and David Harding's work as town artist in the new town, Glenrothes in Scotland from 1968-78.

The advocacy work of community architects paid off and by 1968 the Town and Country Planning Act required that the public must be adequately informed and consulted before approval of plans (ibid, p.30). In 1969 the Skeffington Report (entitled 'People and Planning') was the first government report on public participation (ibid) and in this same year, the Housing Act encouraged the retention and improvement of houses and neighbourhoods rather than wholesale demolition and replacement (ibid, p.31).

Profile: London Free School Adventure Playground
Grass-roots community activism against top-down redevelopment was also happening in North London from the mid-1960s when homes were being demolished and communal spaces bulldozed for the building of the new A40(M) Motorway. This led residents to fight for better housing and play areas for their children (Duncan 1992). In the summer of 1966 the London Free School adventure playground was launched in Acklam Road, North Kensington, where the Free School reclaimed land cleared to make way for the road. The London Free School was described as an 'anarchic temporary coalition' (Vague n.d.) that was:

> "based on the American idea of self-organised learning for adults, set up classes on housing and immigration. It opened a neighbourhood advice centre, helped to

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[3] Helen Crummy's 'Let the people Sing' (1992) documents the history of the Craigmiller Festival Society.

organise the first Notting Hill Carnival in August 1966 and developed an adventure playground on part of the land cleared for the construction of the new motorway." (Duncan 1992).

At the launch of the playground, the artist Gustav Metzger invited local children to burn piles of rubbish (Breitwieser 2005, p.132 and 140). While the London Free School group itself was short-lived, photographer Adam Ritchie continued to fight to save the playground they had helped initiate and set up the Playspace Group which fought to keep land under the new road (the Westway) for play space (Duncan 1992). Four years later, in 1971 the North Kensington Amenity trust (still active today, renamed the Westway Development Trust) was established, but not after much wrangling between the Council and the Playspace Group (renamed the Motorway Development Trust in 1968), with the Council wanting control over the new body because they thought the community activists were "politically dangerous" and "administratively incompetent" (Duncan 1992). Ritchie and John O'Malley (secretary of the Playspace Group) originally approached the independent charitable foundation, City Parochial Foundation for funding, which went on to fund the newly constituted organisation in 1970 (ibid).

POLICY
Towards the latter half of the 1960s in Britain, the Labour government introduced an Arts Minister for the first time in the history of British politics. At this time public funding for art, distributed through the Arts Council of Great Britain, was focused on securing national treasures, British heritage and existing arts organisations. A new Labour government, their introduction of an arts minister and a variety of self-organised cultural activities happening at the time led to discussions about the role of public subsidy for the arts, raising questions about who public funding for art should benefit. Towards the end of the decade, the Arts Council attempted to deal with the wealth of applications they were receiving from 'new activities' that did not fit any of their existing categories of music, drama, dance, literature or visual arts. There was increasing pressure on the Arts Council to support individual artists and also growing awareness and concern that public subsidy for the arts was not reaching working class taxpayers. Socialist artists and activists were beginning to advocate 'cultural democracy' meaning everyone had the right to the means of cultural production. This decade also marked the beginnings of the misinterpretation of cultural democracy by the first Arts Minister and subsequent government policy makers, which involved the watering down of cultural democracy and the promotion of the democratisation of culture instead. The policy of ensuring the right for everyone to have access to 'high art' meant the institutions and promoters of culture did not have to hand over power, just open their doors to a wider public.

This shift in policy by the newly elected Labour Party was perhaps for some people well overdue and for others not radical enough. Raymond Williams, for example, reflects on how Labour's failure to fund working class culture in the 1940s was detrimental to Labour's political survival in the 1950s:

> "I still believe that the failure to fund the working-class movement culturally when the channels of popular education and popular culture were there in the forties became a key factor in the very quick disintegration of Labour's position in the fifties." (Williams cited in Cultural Policy Collective 2004, p.16).

[I need to add here what Williams thought about these changes in the 1960s and clarify how Labour's policy changed from the 1950s-60s]

The TUC's Resolution 42
During the Trade Union's Congress in 1960, resolution 42 was introduced to question the role of art within the trade union movement. The resolution demanded greater access to the arts:

> "Congress recognises the importance of the arts in the life of the community especially when many unions are securing a shorter working week and greater leisure for their members." (Kershaw 1992, pp. 105-6).

Centre 42, whose elected artistic director was the playwright Arnold Wesker, was set up in 1961 as an attempt to work with Trade Councils to realise this resolution. It started with a £10,000 grant from the Gulbenkian Foundation as a touring festival combining poetry, folk music, art exhibitions, "readings in factory canteens" and theatre. Wesker stresses the aim of Centre 42 was to "find a popular audience for the arts, NOT an audience for popular art as was its frequent mistaken description" (Wesker n.d.). In 1964, Wesker started to use an old Victorian engine shed (later know as the Roundhouse) for their activities, with the aim of turning it into a "workers fun palace and a mecca for the socialist arts" (Farren 2002, p.72). £650,000 was needed for renovation and running costs for two years and there was support at the time from Jennie Lee, Labour's new Minister for the Arts. According to Wesker:

> "This should have given us a friend in the inner sanctum of court. It didn't. Jennie embarked on her own agenda for the arts, and saw Centre 42 as redundant rather than as a project for which she was now able to encourage the financial support she had worked for while a member on our Council of Management. We had transmogrified into a thorn in her side." (Wesker n.d.).

Despite these rejections, Wesker was able to host a fundraising tea party at Downing Street which raised £80,000 for Centre 42. It could perhaps be said that Wesker's ambitions for Centre 42 were based on a 'democratisation of culture' – bringing quality art to the masses rather than supporting working class culture itself. Baz Kershaw suggests:

> "Wesker and Centre 42 were accused of cultural imperialism, trying to force middle-class art on the masses, by both left-wing and right-wing critics. The attacks turned out to be fatal. The unions withdrew their support…" (Kershaw 1992, p.106).

[I need to add here more info about Centre 42, its relationship to the Trade Unions and its demise – what was the story of the withdrawal of support?]

Britain's first Arts Minister
In 1965 with the Labour government elected, responsibility for the Arts Council of Great Britain was moved from the Treasury, where it had resided since the war, to the Department of Education and Science. Jennie Lee, the first Minister responsible for the arts, delivered the White Paper: 'A Policy for the Arts: The First Steps' (Lee 1965). The

Paper outlined the need for more State investment in the arts in order to encourage more people to enjoy the arts:

> "In any civilised community, the arts and associated amenities, serious or comic, light or demanding, must occupy a central place. Their enjoyment should not be regarded as something remote from everyday life. The promotion and appreciation of high standards in architecture, in industrial design, in town planning and the preservation of the beauty of the countryside, are all part of it. Beginning in the school and reaching out into every corner of the nation's life, in city and village, at home, at work, at play, there is an immense amount that could be done to improve the quality of contemporary life." (Lee cited in Wallinger and Warnock 2000, p.146).

This led to the government increasing the Arts Council's grant by 45% in 1966/67 and by a further 26% in 1967/68 (Fisher 2006) and was part of the programme to increase access and widen audiences to the arts. In response to the White Paper, the editor of The Burlington Magazine at the time wrote in support of Labour's new proposals:

> "Never before in a Government publication has art been treated as an essential element in the national life – as essential to the nation's spiritual, as the Health service is to its physical, welfare. In earlier publications there always lurked the assumption that art was a desirable relaxation, the icing on the dull cake represented by the benefits conferred by the Welfare State; so long as the other requirements were satisfied, then and then only could art get a hearing. Now this is changed. We have all been surprised at the way art has woven itself into the texture of life. Even more surprisingly, we now have a Government which appreciates this fact, and intends to do something about it." (Editorial, The Burlington Magazine, no.746, Volume CVII, 1965, p.231).

Despite this shift in policy, however, the focus was still on the 'democratisation of culture' more than the funding of working class culture. According to Brighton (2006), for example, while audiences for the arts did continue to grow, "there is no evidence that the working classes increased as a proportion of that audience." (p.115).[4] Whether this is the case or not, this definite shift in policy is worth noting as it forms the backdrop to the debates on who art is for between 'traditionalists' (labelled 'elitists' by some) and community art activists that continued to run well into the 1970s and to some extent this debate is still relevant today. It also marks a point at which the government started to consider a process of 'art for all' or the democratisation of culture (different to the cultural democracy movement developed in the 1970s by community art activists).

The issue of who art was for was now on the agenda and led to the Arts Council of Great Britain having to reassess how to distribute funds and who to. The Arts Council up to this point had not considered it a priority to support living artists. In 1968, of a budget of £7,200,000 managed by the ACGB, only £59,343 was awarded to creative artists in England (Castillejo 1968a).[5] The author of the report, Castillejo, makes a number of

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[4] Brighton does not say that supporting working class culture should be the role of the Arts Council, unlike Raymond Williams, for example, who advocated such a move.
[5] Castillejo distinguishes between 'creating artists (composers, choreographers, playwrights, artists etc) and performing artists (actors, dancers, instrumental musicians, singers etc.)' (Castillejo 1968a).

suggestions to try and improve this situation such as working with the press who could inform the public that "artists are receiving virtually no help and are in danger of extinction"; that money should be directed towards creating centres "where creative artists can at least reach the public" rather than giving individual grants and that public and private foundations should be encouraged to "support an artist or scheme fully, or not at all" (Castillejo 1968a).

'Repressive tolerance': The New Activities Committee and FACOP
Introduction:
During the 1960s there were an increasing number of counter-cultural, 'alternative', 'underground', self-organised events and collectives emerging, many of which started to apply for funding from the Arts Council of Great Britain to continue their work. Many of these activities were being organised through informal 'Arts Laboratories' and 'Arts Workshops' that had been set up by artists in different parts of the country (BIT Information Services 1969).[6] These activities were often self-funded, worked with small budgets from individual patrons or charged small entrance fees to help cover basic costs. For example, Bill and Wendy Harpe, directors of The Great Georges Project in Liverpool wrote on 6 June 1969 that:

> "The [Great Georges Project] has not yet received, or asked for, any support from public funds: money has been received from various trusts, and we have had a considerable number of gifts by way of services (transport, printing, etc.) and gifts in kind (paint, kitchen equipment, timber, stationary etc) from local businesses and industry. Everything that has happened to date has happened because people have come along and joined in. Most of the visiting artists and professionals have given their services – sometimes for expenses, frequently for nothing." (BIT Information Services 1969).

They describe the centre as being closer to a sports centre than an arts centre, but that "all the work at the centre, no matter how community orientated, has its starting point in the contemporary arts" (BIT Information Services 1969). The first Art Laboratory was set up in 1967 by Jim Haynes in Drury Lane as a meeting space for music, art, theatre, happenings and information. In 1969 Arts Lab had to close due to mounting debts and lack of support from the Arts Council. In a Newsletter written at the time, Jim Hughes explains:

> "A few people in a position to help financially took but never gave. They asked, 'what's the product? What's its name?' The real answer was Humanity: you can't weigh it, you can't market it, you can't label it, and you can't destroy it. You can touch it and it will respond, you can free it and it will fly, you can create it and it will grow, if you kill it -- it's murder. The kids here don't believe it's the end and they're right for it will reappear in another form. 'We are the seeds of the tenacious plant, and it is in our ripeness and our fullness of heart that we are given to the wind and are scattered'." (Haynes 1969).

This Arts Lab had survived on donations and fundraising parties rather than from funding from the Arts Council. At the time of its closure in 1969 Haynes was in £8,000 dept and

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[6] I have found no reference to a comprehensive or even partial study of the Arts Labs and Arts Workshops to date.

yet the Arts Council had asked if he would be an advisor on their New Activities committee **[I need to check the details of this – I don't think he took up this post].**

According to Lord Goodman, Chairman of the Arts Council, by the end of 1968 the Arts Council was being 'bombarded' with funding applications from arts laboratories, theatre groups and 'loosely knit bodies of young people' and that these new applications for support were unfamiliar activities to the Arts Council, not coming under any of their existing categories (Goodman 1970).

Based on the increase of applications for such activities, the Arts Council of Great Britain established a New Activities Committee, originally under the chairmanship of Sir Edward Boyle. The purpose of the Committee was to investigate these new activities and decide if "whether in all this fret and foment there is something worthy of public support from public funds" (ibid). Lord Goodman, chairman of the Arts Council goes on to state,

> "Some of it may turn out to have been exhibitionist nonsense; some of it to relate to coteries so small as to have no public claim; some of it may–for all we know–be new and fresh and vital. This we hope our committee will tell us." (ibid).

The development of the New Activities Committee, however, was criticised by those inside and outside the Arts Council. For some artists, the approach was undemocratic and tokenistic. According to artist Malcolm LeGrice,

> "there was a deep split in the Arts Council between those who favoured a remit which emphasized the provision of traditional forms of art to a wider public, and those who were committed to a new mission of supporting contemporary and experimental activity." (cited in Thomas 2006, p.463).

The Arts Council's awareness and support of some of these 'new activities' was deeply unpopular with those suspicious of funding contemporary art experiments. The Daily Mail on March 16, 1970, for example ran an article titled: "They're giving away YOUR money to spoon-feed hippy 'art'". The article goes on to state how:

> "The [Arts] Council is now established as a patron of the underground – anarchist – drugs world, though many underground followers consider it is 'mean' and spends too much on orthodox art such as theatre and opera." (Anon. 1970)

Artists fight back: The beginnings of the FACOP
In December 1968 six young artists **[I need to find out the names of them]** were invited to a New Activities Committee meeting to give evidence of their 'new activities'. It was as a result of this meeting that artists started meeting as the Friends of the Arts Council Operative (FACOP) because of "grievances against the State's monolithic arts patronage machine, and more specifically through the setting up of a committee of enquiry into new activities" (FACOP 1969b, p.1). The young artists involved in FACOP were disturbed that their work and behaviour were being monitored and examined by the Arts Council, just as other authorities including the police, press and politicians were taking an interest in young people at the time.

FACOP were trying to revive some of the promises made by Lee in her 1965 White Paper, which stated that '[o]ne of the main objectives of the government's policy is to encourage the living artist…' (Lee cited in Wallinger and Warnock 1965, p.146) and readdress the sentiments of Lord Goodman's speech to the House of Lords on 26 February 1969 in which he stated that young people should be supported and allowed to express their own standards rather than these be dictated from above, "so that they may enjoy artistic amenities according to their own notions and not ours" (Bieda et al 1970).

The Need for an Artists' Panel
In April 1969 members of FACOP occupied the New Activities Committee's last meeting wearing dunces hats and presented the Arts Council with an alternative structure for a new panel based on elections, open meetings and an "adequate panel structure and finances, able to deal with the unique problems of supporting the living arts and particularly those in question" (Bieda et al 1970). Sir Edward Boyle, then Chairman of the Committee, gave a speech to the House of Commons in which he called for the support of FACOP's idea of an elected artists panel which would decide how New Activities money should be spent. He went on to describe this occasion artists occupied a New Activities Committee meeting:

> "the first time in my life [I was] at the receiving end of what I think is called a 'happening'. This may happen to me again in the future but it was the first time I had experienced the unscripted incursion of an uninvited group of people into our discussion." (Boyle 1970, p.2).

At this 'occupation' of the new Activities Committee, FACOP demanded that the Arts Council be replaced by an 'Artists' Council':

> "We envisage that this panel would be a form of continuous assembly inside the AC [Arts Council] and would therefore discuss many major issues; in addition to apportioning the money, it would press for increased grants from the AC [Arts Council], from industry, and act as a form of communication among the artistic community, and between the public and artist. It would be whatever those involved wished it to be." (FACOP 1969c).

This new panel would be an Artists' Panel and would be an alternative to what FACOP accused the New Activities Committee as being, that is a "secret caucus of 'objective' evaluators of 'meritorious' applications" (FACOP 1969a, p.1). FACOP saw the New Activities Committee as corrupt and undemocratic, that successful applications depended on the opinions of a few unelected people who were responsible for "grading, sorting and packaging of artistic activities". FACOP were against the judging of art in this way and saw it as a step towards fully integrating art into "consumer society by the newly trained class of arts administrators" (FACOP 1969a, p.2).

FACOP were certainly against the new professionalism of the middleman. The arts administrators they were referring to in this case were students on the Arts Administration course at Regent Street Polytechnic who worked with InterAction and the Architectural Association with support from GLAA and Kensington and Chelsea Arts Council to produce a detailed plan for the development of an Arts Centre for the Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. The research took place between October 1968 and May

1969 and resulted in a brief for the architectural students. FACOP described this exercise as 'pathetic' and these 'new administrators' as 'cultural parasites' (FACOP 1969a, p.2).

Instead, FACOP, through the establishment of an Artists' Panel wanted to become responsible for the "conduct [of] our artistic projects, the allocation of material needs and the needs of our fellow artists" (FACOP 1969a, p.5). They stated how it was the responsibility of the artist to recognise that art and its patronage and administration are the same thing and must be considered so in order to effect change and resist the 'external organisation of life'. Responding to Lord Goodman's question about how to find, train and support the new administrators "upon whom the whole operation depends" they write this is a "perversion of the real process" (FACOP 1969a, p.3). They refused to be absorbed into a system that translates every act of political organisation into a series of "checks and balances" (FACOP 1969a, p.5).

Rather than continuing to operate 'underground', FACOP attempted to engage in the funding system and change it. Their proposal was to reverse the tables and take control back from the bureaucrats into the hands of the artists. FACOP realised, however, that this would take a leap of imagination for the artists involved to move beyond a critique of alienation and rejection:

> "Have we knocked down the gates in our own minds? –if not, how can we confront a system which we must assume some responsibility for perpetuating?" (ibid, p.6).

While there were general agreements on the need to challenge the Arts Council's undemocratic decision-making process, there was not necessarily an agreement within FACOP about what the alternatives should be. While it may have been clear to some that it was crucial to critically engage with the funding system, for others it was a case of just taking the money and running. The latter approach was thought by some to be tantamount to supporting the system that the 'activists' were trying to bring down, challenge and democratise. Gustav Metzger at the FACOP conference in May 1969, for example, recognised these conflicts of interest within FACOP and the potential problems they may cause:

> "An objective understanding of the conflicts engendered between those artists attempting to change society, and others concerned with personal economic survival and tied to the numerous hang-ups of the art world, is basic to the functioning of groupings such as FACOP. Unless such an objectivity is established, the compromise and time wasting will become intolerable – precluding results in terms of useful social change. Yes: the slogan is ARTISTS AGAINST ARTISTS." (Metzger cited in FACOP 1969b, p. 5).

In June 1969, FACOP held a conference at 'I' Site, St Katherine's Docks (organised by SPACE) to propose the idea of an artists' panel and artists' council and to discuss "the role of the artist in society, the problems of patronage, the need to spend money on living rather than dead art, the situation of the Arts Labs, the need for new and better buildings for the arts" (FACOP 1969b, front page).

During the conference, which was attended by over 300 people (consisting mainly of artists involved in the Arts Labs), the Arts Council was "continuously attacked for its indifference, ignorance and irrelevance to the real needs of living artists" (FACOP 1969b, front cover). They also discussed alternatives to Arts Council patronage including Jim Haynes' suggestion that the Drury Lane Arts Lab could tour the Beatles' Magical Mystery Tour film to raise funds and that artists who earn more should contribute to a fund for younger artists to apply to (ibid, p.1). It was also at this meeting that Jim Haynes made the suggestion for an Arts Labs in Great Britain Trust which was set up soon after, in 1969, by the Community Development Trust (a charity based in New York) "to make possible rapid development of new activities, especially those concerned with young people and the communication of ideas" (Arts Lab in Great Britain Trust n.d.). The aim of the Trust was to raise money to support the Arts Labs and was seen as an alternative to the New Activities Committee (ibid).

A New New Activities Committee:
In the same month as FACOP's conference a new New Activities Committee was established by the Arts Council under the chairmanship of Michael Astor.[7] FACOP were disappointed that the New Activities Committee had not taken on board their suggestions in this new formation of the Committee and instead continued to meet behind closed doors. The move by the Arts Council to include 6 'new activists' on the panel when it reconvened in 1969 was, to many involved in FACOP, an act of 'repressive tolerance'[8]. Members of FACOP, David Bieda and David Robins were critical of this revamped panel that perpetuated an illusion of support for living artists:

> "In no other country in Europe or America is it conceivable that any self-respecting (radical?) artists would sit on such a trumped-up caucus, especially those whose activities represent a criticism or alternative to the values of an institution such as the Arts Council." (FACOP 1969b, p.4).

Despite these criticisms, Jos Tilson, another member of FACOP was a member of the Committee until she resigned in 1969 because of the undemocratic nature of the Committee. The New Activities Committee ran from July 1969 to April 1970 with a budget of £15,000 (holding 12 meetings in all), resulting in a New Activities Report which went to the Council on 27 May 1970. Jos Tilson did some research at the time into the 44 groups whose applications to the Arts Council had been referred to the New Activities Committee and found that their applications amounted to over £60,000, a sum well above the budget allocated to the New Activities Committee (FACOP 1969b, p.3).

After much deliberation as to how to spend the £15,000, the committee decided to appoint £1,500 to eight regional co-ordinators to spend on 2-3 day 'gatherings' to demonstrate these new activities. In a document that uses remarkably informal and casual language for the Arts Council, the New Activities Committee Working Party distributed, 'An Everyday Tale of Artistic Life: or Bread and Water for 2 days' (New

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[7] Other members of the committee included: Sir Edward Boyle, Ian Bruce, Dave Curtis, Hugh Davies, Grizelda Grimond, Peter Hall, Lord Harewood, Bill Harpe, Jenny Harris (Brighton Combination), Peter Jay, Prof. Frank Kermode (UCL), John Lifton and Jos Tilson.
[8] 'Repressive tolerance' is the title of an essay by Herbert Marcuse (1965) in which he outlines the totalitarian aspects of democratic capitalism that ensures marginalised voices remains suppressed.

Activities Committee Working Party 1969) about these regional gatherings ("we're fed up with the dominance of London") inviting people to initiate events:

> "Each region will be self-governing – you can take over a village, hire an aerodrome, use the streets, or find extensive city premises: the whole EVENT could take place in a train which tours the region…You can make theatre, or put an end to theatre." (New Activities Committee 1969, p.1).

The gatherings were a test to see what would happen and if indeed there was support needed for 'new activities':

> "if the EVENTS really explode into life, then the argument can be put to the Arts Council that for activities, premises and equipment we need £300,000 per year (at least), not the £15,000 set aside this year for 'investigations'." (ibid, p.2).

[I need to add here more info about these events – how did they effect policy?]

Rejection of the Artists' Panel by the Arts Council
Michael Astor and the New Activities Committee deemed FACOP's proposals for an Artists' Panel and Artists' Council "unworkable and unacceptable" (FACOP 1969c). Indeed, the work of FACOP was infuriating its Chair, Michael Astor, who did not think their work valid or relevant to the Arts Council, the only purpose of an Artists' Council being that it would spotlight who the trouble makers were (Thomas 2006, p.463). He suggested FACOP would "pursue their own course irrespective of what the Arts Council can do".

> "Although these bodies may remain critical of the Arts Council I do not regard them as hostile or rival groups in as far as they, and my Committee, will be setting out to achieve certain broadly similar aims. To retain their vitality it is probably necessary that these groups do work outside of the Arts Council but that we each know what the other is trying to achieve." (Astor 1969a).

Later that year, the Arts Council had still not responded to FACOP about their proposal for an Artists' Council as it was considered that FACOP was led by a "small self-appointed caucus of people in London" (Astor 1969b) and therefore not representative. Astor went on to ask any of those sitting on the New Activities Committee to resign if they felt strongly that the Committee, as FACOP had accused them of being, was not democratically elected (ibid). With this, a number of the Committee members resigned, including Jos Tilson:

> "I personally feel that these recommendations [on 'new activities'] should be worked out by an elected, not selected, body of people, not the new-old-boy system thinking what is best, not the 'wisdom from above' again." (Tilson 1969, p.1).

[I would like to see if I can interview Jos to hear more about her involvement in the Committee and reasons why she wanted to be on the committee and the reasons why she left.]

New Activities in the House of Commons
In February 1970 FACOP wrote an Open Letter to MPs attending a House of Commons debate on grants to the arts[9]. This letter outlined their proposals for an Artists' Panel and stated they were awaiting the "translation of these [Jennie Lee's and Lord Goodman's] sentiments into action" and that artists "must receive adequate support and not piecemeal recognition".

> "If patronage is to be a living process which can enrich the growth of new art and bring on as yet unrealised and unrecognised artists and projects, then it must itself be closely involved in the actual life of art, not as a benevolent source of financial support which is available to prop up art as an end product which always remains separate from the source of money and the way it is given, but as a necessary aspect of the creation of art itself. For this to be realised, it is essential for artists to be concerned with patronage at its roots." (Beida et al 1970, p.2).

Sir Edward Boyle in his speech to the House of Commons (attended by the five elected artists who wrote the Open Letter), supported the move to fund the work of contemporary artists, breaking down what he meant by 'new activities' as being about those which do not fit into any 'recognised tradition'; activities which are 'ephemeral' and which do not have 'a conventional end product', such as the work being done by the arts laboratories – "this is work which its practitioners feel enhances the quality of life and may provide a real sense of group therapy but it is not meant to be lasting"; art that "crosses frontiers between different kinds of art" and "those people who are interested in these new activities are particularly concerned with participation". He closes his speech, asking that there should be support of "experiments of this kind" and that:

> "What we can reasonably do in our turn is to ask the <u>avant-garde</u> [underlined in original document] that occasionally they should take yes for an answer – and that when some new form of committee activity turns out successfully and is recognised, this should not be condemned as 'repressive tolerance'." (Boyle 1970, p.2).

This relates to FACOP 's earlier remarks that the New Activities Committee was a form of 'repressive tolerance' and that they refused to "be programmed or simply administered or judged" (FACOP 1969a, p.20).

The battle continues – the absorption of radical critique into the Arts Council?
The situation seemed to have reached a point where FACOP and the Arts Council's New Activities Committee were blaming each other for being exclusive caucuses and undemocratic. The battle between them continued and on 26 October 1970, 'activist' members of the New Activities Working Party, FACOP, the Arts Lab Trust of Great Britain and others held a national assembly at the St. Pancras Town Hall Assembly

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[9] David Bieda, Su Braden, Guy Brett, Tim Platt and Marc Chaimowicz wrote the letter.

Rooms to discuss the need for more financial support for living artists from the government. This was billed as the London 'gathering' supposedly supported by the New Activities Committee but in fact had not been sanctioned by the whole Committee. This led to the resignation of the artist John Lifton (founder of the Institute for Research and Art and Technology in 1969) from the New Activities Committee because he had sanctioned the going ahead of this event, giving £300 of the New Activities Committee budget, which Astor and others on the committee had not agreed to it (New Activities Committee Minutes of their 4th meeting, 22 October 1969).

FACOP and the New Activities Committee could not agree on fundamental issues. In a letter from Astor printed in the New Statesman (22 May 1969), he stated,

> "My more politically orientated opponents believed in overturning all institutions, where they saw revolution as a sign of progress I came to see it as directed towards anarchy. Where they called for 'democratically elected councils' I invariably resisted their ambitions because, in my view, what they were striving for was a form of mock elections manipulated by a small caucus whose viewpoint was less tolerant and open-minded than that of the Arts Council. Finally, and I think amicably, we agreed to disagree." (Astor 1970).

He goes on to remark that,

> "I would like to add that the large majority of young aspiring avant-garde artists that I encountered were not primarily politically orientated. Many of them were idealists, many of them were impressively unacquisitive and selfless in their aims. Confusion arose primarily where they interpreted art to mean anything they wanted it to mean. In spending the taxpayers money I took the view that the Arts Council must recognise certain artistic standards however esoteric these might be." (ibid).

This highlights the fundamental differences in approaches taken by FACOP and ACGB – namely that ACGB understood their role as securing 'standards' in art as their public service and yet it was the very notion of 'standards' that the artists and activists involved in FACOP were contesting as well as questioning who got to decide on such standards.

These 'standards' to be upheld by the Arts Council did not include the more politically provocative work of some artists, for example, the Arts Council refused to pay a fine of performance artist Jim Pennington who fired a toy pistol at the eagle of the American Embassy (anon. 1970). According to the same article, Pennington was turned down for funding to go towards his next performance – "to plant some cannabis on the Home Secretary, to deface gallery paintings or to rob Barclays Bank" (anon. 1970). According to Michael Astor, he "doubted if the council was the proper body to encourage any of these acts" (Astor 1970).

However, it appears FACOP were being actively critical of the Arts Council whilst still being paid by them. Their newsletter/journal, Circuit, for example, received £75 from ACGB (per issue), despite its calls for the dismantling of the Arts Council itself:

"WE WANT TO RUN OUR OWN AFFAIRS – but liberty is the crime which contains all crimes. To current attempts – official or unofficial – to water down our case and absorb them into the present structure ignoring their radical nature we say FACOP." (FACOP 1969b, p.4).

Lord Goodman, Chairman of ACGB writes to FACOP stating how the ACGB "flourishes under close scrutiny and therefore the expression of active criticism" (FACOP 1969b, p.4).

The question remains, what were the effects of the ACGB listening to these requests and providing subsidy on the experimental, counter-cultural, activist nature of these activities? Was it better to fund these activities than have them operating independently as a form of sanctioned critique? As the Great Georges Project had stated: "Once one is receiving large sums of public money, then one's direction inevitably tends to be influenced by the continued need to keep receiving this money" (cited in BIT Information Services 1969). FACOP were aware of the issue of their radicalism or criticality being absorbed by the Arts Council:

"We know the Arts Council will not easily change its ways (and if it pretends to, will attempt to absorb any dissident elements)…turned into a commodity or an entertainment, the cultural process rather than breaking any boundaries in the mind or in society reflects a repressive economic/social process and becomes simply the preserve of a privileged elite indulging in an irresponsible fatalism…How can we, faced with consumer culture at every moment and in every direction – impelled by its familiar process of atomisation – search consciously for familiar and meaningful things, and yet avoid conditioned responses that have the familiarity of the treadmill which we wish to act against and replace?" (FACOP 1969a, pp.1-2).

The absorption and de-radicalisation of this period has had effects on the way culture has been supported ever since. By inviting certain radicals in, the system could acknowledge those subversives without having to change the system. FACOP's response to this was a rejection of the continuation of the Arts Council in its present form (FACOP 1969a, p.3). In its inclusive, open and rational appearance, the Arts Council relied on those seeking support to not see through this veneer. Artists continue to support this system by relying on it to valorise their critical art through to the present day.

ART PRACTICE
A dramatic shift – the rise and fall of self-organising counter-cultures
Many writers have looked back at the 1960s as a period of dramatic, even 'revolutionary' change in terms of how art was conceived, produced and distributed. Lippard (1973), for example has described the period from 1966 – 1971 as a time of the dematerialisation of the art object. From the late 1950s leading up to the Paris uprising in 1968, artists were practicing and performing out of the gallery, making work with non-artists, exploring the political potential of art, rejecting Modernism and working to dissolve the distinctions between art and everyday life. Some have described the 1960s as a decade when art was becoming more directly political, participatory and socially engaged. Arts Labs and Arts Workshops were active in many parts of the country and supported the performances, happenings, screenings and discussions that marked this decade. Issues

of art's role in society and the politics of funding were being discussed at this time, for example, Gustav Metzger in 1969 and 1970 gave two lectures at the Slade School of Art on the social relevance and responsibility of art that perhaps demonstrate this shift. They were titled 'The Social Relevance of Art' (organised by Stuart Brisely) and 'Do You Eat? – The Artist in Technological Art and Social responsibility?' (4 February). The latter asked the questions, Do you eat? Where does the money come from? Does it matter where your money comes from? And do you feel responsible towards society? (Breitwieser 2005, p.159) **[I need to find out more about these discussions from Metzger if possible]**. This era has been described as one where there was a departure from "conventional concepts of art towards artists questioning who art was for and started working with non-artist 'participants' and with specific communities; the characters of artist and audience would begin to merge and some artists would become mediators or facilitators of a process rather than the sole producers (Harding 2005, p.5; Harding in Dickson 1995, p.28 and Braden 1978, p.7).

The art initiatives during the 1960s were predominantly self-funded or survived on in kind support, donations or fundraising through parties and events. This changed towards the end of the decade as artists started to pressurise the Arts Council of Great Britain for support, as seen in the work of FACOP, for example. Su Braden points out that many of the 'alternative' art practices of the 1960s,

> "offered no real attack on the nerve of the assumptions generally held by both 'artists' and 'non-artists' about their respective roles. They were simply under-funded alternatives to the accepted views, and as such, when judged by those who maintained both 'standards' and the purse strings, could be dismissed as 'un-professional'." (Braden 1978, p.5).

International Influences
How and why were these shifts in art practice occurring? While the focus here is on instances in the UK which may have gone on to influence future practice, this was an international network, that was influenced by the Surrealists and Dadaists that had gone before them. Anti-art, detourne, happenings, neo-concretism and auto-destruction (to name just a few) were reactions against or alternatives to the commodification of art, increasing control over 'freedoms' by the state and/or the threat of nuclear war. These artists shared a concern for breaking down the relationships between artist and audience and dissolving the distance between art and the everyday. For example, in the late 1950s John Cage was leading his 'Experimental Composition' classes at the New School for Social Research in New York (1957–1959), which went on to influence Fluxus artists who rejected the serious, market-driven Modernist art world (Buchloh and Rodenbeck 1999). In Paris in 1958 the Situationist International started to publish their Journal of the same name (which ran until 1969), which, with Debord's publication 'Society of the Spectacle' (1967) employed the notion of Detournement or 'diversion' to provoke a revolution in the everyday (Sadler 1999) and was influential in informing the Paris Uprising of 1968. Before 1960 Allan Kaprow had already started his temporary, event-based, ephemeral performances in public and private spaces with participants to question transactions of labour and consumerism (Buchloh and Rodenbeck 1999). Gustav Metzger had produced his first auto-destructive manifesto in London and was writing about auto-destructive art which he described as a form of public art for industrial society (Buchloh and Rodenbeck 1999; Breitwieser 2005). Lygia Clark and Helio Oiticica

at this time were developing a neo-concretist practice in Brazil which invited audiences to participate and interact with objects, becoming artists themselves (Osthoff 1997).

Examples of art activities
This section gives an overview of some key events in 1960s Britain that brought together issues of art, politics and social change. In 1960 the Situationist International were invited to take part in an Independent Group event at the ICA during which Guy Debord and the other members of the Situationist International walked out after refusing to define 'situationism' (Sadler 1999, p.41). In 1961, Gustav Metzger demonstrated his auto-destructive art at the South Bank during which he sprayed acid on white, black and red sheets of nylon which disintegrated when the acid came into contact with it (Breitwieser 2005). In 1962 the first Fluxus event took place at the ICA and Gallery One called 'The Festival of Misfits'. In 1963 the ICA hosted Archigram's exhibition, 'Living City'. Other key events included:

- Project Sigma

Initiated by Alexander Trocchi, Project Sigma was a situationist venture, proposing as part of its activity to develop 'cultural engineering' which would involve artists offering 'technical assistance, making available "pool cosonaut" to company "n", and in oiling connexions between "n" and the vast groundplan in the process of articulating itself as project sigma evolves.' (Slater, 2000, note 10). Project Sigma held its first event at Braziers Park, Oxfordshire in June 1964 (Nuttall 1968 and Murrey Scott 1992).

- International Poetry Incarnation

The International Poetry Incarnation of beat poets on 11 June 1965 at the Albert Hall organised by John Esam, Dan and Jill Richter and introduced by Alexander Trocchi was later billed as Britain's first full scale Happening (Morrison 2005). Jill Richter paid for the event (Schmidt 2008) which included a £400 hire fee for the venue. According to an anonymous blog post, the Richter's ran off with the proceeds without paying the artists (ibid 2008).[10]

- The International Times

Another event in the mid-late 1960s that brought together culture, social issues and politics included the publication of the first edition of The International Times (known as the IT after The Times complained), a newspaper by and for active counter-culturists in London. The Newspaper was given an initial donation of £500 by the wealthy businessman, Victor Herbert (Thomas 2005, p.464). Founded by Jim Haynes, Barry Miles and John Hopkins and initially edited by Tom McGrath the IT was launched at the Roundhouse on 11 October 1966 with music, happenings, film screenings and has been described by Daevid Allen of the psychedelic rock band Soft Machine who played at the event as,

> "one of the two most revolutionary events in the history of English alternative music and thinking. The IT event was important because it marked the first

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[10] The surviving poets who took part in the original event reconvened in 2005 at The Albert Hall to celebrate the event 40 years on during which Adrian Mitchell updated his 'To Who it May Concern' poem to reference the Iraq war instead of the Vietnam War.

recognition of a rapidly spreading socio-cultural revolution that had its parallel in the States" (Palacios 1998, p.?).

The IT offices were raided by the police and equipment taken on the basis of the Obscene Publications Act in 1969. The charge was based on the personal adverts in the paper which were "for the purpose of sexual practices taking place between male persons" and "conspiring to outrage public decency by inserting advertisements containing lewd, disgusting and offensive matter". This led to the directors, Dave Hall, Graham Keen and Peter Stansill being convicted and sentenced to 18 months in prison which was suspended for four years and later acquitted in 1971 due to the success of the OZ trial (Stansill 2006, p.80)[11].

- International Dialogue in Experimental Architecture

During the same year as the IT's launch party, a conference and exhibition took place in Folkestone called the International Dialogue in Experimental Architecture, held at the New Metropole Gallery in Folkestone co-organised by the architecture collective Archigram and BASA. Some of the participants included Paulo Soleri, Yona Friedman, Cedric Price (who was then working on his Fun Palace for the Lea Valley) and Constant Nieuwenhuis, who co-founded the Situationist International and "who had given up painting to construct a vast model of a continuous building, New Babylon, that would straddle the whole world" (Rykwert 2007).

"Price and the organisers shared with most of the participants a sense that technology would provide the sufficient motor for the future of architecture. There was no need to appeal either to socio-political or even economic notions, and any sense of the physical context in which these buildings were to go up was also an irrelevance, or simply an accident of circumstance." (Rykwert 2007).

- Dialectics of Liberation: Towards a Demystification of Violence

On 15-30 July 1967 four psychologists involved in the anti-psychology movement, R.D. Laing, David Cooper, Joseph Berke and Leon Redler organised a five day conference at the Roundhouse called the 'Dialectics of Liberation: Towards a Demystification of Violence' that brought together Marxist intellectuals and political activists. Julian Beck of the Living Theatre and Allen Ginsberg were also on a panel and Carolee Schneeman organised the after parties and performances. Some of the speakers (Lang and black activist Stokely Carmichael) were calling for counter violence against the system, defending violence against a violent society (Farren 2002; Cooper 1968; Ali 2005). According to David Cooper in the publication 'Dialectics of Liberation' which documents the conference,

"young people actually took to living in the Round-house and then took their seminars out into local pubs, cafes and public places." (Cooper 1968).

He goes on to say that the event was the founding of The Anti-University of London.

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[11] OZ was an 'underground' magazine published originally in Sydney (1963-69) and then in London from 1967-73. In 1971 the editors of the magazine were brought to trial on obscenity charges for which they were charged guilty. Their convictions were then overturned at the appeal trial when it was found the judge had misdirected the jury and a prosecution witnesses had been assaulted by police (REF?).

- The Anti-University

The London Anti-University was active from 1968-69 at 49 Rivington Street in East-London. According to Roberta Elzey (Berke 1969), The Anti-University was convened by Allen Krebs, David Cooper and Joseph Berke who had all been involved in the setting up of the Free University in New York and were inspired by the critical universities in Amsterdam and Berlin. Other 'teachers' included Charles Marowitz, Allen Krebs, Edward Dorn, Obi Egbuna, Noel Cobb, Stuart Montgomery, and Anna Lockwood. Cooper at the time had set up an anti-institution, Villa 21 at Shenley Mental Hospital in Hertfordshire. The Anti-University had three main areas of interest: radical politics, existential psychiatry and the avant-garde of the arts (Berke 1969).

Alternative Cultural Spaces
There were a number of 'alternative' spaces at the time in London that housed exhibitions and events. Many of these were self-funded or relied on donations, often meaning they had short life spans. These included, along with the Arts lab on Drury Lane, The Centre for Advanced Creative Study (later called Signals), Indica, the London New Arts Lab and the Institute for Research and Art and Technology (IRAT).

- The Centre for Advanced Creative Study and Signals

The Centre for Advanced Creative Study was set up by the artist Marcello Salvadori to encourage collaborations between scientists and artists. Salvadori set up the Centre with David Medalla, Gustav Metzger and Guy Brett in 1964 in the South Kensington flat of a young entrepreneur called Paul Keeler (Centre of Attention 2006). The Centre then moved to 3 Wigmore Street, changing its name to Signals and started publishing a Signals News bulletin. The space showed experiments by international artists such as Takis, Camargo, Soto, Kenneth and Mary Martin, Li Yuan-chia, Gerhard von Graevenitz and Lygia Clark. The centre and the bulletin came to an end in 1966.[12]

- Indica

Indica (named after the cannabis indica) was set up by Barry Miles, Peter Asher and John Dunbar who had met at the Albert Hall beat poetry event in 1965. Peter Asher donated £2,100 to establish the gallery (Centre of Attention 2006). They set up the gallery and bookshop Indica at 6 Mason's Yard, Mayfair and showed artists such as Soto, de Marco, Julio Le Parc, Takis and Liliane Lijn. According to Dunbar, the group "had a casual way of running the gallery. I never took it seriously as a business in the way that they do now. We funded the space on a day-to-day basis, and we enjoyed it" (Centre of Attention 2006). The bookshop split from the gallery in 1966 (the bookshop went to Southampton Row) and the gallery closed in 1967.[13]

Artists Initiatives – developing a context for art
In the UK in the 1960s there were a number of artists initiatives, with diverse agendas and practices, supported by various forms of funding, such as the development of artists' residencies in industry through the work of the Artists Placement Group initiated by John Latham and Barbara Steveni in 1966 and the organising of community art groups

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[12] The Centre of Attention held an exhibition in 2006 called 'Fast and Loose (my dead gallery)' which brought together documentation on past radical art spaces in London from 1956-2006, such as Signals, London Free School, Indica and Arts Lab (http://www.thecentreofattention.org/dgsignals.html).
[13] In 2006 Riflemaker gallery curated an exhibition about Indica, forty years after its closure and showed some of the work by artists originally involved.

working in local contexts, such as Craigmiller Festival Society near Edinburgh (from 1962)[14]; The Great Georges Project (from 1968); Free Form Arts Trust (from 1969); Interaction (from 1969) and Welfare State (from 69) **[I need to give brief descriptions of these organisations and their funding].** Artist David Harding started working in the planning department of Glenrothes, Scotland in 1968 where he would continue to work for a further ten years. Su Braden and colleagues had started a touring event, called Pavilions in Parks which ran from 67-71 and aimed to readdress the barriers between artists and audiences. The artists worked with architects and designers to build lightweight portable structures which toured around parks and were host to art events in Chelsea, Croyden, Greenwich, Camden, Cardiff and Swansea. The aim was for local authorities to adopt the scheme where artist could work directly with people (Su Braden 1978, p.185). **[I need to find out more about what happened to this project – did local authorities adopt the scheme, for example?]**

Profile: The Artists Placement Group

The APG began in 1966 and ran placements in industry from 1968-75 and government departments from 1975-79[15]. The placements were based on an 'open brief', meaning there was no contract between the artist and host organisation and Latham and Steveni would work with the organisations to enable them to 'invite' the artist in (Slater 2000, p.2). The emphasis of the placements was on process and research and not end product. Slater remarks that it "sought to take conceptualism into a more engaged, inter-disciplinary direction" (Slater 2000, p.2). For APG, "the potential disappearance of the art object was not an occasion for mourning but an ongoing continuation of attempts to give art a formation" (Slater 2000, p.1):

> "aligning himself with developments in physics Latham came to view 'events' rather than the 'particles' as a core apt basis for a socially engaged artistic endeavour, events spanning micro-moments and cosmological durations that, it was hoped, could be communicable as spurs to action and participation rather than as objects of self-referential contemplation." (ibid).

Latham introduced the term 'incidental person' instead of 'artist' as a way of suggesting it was not just the art itself that was being reunited with its context. The purpose of the placements in industries was to "release the impulse to act" (Slater, 2000, p.2). Slater asks what it was the APG wanted to change: "Did they want to change society or did they want to change society's attitude to art?" (Slater 2000, p.2) and concludes that it was probably the latter (Slater 2000, p.4). Without intention, APG were paving the way for the professional artist in residence or artist consultant that is prevalent today to the extent that "the incidental person is turned back into an artist by means of their professionalisation" (Slater 2000, p.4). While fighting for the recognition of the 'incidental person' the mere fact that they were creating a niche role for such a character in industry or government meant APG failed to pursue the dematerialisation of the art object and

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[14] In 1976 the Lothian Council decided to cut their grant to the Craigmiller Festival Society: "The society mobilised all the support it could muster which proved effective in getting the full grant restored at the next meeting of the Council. However, it seems that this situation could be repeated each time the grant comes up for review, and the energies of the Festival Society will be dissipated in an annual political battle for money for survival" (Braden 1978, p.182).

[15] Placements included Roger Coward at Department of Environment, Hugh Davies and Ian Breakwell at the Department of Health, John Latham at the Scottish Office, Stuart Brisley at the Peterlee Development Corporation. (Slater 2000, note 23).

incidental person as the placements relied too much on the host legitimising the placement. As part of this process, the artist became the professional specialised employee of that host organisation:

> "in bringing together people from various disciplines (civil servants, industrialists, architects etc.) it does not actively pursue de-specialisation but brings forth the 'incidental person' as a specialist in his or her own right." (Slater 2000, p4).

As David Harding argued in the 1970s (Dickson 1995), the incidental person was capable of working directly with their host organisation as this was part of the art experience and that administrators and curators were seen to add an unnecessary layer of bureaucracy that "still censors social art today" (Slater 2000, p.2). It is perhaps this layer of curatorial administration that sometimes led to the increasing specialisation or professionalisation of the artist figure on their placement, something APG and other artists at the time were attempting to break down and reverse, leaving the tools of negotiation to the 'incidental person' to operate.

In describing APG's approach to providing a context for incidental persons, saying they could work independently of government directives, Slater states this "ultimately is not the case today for artists and writers in residency" (Slater 2000, p.2), suggesting government agendas are more likely to intervene in that context. It is unclear as to why those directives were less present in the 1960s than it is suggested they are in the 2000s. He does go on to say, however, that the "conscientious bureaucrats of a Governmental Department" would welcome the opportunity to have an external observation of their work (especially if it was free!).

While APG initially received funds from ACGB, in 1972, their funding was cut on the basis that "APG is more concerned with Social Engineering than with pure art" (Tate website, timeline of APG's activities).[16] Despite continued applications and lobbying the Arts Council for support after the government placements had finished in the early 1980s, the Arts Council refused to fund them and, according to Slater, obstructed the APG's attempts to get funding from other bodies.

Roy Shaw, the then General Secretary of the Arts Council, called the work of APG 'spoof work' (REF?). This was perhaps because APG were able to pursue a number of placements directly with government bodies without the funding or support of the Arts Council (therefore in the Arts Council's eyes, the work was not recognised). The Arts Council and Gulbenkian Foundation were developing their own artist 'residency' schemes at this time (such as the Propositions to Industry exhibition proposal by Edward Lucie-Smith), which ignored the main elements of APGs approach (Harding in Dickson 1995, p.30).

> "I think this scheme [Propositions to Industry] would be attractive to many of the industrialists who are already known to have a concern for art. For one thing, the extent of their involvement would not be as daunting as that which is implied by the requirements of the Artists Placement Group, whose dialectic, incidentally,

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[16] The Tate Archive Collection bought the APG Archive in 2004 and hosted an APG event in 2005.

brings a chill to the heart of many who have been invited to participate in APG."
(Emrys Williams 1972, p.1).

Latham later took ACGB to the European Court over the fact that it had co-opted and
misrepresented APGs work but lost his case due to ACGB being protected by Royal
Charter (Harding in Dickson 1995, p.30). Slater suggests that perhaps the Arts Council's
rejection of APG's requests for support meant the threat implied by the incidental person
was being taken more seriously by others than it was by the APG themselves (Slater
2000, p.5).

1970s
The Context
The 1970s was a decade of strikes, rising inflation and increasing unemployment under Conservative (1970-76), Labour (1976-79) and then re-election of the conservative government in 1979 led by Margaret Thatcher. During this period debates continued about what kinds of arts and culture should be subsidised by public funds. Advocates of the 'traditional' approach to supporting 'excellence' fought the growing number of practitioners from 'alternative culture' movements that were growing in strength and numbers since the late 1960s, many of whom labelled the Arts Council's traditional approach to funding as 'elitist'. Due to the increase in grants and expansion of art colleges in the 1960s and therefore an increase in practicing artists leaving those institutions, "questions began to be asked by some of the people going through the process about their position in British society and their possible means of making a living" (Saltsman 2001, p.3).

The 1970s also saw the continuation from the 1960s of issue-based, political and socially engaged work. Stuart Sillars (in Moore-Gilbert 1994), for example refers to the "direct socio-political commitment" of artists during this decade practicing what he terms "engaged conceptualism". He refers to Victor Burgin's artwork, 'Today is the Tomorrow you were Promised Yesterday' (1976) as an example of this work in its "powerful social criticism, attacking the sterility of suburban life, the irrelevance of the advertiser's dream and the lie of the politician". During the 1970s Stephan Willats published 'Art and Social Function' also marking a growing practice of connecting art to society and rejecting the artist-audience divide (1976). For the 'Art into Society, Society into Art 'exhibition at the ICA (1974)[17], Metzger did not show any work; instead he called for Years without Art 1977-1980 in the exhibitions' catalogue[18]. Other exhibitions, events and conferences included APG's 'Art and Economics' exhibition at the Hayward Gallery (1971) and Maggie Pinhorn's exhibition 'Strike' at the Whitechapel Gallery (1971). In 1972 Joseph Beuys made his first visit to London to do his Information/Action performance at the Tate Gallery. Joseph Beuys at this time was developing theories of sculpture, democracy and green politics and during the performance lectures at the Tate during 1972 he presented and discussed some of these theories. He described them as "a blend of art, politics, personal charisma, paradox and Utopian proposition" (Tisdall, 1979, p.?). In 1974 there were two conferences: 'Art theory, Politics and Practice' conference at the R.C.A. (April 1974) and 'Culture in Crisis' conference at the I.C.A. (November 1974) and in 1978 there were two (Arts Council funded) exhibitions: 'Art for Whom?' (April-May) at the Serpentine, curated by Richard Cork[19] and 'Art for Society' (10 May - 18 June) at the Whitechapel Gallery, the latter seeming to answer the question of the first.

The Artists' Union
The Artists' Union (AU) was initiated in 1972 by a group of artists[20] who began by hosting workshops to discuss issues such as the artists' role in society, patronage,

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[17] Curated by Christos Joachimides and Norman Rosenthal involving artists Joseph Beuys, Gustav Metzger, Albrecht D., Dieter Hacker and Laus Staeck.
[18] The idea of the art strike was picked up again by Stewart Home in 1985.
[19] Artists included Conrad Atkinson, Peter Dunn and Loraine Leeson, Islington Schools Environmental Project, Public Art Workshop and Stephen Willats.
[20] Among others, members included Conrad Atkinson, Roland Miller, Charles Gosford (chairman), Richard Mann (secretary), Rosie Christmas (North West branch), Joan Jonas (London branch) and Peter Dunn (London branch rep).

Government policy for the Arts; policy within the Trades Union movement, the artist in education; art, science, technology and industry and women in art (Saltsman 2001, p.3). Originally based at the ICA, they then moved to Shaftsbury Avenue in 1975 to share premises with SPACE and AIR. The AU tried (unsuccessfully) to gain official recognition and union status from the TUC, as working with the Labour movement was thought to be more sustainable than short-term grants from the Arts Council and other bodies as this was considered "demeaning for artists"'(Chairman's Report to the Artists Union, 4th Annual Conference, 1980 cited in Saltsman 2001, p.9).

> "'How can we be a union - who is our employer?' 'Are we not Self-employed?' Art reaches so many other occupations...affiliation may require an act of imagination on the part of both artists and the TUC. We are still misrepresented as self-indulgent, self-glorifyingly offering genius for investment purposes. (Come to think of it how many millions of people receive money directly from the govt. in salary or benefit. Don't we need artists as well as traffic wardens?)" (Branch Report from South West 1980 cited in Saltsman 2001, p.16).

The AU lobbied the Arts Council (recommending changes in 1974), worked to improve employment rights (through establishing contracts for artists) and tried to secure resale rights for artists by setting up the Visual Artists Rights Steering Committee. The main aim of the Union was to,

> "establish the artists right to work - art is labour. It is not only the artists' work which has value but the artist himself. Only in acting together can artists achieve this, demanding the reform of the existing means of patronage and establishing new ones (in a sense creating their own employers)" (Artists Union Newsletter, February 1976 cited in Saltsman 2001, p.5).

It is significant that the artists' integrity was at the heart of the AU. Whereas nowadays such an association would perhaps be accused of churning out professional service providers, the Artists Union was keen to promote the recognition of the production of art by artists as their main activity that should be financially rewarded (Saltsman 2001, p.6). This included the work of community artists and others who were developing work beyond gallery or art institutional contexts. The Union was seen as a way of protecting themselves through collective action (ibid)[21]. According to Peter Dunn, an AU London branch representative, artists working outside the gallery system, as he was at the time, had three options for funding their practice:

> "1) find 'money work' to subsidise your art 2) Get lucky with the Arts Council or your Regional Arts Association 3) find a friendly community which values your skills and will pay you for using them" (Peter Dunn Sept 1980 cited in Saltsman, 2001, p.12).

He goes on to say that while there are placements in industry and planning offices, for example, these are "often cosmetic activities and you can bet that as soon as the artist

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[21] For example, the AU was also aware of the potential conflicts of interest that could arise between artists needing studio spaces and local community's need for housing (Chairman's Report to the Artists Union, 4th Annual Conference, 1980 cited in Saltsman 2001, p.10).

gets close to significant expression which conflicts with the status quo, then it's bye-bye" (ibid). Dunn's concerns imply there were restrictions on the commissions in terms of the artistic content of the work being produced.

The AU suffered in the 1980s because of the decline in membership, funding and resources meaning it did not have significant power to be taken seriously enough to effect change: "While striking performers can affect the economics of capital-intensive performance space, no one would notice if creative artists went on strike" (Saltsman 2001, p.17).

[I'd like to expand this section and try and find out the links between FACOP, the AU and APG, for example, and find out more about its demise in the 1980s].

Cultural Democracy or Democratisation of Culture?
During the 1970s there was growing awareness about the 'democratisation of culture' versus 'cultural democracy'. These debates are outlined in the report 'The Arts Council Phenomenon'[22] by Battersby (1981) in which she clarifies the difference between the democratisation of culture, which "implies efforts to make traditional and the best of contemporary culture more widely accessible" compared to cultural democracy as "a viewpoint [that] sees no particular value in doing any such thing and demands that priority should be given instead to developing the creative capacities of individuals with the help of animateurs and community artists" (ibid, p.40). Cultural democracy can be linked to the idea of breaking art down into everyday life, explored during this time by Beuys (Tisdall 1979), Lefebvre (1991, originally published in 1947) and Freire (1970, originally published in 1968) and community artists such as those projects begun in the 1960s such as Welfare State, InterAction, the Great Gorges Project, Craigmiller and David Harding as town artist in Glenrothes and initiatives in the 1970s including Telford Community Arts (set up in 1974 by Graham Woodruff and Cathy Makerras)[23] and City Arts in Dublin (founded in 1973). In the same year Telford Community Arts was established, Sylvia King and others established the 'radical community arts organisation' Jubilee Arts based in the West Midlands, the Blackfriars Community Photography project began in London[24] and David Cashman and Roger Fagin set up the Islington Schools Environmental Project.

Other writers at the time were very critical of cultural democracy and refer to its inevitable failure as signaled by FACOP in the late 1960s and written about by theorists such as Marcuse's (1965) and Habermas (in 'The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere' 1962, translated into English in 1989). Battersby goes on to state that:

> "It should be remembered that the term "community arts" means something
> different in Britain from Australia, New Zealand or the United States. In these and

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[22] The Arts Council Phenomenon is a report written by Dr Jean Battersby, Chief Executive of the Australia Council of the Conference of Commonwealth Arts Councils, sponsored by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation at the University of Kent, Canterbury, England, in April 1979.

[23] Telford Community Arts was set up to "find ways of helping local residents express and communicate their opinions, feelings and experiences of life and to participate fully in the creative and decision-making processes involved" in the development of the new town but "by the mid-eighties Telford had grown to the point where it had seven full-time workers (many recruited from residents) and an unashamedly left wing stance. By the beginning of the nineties they had ceased to exist – why?' (Sally Morgan in Art with People, 1995, p.?).

[24] See research by Paul Carter.

other countries, community or expansion arts are concerned with stirring the grass roots, so that arts council funds go to nourish that growth, usually by applying professional skills in some way to help improve the quality and vigor of amateur activity. In most of these countries community arts comprise workshops, festivals, artists-in-residence, community arts officers paid to work with local government, visiting tutors, animateurs, competitions and co-operatives. They are mainly rather conventional programmes involving strong amateur participation. From time to time, however, they spawn those wild aspirations which are the life blood of the arts." (Battersby 1979, p.41).

Significantly, Battersby goes on to report that in Britain there was a political purpose to the community arts movement aimed at realising cultural democracy[25]:

"In Britain, in addition to programmes of this type, some community artists see their work as the spearhead of the cultural democracy attack, a somewhat politicised movement with a strong and trenchant intellectual thrust or with unjustifiable intellectual pretensions, according to your point of view. The cultural democrats aim is to undermine what they see as insidious attempts by the instrument of a state establishment (the arts council) to impose an alien culture on the working class, thereby indulging in cultural colonialism or cultural imperialism." (Ibid).

One of the papers given at this conference was by Richard Hoggart (member of the Arts Council and Warden at Goldsmith's College at the time) entitled 'Excellence and Access: The Arts Council' (which was later published in Higher Education Quarterly 33 (4), pp.389–401). In this paper, Hoggart suggests the Arts Council should fund right wing community artists in order to demonstrate the Arts Council's neutrality and independence from the government.

Shortly after the Arts Council report on the 'Community Arts in Great Britain' was published (Baldry 1974), in 1975 Lord Gibson wrote the ACGB report 'The Arts in Hard Times' which illustrated the antagonisms towards the funding of community art. In it, Gibson condemns the term 'cultural democracy' being used by community artists as "this demographic doctrine insults the very people it is supposed to help" and accuses politically motivated artists of naïve romanticism[26]. Kelly (1984) argued that Gibson had misunderstood community art as a way of getting more people to like and understand art, that this was not a primary motivation of community artists, who were more concerned with enabling people to have more power and say in the direction of their own lives. It could be argued that this misunderstanding had already begun with the Baldry Report.

Art & Language, in their journal of the same name, wrote an essay in response to the exhibitions 'Art for Whom?' (April-May, 1978, Serpentine Gallery, curated by Richard

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[25] It is interesting that this fight for cultural democracy is still relevant 30 years later with the document published by the Cultural Policy Collective in 2004 entitled, Beyond Social Inclusion. Towards Cultural Democracy.
[26] These views are echoed in the views of The Manifesto Club in 2007/8. According to Claire Fox, "efforts to dilute the arts for the benefit of 'the socially excluded' are patronising rather than democratic" (Institute of Ideas website, 2008).

Cork[27]) and 'Art for Society' (10 May - 18 June, 1978, Whitechapel Gallery) in which they stated:

> "Exhibitions of art-for-people, love-the-people curators and help-the-people critics must be seen as essentially revitalisers of bourgeois subjectivist or idealist 'disciplines'…The result of socially progressive art ought to be less not more exhibitions, less not more experts on socially progressive art". (Art & Language 1980, p.9).

According to Peter Suchin, for Art & Language, such artists, curators and critics are "agents of bourgeois legitimation":

> "…Now bourgeois art teachers pretend they are socialist artists…It is the same recurring problem: the historical conditions they are really in are ignored in favour of the historical conditions they want and need, believe, feel intimidated into supporting, feel as though they ought to be in." (Suchin 2007)

There was confusion between the project of cultural democracy and a misunderstanding of this as a patronising democratisation of culture. This misinterpretation perhaps came about because the same value-systems of judging art used to understand and interpret gallery-based art were applied to that of community and non-gallery-based art practices. This issue was recognised by Su Braden in 1978 during her Gulbenkian funded research into community based art activities when she recognised the need to adapt the language and 'vocabulary' if the context of artistic production changes: "The truth is that the language of the international art market is mute in the context of a housing estate" (Braden 1978, pp.113-4).

Braden's research was a comparative study between the practice of "artists who were placed by funding bodies in new social contexts" with that of artists who have set up situations themselves. She mentions the gap between the concepts of the funding bodies and the artists who have set up their own residencies: "This difference can be summarised in the conflict between the notion of popularising art and the notion of artistic democracy" (ibid). So here we can see the beginnings of a fundamental divide – that between the top-down democratisation of culture and the bottom-up movement of cultural democracy.

> "An artist 'placed' in a new context appears all too frequently to feel the job in hand is to take his or her art to the people, with the consequent expectation of a response or degree of participation that is based on a relationship between 'professional' and amateur'. Rather the community artists' expects / insists creative equality with members of those communities" (ibid, p.108).

As the practice evolved community artists placed more specific demands on funding bodies and at the same time some artists reacted against the top-down model of art being employed as a panacea for socially deprived areas. Braden writes about the lack of long term funding for community art, stressing that proposals should have come from

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[27] Artists included Conrad Atkinson, Peter Dunn and Loraine Leeson, Islington Schools Environmental Project, Public Art Workshop and Stephen Willats

the communities themselves rather than advertising for community artists to be 'placed' in communities stating there has been a "lack of theoretical analysis attaching to arts patronage and administration" (Braden 1978, p.121). Braden states how often contrived, artificial proposals rely on the "unfortunate widespread view that community art can be prefabricated with a set of components" (ibid, p.123). Her study found that artists responding to advertisements to work in deprived areas to 'animate' communities were rarely successful (ibid). Again, she remarks that this is based on the confused misunderstanding of 'taking the arts to the people' – rather than cultural democracy:

> "This implication is the paternalistic one, that there are 'professional' artists who are able to 'animate' and 'enliven' and that the people who live there are not! The causes of deprivation in such an area, apparent as they are, are ignored" (Braden 1978, p.123).

Braden preferred it if the artist has been working in an area already, through a self-initiated project and then for the community to seek funding to keep the artist there. She stated how this required a new kind of long-term commitment from funders but that often funding bodies preferred to fund new initiatives of their own rather than continue to fund existing community arts projects. Braden suggested one-off funding grants were both "alienatory and temporary" but still projects continued to be funded this way rather than through long-term commitment and year-by-year programming (Braden 1978, p.124). It is interesting that 30 years later Braden's suggestions have still not been addressed and instead the format of advertising for short term socially engaged artists is now commonplace.

[I need to add here more background and analysis of why short-term funding is still the norm and perhaps point out any anomalies. Did her book have any impact on policy?]

Policy
The beginnings of funding for community art
Community arts formed an aspect of the 'new activities' that the Arts Council had been investigating from 1968. Following the work of the 'new activities committee' of 1968-1970 and 'experimental projects committee' from 1970-73 1974 marked another important rung on the ladder of public funding for community arts as the year the Arts Council established a Community Arts Committee and published Professor Harold Baldry's report titled 'Community Arts in Great Britain'. Prior to this, the Arts Council had not recognised community art as worthy of public funding. The Committee was set up to investigate whether it was the responsibility of the Arts Council to fund community art and was followed by the subsequent establishment of the Community Arts Evaluation Working group from 1975-77.

Applications to the Experimental Projects Committee from 1970-3 fell into categories of performance or community arts (BIT Information Services 1969). Baldry, in his report, points out that community art was a distinct category to 'experimental art', explaining how 'experimental' was not an appropriate term as it implied a relationship to an excepted tradition, which he wrote, in the case of community art, did not exist. Referring to the brief for his report to "consider the relationship between experimental work and community arts projects", he stated,

"while community arts work is new and therefore in a sense "experimental" by no means all experimental work in the arts belongs to community arts, and therefore the two do not coincide" (Baldry 1974, p.1?).

On 26 February 1974, the Arts Council held a seminar to discuss the meaning of the term 'community art'; the criteria which had been used to assess whether projects or groups should be funded and to what extent the Arts Council and Regional Arts Associations should be subsidising this area of practice (Community Arts Committee 1974). Baldry raised the issue that community art may have nothing to do with the values of art and excellence promoted by the Arts Council and therefore might not be the responsibility of the Arts Council:

"Community artists are in most cases rendering a service to society and deserve public help, financial and otherwise. The question arises whether their work has any relevance to the aims of the Arts Council, and whether in consequence the Arts Council should be involved." (Ibid, p.2?).

Baldry recommended the Arts Council support community art, suggesting that funding should come primarily from the Regional Arts Associations, with support from the central ACGB office; that match funding should come from local authorities and that "recipient(s) of an award should be allowed freedom in spending it as their enterprise develops" (ibid). He also writes that these applications be subject to close examination and continuous assessment (ibid, p.3?).

The Arts Council was not the only funding body to be funding community art at this time. The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and Manpower Services Commission (the government organisation for retraining unemployed people) were already funding community art activities. The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation's policy, for example, was to place artists in community contexts only at the invitation of that community (Braden 1978, p.111).

Categorising 'community art'
The gradual and at times turbulent process of incorporating community arts into the Arts Council meant the accepted meaning of the term 'community art' was discussed within the Council in order to reach a common understanding of what it encompassed. In his report, for example, Baldry defines community artists as "a distinct and identifiable species" who,

"carry their work into the environment of the community itself – streets, pubs, etc. What matters most is not an organisational form, nor bricks and mortar, but the commitment and dedication of the individuals involved." (Baldry 1974, p.1).

Managers and funders of community art from the GLAA, Gulbenkian Foundation and Home Office, for example, that attended an Arts Council seminar about community art on 26 February 1974, were recorded in the minutes of the seminar, as describing community art as people-based, involving participants; that is was about the process rather than an end product (James Saunders, Writer and Chairman of Drama Panel, GLAA) and that it was as an instrument for education or social work (Richard Mills,

Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation). In the context of social development, community art was thought to produce greater community cohesion (Anthony Wraight, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation). For others, the principle criterion for funding was 'social need' (Mr. Sandiford, Home Office, Urban Aid) (REF?). With these various definitions being proposed by the managers and funders (rather than practitioners) of community art, came an enthusiasm for the practice and a suggestion that the Arts Council, along with the Regional Arts Associations and Local Authorities should fund this work as it signalled an important shift in practice that the Arts Council should recognise:

> "it constitutes much more than a minor footnote in our cultural history. For community arts is no temporary fashion. A new generation is turning upside down many cherished shibboleths about education, planning, health, and community development where the same concepts of self-reliance, process and participation are no less dominant." (anon. 1974).

The opening up of the arts to incorporate education, welfare, health and community development, meant for some, that this was no longer art but something else. In a letter from community worker Chris Elphick to Jeremy Hutchinson (Chairman, Community Arts Evaluation Working Group at ACGB) dated 6 September 1976, he stated: "I see community arts as an important and developing part of a general community development process and not as an 'art form' in its own right" (Elphick, 1976, p.1).

Elphick suggested the Arts Council should fund community art but not in isolation to other funding bodies, suggesting a national community development advisory body that could bring these different funders together to consider the future of supporting this practice "in a more organised way". While Elphick saw the potential overlaps with different sectors, others were not happy with the ambiguity of the term community art and preferred to keep it in a separate category. This meant the traditional art forms could be maintained.[28] Jim Elder, Under Secretary for the Association of District Councillors, questioned the broad definitions of community art being given by the Baldry report, saying that projects such as "children's entertainment trips and street parties would not seem to suggest very great skills. 'Improvement to housing' can hardly be described as a community art" (Elder 1976). Keith Lomas (Chief Exec and Town Clerk, Bournemouth) in a letter to Stephen Rhodes (Secretary, Association of District Councillors) also remarked on the lack of clarity in the discussion document:

> "It would appear that the Arts Council is trying to create an 'exact science' out of the diverse and spontaneous activities of local people who wish to provide recreation and enjoyment for themselves within their own area. This is particularly noticeable in the professional jargon which is used throughout the document. No satisfactory definition of the generic term "community arts" is given and, whilst one can sympathise with attempts to establish theatre or other arts groups by local people, this should be seen in the context of a specific art form and not as part of an organised programme of community arts incorporating activities which can hardly be described as art." (Lomas 1976, p.1).

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[28] It is interesting that by the 1990s the category 'community art' had disappeared from the Arts Council and while it was presumed this was because the values of community art had spread through all sectors of the Council, many community artists and activists were sceptical of this and felt community art as a movement had been lost.

The Association of Community Artists

In 1972, a conference at the ICA on community art led to the establishment of the Association of Community Artists (ACA) whose founding members were Bruce Birchall, Martin Goodrich and Maggie Pinhorn[29]. Owen Kelly in his publication 'Community, Art and the State. Storming the Citadels' (1984) describes how ACA lobbied the Arts Council for funds for community art but as their applications were accepted, that this marked the beginning of the depolitisation of community art through state funding. Kelly remarked that while some community artists were successful in getting funds their success led to their downfall as funding directed community artists "away from the areas of danger in which its founders had been dabbling, and towards altogether safer pastures". This shift has had an inevitable knock on effect on socially engaged artists ever since. Understanding the reasons and effects of this move will go some way towards tackling the dilemma of being paid to be critical and political as an arts practitioner today. What have been the long-term effects of the "collapse of the community arts movement into the waiting arms of the state" (Kelly 1984, p.14)?

[I need to find out more about the activities of ACA – I have not found their archive yet, only references in the Arts Council archives]

Despite ACA eventually becoming its own worst enemy, Sally Morgan, who was a member of ACA and who went on to become the head of Art and Social Context at the University of the West of England in the 1990s, stated:

> "In my opinion ACA was the single most important element in the forging of the community arts movement…Although later criticised for its reluctance to take a unified ideological stance, it provided a network of practitioners that was never bettered." (Morgan in Dickson 1995, p.17).

According to Morgan it was the ideological splits between the 'Urbanists' and the 'Ruralists' and the 'Hard left' and the 'Soft left' within ACA that, whilst this led to stimulating debates among its members, was the path towards ACA's self-destruction as they all began fighting for the same small pot of money (Morgan 1995, p.18). The Association was disbanded in 1980 and a new Association for Community Arts was formed, which was open to anyone to join, not just artists.

[I need to find out more about why and how ACA disbanded – what were the reasons and repercussions?]

Challenging the system

The introduction of community arts as a potential funding strand within the Arts Council caused disruption to the existing system of judging applications which relied on a modernist understanding of art which generally involved art carried out by artists resulting in end products for exhibition. Community arts did not fit the existing categories or criteria and unless the Council was prepared to rethink its whole remit, community arts would have to find a home in another, separate category. The introduction of a debate and potential policy on community arts within the Arts Council triggered a wider

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[29] Maggie Pinhorn made Tunde's Film with teenagers living in East London in 1973.

questioning of the existing criteria and value-judgements advocated by the Council on what and how they funded art. It was suggested that community art could not be judged (in terms of what to fund) in the same way as the type of art they had hitherto been funding.

As mentioned in correspondence from Chris Elphick (1976) and Keith Lomas (1976) there were some reservations as to the status of community art as 'art' implying that it should perhaps not be funded just by the Arts Council as it was not art but social work. According to a report from Eastern Arts Association on the Community Arts Committee, for example, (dated 15 November 1976), it stated that its criteria for funding would be based on "artistic quality and community skills" and that they would not fund activities that "local government services should be responsible". For East Midlands Arts Association there were issues that their main focus had been on funding the fine arts and professional artists and that community art "stands our previous policy on its head" as it "is concerned with the participation by the masses of the people in all the creative processes of art production and the realisation of their own potential for creativity" (East Midlands Arts Association 1976, p.1).

The introduction of community arts on the agenda also challenged the timescales for funding. Applications for funding from community artists demonstrated the need for longer-term funding (also recognised by Braden in 1978):

> "For instance, the South Normanton application described the worker they required as a 'community magician' whose active participation they foresaw for years rather than months." (East Midlands Arts Association 1976, p.1).

There was also a suggestion at this time that the Community Arts Committee might start to consider funding applications from communities as well as from community artists (ibid). Some of those involved in the Community Arts Committee questioned how to assess the applications coming from community artists and also the effects on those involved.

> "There are virtually no criteria and it is difficult to see how these will emerge because objectives will differ in quantity and quality. However the final touch stone will be the effect on people's lives and the opinions of the population concerned should be obtained in assessment and performance." (Ibid).

In a letter from Ruth Glick, Co-ordinator of Shoreham Youth Workshop to Jeremy Hutchinson, Chairman, Community Arts Evaluation Working Group (1976), she suggests that funding bodies have judged "excellence and standards measured on one particular scale only". She suggests their criteria exclude community art which she sees as being about professional artists as "guides and stimulators [for] amateurs doing the work". For Glick, community art is an educational tool which "teaches people about themselves and possibilities available to them through the medium of the arts" and which aims to enable people to have more say in the ways their lives are run ("if this a subversive wish then I am a subversive"). She calls upon the Arts Council to reconsider their terms of reference for judging applications and implores them to recognise art happening in an educational context (Glick 1976, p.1).

The Community Arts Evaluation Working Party continued to struggle to develop methods and criteria for assessing community arts activity. John Buston, a member of this Committee, suggested there were two areas that should be addressed during assessment, that of the "artefacts produced by a particular project" that would be assessed using the Arts Council's traditional criteria for assessment ("how appropriate is the image used in communicating the artists' vision, is the work produced appropriate to its context and so on"). The other aspect would be, he suggests, "how far is the community involved in the stages of the creative process, how far are channels of communication being opened up within the community as a result of community arts projects activity" (Buston 1976, p.1). So here, Buston includes the 'artefacts' produced during community art as part of their assessment by the Arts Council, applying the same measures of appropriateness and quality used across the Arts Council.

For others, the assessment criteria of the Arts Council were not relevant, as community art was not about art at all but more about "the integrity of an individual's feeling life and each persons emotional confidence and sense of self-responsibility" therefore deducing that trying to assess this work was a futile exercise. Instead projects should be funded by "clear sighted, sensitive judgement; by intuitive feel" (Anon. 'Arts Centres and Community Arts', 1974, p.1).

'Repressive tolerance' continues?
While it appears ACGB were responding to demands from the Association of Community Artists, there were many unclear side effects of this dramatic shift in ACGB policy on community art practice. Some critics of the Arts Council's adoption of community art saw it as a patronising democratisation of culture which further strengthened and maintained the values of the state at the expense of those fighting for cultural democracy (Kelly, 1984). While some practitioners were keen to receive more support for their work, others were dubious as to the effects more funding and responsibilities would have. Certainly, some in the Arts Council at this time were looking eagerly to community artists and trying to find ways of funding these new "distinct and identifiable species" (Baldry, 1974, p.?). For a practice that some in the Committee described as social work and an instrument for education, it is somewhat surprising that only two years prior to the setting up of the Community Arts Committee, the Arts Council ceased to fund the Artists' Placement Group on the basis that "APG is more concerned with Social Engineering than with pure art" (Tate website, timeline of APG's activities), suggesting that some in the Arts Council still believed the responsibility of the Arts Council was to fund 'pure art' and not social engineering, despite the introduction of the Community Arts Committee soon after the decision to stop funding APG.

A concern for some members of the Association of Community Artists was that the funding of community art would lead to another period of 'repressive tolerance' (as referred to by FACOP in 1969), where the Arts Council would support a version of community art practice that is not challenging, radical or political, but a soft, friendly, apolitical version of events. According to Kelly (1984), the Community Arts Evaluation Working Group was set up because there were concerns about the political activities of some community art groups and reminded the Arts Council, "there is clearly no justification for funding any activity which is not art based" (ibid). Criticisms of the Baldry report, coming from the Association for District Councilors, for example, illustrated further points of contention, namely that the work described in the Baldry report was not

art and that it appeared to be politically biased (Elder 1976, p.1). This political bias refers to community art's aims of cultural democracy, of political change and "the long term objective being to control the means and resources to enable a wide range of creative activities to take place" (ibid).

While the Baldry report led to the releasing of money for community arts activity, the vagueness of the terms meant it could easily be high jacked to serve other agendas than those of practitioners (Kelly 1984, p.?). It has since been noted by Doherty (2000) and Albert (2003) that the move to fund community art by the Arts Council at this time signaled a shift in policy which effectively de-radicalised or depoliticised an otherwise radical, politicised practice, "excluding the more radical elements [and] profiling work with disadvantaged 'target groups'" (Doherty 2000, p.?). This concern can perhaps be related to the work of FACOP from 1969 towards an Artists' Council through their critique of the Arts Council's creation of a New Activities Committee, which while creating new funding opportunities also took control over content away from the practitioners themselves into the hands of bureaucrats and administrators.

> "As funding priorities began to dictate agendas and the "sweet equity" of the collective was harnessed for institutionalised welfare, the line between socially directed, funding-led creative activity and a critical and experimental artistic practice was drawn." (Doherty 2000, p.?).

Artist, David Harding stated how in the mid 1970s he believed artists should have been negotiating directly with local authorities and did not need the Arts Council to intervene on their behalf. This was demonstrated in the work of APG at the time, for example. He suggested that as the Arts Council started to take up this role of intermediary, they did so with the modernist value systems used for art as the only way it knew how, and as a result created "barriers and obstructions between artists and the constituencies":

> "The possibilities being explored by artists were seriously damaged by this growth in art bureaucracy and led, for a crucial period, to a neutralisation in the development of public art. " (Harding 1997, p. 15).

The Community Arts Committee marked a shift towards an understanding of community art as being more about providing solutions to social problems than about radical cultural democracy. As Kelly had warned twenty years previously, Albert (2003) goes on to point out how this move to financially support community art meant the radical elements of the practice were eliminated and were interpreted as artists who "worked with children" and "disadvantaged elements of society". Crucially, Albert makes this link between community art and socially engaged art:

> "…this was when policy-makers and state funders first encountered the idea that "socially engaged art" could be a picturesque and inexpensive alternative to social services." (Albert 2003, p.?).

As referred to by Morgan (1995), Doherty (2000) and Albert (2003), Baldry in his report while referring to the aim community artists had to effect social and political change, softened the political or radical motivations of some of these practices, preferring to

highlight their ameliorative effects ("enriching an otherwise barren existence") and work with children:

> "[a community artists'] primary aim is to bring about change – psychological, social, or political – in a community; and in doing so they hope to widen and deepen its sensibilities and to enrich its otherwise barren existence. They seek to do this by involving the community in the activities they promote; and because children are most easily involved they often work to a large extent with children and hope through this to involved the adults as well." (Baldry 1974, p.?).

Some critics were aware that the top-down prescription of community arts the Arts Council was issuing was missing a vital ingredient, the communities themselves. Penny McPhilips, of North West Arts in a letter to Elizabeth Thomas (Chairman of Community Arts Community, ACGB) dated February 1976 outlined that the assessment of the Community Arts Committee focused on: "whether its existence has stimulated greater interest in community art; whether projects have developed irrespective of the committee's existence and whether the committee's work is harmful" (Mc Philips 1976, p.1). In response to this assessment she argued that while the Community Arts Committee had "stimulated academic interest among journalists, arts administrators, professional artists, community and social workers it had not directly influenced communities themselves, chiefly because it is too remote" (Mc Philips 1976, p.1).

[I need to find out why this failed – why did the funding for community art not reach the communities themselves? Were there any other critics and evidence of this failure? This is really relevant to current critiques of funding socially engaged art in areas of regeneration – does it actually reach those people it is aimed at?]

Peter Day, from the Solent People's Theatre, Southampton warned that the community arts may begin to copy the existing Arts Council structures too closely as community artists become professionalised and funded, leaving the communities still without resources:

> "We must be aware that at any time, perhaps already, we will be faced with an elitism in Community Arts of a political, social and artistic nature as serious as any elitism in the traditional arts…What efforts has the Committee made to reach Communities/ Community Groups who are unaware of the growth of community arts and know nothing of the funds available?" (Day 1976, p.1).

This concern is echoed through the 1980s and 90s to today. Rather than projects being generated by communities themselves, artists are often parachuted in and projects imposed and directed by artists, the Arts Council, arts organisations or local authorities. There was concern, too in the 1970s that the categorisation of community art into social and educational work within ACGB and the Community Arts Committee went against the cross-disciplinary and informal networked nature of the practices and that the Arts Council would judge projects against there own criteria rather than those of the communities themselves.

1980s - The Context:
1979 was the beginning of Margaret Thatcher's eleven-year leadership as prime minister. During this decade she began to dismantle the welfare state, leading the way towards the privatisation of public services. The Cold War continued until 1989 with the Americans holding cruise nuclear missiles at their airbase on Greenham Common where activists set up the Women's Peace Camp in protest from 1981-2000. The prolific acceptance of rising neo-liberalism, individualism and consumer capitalism led to a backlash by those refusing to play the game that manifested itself in the form of punk, or, for the political and cultural theorists, in the form of Marxism Today. Movements, such as cultural democracy and community art were openly aligned with left-wing campaigns for socialism. In the 1980s, another world was still deemed possible, as unfettered capitalism had still not completely taken its hold. The 1980s, however, became the defining decade that saw capitalisms complete infiltration and by the end of the 1980s career prospects, professionalism and marketing replaced plans for 'the revolution'.

Policy
During the 1980s there were contradictory policies and approaches to arts funding being carried out simultaneously. This section outlines the Conservative government's policies on culture and the attempts by some artists and Labour activists to establish and intervene into the progressively commercialised cultural field with socialist cultural policies. The increasing conservatism of an official, national cultural policy (delivered by the Arts Council) in the 1980s was at odds with the Labour-controlled Greater London Council (GLC)[30] which was able, over five years (1981-86) to support relatively radical, socialist, politicised art practices and campaigns before its eventual abolition by the Conservative Government in 1986[31]. The Conservative Arts Minister, Norman St John-Stevas ordered cuts in funding to 41 arts organisations in 1980. Further reductions in public spending during the 1980s, led to a 'crisis' in arts funding and the debates between excellence and populism or elitism versus instrumentalism continued into the 1990s.

Conservative Arts Policy
Public subsidy and conservative politics do not necessarily sit happily together. The Thatcher government was in the throws of dismantling and privatising the Welfare State during the 1980s and so it may be considered odd that they continued to provide public subsidy for the arts. Writing in Marxism Today, critic Peter Dormer suggested the government continued to finance the Arts Council because "it makes sense to get someone else to administer for you and take the blame" (Dormer 1982, p.33). Arts Minister, Norman St John-Stevas at the time warned that the arts world "must come to terms with the situation and accept the fact that government policy in general has decisively tilted away from expansion of the public to the enlargement of the private sector" (Shaw 1986, p.40). Despite increasing demands from artists and arts organisations for public funding through the Arts Council[32], the Conservative government was preparing the ground for increasing restrictions on funding, creating their own

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[30] The GLC were the top-tier local government administrative body for Great London from 1965-1986.
[31] In 1983 the Conservative Government produced the report Streamlining the Cities: Government proposals for Reorganising Local Government in Greater London and the Metropolitan Counties which lead to the dismantling of the GLC and Metropolitan County Councils in 1986 (the Metropolitan County Councils were Greater Manchester, Merseyside, South Yorkshire, Tyne and Wear, West Midlands and West Yorkshire).
[32] In 1980 the Arts Council established the Education Unit to cope with increasing demands for advice and guidance from both arts and education bodies (http://www.vam.ac.uk/vastatic/wid/ead/ACGB/ACGBf.html).

demands that the arts sector become more self-sufficient, commercially viable and less dependent on Britain's tax-payers.

Debates circled at this time around the role the State played in subsidising the arts, some calling for the termination of public subsidy altogether. Simon Jenkins, editor of The Economist, for example, thought public subsidy was a "demoralising system which keeps its victims cocooned in a 1960s time warp of jaded radicalism" (cited in Shaw 1986, p.90). The Selsdon Group of Conservatives and Kingsley Amis, argued that subsidy was undemocratic, that it was a "breeding ground for left-wing arts" and "a form of government control of people's lives and decisions" (cited in Shaw 1986, p.32). The political economist, David Sawyers, in his essay, 'Should the Taxpayer Support the Arts?' (1993), called for the abolition of the Department of National Heritage (set up in 1992) and the Arts Council and that instead, "any future assistance to the arts should be administered by the Department of Education" (Sawyers 1993, p.38). This was based on his argument that public subsidy for the arts should only be given "if the educational subjects they assist are considered important, and if the supply of the relevant artistic activities or museum is considered inadequate to support education effectively" (ibid, p.30). The subsidy would only be justified if it resulted in improvements to local economies and that this may include school visits to "galleries and theatres as this would enable them to enjoy [i.e. pay for] the arts later in their lives" (ibid, p.37), but, he says, "there is little reason for British taxpayers to subsidise facilities for the benefit of foreign tourists" (ibid, p.37-8).

Conservative arguments against the Arts Council and public subsidy were based on a concern that public funding dictated the content of artistic production and that for art to exist in a society that "values individual freedom", it should be up to the consumers of culture to decide what they want to spend their money on, rather than the government deciding what is good for them. In other words, cultural production should be regulated by the market rather than protected by the State. This is a marked shift from the Arts Council's Michael Astor's claims in 1970 for the ACGB to be the arbiter of 'standards' (Astor 1970) It was considered that government funding of the arts could affect the opinions of artists to the extent that "the value of the arts as a debating ground may be *reduced* by subsides" (Sawyers 1993, p.29). Sawyers' anti-subsidy argument is based on his assertions that increasing subsidy to the arts merely increased dependency on the state and that instead, the state should encourage arts institutions to become financially self-sufficient; that "[m]useums would also have to accelerate their change to more commercial policies, and probably adopt universal charging policies" (ibid, p.41). He believed that subsidising the arts led to arts institutions becoming *more* elitist because this meant they did not have to worry so much about attracting audiences (ibid, p.32).

As Alan Tomkins, arts advisor at the GLC stated in an article in the community art journal Another Standard (Spring 1984), the notion of 'freedom' in the 1980s was firmly based on commercial market freedom rather than democratic freedoms:

> "Freedom *from* State intervention.
> Freedom *to* Compete and Survive.
> Freedom *for* the laws of Capital Accumulation." (Tomkins 1984, p. 21).

Other factors which indicated the Conservative's influence on cultural policy being delivered and understood in market terms was when, in 1983 the National Audit Office introduced performance indicators and targets to the arts and when the government established the Business Sponsorship Incentive Scheme in 1984 to support and encourage the private support of the arts (Sawyers 1993, p.21).

The Arts Council
Despite outspoken critics against any form of public subsidy and major cuts to the arts[33], the Conservative Government did not abolish the Arts Council out right. At this time, however, the Arts Council was seen to undergo a tightening of the leash and reduction of the arms length principle.

An early example of funding dictating practice was the censorship by the Arts Council of a work by Conrad Atkinson, which he says was the Arts Council preparing for the incoming Conservative government and provided a useful educational tool for those artists who thought the Arts Council was neutral. This act of censorship demonstrated to Atkinson that the Arts Council was "perfectly happy to support artists who decorate the system, but once you start to make fundamental criticisms, then all of a sudden they are wary of their next negotiations with the Treasury. So in fact culture is being politically manipulated" (Atkinson 1981, p.26). The project that was censored was 'A Children's Story' (1978) which was removed from the Arts Council exhibition, 'Lives at the Serpentine in the same year'[34]. The work was commissioned by the Slade to commemorate its 150th anniversary and was presented to the Queen Mother who was then Chancellor of the university. The piece documented how twenty years after Distillers Biochemical had introduced the drug thalidomide into the country, they had still not compensated over 80 children who were victims of the drug. Distillers Alcohol products carried the Royal Warrant and it was this piece Conrad and the Slade presented to the Queen Mother. The Arts Council then went on to remove the work from their exhibition at the Serpentine and Atkinson sued the Arts Council for breach of contract[35].

Some of the key members of the Arts Council were sceptical of public subsidy, including its Chairman, Sir William Rees-Mogg who thought, "subsidy encourages extravagance" and "weakens the sinews of self-help" (Shaw 1986, p.34-35). A new member to enter the Arts Council in 1980 included the Treasurer of the Conservative Party, Alastair McAlpine who had also expressed anti-subsidy views (Shaw 1986, p.43). The appointment of McAlpine signaled for some, such as Roy Shaw (Secretary-General of the Arts Council), the politicisation of the Arts Council:

> "I saw his (McAlpine's) appointment as an omen of the impending politicisation of the Arts Council and the erosion of the celebrated 'arm's length principle' which guaranteed the Council's independence from political influence." (Shaw 1986, p.43).

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[33] The Arts Council budget was reduced by £6 million in 1981/2 and in the same year the same year ceased to fund individual artists in literature and visual arts (Hutchison 1982, p.112).
[34] Atkinson describes this story in 'A Children's Story, or the Material Relation of the Artist to Society' in Conrad Atkinson: Picturing the System, 1981 Pluto Pres and ICA Projects (exhibition catalogue, ICA, 25 November-23 December 1981).
[35] In 1981 InterAction produced the 'Arts Council Show Trial' at the Tricycle Theatre, Kilburn, based on The Thalidomide Affair a play by Ivor Denbina about Atkinson's ACGB court case.

According to Shaw, another significant moment in this politicisation was the sacking of Richard Hoggart from his role as vice-chairman of the Arts Council, leaving only Shaw as the sole 'left-wing' voice in a membership of 21 at the Arts Council. The former Tory councillor, Luke Rittner, replaced Shaw in 1983. According to Peter Smith writing in Marxism Today, Hoggart, while being centre-left, was "sceptical about ideas for democratising the Arts Council" and "community arts policy", as was Shaw (Smith 1982, p.31)[36]. Shaw points out his views on this as well:

> "Hoggart was 'of the left', but a very moderate one who (ironically) had been the strongest critic on the Council of any move by left-wing arts organisations to use art for political propaganda." (Shaw 1986, p.43).

The views of the Conservative Party towards privatisation and against the intervention of the State, were expressed by Sir William Rees-Mogg (chairman of the Arts Council) in a speech to an invited audience at the London headquarters of IBM on 11 March 1985 entitled 'The Political Economy of Art' in which he argued for a change in the taxation system so that individuals could choose to support art on their own terms, concluding that "the state should continue to help the arts – but the arts should look first to themselves and to their audiences, for their future and their growth" (editorial, Another Standard, May/June 1985, p.4).

Rees-Mogg's talk 'Political Economy of Art' was delivered one year after the publication of the Arts Council's 'Glory of the Garden' report, which outlined the devolution of the Arts Council to the Regional Arts Associations in partnership with local authorities and private sponsors. The House of Commons Select Committees for Science, Media and the Arts had also published a report on 'Public Funding and the Arts' (REF?) which made recommendations to the Arts Council to provide more support for arts in the regions and also noted how the arts were "irresponsibly underfunded" (ACGB 1984, p.2). These issues of underfunding and London centricity were also raised by the Policy Studies Institute's 'A Hard Fact to Swallow' (1982) and Clive Priestley's report on the Royal Opera House and Royal Shakespeare Company (REF?). Some considered these moves to outsource and decentralise the provision and responsibility of funding to the regional arts associations as diluting the impact of the Arts Council whereas others welcomed the move. By this point, the Arts Council had already devolved the funding of community arts to the regions, when the Community Arts Committee was replaced by a Combined Arts Panel which was responsible for "national community arts clients, arts centres and special applications" (editorial, Another Standard, March 1982, p.3).

> "The Arts Council…adopted the shit screen of the armslength principle for itself and devolved community arts to the regional arts associations thus reducing again its own commitment to change and cutting off community arts initiatives from Arts Council expertise." (Dormer 1982, p.34).

The move to consider primarily the economic gains (seeing culture as an *industry*) and pressure to ensure the arts were working for their money, can be seen in the publication of two books published in this decade: 'Partnership: Making arts money work harder'

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[36] Note it was Hoggart who had previously stated in 1979 that the Arts Council should fund right wing artists in order to demonstrate the Arts Council's neutrality and independence from the government (Battersby 1981).

(ACGB 1986) and 'The Economic Importance of the Arts in Britain' written by Myerscough, funded by the Gulbenkian Foundation and published by the Policy Studies Institute in 1988.

The Community Art Movement in the 1980s
By the early 1980s community art organisations and projects were receiving funding from the Arts Council, the GLC, the GLAA, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and government quangos such as Manpower Services Commission, Urban Aid and Inner Cities Partnership. With the election of the Conservatives in 1979, community art practice had become so well established, the GLAA Community Art Panel hosted a forum entitled 'Community arts – where are we now?' (6 July 1980 at the Commonwealth Institute) which looked back at the previous ten years of the community arts movement. However, despite the practice becoming recognised by funders (such as the Gulbenkian Foundation, GLC, GLAA and Arts Council), the disbanding of the Association of Community Artists and the devolution of community art by ACGB was a set back to many community artists who felt this signalled a fragmentation of the movement.

> "The loss of a national framework, to me, meant loss of focus for the movement, and the opening up of membership to include representatives of the funding bodies meant that we had no place to organise when our needs did not coincide with their desires." (Morgan in Dickson 1995, p. 21).

Worries over the regionalisation of the Association for Community Arts and the potential fragmentation of the community arts movement were further entrenched upon news of the Arts Council's decision to devolve responsibility of community arts funding to the regions. Some called for the need for a centralised steering committee (editorial, Another Standard, May/June 1981, p.2).[37]

> "Community art is in danger of becoming a trendy catchphrase the use of which will for a short time guarantee funding. This will be to the long-term detriment of the movement, and could result in the dilution of the term until it is meaningless, and guarantee a certain backlash sometime in the near future. The removal of community art from the Arts Council could inadvertently accelerate this process…" (Another Standard, March 1982, p.3).

Elizabeth Hocking, Karen Merkel and Sarah Mudd argued for work to be done at policy level through the establishment of a Council for Community Culture:

> "Joining together with other groups under a new umbrella organisation was one strategy for achieving greater funding, greater control over funding and great potential for a dynamic interchange of ideas. It may not be the right strategy: A state funded council for community culture presupposes the benevolent paternalism of the capitalist state. What we must do, perhaps, is to analyse the inherent contradictions between the two, and then informed by that analysis,

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[37] Pippa Smith states that devolution could lead to the fragmentation of the community arts movement (Robin Guthrie talks to Pippa Smith interview (Smith and Guthrie 1982, p.9).

develop the strategies by which to achieve the policy." (Hocking, Merkel and Mudd 1982, p.19).

With the discontinuation of ACA, The Shelton Trust was established in 1980 as an education and information body which complemented the campaigning work of the Association for Community Arts.[38] The Trust published the bi-monthly magazine Another Standard (1981-86) and held seminars and conferences (Another Standard, May/June 1981, p.8). According to Kelly (one of the editors of Another Standard), one of the reasons for establishing The Shelton Trust was because the funding bodies argued that ACA was a "political body, which they could not fund, but could fund its educational and information aspects if these were a separate body" (Kelly 1984, p.?).

With Another Standard and the Shelton Trust, the community art movement was developing in strength in the early 1980s. This was further helped by the left wing GLC's funding of community art practices. Privatisation and individualism promoted by the Thatcher government meant there was an obvious enemy in the 1980s which artists and activists responded to with work and actions dealing with issues of identity, feminism, gay rights, racism, workers rights and community activism. Conferences to have taken place in the 1980s, for example, included 'Cultural Politics and Visual Representation' (with Loraine Leeson, Elizabeth Cowie, John Tagg, Frank Mort, Homi Bhabha and Chris Weedon)[39] and Children, Planning and Play hosted by Art and Architecture at the Shoreditch Play Park, Hackney in 1984 (22-23 September).

The Campaign for Cultural Democracy
The Shelton Trust (under the chairmanship of Owen Kelly and before him Bernard Ross) adopted the campaign for cultural democracy during their AGM on 16 May 1985. Kelly (1984) described this struggle for cultural democracy as a socialist project, that it was about equality of access to the means of production, rather than consumption of an already defined culture (p.101). In 1986 The Shelton Trust held a conference in Sheffield called 'Another Standard 1986: Cultural and Democracy' at which it presented its new publication, 'Cultural Democracy: the Manifesto'. This manifesto was too politicised for some members:

> "The problem was that the manifesto moved beyond explicit cultural aims into very specific political aims, and bore only a slight resemblance to the draft charter. In many people's opinion this was a step too far". (Morgan in Dickson, 1995, p. 24).

A discussion group produced a paper in response to the Manifesto called 'Another View in which they stated,

> "Our work is valuable and can be empowered as long as it does not create false hopes either for the people we work with or ourselves… There is strength in defining and recognising out limits. There is positive value in preparing for change." (ibid, p. 24).

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[38] The Trust's original directors included: Bernard Ross (Chairman), Felicity Harvest, Tim Pearce, Cynthia Woodhouse, Chris Foster, Nigel Keach, Cilla Baynes, David Pole, Su Braden and Paul Fahey.
[39] 1983 October 29th at the Polytechnic of Central London.

Following the Sheffield conference, the Shelton Trust renamed itself Another Standard. A working party called Cultural Democracy and the Labour Movement was proposed to "develop exchanges of information concerning activity within the context of struggles against the state, problems and obstacles of negotiating with the Labour Movement…'" (ibid, p.25). The other decision made at the conference was that another working party would be established "to change the structure of Another Standard to meet the needs of a national campaign group". However, the new Trust was in breach of its articles and had to disbanded (ibid).

Morgan states how this marked the end of the ideological side of the movement:

> "The balance of power between funders and practitioners was broken – funders calling all the shots and practitioners being disorganised on anything but a local level. This means we have reached a point in 1994 when 'community arts' can mean anything RABs and local councils want it to mean" (cited by Morgan in Dickson 1995, 25-26).

Alan Tomkins in 1984 remarked on how it was John Maynard Keynes, founding member of the Arts Council in 1946, who helped "define incorrectly, cultural policy as a problem of finding audiences for the artists' work rather than vice-versa" (Tomkins 1984, p.21). This misinterpretation of cultural democracy as democratisation of culture was still prevalent in the 1980s. Tomkins goes on to state, "this tension between, on the one hand, centralisation, professionalisation and 'standards', and on the other, diffusion, democracy and popular appeal remains with us today" (ibid, p.21).

> "You work for the state: in the state, but against the state. You work to change the restricting nature of the state, to fight for more democracy, more collective practices, new cultural sites, etc. It is in this sense that we need to understand the sate not only as an institution, but also as a form of social relations, a class practice." (Tomkins 1984, p.21).

The role of art in the Socialist / Labour movement
The Conservative government was accused of 'politicising' the Arts Council by reducing the arms length principal and appointing Conservative Party members to the Council. During the same decade, however, they devolved the Arts Council to the regions, reduced grants and encouraged arts organisations to be less dependent on the taxpayer implying a step away from direct intervention by the State in the running of the Arts Council. Those on the Left accused the Conservatives for their elitist, exclusive policies that at worst promoted traditionalist values of high art that were inaccessible to the majority of people and at best the democratisation of culture that presumed the majority of people should experience this 'high art'. The response from the Conservatives was to patronise these left-wing tendencies as 'populist'.

Two specific attempts to effect change within the Labour Party to amend their cultural policy were the Labour Arts and Museums Association (LAMA), which proposed to abolish the Arts Council and create a new Ministry of Culture: "We must consolidate plans for the arts founded on firm Socialist principles" (Hanford 1985, p.35)[40]. The other

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[40] See Arts Funding and Administration, a discussion document by LAMA **[I need to source details of this]**

was Arts for Labour, established in 1981 (and still active today) to "assist and advise the Labour Party in the establishment of a socialist policy for the arts" and to "provide opportunity for members to consider matters of mutual interest to Arts for Labour and the Labour Party" (Another Standard, Autumn 1983, p.10). At an Arts for Labour conference in 1983 (at the Association of Scientific, Technical and management Staff, Camden on 3 September) about the creative and artistic aspects of the Labour and Conservative election campaigns, community arts and the relationship between government and the arts (ibid), the debate fell into two camps. One camp was adamant the main objective was to win the election using any means necessary and the other was keen to keep the socialist agenda in mind but it was noted that these two views were never reconciled. There was also no agreement among delegates about the role of art in the 'struggle for socialism' as "[t]his debate would need to consider what it meant to be a socialist and an artist, and whether, in fact, all types of artistic practice and all kinds of creative techniques are equally applicable to the struggle for socialism" (ibid). The report mentions a talk by Ray Lockett from the Association of Scientific, Technical and management Staff about the "growing radicalism" within his union and their fight for the "decasualisation of the arts worker" by recognising both the "flexibility necessary in the radical sector" and "the cultural importance of the work being done, and the need to ensure that people are being funded properly to do this work" (ibid).

The Labour Party did not necessarily have all the answers, however, and were accused of sharing the view that while they wanted art to be accessible to all, they did not go far enough to promote cultural democracy. Others accused Labour as having lost all faith in the 'inherent qualities' of the arts: "What has happened not just to our language, but to our culture when 'excellence' can be used as a pejorative term?" (Shaw 1986, p.81). The Labour Party enjoyed proclaiming that the whole culture business was a bourgeois construct and a capitalist venture, but failed to execute radical changes in their cultural policies, as summed up by Andrew Howard and Owen Kelly in their statement: "the left no longer have dreams, they have meetings" (Kelly and Howard 1985, p.26). Mulgan and Worpole (1986) also state that the radical, experimental arts policy developed by the GLC during the early 1980s "developed in spite of a rather cautious public manifesto, rather than because of it" (Mulgan and Worpole 1986, p.74). Ken Worpole had warned previously that community art could "sink into an uncritical populism" and that just because the working classes might gain the means of production this does not mean they will produce progressive, socialist actions, but, Worpole suggests, in this case, the "politics of production are perhaps more important than the politics of content" (Worpole 1982, p.7-10). He also stated that it was important the GLC and the community arts movement needed to "substantiate its historical, political, political and aesthetic foundations" so as to work out what was good and bad community art. It was not good enough that community art was being funded. It was important to know what and why. Addressing Labour movement activists, he wanted them to realise that it was not simply about giving money to anyone who says they are community artists as if it was "the way to socialism" (ibid).

In the election year of 1987 the Labour Party published its Charter for the Arts which was described by Brian Sedgmore in Marxism Today as "bitterly disappointing" in that it "refuses to recognise the notion of cultural politics and the idea that art is a necessary instrument of social change" and that it did not reflect the integration of cultural, economic and social policies or deal with "awkward issues such as radical practice

versus populism" nor was there an attempt to unite community, ethnic and high arts (Sedgmore 1987, p.39-41). For others who felt, as Sedgmore did, that "culture has to be the battleground of, and for, socialism", this policy was a missed opportunity. The cultural theorist Stuart Hall, who wrote, echoed this:

> "The idea that we could have a radical movement of any kind in this country while the dominant cultural attitudes remain unmodified, is ridiculous. Politics is held in place, underpinned by certain cultural attitudes, which if they are left untransformed, will undermine every radical initiative." (Hall date?, p.39).

Cynthia Woodhouse, reporting back on a conference in Liverpool, stated how the backlash against socialist art principles that the GLC, Labour movement and community art activists were advocating, may have already begun in 1983:

> "It was the first 'community' gathering I had been to for ages at which someone could say 'I hate socialists and I refuse to work with them' and the others in the room would quietly nod. Is this a frightening example of the rise of the right?" (Woodhouse 1983, p.23).

The artists Sue and Terry Atkinson mention the similarity between the Labour Party and 'political art':

> "In recent years organisations such as CND (graphics, posters), Arts for Labour and Artangel Trust have become visible demonstrations of the linked ground of the two frozen cultures. The Labour Party is presently, and seemingly now permanently, much the duller part of the more spectacular Tory part of the commodification or culture, and with it political life, or should it be half-life? 'Political art', relentlessly conceptually and technically mundane, lacking the wherewithal to provide any cognitive competence, dances as a political shadow backstage. 'Political art' protest against commodification is necessarily part of this commodification." (Atkinsons 1988, p.17)

The role of 'political art'
During the 1980s there was increasing recognition of the problems of a sanctioned 'political art' as a form of 'repressive tolerance'. Practices accepting the funding from the system were inevitably supporting the ideology of that system. While the systems of control that were in place to allow for this support to take place, remained largely invisible, for some artists it was paramount to reveal those systems of control through their art. For Conrad Atkinson, for example, the role of the artist who opposes aspects of society, had to try and expose the systems of control in society in order to make them visible (Atkinson 1981, p.7). He suggested that artists at this time were not mobilised to expose the myth of the artist, which, he says was perpetuated in art schools due to the fears of the purveyors of the myth such Arts Council and other institutions. Artists inevitable buy into this myth themselves as they come to rely on these institutions for support and justification and dare not rock the boat.

> "[artists] are not going to be involved in the issues which will show them how their art is being manipulated, Dealing with these issues would in fact show them how to create an art which refuses to be misused." (ibid, p.27)

By the 1980s there were already critics of the political work of artists dealing with political and social issues. Some of these criticisms came from the collective Art & Language and Sue and Terry Atkinson. For them, political artists were "managed dissenters" who were a sanctioned part of consumer capitalism and sovereign power (Atkinsons 1988, p.?). Declaring there was such a thing as 'political art' went against the possibility of developing a genuinely political practice involving art as the definition killed the action. Writing about the 'State of the Nation' exhibition at the Herbert Art Gallery in Coventry (September – November 1987) curated by Sara Selwood the Atkinson's declared this was the "best bad show we've seen in years" (ibid, p.?). Bringing together the 'political art' of the day, they criticized the campaigning, sloganeering nature of the work which they say was "politically effective in reinforcing a stereotype of oppositional practice, that stereotype of opposition long ago appropriated by the culture industry" (ibid, p.16). The work in the exhibition, they say, abandoned "any aspiration toward high cultural autonomy" and instead "[t]he work affirms dissent as a purely formulaic exercise. What is affirmed is a caricature of the 'political artist' as a worthy and predictable 'struggler'" (ibid, p.17).

As an alternative, they suggest 'political art' should declare the impossibility of 'political art' (ibid, p.16) and new strategic ways in which to "destablise and disaffirm the old secure strategies" by characterising "mistakes and elisions". They recognise, however, that "[t]his is very hard work. Faking it, spoofing it, counterfeit, decoys, ironic critique, dissembling tactics, ersatz dramaturgy, may be of some use, but probably not much" (ibid, p.18). The artists realise that political art is its own worst enemy and that its attempts to be critical are in fact cancelled out by their claims of criticality: "political art has become one of the presumptions it claims it is challenging. It presupposes it is a framework of critical perception, this is bravado" (ibid, p.19), instead they call for the aesthetic, autonomous status of art to be reinstalled as it is through that that work may be truly political.

Populism as democratisation
Access to the arts, or the assumption that art was good for the masses, was part of the programme of the democratisation of culture that both the Conservatives and Labour seemed to embrace, to varying degrees. For Nicholas Green and Frank Mort, this continued, "ranking of certain cultural forms above others, by standards of taste and excellence, is a subtle way of disciplining disruptive social groups." (Green and Mort 1984, p.13). They criticised Labour for continuing this tradition of democratising culture, of "bringing art to the working man".

> "Unrespectable cultural norms – the street, the pub, the fairground – have never been recognised as culture at all. They are dealt with by the police and the local magistrate" (ibid).

Roy Shaw took this angle, advocating that the Arts Council and artists should 'improve' public 'tastes' (Shaw 1986, p.81) and warned against a populist agenda for the arts, as it implied that 'anything goes and the very idea of quality becomes suspect as an authoritarian or elite one' (ibid, p.6). He goes on to say that the criteria for assessment / evaluation should be based on whether something is good enough – based on artistic criteria and excellence (ibid, p.85). The criteria of success were based on quality and it

was the Arts Council's job to regulate quality (echoing Michael Astor in 1970). At this time, even the Labour movement had not recognised or taken on board to a full extent, the campaign for cultural democracy re-ignited by The Shelton Trust in 1985. Instead, cultural democracy was interpreted and disregarded by Shaw and others as "populism". Some within the movement were unwilling to radically shift their thinking on what could constitute art and who had a right to carry it out. The GLC, to a certain extent did embrace the cultural democracy approach (in their "of the people" not "for the people" aims). As secretary general of the Arts Council, however, Roy Shaw dismissed calls from the Association of Community Theatres that their work be considered based on audience responses rather than "conventional aesthetic standards". Such requests were considered populist and were based on the presumption that the public knows best, something Shaw fundamentally disagreed with.

> "Taken seriously, it would lead us to appoint Pam Ayres as poet laureate and pronounce the Sun a far better newspaper than The Times, since it obviously accords more with public taste, having a far larger circulation." (Shaw 1986, p.87).

Dermott Killip, writing in Another Standard responded to Shaw's inability to shift his thinking on 'high art' and skepticism of community art as only possessing 'instant appeal' or merely as an introduction to real art. He states that the work should be considered in relation to the social environment in which it takes place and rejects the "traditional way of seeing art, past and present, as a mysterious, individual product transcending time and society". Instead he calls for art to be recognised as both an "individual and a social activity, decisively shaped by the time and place in which it is made or received":

> "art should no longer be seen as the production of an object or series of objects for consumption. Instead it should be seen as a *practice,* as a specialised part of the general system of human communication. Community art grew out of this 'alternative' revaluation of art's role in society." (Killip 1982, p.17).

The conflicts between quality and populism (or excellence and access) seem to constantly surface and are reflective of the political currency given to culture each time the debate rears its head. While populism presents culture as everyday life it is received as if this is in stark contrast to culture, which has spent centuries, retracting itself from everyday life. Each argument is inevitably ignored as unimportant and irrelevant by the dominant political voice of the time. Shaw, for example, outlines a concern that the mass media does not do enough to "transform attitudes", but rather reinforces the status quo, and that if art policy follows this route of "giving people what they want", this demagogic approach means "art will languish" (Shaw 1986, p.80). With reference to commercial television (and Lord Grade, one of the first tycoons of commercial television), Shaw regards commercial television as inevitably being about giving people what they want, not as

> "'democratic culture' but as a 'demagogic culture', as a policy of pandering to the lowest or, at best, the least demanding tastes…The real democrat recognises a duty to meet people's needs as well as their wants, and knows, as George Bernard Shaw pointed out, that there is a danger of people coming to want what they get" (Shaw 1987, p.80).

Shaw refers to how the poet Roy Fuller resigned from the Arts Council in 1977 because he thought it was "wasting money on community arts" and that "public money for the arts can not properly be dispensed without a strong regard by the dispensing body for standards of excellence and principles of value" (ibid, p.88). There were concerns that the 'standards of excellence' set and maintained by the Arts Council were being jeopardised by community arts.

Community photography and other initiatives:
Other initiatives in the 1980s included the founding of the activist collective Platform in 1984 by Dan Gretton and James Marriott as "a meeting place for imagination, discussion, contemplation and action"[41]; Stewart Home's announcement of an Art Strike in 1985 to take place between 1990-93 in which he requested "all cultural workers to put down their tools" in order to question the role of the artist in relation to the dynamics of power within capitalist society (Breitwiesser 2005, p.187) and in 1989 Barbara Steveni renamed APG Organisation and Imagination (O+I) as an independent international artist consultancy and research body[42].

The 1980s saw the development of photography facilities, workshops and debates on the role of photography in self-empowering disenfranchised communities and documenting the social ills of the time. For example, the work of the Paddington Printshop (now named the London Print Studio), set up in 1974 continued to provide a resource and develop projects with local communities; Camerawork gallery and magazine were active during this period and the Birmingham based magazine Ten.8 was established.

Inspired by Camerawork, Ten.8 was founded by Dereck Bishton, Brian Homer and John Reardon ran from 1979 to 1992, receiving funding from West Midlands Arts. The magazine brought together the work of photographers in the region and also developed a political edge. For example, at a time of race riots in Britain's inner cities, Bishton, Homer and Reardon initiated a project in Handsworth where local people took self-portraits. On the front cover of issue 4 of their magazine, a young man points out of the cover with one hand on a shutter release and inside Bishton mapped the connections between immigration and racism and wrote about how self-portraiture was a means of political resistance (Britten n.d.).

While Ten.8 began as an activist publication with writers and photography collaborating to "engage with racism, nuclear proliferation, unemployment, social unrest" it developed in the mid 1980s into more of a "theoretical/critical journal focused on culture" (ibid). Camerawork, originally a "radical photography magazine" had also taken the same direction by the mid 1980s. Set up in 1976, according to Paul Trevor, one of those involved in the beginning, the magazine had "lost the plot" as its original aims were

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[41] The group worked on issues such as supporting striking cleaning staff at a local hospital whose services were to be privatised ('Addenbrookes Blues', 1983); working with activists lobbying against the privatisation of a local historic community resource ('Corny Exchanges', 1984) and protesting against the abolition of student maintenance grants (1985) (http://www.platformlondon.org/biography.asp).
[42] In 1989 artists John Latham, Barbara Steveni, Rita Keegan, Carlyle Reedy and David Carr were invited to the Southwark Education Research Project by the Inner London Education Authority and the London Borough of Southwark. Together they look at the role of contemporary art in relation to learning and educational restructuring (Tate website).

abandoned and replaced with theory and analysis. The magazine's original aims were to "demystify the process of photography" which the founders felt was part of the "struggle to learn, describe and to share experiences and so contribute to the process by which we grow in capacity and power to control our lives" (Trevor n.d.). Instead the magazine turned into a more theoretical journal. One writer puts this down to:

> "quite a few of the most politically and theoretically 'advanced' photographers stopped taking pictures altogether. The act of photographing someone had been so analysed as a relation of power that it came to be experiences as politically impossible." (cited by Trevor).

The Greater London Council
Background and history of the GLC funding art:
The history of the funding community and activist art through the GLC during the first half of the 1980s is an important part of this study as it sheds some light on a unique period when politically and socially engaged art was funded to effect change in accordance with socialist principles. Labour took control of the GLC at County Hall in May 1981. According to Peter Pitt, chair of the Arts and Recreation Committee (after Tony Banks who left in 1983), there was a "determination to inject radicalism into municipal politics" and that it was "essential to include Arts and Recreation within this overall political direction" (GLC 1986, p.2). There was a call for the GLC to,

> "deepen its commitment to democratising the local State, both by bringing radical forces into County Hall and by transforming the way it operates…Cultural politics also means changing the ideas and attitudes of the people working at the heart of the State…Struggling over a new cultural language is part of redefining what socialism is about." (Green and Mort 1984, p.13).

During a GLC consultation conference on November 27, 1981 titled 'London and the Arts', Tony Banks, the chairperson of the new Arts and Recreation Committee within the GLC, stated:

> "The link between art and politics is for me an obvious one and I believe it to be naïve and self-deluding to suggest that somehow art is above politics… as far as the GLC is concerned it is possible to view arts policy in much the same way as our policies for housing, transport, planning and employment. In other words the arts exist to serve the community." (Editorial, Another Standard, Jan/Feb 1982, p.1).

Liz Hocking of the community art organization Free Form, reviewing this event praises the fact the GLC had realised art was relevant to the community and that 'community art' is a phrase now in common usage (check ref.). Following another consultation conference in May 1982 the GLC established the Community Arts and Ethnic Arts Committees in September 1982 and the a Sports Committee in May 1983. The main objectives of these community arts, ethnic arts and sport committees were based on cultural distribution and cultural history. Tony Banks held a public meeting in 1982 to discuss what a "radical policy for the arts might be". The Committee prided itself on holding all of its meetings in public, open to all (unlike the Arts Council at the time) and appointed practitioners as advisors on the committee panels (REF?).

The GLC's Community Art Sub-Committee was tasked with supporting art activities that had not received money before, that were considered on the margins or not on the radars of other funding bodies, admitting that they were supporting the "making of a popular culture" that was composed of "cultural activities which are 'of the people', which belong to, and are part of ordinary people's lives and experiences" (GLC 1986, p.19). The Sub-Committee funded projects that demonstrated participation of communities in both decision-making processes and in production, it was a policy based on "giving working people a voice" (ibid, p.41).

The GLC's enthusiasm to fund community arts activities at this time suited Labour's socialist programme of redistributing resources and was founded on the premise that art should be available to everyone and that the GLC should encourage the complete breadth of London's arts activities, from local community groups through to what are known as the 'centres of excellence' (GLC 1986, p.7). The then chair of the Arts and Recreation Committee, Tony Banks stated in a public meeting in 1981 to discuss the new policies that community art was about "access and education" and that community arts did not mean lower quality arts (ibid, p.7). The GLC's "of the people not for the people" approach suggests they were embracing cultural democracy, though they still hung on to the presumption that 'high' art was good for people. The proposals by the GLC were met with controversy as they were seen at the time to be a radical redistribution of funds, shifting support away from the 'centres of excellence' into working class cultures.

Funding political and radical work:
What seems relatively unbelievable compared to today's climate, was that the GLC funded local political, campaigning activities. Public funds would not (and cannot) be used in this way today. **[Why is this? Has the legislation changed so that councils are not allowed to support political activity?]** During this time, "[n]ew groups were established and all sorts of communities put on festivals and used art to express their identity and to campaign for a better future" (GLC 1986, p.19). The GLC also funded the production of posters and leaflets for local campaigns, some of them against office developments in central London:

> "In one of [the poster's] people's spirit of resistance against the developers was represented by a large and colourful dragon pushing aside grey office blocks. In another, office blocks were being strangled by greenery which had broken though the gaps between pavement stones." (ibid, p.24).

Some of the projects and spaces to have received GLC funding in the 1980s included the Brixton Gallery, an artist-run space which ran from June 1983 to March 1988[43]; City Limits, an alternative arts and listings magazine, set up in 1980 by striking staff of Time Out[44] and the Docklands Community Poster Project founded in 1981 by artists Peter

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[43] The Gallery was run by artists working voluntarily as part of the Brixton Artists Collective, a limited company and registered charity. Andrew Harman launched a website documenting the history of Brixton Gallery in 2008: www.brixton50.co.uk

[44] In 1980 Time Out stopped their 'policy of parity' of paying all staff the same amount leading to strikes by some of the member of staff who went on to found an alternative to Time Out called City Limits. After having being run as a co-operative for most of its existence, City Limits folded in 1993.

Dunn and Loraine Leeson which ran for ten years during the redevelopment of the Docklands[45].

Section 142 of the Local Government Act of 1972 was one of the sections under which the GLC could fund community art projects, as it allowed local authorities to fund "information projects and processes". It was under this section, for example, they were able to fund film projects dealing with issues of nuclear defence, public transport issues, women's issues and policing (Mulgan and Worpole 1988, p.79-82). It was this loophole the Conservative government wanted to get rid of due to the political campaigning it encouraged (ibid).

Dermot Killip reminded the readers of the first edition of Another Standard (May/June 1981) that the funding of 'radical activities' by the state was fairly recent and that,

> "The reason that community artists, as well as other community activists, fought for it was because they believed that the working class did not benefit from the activities the state funded, yet still had to pay for them out of their taxes and so the state should be forced to alter its pattern of provision to take account of them." (Killip 1981, p.3).

Killip goes on to warn readers that "if we really were successful our work would be directly or indirectly hostile to the state as presently constituted and our grant would be cut" (ibid). In terms of Arts Council funding, it was clear from the outset that community art as stressed by the Community Art Committee in the late 1970s, would be funded on the basis that it was art, not political or social work. Robin Guthrie, chairman of the Regional Committee at the Arts Council (1979-81) reflected on the decisions to fund community art at that time describing two issues that were discussed in the Arts Council: "one is the instinct that all community arts activity is left wing and politically orientated, and the other is that community art is against the whole idea of standards" (Guthrie 1982, p.8). These were myths that needed to be dispelled, he says.

> "If community art was simply about social change and justice and inequality and the fight, as it were, then the Arts Council need have nothing to do with it. If it was about art then regardless of whether its message was also social then the council had everything to do with it…If it hadn't been for the Arts Council there wouldn't be much community art; not in artistic terms anyway." (Ibid).

Not all community art activities were overtly politically motivated, as pointed out in the Autumn 1982 editorial of Another Standard, which stated that some community artists believed celebration was in itself political as it raised people's consciousness and left them feeling "more willing to fight whatever 'real struggles' needed fighting" (editorial, Another Standard Autumn 1982, p.3). For example, John Fox of Welfare Sate claimed in his article that their work involved 'implicit politics', which they thought was both more open and, in the long run, more effective (Fox 1982, p.7-10). For Ed Berman (founder of

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[45] The Dockalnds Community Poster Project received funding from the GLC in 1982 (a total of £25,000); the GLAA – which paid for one full-time salary (£6,000) and Tower Hamlets Arts Committee which went towards cost of materials (£2,907). REF?

InterAction), being too critical of where the money was from was not the main point of their work:

> "Unless there's a direct string attached, or some direct abuse of your receiving the money then it doesn't seem to me to matter where the money comes from…Sometimes questions have come up here at InterAction about whether we should take money from Barclay's Bank, for example, or a business which is directly concerned with South Africa, and I've probably sided with the group against that, but how far do you take it?" (Berman 1983, p.8).

[Analysis of this section needed and more on what is understood as 'political' in community art and how this relates to socially engaged art today]

Profile: The Docklands Community Poster Project[46]
The Docklands Community Poster Project (DCPP) was founded in 1981 by artists Peter Dunn and Loraine Leeson in response to the concerns of East London communities over the extensive proposed re-development of the area. Peter Dunn describes the project:

> "we aim to use our hoardings to give the people who live in Docklands a chance to say what they think about the [London Development Corporation's] plans for the area, and to show their ideas on how Docklands could be made a better place to live." (author?, Another Standard, Winter 1982, p.13)

The newly elected Conservative government designated the land surrounding the working docks as an Urban Development Corporation. This effectively removed local control from an area crossing five London boroughs, with the aim of transferring it into private ownership.

Once described by developers as 'the largest piece of real estate in Europe', the Docklands extends eight miles downriver from Tower Bridge, its most western point, to the Royal Docks in the east. Like many areas of regeneration, its history is rooted in its location on the river and its vestiges of life as busy working docks. At the time of development the area provided housing for communities living and working in the area. When the London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC) moved into its Isle of Dogs offices there were many small industries and a population of 56,000 people, mainly living in high-rise council tower blocks with poor amenities.

The people of Docklands have a long history of changing tides of trade routes and redevelopment of the docks. By the mid 1960s the up-river docks were closed, though the Royal Docks Remained working until the early 80s. Local labour was no longer required with new facilities and work moving elsewhere. The presence of communities became both an inconvenience and an embarrassment for the developers' plans. Keen to fulfill the new Thatcherite vision, the LDDC projected Docklands as a 'virgin site'. Reg Ward, first Chief Executive of the LDDC, speaking at a local meeting in 1982 described the Docklands as "a blank canvas upon which we can paint the future". [47]

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[46] The text for this profile is taken from a text written by Sophie Hope and Sarah Carrington (B+B) titled 'Then and now: The politics of participation in urban change' in Art and Architecture Journal Number 64, Winter 2005/6, pp.21-22.
[47] http://www.cspace.org.uk/, DCPP archive. Spectacle have also got an archive of Despite TV footage which documented a lot of the changes in East London in the early 1980s including: 'Despite the City' (1988) on which Reg Ward is

Peter Dunn and Loraine Leeson had previously been working closely with local trades unions around health issues. They were approached to produce a poster alerting local people of the proposed changes. Following a period of consultation with tenants and action groups, it became clear that a large-scale project was required to match the scale of the proposals. This would be accompanied by design work to document the area before it changed and to record each battle as it was fought. A steering group of local tenants and action groups was formed to develop the project.

A series of photomurals mounted on billboards constructed by DCPP became the core of the project. The steering group considered carefully who the main audience for these posters should be and decided that the Docklands communities themselves were the most important as the majority of residents were unaware of how the area was being changed. The posters changed gradually through replacement of individual sections, developing a narrative and maintaining the visibility of local feeling.

DCPP was awarded a small grant from the local boroughs and the regional arts board and later the new Labour controlled Greater London Council (GLC). The steering group became a community co-op, and part-time staff were employed to fulfill roles of administration, design and technical support. Thus an arts project that began as a request for a poster eventually became the cultural arm of an extraordinary campaigning community over a period of ten years.

The redevelopment of the Docklands went ahead as planned. The LDDC (London Docklands Development Corporation) literally paved the way for a radical transformation of the land. The DCPP could not stop the development, it was engaged in a process to communicate and raise awareness, to gather support and to make visual hidden histories and convey a set of demands. The campaign of which they were a cultural arm did however change the course of the development in certain areas which would not have happened if the campaign had not been able to generate huge public support for direct action. Dunn and Leeson both continue to work on projects in an area that now has an even greater division between extreme wealth and economic hardship. The difference is that now their respective practices are funded under the banner of 'culturally-led' regeneration. Leeson, in a talk at the ICA emphasised that she would not currently work in the way she did with the DCPP since terms of engagement with funders and municipal bodies are completely different. For Leeson, it is now more a question of playing games in defining and describing her practice for funders but ultimately always fulfilling her own agenda:

> "We have to remember that we are in a moment when there is regeneration money. It is of the moment, it won't always be the case. In twenty years' time it will be another name [and] another form of funding. But just because there is this model, you don't have to play the game. I don't follow anybody else's agenda because I'm an artist and I have my own agenda."[48]

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interviewed (www.spectacle.co.uk).

[48] Loraine Leeson at Tracing Change, an event on art and regeneration that B+B organised at Tate Britain in 2005. See http://www.cspace.org.uk/ for more information on Loraine's current practice

Peter Dunn says that instead of reacting to change, top down, he is now working with communities to be pro-active in 'making proposals from the bottom up' in the 'Poplar Futures' project.[49]

Evaluation

As flagged up by the Community arts Committee at ACGB in the late 1970s, there were concerns that the programmes supported by the GLC were not reaching those working class people they were established for. The GLC therefore commissioned Comedia[50] to do a report on whether their community arts policy had reached the people it was intended for. Nine hundred people were interviewed across three districts where there were a number of GLC funded community art projects, 40% of those had used one of the community art facilities in the last year, however, 50-70% of those had qualifications at 'O' Level or above. The report recommended that

> "all future arts programmes should be regularly monitored to find out which precise sections of the population were using them and why…Too many arts projects have for too long have made extravagant claims about who uses them, claims which have never been tested to any degree of accuracy" (cited in Mulgan and Worpole 1986, p.88).

This marks a point at which the need for accountability was based on delivering a socialist arts policy – that public funding should benefit the working classes as much as the middle classes. This need for monitoring came from a concern that despite their ambitions, public money was primarily benefiting people who already had access to the arts rather than broadening participation and production. The GLC, despite its grand ambitions, did not succeed in large-scale redistribution of resources and funds to the working classes and marginal communities of London. Increasing resources and funding for arts, sports and recreation did not necessarily improve the access and use of those facilities by working class people. Instead,

> "many of the attempts to democratise 'resources' have simply given an opportunity for the middle classes to increase their share and consolidate their ideological power." (Tomkins 1984, p.22).

One of the reasons for this failure was perhaps due to the continued 'democratisation of culture' approach that the GLC took, rather than an even more radical cultural democracy approach of direct democracy. There were also the inherent problems of democracy at the GLC – just how representative were the representatives?

> "As soon as [the GLC] began to fund radical projects they realised they were stepping on a political minefield. They decided not to go for devolution, which in practice preserves the status quo, but for a strongly centralized policy giving priority funding for the culture of the unemployed, youth, women's and gay men's groups and the elderly, alongside a strong commitment to popular culture." (Green and Mort 1984, p.12)

[49] Popular Futures is a project run by Peter Dunn working with local people to present their ideas for the future of their area. http://www.poplarfutures.org/

[50] Comedia was set up by Charles Landry in 1978 as a consultancy on art and urban development (although their website states "We see ourselves as critical friends rather than as consultants" (http://www.comedia.org.uk/).

The abolition of the GLC
In 1983 the Government issued a white paper on the abolition of the GLC and
Metropolitan County Councils entitled 'Streamlining the Cities: Government proposals for
Reorganising Local Government in Greater London and the Metropolitan Counties'. By
1986 County Hall was closed. The white paper proposed the locally elected GLC and the
Metropolitan Councils would be replaced by centralised control. This led to public
demonstrations defending democracy and in support of the democratically elected
Metropolitan Councils (Blessing 1984, p.25 and Tomkins 1984, p.22). This 're-
organisation' proposed by the Conservative administration obviously dealt a blow to
funding community arts projects and was seen to benefit the established 'centres of
excellence' (such as the Royal Opera House) at the expense of the "community arts,
ethnic arts and women's groups" (Green and Mort 1984, p.12).

Defining a profession: the effects of increased funding for community arts
With increasing funding and recognition of community art during the first half of the
1980s came its professionalisation. As funds were still relatively small and highly sought
after, competition between the different community art groups increased, as did a need
to clarify and justify the role of community arts. According to Morgan (in Dickson 1995)
the sense of urgency to define more clearly what community art was, partly came from
the increased competition for funding (Morgan in Dickson 1995, p.23 and 24). She goes
on to state that the funding of community art became increasingly based on short term
projects which was in stark contrast to the long held notion that community art "involved
a long-term commitment to one particular community" (ibid, p.23), also referred to by
Kelly:

> "Those 'communities' which have been manufactured by directive
> professionals…[do not] change and develop internally. Instead the opposite
> occurs; they ossify a specific set of relationships which have the professional at
> their centre, and they continue only as long as the professional remains at their
> centre" (Kelly 1984, p.50).

This statement is relevant to the development of funded socially engaged art through the
1990s as funding has predominantly followed a model of parachuting in artists to
communities for fixed, temporary time periods where the professional, paid artist tends
to remain the director of a participatory process. The pressure to articulate community
art's unique values meant that, the struggle towards being *the* most professional, *the*
most viable candidate for funding was a fight only those with certain administrative skills
could take part in, leaving those without such skills out of the race. During games of
such one up man-ship the players often ignored whom the fight was for and were
accused of redirecting funds from those who really needed it into the pockets of those
who already had enough. This is indicative of accusations against the GLC over all and
responds to warning signals voiced by some community artists in the 1980s. For
example, in a letter from a regular contributor to the feedback pages of Another
Standard, a Victor Drill writes:

> "Just the usual shit about well paid boys and girls getting grants to take radio to
> the people. Some of us having to read this kind of self-congratulatory grantspeak
> have been doing it for years, without the support of the idle educated. Where

were the pieces about Radio Jackie, Dread Broadcasting, Radio Invicta and the other unlicensed free radio stations that are actually challenging the present system? Take radio to the people my arse. Free the airwaves now." (Drill 1982, p.4).

This increase in competition and need for validation by the funding bodies meant some community art workers felt the agenda was now being set by the funders rather that the practitioners or communities themselves. There was concern that the purpose of community art had been lost in funding jargon and bureaucratic procedures. For example, Dermott Killip published a letter to Roy Shaw in Another Standard (March 1982) that highlighted the concern over what community art had become:

> "...the drive to educate people can be a way of shifting the responsibility for people's exclusion onto themselves, rather than examining the reason behind their exclusion." (Killip 1982, p.18).

This critique of community art as covering up the real problems and shifting responsibility to the individual is picked up again in the 1990s as funding under New Labour begins to focus again on socially engaged art. Killip's arguments are reaffirmed by Kelly who called for community artists to "re-establish our work as an area of radical activity" (Kelly 1982, p.15). In Storming the Citadels (1984), he acknowledged that with increases in funding, the original community arts groups became more marginalised and that "community artists became known for providing a kind of extended play facility for children" (Kelly 1984, p.24), stating that the solution to teenage unemployment had become, "let them paint walls". The plethora of community mural paintings facilitated by community artists during the 1980s demonstrated how impotent the community arts movement had become during its "decade of grant addiction" (ibid, p.35). Kelly rejected the State's definition of 'community' and how the Arts Council now instructed artists to 'work with a community' as 'community' was not 'representative', fixed or identifiable. Instead, he states, it should be about "what community you are working towards, what community you are participating in making" (ibid, p.15). He quotes the GLAA funding application form which asks applicants to explain "how you work with the community", which he writes ignored the problems of such a question and "serves to hinder the genuine political possibilities of community art, by tying them down to a spurious notion of representation, in which the people with whom we work are reduced to simplistic archetypes" (Kelly 1982, p.15).

One of the criticisms of the community art movement was that they encouraged the development of a separate committee on community art at the Arts Council rather than insist the funding came from the existing panels.[51] Community art had an impact on the Arts Council in that it questioned the fundamental values and 'standards' it was advocating, but the way the Council dealt with this was to establish a separate category of community art so as not to change its overall strategy and ethos. Ken Worpole, for example, stated that this did nothing to change the mentality of the Arts Council, but merely outsourced the community arts or radical or working class elements so as not to change the core conservative structure itself (Killip and Worpole 1982, p.7-10):

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[51] By the 1990s the community art had disappeared from the Arts Council's agenda and instead the principles had (superficially according to some critics) been absorbed into each department.

> "Anything radical either from a new form or a new constituency (obviously the working class is that for the Arts Council), their reply was send them down the road to the community arts committee" (ibid, p.9).

Within the community art movement (as illustrated in the pages of Another Standard), there was a need to define more clearly a theoretical and political angle of community art. The need to narrow the definition of community art came in response to its watering down by different agencies. For example, in an article for Another Standard (March 1982) titled, 'In Search of Cultural Democracy: None of us is excluded', Elizabeth Hocking, Karen Merkel and Sarah Mudd (all members of Free Form) stated a difference between 'Art in the Community' and 'Community Art', arguing the former was far too generic and woolly a term that includes any art working in the community and that the latter has a specific history of struggle which has led to its own criteria:

> "Community arts did not go through years of challenges for nothing. To survive, to prove its point, the movement has had to address itself to many questions. In asking these questions the movement has gained far more than merely funding. We now have criteria for judging our own work, and principles of practice. If they were inappropriate or ill founded, community arts would cease to exist." (Hocking, Merkel and Mudd 1982, p.12-13).

But what were these *criteria* of community art? In the same article, the authors refer to the GLAA Community Arts Advisory Panel which included in its definition of community arts as being art that "cannot be imposed upon people, however well meaning that imposition may be, nor be organised centrally and presented to people for assent" (ibid, p.13). They also mention that community art "takes the concept that art is necessary to people's lives on a vast scale. It is at the opposite pole from art for art's sake" (ibid, p.13). In 1982 The Shelton Trust produced a 'Community Arts Information Pack' (edited by Ros Rigby) in which it outlined eight strands of community arts work and definitions for the terms (Dickson 1995, p. 22). These criteria were backed up by Kelly in 'Storming the Citadels' (1984) in which he cites some of the aims of the community arts movement as being the struggle for a more equitable society (p.6); to enable working people to be creative in ways that would make their creativity socially effective in order to raise their morale and lead to empower themselves in other areas of their lives (p.21); for people to control the means of communication themselves (p.22); to reduce the role of the state in order that activity in other spheres can have space to grow (p.46); and,

> "…to demolish the oppressive and imperialist structures and to build in their places a series of smaller haciendas where activity and participation are encouraged and welcomed and the only activity which is prohibited is the building of citadels." (ibid, p.138).

Ideally, Kelly wanted to remove the term artist altogether:

> "we can imagine a community arts movement without any 'artists' but with a variable set of producers and authors, working in partnership" (ibid, p.58).

This notion that seemed to underpin the community art movement – that culture, art and creativity was to be understood in its broadest sense, not as a separate field or category, was echoed by Ed Berman, founder member of the community arts organisation InterAction and advisor to Michael Heseltine (Environmental Secretary to Mrs Thatcher) at the time, (Berman 1983, p.7-9). When asked if he thought community artists had wrongly thought of creativity as being solely the preserve of the arts, Berman replied,

> "Oh yes. It's absolutely fundamental to me that anybody who thinks that is an elitist snob….Interpreting and creatively using words, images and movement have no more to do with the arts than they have to do with business, sport, teaching, whatever– artists have perpetuated the myth that creativity is all to do with art." (ibid).

'We have become foot soldiers in our own movement': the addiction to funding
> "I believe, that a liberal pragmatism served early on, to cripple the political development of the community arts movement…community artists are increasingly told what to do, and how to do it, by people whose motivations often directly contradict the alleged aims of the community arts movement. We have become foot soldiers in our own movement, answerable to officers in funding agencies and local government recreation departments." (Kelly 1984, p.3).

What began as a victory for the community arts movement in terms of securing some funds and recognition of the role community arts was playing in society, soon became a potential setback as artists started to question their "funding addiction" (Kelly 1984), and their role as civil servants, "safety valves" or as "another outpost of the social services" (Kelly 1982, p.15). This switch from radical demands on the state to artists becoming the "footsoliders in their own movement" was the result of major compromises in their original political motivations and practices, as Kelly remarks, "State funding has rendered the field politically neutral" (Kelly 1984, p.37).

> "Our position was such that we might need to fight for an increase in taxation in order the Arts Council might receive more money, so that community artists might give more of it back to 'the people'…We came as invaders, but without a language of our own we were soon acting and talking like the natives of the citadel" (Kelly 1984, p.29).

The agenda was now set by the State and the community artists were now consumers of that agenda, forming an orderly queue to collect their chunk of the subsidy pie. This shift towards once radical artists now accepting, demanding and relying on funding and permission from the State led some critics to pejoratively label community artists civil servants (Berressai cited in Ice Cream Economics, Another Standard, Autumn 1983, p.6). Some felt this move diverted community artists from "real political issues" and distracted them from "joining and initiating the 'fight' with others" (Hocking, Merkel and Mudd 1982, p.13). Carnivals and festivals, for example, often organised spontaneously and against the wishes or support of the local authorities, were now institutionalised, often organised by the local community arts group or the local play department, becoming "part of the organised, bureaucracy which they themselves originally set out to oppose" and a "safe, unchallenging part of the local status quo, in the way that the local

flower show is" (editorial, Another Standard, Autumn 1982, p.3).

There was real concern that the work of the community art movement should not be sucked up and represented as a glossy service. Funding agendas were accused of 'diluting' community arts activity, such as the Manpower Services Commission, which was more about supporting "mobile arts and crafts or leisure activities" rather than established community programmes, to the extent that this potential funder was instead seen as a threat to the community arts movement (editorial, Another Standard, Summer 1982, p.3). Again, this concern could be interpreted as an act of 'repressive tolerance' rather than bringing about radical change and redistribution. Funding merely reinstated the status quo and strengthened the power structures without questioning them. Community art was now "exploited as a safety valve to keep popular discontent within regulated limits" (Foster 1982, p.13). In a statement that still echoes loud and clear over 25 years later, Kelly remarked how public funding created an illusion of community control and empowerment but that power was never handed over to the community (Kelly 1984, p.103): "Public space murals [became] a celebration of the domination of the local state over its subjects" (ibid, p.115).

While there was rising criticism of the instrumental role community arts was playing, Ed Berman (note he was Heseltine's advisor at the time) seemed to be advocating for this professionalised status of community artist as service-provider, stating that community art was the "junior partner of the private sector – the partner with the public brief" (Berman 1983, p.7-9). These sentiments have become normalised in the 21st Century. For example, speaking about Independent Photography, a community arts organisation in Greenwich and their programme of socially engaged art projects called 'Peninsula', a member of the Greenwich Peninsula Partnership involved in the regeneration of the area, pointed out:

> "The role of projects like 'Peninsula' is to take the fear away from these changes by getting people involved in what's going on locally… People don't like coming to meetings, it's a way of breaking down those barriers and giving people a voice… Independent Photography are like the conscience of the area, [a constant reminder that] it's not just about maximising profits – it's a really good way of ensuring that that conscience is always there…" (Personal communication, 2006).

Issues over the compromising conditions of funding led to debates within the community art movement in the 1980s about alternatives to survival, such as self-sufficiency or supporting activities with commercial work.[52] There were many activities within, connected to or apart from the community arts movement that were not funded that those suffering from 'grant addiction' were turning to for inspiration. For example Killip saw potential in "radical activities taking place in the commercial sphere" (Killip 1981, p.3) and in the Autumn 1982 edition of Another Standard, there was mention of how the punk band Crass, while they perhaps had similar politics to many of those in the community arts movement, did not occupy their time trying to maintain their funding as they did not want any funding, rather they self-funded their activities. The relationship they had with their 'audiences' was not as clients, there was no distinction between who

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[52] Interestingly, these alternatives would have been welcomed by the conservative government who were trying to encourage arts organisations to be more self-sufficient as they wanted to reduce taxes and hence public subsidies.

was paid and who was volunteering. Their status of 'voluntary poverty' meant they were in the same position as the people who supported them (Blessing 1982, p.18). Voluntary poverty, however, was not the path community art took as it moved into the 1990s and was overtaken by a more professional, responsible and contracted 'socially engaged' practice.

1990-2007
The Context
During Thatcher's final years of power she had introduced the unpopular poll tax in 1989 and made her views clear that she was against the political and economic integration of Britain into Europe. The poll tax riots in 1990 and Geoffrey Howe's resignation over Thatcher's reluctance to join Europe lead to her leadership challenge in 1990 which John Major was successful in winning. Major was responsible for introducing the Citizens Charter, later built on by New Labour, which meant public services had to improve standards and demonstrate their accountability. In 1992 the United Nations introduced Agenda 21 for sustainable development to be implemented by local authorities; and in 1993 Major launched the National Lottery act which released funding for sport, the arts, heritage, charities and millennium projects.

After 18 years of Conservative government in 1997 the Labour Party won a landslide victory. The new government under the leadership of Tony Blair instigated referendums in Scotland and Wales leading to the establishment of the Scottish Parliament and Welsh National Assembly. New policies were drawn up for education and health and plans were made for tackling 'social exclusion' and promoting 'cultural diversity'. Targets were introduced for health and education standards and university fees were brought in. Following the September 11th attacks in New York, Blair launched Britain into the 'war on terror', sending troops to Afghanistan and Iraq. 2005 marked the year London won the bid to host the 2012 Olympics and the day after experienced the bomb attacks on London's transport system. Blair resigned in 2007.

CULTURAL POLICY
There has already been extensive mapping of the cultural policy of this period (for example, Jermyn 2001; Reeves 2002 and Selwood 2002). This section gives a brief overview of key research papers and policy documents that have informed, justified and critiqued policies that connect social inclusion and regeneration to the arts and the subsequent issues of measuring the impacts of these policies. The mid 1980s through into the first ten years of New Labour's leadership marked a shift away from any major campaign or movement for cultural democracy and the eradication of any socialist agenda of redistribution towards a framing of public subsidy based on applicants ability to guarantee increased social *and* economic capital. This chapter maps the circumstances for this shift and the ensuing debates it has caused.

A Lack of Evidence
With the dismantling of the GLA in 1986; devolution of Arts Council funding for community art between 1979 and 1980 and the demise of the Shelton Trust and Association for Community Art by the late 1980s, cultural democracy seemed to have had its day and instead the project of democratising culture had been adopted by funders. The Gulbenkian Foundation remained active throughout this period, funding both Myerscough's 'The Economic Importance of the Arts' (1988) and also Comedia's report on the social impact of participation in the arts: 'Use or Ornament? The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts' (1997). These were just two attempts to justify spending on the arts – the first from an economic perspective and the latter in terms of social benefits. The merger of the economic and social aims, targets and impacts became characteristic of this period, manifested in New Labour's social exclusion policy. The general consensus was now focused on how social and economic factors could

become inextricably linked and co-dependent. This was a significant departure from previous socialist thinking that promoted the radical redistribution of incomes in order to improve social conditions for all. According to Reeves (2002) up until this point there had been a lack of a 'systematic evidence base' to make a strong enough case for the social benefits of the arts:

> "The social benefits of the arts on individual and community development had been argued by the Community Arts Movement since the 1960s. However, although there was a significant body of evidence to support this argument, most of it was anecdotal and there were significant gaps in the documentation of work. The low priority accorded to the issue of impact measurement within the political and policy agendas of the time, coupled with the lack of a systematic evidence-base, meant that the case for the arts having a wider societal impact was never sufficiently robust to convince policy makers to release substantive funds for its further study." (Reeves 2002, p.7).

The pressure to measure had already begun in the 1980s with the Conservatives' Financial Management Initiative launched in 1982 which introduced greater accountability and strategic management to the cultural sector in terms of "economy, efficiency and effectiveness" (Selwood 2002, p.3)[53]. By the mid 1990s there was a sense of urgency to demonstrate the impacts of art both on the economy and society at large. For example, Fred Coalter in his report for the Local Government Association, 'Realising the Potential of Cultural Services. Making a Difference to the Quality of Life' (2001) stressed the "most urgent issue for cultural *services* to address is measuring outcomes" (p.8, my italics). In a report for the DCMS by Leeds Metropolitan University, 'Count Me In. The Dimensions of Social Inclusion through Culture, Media and Sport' (2002), the authors stated that while "few people doubt that such projects can produce social benefits…the question is to what extent they occur and whether it rises above pure happenstance" (p.3). Over a period of twenty years there had been a slow but seismic shift from the arts lobbying the government for support on their terms to the government setting the agenda for funding and outsourcing jobs to the arts as if it were another service industry. In return for winning this contract, the arts then had to demonstrate evidence that they had delivered value for money for services rendered or the contract would be given to the next willing service provider, as Chris Smith, then Culture Secretary for New Labour made clear in 1998:

> "This is not something for nothing. We want to see measurable outcomes for the investment which is being made." (Cited in Belfiore and Bennett 2007, p.2).

By 1997 Comedia had produced a publication, 'Creative Accounting: Beyond the Bottom Line' (Lingayah, MacGillivray and Raynard 1997) demonstrating the need for evidence at this time. They critiqued the focus on economic indicators and instead explored ways of measuring changes to quality of life.

ECONOMIC IMPACTS – art as an industry

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[53] Sara Selwood in her paper 'Measuring Culture' (2002) details the history of attempts to measure the impact of the arts in Britain.

Selwood describes how the Department of National Heritage (the predecessor of the DCMS), established by the Conservatives in 1992, was at the forefront of encouraging the arts sector to become more corporate and self-sufficient. The arts were prompted to look towards private funds for support, rather than rely on public subsidy, encouraging the sector to "justify its subsidies in economic terms and identify itself as a wealth creator" (Selwood 2002, p.2).

> "[D]uring the second half of the 1980s, as the 'new financial reality' began to bite, the Arts Council actively sought to increase its grant in aid on the basis of making an economic case for increased public 'investment' in the arts. It introduced the notion of the arts as an 'industry', and listed the returns that the government could expect for 'a small increase in public funding', including the low cost of creating new jobs, savings on unemployment and recycled tax." (Ibid, p.4)

Myerscough's 1988 publication, 'The Economic Importance of the Arts' has been credited with being influential in terms of providing evidence that direct spending on the arts led to spending in other sectors which would in turn increase wealth and job prospects, make cities more attractive to perspective buyers and companies while also increasing tourism. It came at a time when increased evidence was needed to secure public subsidy for the arts and Myerscough came up with a strong, persuasive case for art's economic impact which lead to subsequent investments by local authorities on the grounds that the arts increased employment prospects (ibid, p.4-5).

The Policy Studies Institute's publication 'Culture as Commodity' (Casey, Dunlop and Selwood 1995) gave evidence that the cultural sector was a major employer. Other reports at this time which predicted the rise of employment in the culture industries included Feist and O'Brien's 'Employment in the arts and cultural industries: an analysis of the 1991 Census' (1995) and Pratt's 'The Cultural Industries Sector: Its definition and character from secondary sources on employment and trade' (1997)[54].

New Labour embraced the findings of Myerscough (1988), Casey, Dunlop and Selwood (1995), O'Brien and Feist (1995) and Pratt (1997) and supported the notion that culture was indeed an industry. On coming to power in 1997 they set up the Creative Industries Task Force which published a mapping document in 1998 ('Creative Industries: 1998 Mapping Document', DCMS) suggesting that "if the sector grew by only 4% a year to 2007, it would generate £81 billion in revenues and account for 1.5 million jobs" (cited in Reeves 2002, p.10). This 1998 report, according to Reeves (2002), was important in that it managed to embed the creative industries in national strategies for economic competitiveness and development (ibid, p.10-11). At a time when Britain and other post-industrial, post-manufacturing nations were moving towards more service-based economies, the creative industries were becoming a recognised sector of employment and investment that was accepted by the European Commission, World Bank and by national Government (ibid, p.9). In 2007 Tony Blair was quoted as saying that Britain survives and prospers on "the talent of its people":

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[54] O'Brien and Feist stated 2.4% of the economically active population were working in the cultural sector in 1995 and Pratt had this figure at 4.5% in 1997 (Reeves, 2002, p.8-9). By 2003, the creative industries were a "key growth sector, contributing £11.6 billion per year to the UK's balance of trade (ACE 2007, p.10).

"Modern goods and services require high value added input, some of it comes from technology or financial capital, both instantly transferable. But much of it comes from people – their ability to innovate, to think anew, to be creative." (BBC News website 6 March 2007).

This shift towards understanding art as a service sector industry suits the current fasion of commissioning artists in areas of regeneration or employing artists in residence. The GLC in the mid 1980s had championed the notion that investment should be in the distribution of culture rather than on individual artists. However, since then, cultural policy has shifted away from the idea that independent cultural producers could facilitate everyone's right to produce their own culture towards the promotion of self-sufficient, innovative creative individuals as the ideal neo-liberal freelance entrepreneurs that can effect economic change in the pursuit of urban regeneration (Hesmondhalgh 2007, p.140).

"The same period of change has also witnessed the demise of many of the pioneering community arts groups. New independent groups appear to be a thing of the past. In their place have emerged local authority arts teams – multidisciplinary units with skills both in 'doing' and in 'facilitating". (Lee Corner in Dickson 1995, p.119)

The investment in the commission or residency could now be accounted for or justified in terms of savings in marketing, consultancy or PR, as a developer proudly announced during an Urban Land Institute seminar in 2008 ('Value of art in Property Development', 24 June 2008): "Doing art to save on our advertising budget, that's good enough for me."

SOCIAL IMPACTS
By the early 1990s writers and artists were well accustomed to having to justify their funding – whether it was on economic, cultural or social terms. For some critics, however, the focus on justifying art in economic terms did not sit comfortably with their notion of art. While some continued to argue for the intrinsic, autonomous status of art, others called for different values (fought for through the community art movement) to be recognised, such as social, health and educational benefits of art. It seems that in the 1990s after over a decade of Thatcher, dreams of social change, of socialist art policies and of cultural democracy were forgotten, abandoned or considered merely naïve utopian ideals. However, the socialist principles of cultural democracy were not revived and instead artists, consultants and policy makers, reacting to directions in funding, found ways of justifying art in terms of their social impacts, rather than being pro-active and demanding change through art. Social capital was added to the economic improvement that art could offer[55]. Social capital, according to Putnam (1993) was a prerequisite of economic development rather than an effect of improvements to economy. He warned of the risk of destroying social capital during regeneration (or 'economic reconversion' as he terms it) which can sometimes "heedlessly ravage existing networks". He admits that social capital is not easily measured using "current accounting schemes", but he says, this "does not mean that they are not real. Shred enough of the social fabric and we all pay" (Putnam 1993, p.4).

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[55] The term 'social capital' was a concept developed by Robert Putman in an article for The American Prospect, no. 13 (1993), 'The prosperous Community. Social Capital and Public Life'.

One of the problems with Putnam's analysis of social capital is that it assumes a certain type of social capital according to capitalism – stating that "of two identical youths, the one unfortunate enough to live in a neighbourhood whose social capital has eroded is more likely to end up hooked, booked, or dead" (ibid, p.5). Combined with inadequate education, unemployment and poor health, black and Latino residents of inner city ghettos, according to Putnam suffer from "profound deficiencies in social capital" (ibid). He does not recognise social capital coming from those areas. On a system based on connections to get work, he explains that it is essential that grass-roots organisation and community development outside work should be nourished and encouraged.

The research group Comedia (established in 1978 by Charles Landry) were at the forefront of producing a number of documents that presented 'evidence' of art's role in improving social situations during the 1990s which some have claimed went on to influence New Labour's cultural policy[56]. Such documents included 'The Social Impact of the Arts' discussion document (Landry Bianchini and Maguire 1993), 'The Art of Regeneration' (Landry, Greene and Matarasso 1996) and 'Use or Ornament? The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts' (Matarasso 1997). Other reports that aimed to demonstrate art's social role before New Labour came to power in 1997, included the Community Development Foundation's 'Arts and Communities: The Report of the National Enquiry into Arts and the Community' (1992) which claimed that community arts "strengthen the democratic process through developing more articulate citizens" (Drake 1993, p.99) and Susan Galloway's 'Changing Lives, The Social Impact of the Arts' (1995) commissioned by the Scottish Arts Council.

Most of these documents read as if they are advocacy documents responding to the need for evidence of impact. They do not question the need for evidence in the first place but doff their hat and humbly scurry off to find the evidence. They are perhaps testament to the fact that the arts were increasingly willing to pimp and prostitute themselves and others to funders. They come across as desperate attempts to show off all the glowing ambitions and incredible characteristics of art, fighting for a permanent spot in the limelight and yet constantly struggling to be heard.

As well as their enthusiasm for the economic aspects of art, New Labour were quick to adopt the social improvements consultants such as Comedia were promising art could carry out, as reflected in Labour's 1997 Manifesto:

> "The arts, culture and sport are central to the task of recreating the sense of
> community, identity and civic pride that should define our country. Yet we
> consistently undervalue the role of the arts and culture in helping to create a civic

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[56] Merli (2002) states Matarasso's report 'Use or Ornament?' (1997) "played an important role in establishing a near-consensus in Britain among cultural policy-makers" and references the occasions the Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport, Chris Smith quoted the report in various speeches in 1997 and 1998 (p.1). Reeves (2002) remarks how this same "seminal study…produced a step change in recognition of the sector's contribution to social development [and] provided a clearer definition of the potential social benefits of the arts" (p.16). Selwood (2002) states how "the promotion of social impact was initiated by the consultancy Comedia, which in 1993 began lobbying for support to prove the effectiveness of 'investing in socially orientated arts initiatives'" (p.9). In his defending article against accusations of 'Use or Ornament?' being a flawed research project by Merli, Matarasso denies any direct influence over policy that his report may have had: "If it has had an influence, it may simply be because its publication coincided with the complex evolution of cultural policy, practice and values. In other words it may be a symptom rather than a cause…" (Matarasso 2002, p.342).

society - from amateur theatre to our art galleries…Art, sport and leisure are vital to our quality of life and the renewal of our economy. They are significant earners for Britain. They employ hundreds of thousands of people. They bring millions of tourists to Britain every year, who will also be helped by Labour's plans for new quality assurance in hotel accommodation." (The Labour Party 1997).

The shift that started with Thatcher towards understanding and supporting culture in terms of its financial return was nurtured by Blair. Social benefits were expected to reap long-term economic improvements as social and economic targets became interlocking. In 'A New Cultural Framework' produced by the DCMS in 1998, the Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport, Chris Smith outlined their new approach to investment in culture based on allocating funds "to deliver against demanding output and outcome based targets" (p.3) based on "access, excellence, innovation, education and the creative industries" (p.1). In the review, Smith announces the allocation of £290 million over three years for the cultural sector and that this money will be spent on "direct services, and putting a new emphasis on the public rather than the producer" (p.1)[57]. Spending on culture was now to be justified in terms of its social and economic benefits and outputs. This could be dressed up as social or cultural benefit but the ultimate outcome was considered in terms of benefits to individual, local and ultimately national economies.

The calls in the mid 1980s to establish monitoring of how GLC funding was spent (Mulgan and Worpole 1986) were based on the concern that the funding was not reaching the people who needed it the most. Evaluation had now become so embedded in policy-making and funding to the extent that it had become more about justifying and validating funding *before* money was spent rather than changing policies and processes in response to evaluations. By the time Labour were elected, the need to monitor and evaluate funds was no longer so much about making sure the money reached the right people, rather, how much the funding was value for money in terms of expected and actual return. This marked the shift into a complete market economy. Those who wanted to survive this shift and continue their work had to be willing to prove themselves in this way. Telford Community Arts (established in 1974) were one organisation, however, that chose, in 1990, "voluntary disbandment rather than compromise their principles and accept all the restrictions being imposed by their funders" (Morgan in Dickson 1995, p.26).

Impact Studies
There have been a number of reports and research projects that have tried to respond to the endless quest for defining what the impacts of art might be and offering various methodologies and toolkits for capturing these impacts[58]. Many of these studies have

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[57] In contrast to this, two years later, in his New Statesman Arts Lecture, 'The Creative Imperative. Investing in the arts in the 21st century' (2000), Gerry Robinson, Chairman of the Arts Council of England stated "I wanted to put the creator and creativity right back at the centre – something I sensed very early on had been lost by the Arts Council and by parts of the arts community" (p.4). He goes on to make the case for the need for an increase in funding or the arts.
[58] These include (in chronological order): Matarasso, F., 1996. 'Defining Values: Evaluating Arts Programmes, The Social Impact of the Arts, Working Paper 1'. Stroud: Comedia; Lingayah, S, MacGillivray, A, and Raynard, P, 1996. 'Creative Accounting: Beyond the Bottom Line, The Social Impact of the Arts, Working Paper 2'. Stroud: Comedia; Reeves, M., 2002. 'Measuring the social and economic impact of the arts: a review'. London: ACE; ACE, May 2004, 'The Impact of the Arts'. London: ACE; Holden, J., 2004. 'Capturing Cultural Value. How Culture has become a tool of government policy'. London: Demos; Cowling, J., 2004. 'For Art's Sake? Society and the Arts in the 21st Century'. London: IPPR; ixia, 2005. 'Research on Public Art; Assessing Impact and Quality'. Birmingham: ixia; Prevista, 2005. 'The Impact of Visual Arts

focused on the extrinsic – economic, social impacts – as this is what is required from the 'investors'. Critics have responded to this plethora of impact studies with a call for funders and spenders to not forget the 'intrinsic qualities' of art. Sara Selwood, for example, in her paper 'Measuring Culture' (2002) argues that until collection and analysis of data is carried out more objectively, collecting statistics to prove the use of art has been "a relatively spurious exercise" (p.1). She notes (as John Holden of DEMOS does in his 'Capturing Cultural Value' paper of 2004) that there has been an increase in government control over the arts and that this has meant culture is now valued in terms of its impact rather than its intrinsic value (ibid). Selwood argues that in the race to gather data and prove art's worth with robust evidence, the line between advocacy and research had been blurred (ibid, p.2), a distinction, she says, that must now be drawn (ibid, p.9).

While this government-driven need to measure had started during the Conservatives, New Labour "attempted to bring culture closer in line with government policy, and required that the cultural sector justify its funding by demonstrating the social impact it was making, particularly in the area of social inclusion" (Ibid, p.5). As part of this policy, and due to the Public Service Agreements introduced in 1998[59], the DCMS introduced three-year funding agreements "placing clear responsibilities on those bodies to deliver against demanding targets" (ibid, p.7). These targets were to be monitored by a new body called the Quality, Efficiency and Standards Team (QUEST):

> "We need to ensure that sponsored bodies meet *our* objectives and deliver improvements in efficiency, access, etc. in return for the investment of public money." (DCMS 1998, p.14, my italics).

QUEST's role was to evaluate and promote good practice and ensure the sponsored bodies delivered the DCMS's objectives, reporting back to the DCMS on the performance of those bodies (such as the Arts Council) that they have funded: "For DCMS, this implied closure on any possibility of 'grants for grants sake'" (Selwood 2002, p.7).

Freelance consultants, artists and evaluators have jumped on the bandwagon eager to contribute to and prove these policies in order to continue to receive funding. This has led to a wealth of documents providing 'evidence' that art can do all these jobs rather than questioning the targets themselves. As Belfiore and Bennett (2007) have pointed out, this has led to a "proliferation of methodologically unsound impact studies that have been the subject of some quite extensive scholarly critique" (Belfiore and Bennett, 2007, p.3). The Cultural Policy Collective also flags this point up[60]:

> "The role of private sector consultancies [e.g. DEMOS, COMEDIA, Compass] and freelancers in promoting the social inclusion agenda certainly requires closer

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Interventions in Regeneration, Healthcare and Education Contexts' London: ACE; ACE, 2006. 'The Power of Art. Visual Arts: Evidence of Impact'. London: ACE.

[59] Public Service Agreements meant government departments were required to account for spending and delivery on the Government's agenda.

[60] The Cultural Policy Collective set up culturaldemocracy.net to offer an alternative vision for cultural politics in Scotland and published the pamphlet 'Beyond Social Inclusion: Towards Cultural Democracy' in 2004 (http://www.culturaldemocracy.net/)

investigation – their vested interests do not always lie in conducting probing research" (Cultural Policy Collective 2004, p.10).

And also by Malcolm Dickson in 1995:

> "The job of artists in any 'community' setting is complicated by misconceptions filtering down from high art, and shared by some community organisations themselves, that art can cure social ills and that people benefit from being in close proximity to an artist. This creates false hopes which may benefit the artists' CV but takes more from the group that artist works with than what resonates after the project is 'complete'. There is a multitude of predatory groups and political manipulators at work in communities deemed for development, and many will see certain arts activities as part of that. There are successful and less successful elements in any art project – what is required is the criteria by which to assess and discuss these" (Dickson 1995, p.13).

To what extent, then, are managers, evaluators, researchers, curators and artists taking the money connected to social inclusion agendas and upholding and replicating a process of 'false democratisation' that in fact does nothing to effect social change and is the antithesis of producing cultural democracy (Cultural Policy Collective 2004, p.13)? There is perhaps an urgent need for such workers to distance themselves, radicalise and re-group in order to reassess the politics they are advocating, feeding off of and providing the fuel for.

The Cultural Policy Collective in 2004 reintroduced the cultural democracy debate with their pamphlet 'Beyond Social Inclusion: Towards Cultural Democracy'. They argued that the government's attempts to commercialise and popularise culture has in fact been an anti-democratic negation of a 'people's culture' (ibid, p.18). Culturally-led regeneration, for example, has become the perfect vehicle for the government's programme of developing an illusion of social change as "[t]he ideal urban citizen tacitly adopts artistic creativity as a model for personal change" (ibid, p.20) when in fact, regeneration "offers nothing to those who want to challenge rising poverty and mend the crumbling infrastructure of Britain's cities" (ibid, p.38). It is essentially this contradiction – the incompatibility between private enterprise and social welfare/provision that encapsulates the contradictions within the socially engaged art commission today – the two to do not reconcile each other and yet the artist / curator is asked to overcome or ignore these differences for the sake of the commission.

> "In the absence of commonly agreed methodologies (or even principles) among practitioners, funders have filled the gap with projects and schemes which fulfill their own strategic needs. This need not be bad news. The pragmatic artist will work within their guidelines. Opportunists will reshape their idea to the scheme which looks most like it. The visionary will come up with something which moves the boundaries. The successful artist is a bit of all three." (Lee Corner in Dickson, 1995, p.122).

How the Arts Measure Up: Australian Research into Social Impact by Deidre Williams

In 1997 Comedia commissioned Deidre Williams to write a working paper titled: 'How the

Arts Measure Up: Australian Research into Social Impact' that drew on her previous research into the social impact of community arts projects in Australia ('Creating Social Capital' 1996). This study drew out some of the contradictions between the social and economic ambitions for 'participatory' or 'community' arts. Williams' original study was carried out during a time when, as in Britain, conservative market-driven policies meant community arts were being couched in terms of economic benefits and she says, despite her research pointing towards other aspects of the practice, this was still the case in 1997. She points out that this economically driven approach to understanding and funding the arts is often at the expense of "social, educational, cultural and economic dynamics" (Williams 1997, p.1). She identifies one of the problems being that there is no evaluation framework to "inform the real financial and economic impact of the work". When it came to improving economic performance, Williams stated that the existing economic indicators for measuring the value of community arts were inadequate (ibid, p.28). Quoting from 'A Truly Civil Society' by Eva Cox,

> "The arts industry – note the word – feels compelled to justify it's funding by pointing to its capacity to employ people, its export potential, and even its capacity as a marketing tool to promote national identity. These justifications neutralise any opposition from Treasury and Finance. They make the bean counters feel secure. However the emphasis on industry undermines our capacity to see the arts as an area where we explore creativity for its own sake; where we enjoy participating in activities even if they are not professionally saleable. Creative outputs are more than their resale value." (Eva Cox, 'A Truly Civil Society' 1995, p.75 cited in Williams 1997, p.28).

Rather than testing, questioning or rejecting this request, however, Williams (in line with her fellow researchers at Comedia) embarks on trying to come up with a framework which refers to how community art can increase social capital, build and develop communities, activate social change, develop human capital and improve economic performance[61]. Another problem she identified is the fact that community art "will always be severely compromised while it is stuck in a fine arts paradigm" (ibid, p.3). Williams suggests that "community-based, collaborative artistic production" is a catalyst for generating social capital as it is based on group ownership and shared responsibility. She makes a case for community art increasing social capital which she identifies as the non-competitive, co-operative social interaction among people as they create values, trust and meanings together (ibid, p.6). In terms of human development, Williams states how community artists often act as catalysts for experiential learning and critical reflection (ibid, p.24).

In describing the role community art has in term of developing communities, Williams raises the point that community-led, bottom-up schemes, which community art programmes generally are, are at odds with a government "primarily concerned with 'bottom line' economics and short election terms" (ibid, p.12). This is perhaps the crux of the matter and why community arts have only ever been paid lip service to and are rarely allowed to continue in the long term, as this would not sit comfortably with large-scale developments, a market economy-orientated culture or party politics.

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[61] This was pursued further by Matarasso in 'Use or Ornament?' (1997).

'Use or Ornament? The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts' by Francoise Matarasso

Matarasso's 'Use or Ornament? The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts' (1997)[62], according to Reeves, "produced a step change in recognition of the sector's contribution to social development" (Reeves 2002, p.16). Building on the impact studies that came before it, this report consolidated the values and benefits of art and directly addressed policymakers and funders. According to Reeves:

> "It was the first large-scale attempt in the UK to gather evidence of the social impacts arising from participation in the arts and it provided the earliest authoritative evidence of the impact of socially relevant arts practice...The study showed that the arts make a valuable contribution to social policy objectives, and concluded that a marginal change on social policy priorities was all that was needed to capitalise on the positive benefits accruing from participative arts activity." (ibid, p.16).

Having outlined some of the key findings of the social benefits of participatory art projects, Matarasso concludes that it would only take a small adjustment to introduce participatory arts initiatives into cultural and social policy in order to "deliver real socio-economic benefits to people and communities" (Matarasso 1997, p.vi). It is clear Matarasso has a certain idea of the role of art already when he decides to focus on social impacts as he feels there has been a bias in studies on the economic impact of the arts which "miss the real purpose of the arts, which is not to create wealth but to contribute to a stable, confident and creative society" (ibid, p.vi). The report focuses mainly on the beneficial aspects of the impacts, finding that participation in the arts improves self-confidence, practical and social skills, contributes to social cohesion, nurtures local democracy, renews public images of cities and generally make people happier. Despite the focus on social impacts, Matararsso also found economic benefits in terms of the amount of voluntary labour participatory arts relies on, that amounts to "a boost to the country's education resources worth hundreds of millions of pounds" (ibid, p.ix).

Stating how these project also contribute to carrying out other public services (such as child care, social services, health promotion and crime prevention), Matarasso points out, without giving away whether he thinks this a good or bad point, that participatory arts projects are often funded from "communities' existing resources, with marginal support from the state" (ibid, p.ix). This could be read as a money saving solution for the government – artists and participants are willing to carry out underpaid or voluntary social work in order for the government to make savings. Matarasso declares that it is in fact the artists' responsibility "so long as they are in receipt of public funds" to contribute to society (ibid, p.x). The report advocates for participatory arts projects as effective, flexible, cost-effective, problem solving devices that social policy could "make use of". He even goes as far as claiming art can "reduce public expenditure by alleviating social problems which the state would otherwise be obliged to put right" (ibid, p.ix and p.93). This premise that art is a cheap creative panacea which can solve social problems and save the taxpayer money in the process implies government does not have to make

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[62] It is worth noting that Matarasso does not use the term community art but instead 'participation in the arts'.

policies to tackle real social problems and effect direct change. Matarasso's declaration and its apparent influence on policy has rightly been the target of many critics.

In his chapter on 'Counterweight' about the costs, drawbacks and damage that could result from the "forces unleashed by creativity", Matarasso identifies that successful participatory projects can have complex and unpredictable results in the short term that may be 'politically uncomfortable'. He asks, "How far does the state really want to empower or raise expectations of its citizens?" Unfortunately, he does not think it is the role of his research to answer these questions, "which are proper subjects for *political* debate" (my italics), implying that he does not deem his own research political. In this chapter, Matarasso also flags up the fact that some people interviewed felt that having to deliver outputs to satisfy Government bureaucracy stifled and distorted the values of arts initiatives on personal and community development.

Paola Merli's critique of 'Use or Ornament?'
Five years after 'Use or Ornament?' was published, Paola Merli wrote a critique of Matarasso's research[63], saying it was "flawed in its design, execution and conceptual basis" (Merli 2002, p.1). Merli unpicks the methodological problems in the research, claiming that the data collected did not support the report's conclusions, accusing Matarasso of formulating questions that led to biased answers that "rule out the possibility of negative impacts" (ibid, p.4). She states that Matarasso judges other people's quality of life according to his own standards and approached the research with a preconceived perception of what art is and should be for. Merli points out one of the key contradictions in the document was that Matarasso used predefined indicators (constructed by the researcher without preliminary discussions with the 'participants' of the projects he is researching) which did not allow for the research to capture and discover the unpredictable aspects of the projects, which he defined as the very *strength* of participatory arts.

Merli is also critical of the underlying conceptual bias that art can carry out all of these objectives, saying that rather than changing

> "people's daily conditions of existence-it will only 'help' people to accept them. However, making deprivation more acceptable is a tool to endlessly reproduce it. Social deprivation and exclusion arguably can be removed only by fighting the structural conditions which cause them. Such conditions will not be removed by benevolent arts programmes" (ibid, p.8).

It is here we can see a difference between the community artists fighting for cultural democracy in the mid-1980s and the 'new missionaries' advocated in 'Use or Ornament?' a decade later. Art's fight for liberation from social control had perversely turned into art's facilitation of social control, as Merli points out:

> "While the original phenomenon was a spontaneous movement, its revival is a device 'offered' by the government. While the former was directed to the expression of conflicts, Matarasso's vision is directed to social stability obtained

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[63] The original article was published in the International Journal of Cultural Policy, 2002 Vol. 8 (1), pp. 107-118. The page numbers referred to here are from a downloaded version of the article from Variant: http://www.variant.randomstate.org/19texts/socinc19.html

by means of 'peaceful' popular consensus, the underlying inspiration seemingly being that whereas the rich are doing the 'right' things, the poor should be soothed through 'therapeutic' artistic activities." (ibid, p.9)

Merli concludes that research on the social impact of participatory arts should turn to new approaches; that an understanding of "quality of life" from the participants involved should be garnered before measuring how art has improved it; for the research to make explicit the theories underpinning the research, such as relevant sociological theories of creativity and art perception and the effects of art on individuals through cognitive psychology (ibid, p.10-11).

In his response to Merli's article, Matarasso (2002) accuses Merli of a "fundamental misreading of the published report" and defends his research as not attempting to be an academic, social scientific piece research but as research based on practical experience,

> "there are many ways of understanding the world and many legitimate forms of knowledge. An approach informed by practice need not be less rigorous than one informed by theory…Paola Merli's critique is founded on treating Use of Ornament? as something it is not: an academic attempt to prove definitively the social value of participation in art." (Matarasso 2002, p.338).

On the point that Merli raises about the report being weighted heavily on *positive* outcomes, Matarasso states that "the study did not set out to prove that such consequences are inevitable: nor could it, since they depend on the infinitely variable combination of situations and people" (ibid, p.340-341). He believed Merli confused the point of the research which tried to assess whether participatory art *can* lead to particular results, and was not saying they *must* (ibid, p.342). He does however, admit that the criticism made towards the use of the term 'cost-effectiveness' was justified: "it was certainly used in much too loose a sense in this research" (ibid, p.345). His riposte, however, was still based on what he 'believes' and 'sees' as a 'democrat' and someone who argues "above all for the importance of art in its own right", who believes "that how people use the arts is up to them, except within the limits which the practice of democracy imposes on its ideal, to be determined by government or by other vest interests" (ibid, p.343 and 345).

Further Impact Studies
Since Matarasso's 'Use or Ornament' there have been a number of research documents produced by the Arts Council, DCMS, DEMOS and IPPR that seek to find evidence and methodologies for collating evidence on the social, economic and/or intrinsic values of the arts. In their spending review of 2007, the Arts Council describes their achievements since 1996/7 and declare their future as being about encouraging "even more people attending and participating in the arts" still convinced that the arts "can achieve remarkable outcomes, ranging from improvement in pupil's attainment and attitude to learning, to providing the catalyst for economic and social regeneration, to helping young offenders on the path to rehabilitation" (ACE 2007, p.9). The Arts Council produced a report in May 2004 outlining "some research evidence" of the impact of the arts. The review focuses on the impact of art on social inclusion (through employment, education, health and criminal justice) and regeneration (including social capital and sustainable

development). In the introduction, the author states that despite the numerous claims about the impact of the arts, "there are still many gaps, particularly in the area of social impacts" and that the Arts Council is committed to "strengthening the existing evidence base on the impact of the arts" (Arts Council of England 2004, p.3). In 2006, the Arts Council produced 'The Power of Art: Visual arts; evidence of impact' in which it is claimed that:

> "The visual arts have a positive impact on the people who engage with them. While there is qualitative and anecdotal evidence, there is limited robust research evidence of the reach and effects of the visual arts on individuals, communities and localities." (ACE 2006, p.8).

The document details evidence based on research carried out by Prevista Ltd in 2005 about social policy areas of regeneration, health and education and learning. The aim of the document, with its twenty case studies is to make a case for visual arts in 'public policy development'. The report admits there is "no common conceptual framework for measuring the impact of the visual arts" and so instead, the case studies aim to present "persuasive evidence" to demonstrate the need to evaluate long-term effects. This admission to not having adequate evidence or the correct tools to measure art had been stated by the then Culture Minister, Estelle Morris in 2003:

> "I know that arts and culture make a contribution to health, to education and crime reduction, to strong communities, to the economy and to the nation's well-being, but I don't always know how to evaluate it or describe it. We have to find a way of describing its worth." (Estelle Morris 2003, cited in ACE 2006, p.10).

A year after Morris' call for more robust data, her concerns over a lack of evidence were later amplified by the new Cultural Secretary Tessa Jowell in her speech on Government and the Value of Culture (Jowell 2004), in which she calls for the recognition of the intrinsic value of art:

> "Too often politicians have been forced to debate culture in terms only of its instrumental benefits to other agendas – education, the reduction of crime, improvements in wellbeing – explaining – or in some instances apologising for – our investment in culture only in terms of something else. In political and public discourse in this country we have avoided the more difficult approach of investigating, questioning and celebrating what culture actually does in and of itself." (Ibid, p.8).

Jowell declares there is a "poverty of aspiration" which she says, "comprises all our attempts to lift people out of physical poverty" but that engagement with 'high' culture can help alleviate this poverty of aspiration (ibid, p.3). Jowell asserts that it is the government's responsibility to deliver "intelligent public subsidy" to "complex cultural activity" (ibid, p.7), which, Jowell, asserts is "access to the best" (p.7 and 16), whereas "[a]ccess to the substandard is access to disappointment which will translate into an unwillingness to keep paying…That is why excellence has to be at the heart of cultural subsidy" (Ibid, p.16).

As Variant point out in the Comment section of their Summer 2004 edition of the magazine, while some people welcomed Jowell's recognition of the 'intrinsic excellence' of the arts, her paper was in fact nothing less than "a prescriptive social agenda for the arts via the back door" that "repackaged the current instrumentalist agenda" by presenting an art for art's sake appearance so long as it can help alleviate the poverty of aspiration (Variant 2004, p.5). As in Matarasso's 'Use or Ornament?', the poverty of aspiration places the responsibility of alleviating poverty back onto the individual, away from government.

In the same year the Arts Council produced the 'Impact of the Arts' research document, they also published 'The art of inclusion', another research document by Helen Jermyn. This focused on the analysis of three models of "arts intervention" or "social inclusion work" identified by the Arts Council: community-led work; experienced arts organisations working with socially excluded, low income communities; and experienced art organisations working alongside less experienced, larger arts organisations to share their skills (Jermyn 2004, p.i and iv). In her introduction she calls for the recognition of individual testimony and "participation and engagement in the arts as an end in itself", saying that only long-term studies with established projects or organisation would be conducive to providing evidence of the contribution of the arts on wider social and economic outcomes (ibid, p.i), something the Arts Council were obviously unable to fund at the time.[64] Jermyn focused on "participatory arts projects" of 28 arts organisations that had been selected by the Arts Council as "exemplars of good practice". It is interesting that the study from the beginning was focusing on what were already considered to be "good practice", therefore canceling out any openness to negative impacts the "art of inclusion" may have exposed. Despite the aims of the research, Jermyn reveals that none of the case study projects chosen were 'community-led' but that each project had been initiated by staff in arts organisations, of the Arts Council or Regional Arts Boards. This perhaps reflects the move away from community-led projects in the 1960s, 70s and 80s and secures the notion that inclusion is a top-down process that comes from the included and acts upon the 'excluded', setting the scene for a decade of commissioned socially engaged art projects.

The Arts Council's commitment to evidence the fact that the arts are able to efficiently carry out government objectives is demonstrated through A.C.E.'s collaboration with the Arts and Humanities Research Council to establish three fellowships to research the area of impact evaluation[65]. Eleanora Belfiore and Oliver Bennett of the Centre for Cultural Policy Studies at the University of Warwick hold one of these awards and are researching the social impacts of the arts (their research grant runs from 2005-2008). Rather than launch into a project to find proof and ways of evidencing the imagined impacts of the arts, however, Belfiore and Bennett began by questioning the underlying assumptions that have led to the impacts of art being advocated and evidenced in the first place. In their paper 'Rethinking the Social Impacts of the Arts' (2007) they begin to

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[64] Indeed, it seems the Arts Council has never funded such a longitudinal study.

[65] The beneficiaries of these fellowships are Professor Ken Willis of The Centre for Research in Environmental Appraisal and Management (CREAM), in the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape, at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, who is focusing on researching "new and innovative aspects of economic analysis and methods to evaluate the economic impact and value of arts and humanities" (AHRC website); Andrew Pinnock, Lecturer in Arts Management and Cultural Policy at the University of Southampton who is developing new socio-economic assessment techniques for measuring musical performances and Eleanora Belfiore and Oliver Bennett from the Centre for Cultural Policy Studies at the University of Warwick who are investigating the social impact of the arts.

map the history of the Western European intellectual belief in the "transformative powers of the arts" as a way of understanding the role of art in society. They hope this will enable people to move beyond "narrowly conceived ideas of performance measurement and target setting" (ibid, p.4) and towards an "intellectual route that can allow us to overcome the false and sterile dichotomy between 'intrinsic' 'instrumental' values of the arts in which cultural policy debates seem presently stuck" (ibid, p.12). They outline a historical perspective of a series of "unquestioned assumptions" such as the notion that there is a shared understanding of what constitutes the arts; that the arts produce positive external social impacts that can be proven; that such proof of impacts will result in increases in government funding for the arts and that a new language is needed for discussing the value of the arts. Their research shows, for example, that such a language for the social impact of the arts has in fact existed for centuries but that it has been ignored, despite the fact that cultural policy makers have plucked elements from this history and given them the "status of general truth" (ibid, p.11). They reflect on the cyclical nature of the debates on the arts and how there has never been a time over 2500 years when "the role of the arts in society and their effects on audiences have *not* been at the centre of heated debates" (ibid, p.12, my italics).

Rather than claim a series of impacts the arts might have, their aim is to "help problematise commonly and a-critically held assumptions and to challenge canonical understandings of the effects of human interactions with artworks" (ibid, p.5). They point out, for example, that "instrumentalism" is over 2500 years old and can be found in Plato's 'Republic' and is not an invention of New Labour (ibid, p.5). In their paper, they identify three strands of philosophy connected to the impact of the arts, as the "negative tradition" which deems arts as having a corrupting and distracting force; the "positive tradition" which focuses on the beneficial side-effects of the arts and thirdly the "autonomy tradition" which rejects any pragmatic understandings or use-values of art and focuses on the intrinsic aesthetic aspects of the arts.[66]

[I need to add a conclusion/summary/analysis of this section]

NEW LABOUR'S SOCIAL INCLUSION POLICY
[I need to add an intro to this section – on the relationship between neo-liberalism, new labour and the illusion of democracy]

Tony Blair in a speech in Southwark one month after being elected, said he wanted to "tackle what we all know exists – an underclass of people cut-off from society's mainstream, without any sense of shared purpose" (cited in Kleinman 1998, p.7). 'Strong', 'normal' families are promoted as being the moral underpinning of successful communities in New Labour's Britain, which, as Fremeaux points out is a strategy to privilege and nurture individualism, rather than encourage collectivism (Fremeaux 2005, p.269-270).

In 1998 the Social Exclusion Unit was established by the Labour Government which published a report on neighbourhood renewal: 'Bringing Britain Together: a national strategy for neighbourhood renewal' (Cabinet Office, 1998). As a result of this report 17

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[66] Belfiore and Bennett will be publishing The Social Impact of the Arts: An Intellectual History by Palgrave/Macmillan in 2008.

Policy Action Teams were established to investigate the problems of poor neighbourhoods. Policy Action Team 10 was tasked with investigating the best way arts, sport and leisure could engage people in poor neighbourhoods and in their report concluded that arts, sports, cultural and recreational activity,

> "can not only make a valuable contribution to delivering key outcomes of lower long-term unemployment, less crime, better health and better qualifications, but can also help to develop the individual pride, community spirit and capacity for responsibility that enable communities to run regeneration programmes themselves." (DCMS 1999, p.2).

Following this, the social exclusion agenda was "firmly embedded in DCMS policies – for sport, the arts and across the board" (Kate Hoey MP, n.d.). Social inclusion became the answer to social exclusion.

Ruth Levitas in her book 'The Inclusive Society? Social Exclusion and New Labour' (2005) describes the three competing and contested discourses that have informed New Labour's social inclusion policy. They are 'redistribution discourse' (RED) which understands social exclusion as intertwined with poverty, but recognises the distinction between poverty and social exclusion in that one does not always lead to the other. The solution to exclusion in this discourse would be the radical redistribution of income. This discourse is the one perhaps most closely aligned with a socialist arts policy, the early ambitions of the GLC and the campaign for cultural democracy. The 'moral underclass discourse' (MUD) relies on a cultural rather than material explanation for poverty, assuming benefits are bad for people and result in a culture of dependency on welfare. This discourse is based on the notion that there is an underclass of people who are excluded from citizenship but whose main aim is to "win a place back in society by gaining a job" (Field 1990 cited in Levitas 2005, p.16). Employment is essentially the deciding factor as to whether someone is included or excluded. Levitas quotes Charles Murray ('The Emerging British Underclass' 1990), who described the underclass as a disease spread by people "whose values are contaminating the life of entire neighbourhoods" (ibid). This assumption is echoed, for example, in Chelliah's report on arts and regeneration (1999)[67]:

> "Participation in the creative life of the community directly challenges passivity, cynicism and a sense of disempowerment which are frequently encountered features in deprived areas." (Chelliah 1999, p.11).

With MUD, the underclass or deprived are accused of having these shared characteristics and that they have brought it on themselves to be like this. Finally, a 'social integration discourse' (SID) is based on the integrated function of paid work and reduces the social to the economic with the economic being understood as paid labour. 'Solidarity' is encouraged as it reduces costs of social provision, "it is the business of each citizen to practice neighbourly solidarity" (quoted from the EC report, 'Growth, Competitiveness, Employment' 1994, cited in Levitas 2005, p.25). This discourse relates to the economic reports of Myerscough, for example, which place the arts worker in the

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[67] Drawing extensively on the Comedia reports (1996 and 1997) Chelliah's booklet translates their key points and aims them at corporate policy makers and those involved in regeneration (the booklet was published by the Local Government Information Unit).

context of paid labour to justify their existence and significance in a service-based market economy, the main criterion for the creative industries being employability.

Levitas sums up these three discourses as RED being when the socially excluded have no money, MUD when they have no morals and with SID no work. She remarks that New Labour have shifted away from RED to an inconsistent combination of SID and MUD, meaning they have abandoned their socialist project of redistributing power, resources and income and have adopted a moral duty to work as the meaning of citizenship. Levitas argues that New Labour's social inclusion agenda suppresses the conflicts and contradictions of exclusion and inclusion. Rather than abandon the notion altogether, however, she suggests a broader idea of social inclusion could lead to a critique of capitalism, a more radical discourse and more radical politics (ibid, p.6).

'Community' as problem and solution
There has been a plethora of definitions over inclusion and exclusion, with the language often covering up the real problems of poverty and the increasing wealth gap. Whereas 'underclass' was used to describe the 'socially excluded', 'community' as a term was often used by those who considered themselves 'included' to classify a group of excluded 'others' (Fremeaux 2005, p.267)[68]. Under New Labour, 'community' became 'both problem and solution' (ibid, p.271). Participatory, socially engaged art happening in and with 'communities' also became embroiled in this terminology (for example, it was referred to as 'social inclusion work' by Jermyn 2004). Community-based work began to imply a more bottom-up approach to regeneration and development, but this was not always the case.

Kleinman in his paper, 'Include me out? The New Politics of Place and Poverty' (1998)[69], rejected the term 'underclass' and the way it was used interchangeably by Blair with social exclusion ("As a description it is inaccurate, as analysis worse than useless, and as a guide to policy positively harmful", p.8). Kleinman preferred the term social exclusion and its distinction from (yet relatedness) to poverty and unemployment although he was wary of it becoming a cliché "to cover almost any kind of social ill" (Kleinman 1998, p.10). Crucially, he states:

> "Focusing on social exclusion is politically attractive because it avoids the difficulties associated with addressing inequalities and power relations in the wider society." (ibid, p.10).

Again, this demonstrates the ways in which the language creates a distraction from demanding real changes in policy that would redistribute resources, wealth and power. The government can avoid having to make radical changes by presenting a picture of social inclusion. Kleinman points out the absurdity of the assumption that social inclusion is linked to community, networks and belonging:

> "Socially excluded areas don't just need jobs and better homes – apparently they

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[68] The notion of 'community' as being a fixed, achievable unit has been contested by Jeremy Brent who introduces the notion of 'community without unity' based on ambivalence, difference and division rather coherence, agreement and similarity (Fremaux, p.271 on Brent, 1997).
[69] Case Paper, August 1998, Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion – funded by the Economic and Social Research Council. This paper was given at the ICA, March 1998 as part of a series titled Time, Space and Society to mark the tenth anniversary of the Institute of Public Policy Research.

need community centres, self-help groups, voluntary organisations and community businesses. I don't quite follow the logic here, as these all seem to be things which better off areas don't have, or at least, don't have that much of." (Ibid).

He says the danger is that this "emerging ideology of social inclusion will lead to the imposition of modes of behaviours on the poor, which the rest of society has rejected" (ibid, p.12) and quotes Mary Baumgartner's study of a suburb of New York City (1988) in which she discovers suburbia as "a model of social order",

> "The order is not born, however, of conditions widely perceived to generate social harmony. It does not arise from intimacy and connectedness, but rather from some of the very things more often presumed to bring about conflict and violence – transiency, fragmentation, isolation, atomization, and indifference among people. The suburbs lack social cohesion but they are free of strife." (Baumgartner cited in Kleinman 1998, p.11)

Kleinman stresses the difficulty in distinguishing between the 'economic' and 'social' aspects of regeneration, saying that while the economic may prevail, "social capital is as important to economic development as economic capital", although he does not see a contradiction between the social and economic aims.

Jermyn (2004) found that within publicly funded arts organisations the language of social inclusion was confused, with some people referring to inclusion and others exclusion, but that generally there was a sense of unease over the language and that arts projects were not "necessarily seeking explicitly to tackle the four policy indicators of social inclusion that are commonly referred to (health, education, employment and crime)" (Jermyn 2004, p.v), rather outcomes might be possible by-products. Many people only used the term in the context of funding applications or policy making (ibid, p.25) She suggests ACE consider a clearer definition of social exclusion, outlining what "counts as 'social inclusion work'" (ibid, p.xi) as it is often used in the arts sector but without consistency (ibid, p.24). She also states, it would be useful to clarify if ACE is interested only in funding those projects that explicitly 'tackle' social exclusion or if they are interested in projects that "offer socially excluded groups cultural opportunities and projects that might indirectly contribute to the outcomes of social inclusion" (ibid, p.31-2).

Towards a Third Way – combining social and economic ideals
A key report to signal the departure from Labour's commitment to redistribution was the Commission on Social Justice's 'Social Justice: Strategies for National Renewal' (1994, known as the Borrie Report) which stressed the interdependency (rather than opposition) of economic efficiency and social cohesion (Levitas 2005, p.33). "The ethics of community" were now combined with "the dynamics of a market economy" and equality was based on equality of economic opportunity (ibid, p.34).

Kleinman (1998) took issue with New Labour's social exclusion policy as despite the number of regeneration schemes (500 in England funded by the Single Regeneration Budget Challenge Fund at the time of his lecture in 1998, p.3), the gap between the rich and poor was continuing to rise. While aware of the issues of placing too much significance on employment, he advocates employability as one of the key factors in tackling exclusion:

> "…I do not mean to imply that individuals are to blame for their unemployment. I mean that in a competitive, open economy, those individuals that have the least competitive attributes will find it most difficult to gain access to jobs." (Kleinman 1998, p.6).

New Labour moved a step further away from socialism's objectives which were about redistribution of income towards a notion of redistributing (job) opportunities: "if everyone is included, everyone must work" (Levitas 2005, p.36). Culture Secretary Tessa Jowell confirmed New Labour's agenda in 2004 as being about creating "equality of opportunity to material wealth and chances for material fulfillment" (Jowell 2004, p.14). The Cultural Policy Collective have also picked up on the fact that, as Levitas stressed, the social inclusion policy advocated by New Labour is based on "equality of opportunity" through education, training and access to paid work, rather than actual equality through measures granting collective rights and the public redistribution of resources (Cultural Policy Collective 2004, p.5). Poverty under New Labour is renamed 'exclusion'.

> "Inclusion may appear a progressive ideal, but in reality it means incorporating the poor into a capitalist economy driven by accumulation beyond human need, an economy founded on their exploitation." (Ibid, p.6).

Paid labour, as a marker of inclusion and citizenship has been predominantly unquestionably accepted by many of those working in the arts and signals the drive towards the professionalisation of the artist as entrepreneur. There are few critiques of this shift in Labour's programme[70] and how it ignores the refusal to work, inability to work, illegal work, informal uncontracted work, unpaid work or the issue that employment might not offer any form of satisfaction or sense of inclusion in society. Levitas (2005) continually points out that none of these New Labour reports or debates on social inclusion recognise the unpaid labour of domestic work, child rearing or caring. One could also add to this the significance of unpaid, invisible work done by artists.

> "[U]npaid work is never [in these reports] quite seen as work, as economically productive or as contributing to wealth, so that (re)distribution of the social produce is tied to the (re)distribution of paid work." (Levitas 2005, p.47).

For some the unpaid, invisible work is seen as a threat to social order, for example John Gray (Beyond the New Right, 1993) admits that the 'underclass' (i.e. the unpaid labour force and those who do not own property) "may reasonably be expected to lack the dispositions appropriate to civil life and may well become its enemies" (Gray 1993, p.37 cited in Levitas, p.100).

New Labour's Third Way melding of social cohesion and economic growth is based on the assumption that paid employment puts the citizen on the road to social integration. It assumes that everyone wants to play this capitalist game, that a living wage is a citizen's sole purpose and getting a job and buying a house is a sign that you have reached citizenship status. However, as Levitas points out, "inclusion means accepting the fundamental inequalities of a capitalist system" (ibid, p.68-9). The dominant New Labour

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[70] 'The End of Parliamentary Socialism: From New Left to New Labour' (2001) by Leo Panitch, Colin Leys and David Coates details the background to New Labour's shift from socialism to neo-liberalism and Anthony Giddens has written about Labour's Third Way as social democracy (1998 and 2000).

discourses on social inclusion (for example, writings by Will Hutton and research papers by the think tank DEMOS) focus on improving the management of capitalism, not questioning it (ibid). The Cultural Policy Collective remark on the fact that the social inclusion agenda is built on the acceptance of capitalism, that "privatisation is assumed to be socially beneficial and the power of global markets unassailable" (Cultural Policy Collective 2004, p.6). Again, the issue is how best to achieve inclusion status in a capitalist system and all it represents. Any attempt to challenge and transform capitalism as not recognised or considered irrelevant to the social inclusion programme (ibid, p.13).

Contributing to the chimera of social inclusion (reminder: social inclusion is not socialism)
Levitas looks at the writings of Amitai Etzioni ('The Spirit of Community', 1995 and 'The New Golden Rule', 1998) who advocates social responsibility as a "remoralisation of social life" (Levitas 2005, p.91) and suggests an increase in unpaid voluntary work through services to communities and families. Levitas asks who Etzioni expects to disregard their own individual interests (the bedrock of capitalism) and carry out this unpaid social work on which communities apparently depend (ibid, p.94)? She also refers to John Gray (1993) who suggests that welfare provision should be provided by families, neighbourhoods, churches, friends before the State steps in (ibid, p.100). This is extremely relevant where art is concerned, which has also become involved in side stepping radical redistribution in favour of helping people to help themselves, becoming the facilitators of this self-provision and acting as catalysts for Etzioni's "remoralisation of social life". Whereas in the 1960s, 70s and early 80s community artists were interested in facilitating community action connected to campaigns for change, equality and rights, by the late 1990s, artists had become paid facilitators, employed by the same people who they would have been working against twenty-thirty years ago.

Researchers at the Leeds Metropolitan University (2002)[71] found that for projects that were supposedly trying to deal with social inclusion[72] they appear to have had little success in opening-up wider decision-making process beyond the project (Leeds Metropolitan University 2002, p.6). They also found that projects were considered to have 'worked' according to the "instinctual response of the professionals responsible for the projects" rather than evidence from the socially excluded participants themselves. The report highlights the fact that arts organisations delivering these projects may not have the capacity to carry out sufficient evaluation capable of 'proving' the case and that often the pressure to present the project in a good light means "there are clear imperatives to present a positive impression of the work of projects". The focus then becomes about collating *outputs* rather than developing more longitudinal studies of *outcomes.* What counts as a desirable benefit to one person, may not be the same to another and the criteria of success may change according to the politics of the funders (ibid, p.7). So while the criteria for successful or beneficial outcomes are dependent on the views of those measuring the projects, it is also of concern that these criteria are often set and measured by those funding or delivering the project rather than the so-called 'participants'. This implies that cultural democracy in terms of widening and redistributing decision-making is not happening, if it was, those whom the projects are

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[71] Their research is based on 14 case studies.
[72] According to the Leeds Metropolitan University researchers, social inclusion projects should foster involvement in decision-making and agenda setting, exercising rights and taking responsibilities, while individual projects might "work hard to welcome participation" (p.6).

supposedly for would be setting the criteria for measuring whether the project has succeeded or not. The question is, why has this shift not taken place?

REGENERATION

By the second half of the 1990s there are more research and policy papers referring to the role of culture in regeneration. Regeneration was one of the policy fields where perhaps the bringing together of art, social capital and economic impacts was most obvious (compared to perhaps the role of arts in education, health and crime reduction, for example). Attempts to re-invigorate economic redevelopment with social values meant further lobbying reports and papers were produced to validate the positive effect of art in society. A number of influential papers were produced which are said to have influenced New Labour's merging of social and cultural policy in the context of urban renewal, for example, the Joseph Rowntree report 'The Art of Regeneration: Urban renewal through Cultural Activity' (Landry, Greene and Matarasso 1996) detailed 16 case studies in Britain and Western Europe where cultural activity had been used as a catalyst for individual and community development. The publication was produced for the conference of the same name in Nottingham in 1996[73]. The conference report outlined how art can be used to benefit the regeneration process, emphasising the role of art to stimulate economic activity and how local people should be seen as economic and social entrepreneurs (Matarasso and Hall 1996, p.v). They argued that planners should *use* the arts as one of their key tools of community and social development due to their cost-effectiveness and imaginative approach to addressing a range of social needs from "youth crime to supporting independence among disabled people".

> "A few thousand pounds can buy a festival which unites an area; a youth arts programme which addresses offending behaviour; a consultation exercise which transforms the relationship between residents and local authority…the range of ways in which arts initiatives can be used is very wide." (ibid, p.vi).

These factors were backed up by Moriarty in 'Hidden Assets: The Role of Arts in Regeneration' (1998) and Ramani Chelliah (1999) who urged those involved in regeneration to recognise the "unique capacity of the arts to facilitate social renewal which is essential for the sustainable regeneration of disadvantaged communities" (Chelliah 1999, p.9-10). Shaw's briefing paper on the role of the arts in neighbourhood renewal for the Arts Council (2003) also states how artists can stimulate deprived communities to "use their creativity and imagination and to give them a view of a different future" and that while the arts "do not offer a magic potion" they "help individuals and communities take a new direction. No other field can do this" (Shaw 2003, p.1).

Why were Comedia, the Rowntree Foundation, the Arts Council and local government so keen to demonstrate arts role in regeneration from the mid-1990s? This was partly due to the fact that those with vested interests were having to find reasons for the Sate to continue to support the arts. While some of the issues and roles of art pointed out by Matarasso were familiar to the community arts movement, the arts had now, as Kelly described in 1984, become foot soldiers in their own movement, having to justify the quality of services they were now carrying out to hit government targets. This was not cultural democracy in action; instead, this was government imposed, top-down

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[73] The conference was organised by Nottingham City Council in partnership with Comedia, Arts Council of England, English Partnerships, East Midlands Arts Board and Nottingham City Council.

bureaucracy. The socialist values held by many community artists to effect social change rather than defend the specialised role of the artist were watered-down and regurgitated by New Labour policy-makers as a depoliticised version of what they had been fighting for. Campaigning for change, community rights and direct democracy were filtered into a job for the artist to conjure up scenarios where participation is performed and consultation boxes are ticked. Comedia's conference report advertises the "art of regeneration" as a service in exchange for a cost-effective contract in a competitive market.

The Art of Regeneration conference took place prior to New Labour's election victory and reflects some of the values of cultural democracy before they were hijacked by politicians and developed into a tokenistic social inclusion policy. At this stage, delegates and speakers apparently felt that,

> "cultural action was seriously undervalued as an agent of social change. The arts are too often seen as entertaining (or elitist) diversion from the real business if addressing the serious problems faced by Britain's communities" (Matarasso and Halls 1996, p.vii).

By 1998, the integration of a social agenda for art was well established within the New Labour plan, based on a framework of accountability and evidence-based policy making. Aims and ambitions of democratic change and egalitarian re-distribution of income were dropped by New Labour who sought during their decade in power from 1997 to shuffle money around and create a framework of social inclusion that created an impression of democratic change while avoiding any fundamental changes. Despite their policies, social inclusion had failed to reduce the gap between the rich and the poor.

The demise of the cultural democracy and transformation from community art to socially engaged art.
Following the break up of the Shelton Trust and Another Standard in the late 1980s the community art movement began to fragment and disintegrate. While some of the working methods of the movement were appropriated by New Labour, the campaigning, politicised aspects of the movement were not revitalised. By the mid 1990s the term 'community art' was no longer as popular and instead terms such as 'participation' and 'socially engaged' started to be used. Lee Corner describes how community art had been absorbed into pre-existing categories of art funding bodies:

> "In the mid-1990s it is not easy to find a funding body which responds immediately to the term community arts. Phone any regional arts board or arts council and ask about grants for community arts projects and you are likely to be asked to specify the art form (visual art, music, drama) or the bit of the community (school, hospital, black, disabled)" (Lee Corner in Dickson 1995, p.118)

In the same publication, Sally Morgan describes how artists used to practice community art whilst 'on the dole' because "something needed to happen". Having never expected anyone would fund them, community artists later began to accept funding and finally they demanded it (Morgan in Dickson 1995, p. 16). Morgan distinguishes community art from public art or art in the community, saying it was the manifestation of an ideology

with long-term cultural and political ambitions. While for some practitioners these ambitions were about effecting social change through art, for others, it was more about changing society's attitude towards art, the latter not being overtly, or even covertly political (ibid, p.18).

Claire Bishop (2006) states how collaborative practices in the 2000s had lost their "authoritarian punch" compared to the community arts and critical pedagogy of the 1970s. Despite the many criticisms of funding-led community art and mourning over lost political ideals of the movement, in the 1990s there was also a reappraisal and lobbying for the recognition of art that involved people and tried to effect social change, for example, the South Wales Intercultural Community Arts was established in 1990 and in Northern Ireland a Community Arts Forum was set up in 1992. In the same year there was a conference entitled 'Art and Communities' in Stirling and in 1995 Artists' Newsletter readdressed the significance of community arts with their publication 'Art with People' edited by Malcolm Dickson which traced the history of community art from the 1960s and related those original practices to the work of practitioners in the mid 1990s. Malcolm Dickson in his introduction to this publication mentions 'socially engaged arts' in his description of the practice. This is the earliest mention of the term socially engaged art I have found to date:

> "Far from being unimportant in arts work with people, quality and excellence are central to it. Certain fine art practices and high arts are protected from the yardstick which is used to measure more *socially engaged arts*. It has been easy for art world supremacists to dismiss whole areas of practice as 'social art' – seen as decoration, community work, art therapy or play. That it is not considered equal to those other 'proper' art forms which cater to a minority of tastes and to which the majority of funding goes deflects any challenges to the mainstream." (Dickson 1995, p11, my italics).

- Gallery education and outreach

By the mid-1990s gallery education programmes were expanding as the beacons of accessible, inclusive public institutions. Education programmes developed work with schools, local communities and visitors to the galleries through interpretive programmes and workshops with artists. Organisations, such as the Whitechapel Gallery, IKON Gallery, Camden Arts Centre and Serpentine Gallery, for example, commissioned artists to develop off-site work as a form of 'outreach' to communities who would not usually use the galleries. It was through these commissions that much socially engaged art was developed in the late 1990s, such as 'Out of Here' and 'as it is' in 1998 commissioned by the IKON Gallery; Anna Best's 'Wedding Project' in Borough Market commissioned in 1998 by Tate Modern; 'To be continued' in 1999 as part of the pre-opening programme of the New Art Gallery Walsall and also in 1999, the 'North London Link', an off site programme by Camden Arts Centre[74]. While some institutions may have had 'education and access' at the heart of their aims, many educational departments remained marginalised in relation to exhibition programmes. As New Labour's social inclusion policy began to take effect, education departments became the bread winners for galleries, but according to some critics, they did not do enough to challenge the

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[74] **[I need to add details here of these programmes – artists included, curated by etc.]**

underlying hypocrisies of social inclusion agenda[75], instead finding themselves in an ideal position to carry it out and be paid for what they had long been fighting for. Anna Harding in the introduction to 'Magic Moments' (Harding 2005) outlines the dangers of this process:

> "Increasingly, rigorous demands for accountability for public funds have goaded art institutions to prove their worth through educational services which aim to engage and civilise 'new audiences', while a parallel new industry has grown up to evaluate these activities and prove their worth. Working with 'disadvantaged communities' including young people today provides an important source of revenue for art institutions. How far these activities can be co-opted whilst perpetuating exclusive cultural space remains to be seen." (Harding 2005, p.17).

Engage, the National Association for Gallery Education through their conferences, journal and advocacy work have taken the lead in creating an efficient, professional gallery education field, but have been accused of not being critical enough of the agendas they are delivering. This is perhaps reflected in engage's issue 11, entitled 'Inclusion under Pressure' (Raney 2002), in which the presentation of best ways to tackle social exclusion are attacked by Andrew Brighton as assisting rather than challenging cultural hegemony (Brighton 2002).

- Temporary public art

Debates on public art not as permanent sculpture but as performative, temporary interventions involving collaborations and participation were evolving in the 1990s.[76] While artistic and theoretical debates were evolving at this time, so was the notion that public art *should* have some public benefits and involvement of local people. Julia Gallagher in an article for New Statesman and Society (1995) entitled 'Community Aesthetics' asked if public art could ever be a cure for social problems. Gallagher refers to public art, rather than community art and the role of public art in regeneration (note this article was written two years before New Labour's election victory):

> "Once all that was demanded of public art was that it dignified a town square or a shopping centre; now it is increasingly being sold as a way to cure social problems." (Gallagher 1995, p.1).

She refers to Holly Street Public Art in Hackney commissioned as part of the social and economic redevelopment of the Holly Street Estate[77]. Holly Street Public Art was initiated by the Arts and Cultural Services Department of the London Borough of Hackney in 1994 as an "opportunity to demonstrate the benefits of integrating artists in the regeneration process, supporting the wider strategic cultural developments going on in Hackney and Dalston" (Holly Street Public Art Trust 1996). The programme aimed to involve residents in decision-making and production and in 1995 Holly Street Public Art became a Trust with residents on the board. Gallagher, however, raises the issue that

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[75] Of the "major beneficiaries of shifts on funding, art educators remain the most ambivalent about social inclusion" (Cultural Policy Collective 2004, p.?).

[76] These issues, for example, were explored in 'Decadent. Public Art: Contentious Term and Contested Practice' (Harding 1997).

[77] The director of the Trust was Jayne Bradley and trustees were Ken Gilmour, Patrick Hammill, Isabel Vassuer, John Williamson, Cllr Tony Allen and Mik Flood.

Sara Selwood also tackled in 'The Benefits of Public Art' (1995) that public art was not necessarily benefiting local people or alleviating problems in deprived areas despite its claims to do so (Gallagher 1995, p.2)[78].

Other projects that demonstrated alternatives to permanent public sculpture and addressed the ethics and responsibilities of working in public space in the UK included the project 'Valley Vibes', a mobile recording and sound device, initiated by Jeanne van Heeswijk and Amy Plant in association with Chora, the Office for Architecture and Urbanism in 1998 as a way of aurally mapping areas of east London that were designated for regeneration and in 1999 Montse Romani curated 'Non Place Urban Realm' at the South London Gallery, an exhibition, reading room and series of public forums about urban renewal involving international artists and activists (Iles, Martin and Suchin 2000).

A 'Renewed' Interest

While community art was perhaps being left behind as a term in the 1990s, this decade also saw a number of different experiments and writings that revisited and appropriated past practices that also link to the issues, concepts and theories of community art. These include Joseph Beuys' transformative process of art[79]; notions of site specificity[80]; new genre public art[81]; contextual art[82]; relational aesthetics[83]; post-autonomy[84]; littoral art and dialogical aesthetics[85]. It had also been noted by Buchholz and Wuggenig (2002) that in the mid 1990s artists began collaborating with sociologists, for example, Hans Haake's published his dialogue with Pierre Bourdieu (1994) and Clegg and Gutmann published 'The Sick Soul' in 1996 with contributions by sociologists and anthropologists about film and photography.

Internationally, the notion of public art was being questioned and values of process-based, collective ways of working of the 1960s and 70s revisited. For example, in 1992 there was an international three day conference at the Jan van Eyke Akademie in

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[78] Selwood focuses on permanent public art rather than community or temporary art.

[79] From 1990-92 in London there was a series of lectures at the Tate about social sculpture and the transformative processes of art. Shelly Sacks, collaborator of Beuys, who went on to found the Social Sculpture Research Unit at Oxford Brookes in 1998 established an 'Art and social healing group' in 1993 to explore "connective aesthetics, new pedagogies and the expanded conception of art". 1990 was also the year the Kuoni published writing and interviews of Beuys in 'Energy Plan for the Western Man'. In 1995 in Glasgow, Beuys' influence was revisited again with a conference sponsored by the Goethe Institute exploring his expanded concept of art.

[80] Simon Sheikh wrote 'Site-specificity: From the margins to the social' in Øjeblikket. Magazine for Visual Culture, special issue number 1, volume 8 (1998).

[81] Suzanne Lacy wrote 'Mapping the Terrain' in 1994 in which she and other contributors detail 'new genre public art'.

[82] "It was 'contextual art' in the European context especially in the first part of the nineties, that brought sociology and visual art closer together than at any time before…the difference to the past being that not only Marxist theory was of interest, but also critical sociology (such as Bourdieu's field theory) and traditional sociology, especially systems theory as represented by the Luhmann school in the German context." (Larissa Buchholz and Ulf Wuggenig, 'Constructing audiences, defining art. Public Art and Social Research', eipcp.net, 2002).

[83] In 1998, Nicholas Bourriaud wrote Relational Aesthetics (translated into English in 2002). The notion of contextual or relational art, however, was focused on gallery-based art environments and the production of art rather than art as a tool for social change. It could perhaps be said that socially engaged art developed as a combination of these approaches.

[84] Michael Lingner (1993) writes on post-autonomy: "The aim of post-autonomous artistic production is not (or not primarily) to create objects (electronic or physical) or to document the traces of the productive process. Rather, it is to support and embody a political transformation whereby the human participants subscribe to an open ended mutual learning process and define and activate a productive space outside capitalism and its competitive mode of production." (REF??)

[85] In September 1998 there was a conference in Ireland called 'Critical Sites: Issues in Critical Art Practice and Pedagogy' held in the Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, organized by Littoral, during which Grant Kester delivered his paper on Dialogical Aesthetics.

Maastricht, the Netherlands organised by Ine Gevers called 'Place, Position, Presentation, Public' about the critical function of art and the role of art in public places. The conference specifically addressed the question:

> "how is it possible for a work of art, given the manipulative and ideological affirmative strategies of the (institutional) systems within which it has to function, to play a role that is of any political, social, or aesthetic interest?" (Gevers 1992).

The 1990s in the United States was a productive decade for publishing on the expanded notions of art in relation to the role of art in social and public life[86]. In parallel to New Labour's new Cultural Framework (1998), in 1997, The American Canvas Report "attempted to prove that art is not a purely symbolic or autonomous activity, but is instead a kind of labour that contributes to the overall well-being of society in direct ways including public education and community service" (Sholette 2001, p.?).

Back in the UK by 2000 there were more events and conferences about socially engaged art starting to take palce. Students of the curating MA at The Royal College of Art exhibition, for example, brought together some of these practices in an exhibition called Democracy! in 2000. In the same year, PEER Trust published 'Art for All? Their policies, Our Culture' (Wallinger and Warnock 2000), a collation of writings on the public funding of culture. The following year, the Institute of Ideas and Tate Modern hosted the symposium, 'Pieties or Policies? The Language and Assumptions of Cultural Policy'. In 2003, the Arts Council organised a series of five symposia called 'Interrupt' in collaboration with different universities across England in order to debate the question: "Where does socially engaged, participatory and education arts activity stand within current debates around contemporary arts practice?"[87]

In the 2000s there have been some important publications to have come out that have attempted to write an alternative history and re-theorise process-based / community based / contextual and socially engaged art. These have included Miwon Kwon's 'One Place After Another. Site Specific Art and Locational Identity' (2002); Grant Kester's 'Conversation pieces. Community and Communication in Modern Art' (2004); Claire Doherty's 'From Studio to Situation' (2004); Ted Purves' (ed.) 'What We Want is Free. Generosity and exchange in recent art' (2005); Claire Bishop's (ed.): 'Participation' (2006)[88]; Gerald Raunig's 'Art and Revolution. Transversal Activism in the Long

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[86] These included (chronologically) 'If You Lived Here. The City in Art, Theory and Social Activism, A project by Martha Rosler', edited by Brian Wallis (1991); 'The Re-enchantment of Art' by Suzie Gablick (1991); 'Art and the Public Sphere' by W.J.T. Mitchell (1992); 'Art in the Public Interest' by A. Raven (1993); 'Unmarked: The Politics of Performance' by Peggy Phelan (1993); 'The Phantom Public Sphere' by Bruce Robbins (1993); 'Mapping the Terrain' by Suzanne Lacy (1994); 'teaching to transgress' by bell hooks (1994); 'The Subversive Imagination' by Carol Becker; 1995 in the States saw the publication of Becker and Wien's 'The Artist in Society; But is it Art? The Spirit of Art as Activism' by Felshin (1995); 'Aesthetic evangelists conversion and empowerment in contemporary community art' an essay by Grant Kester in Afterimage (and the subsequent debates this rose such as Martha Fleming's letter to editor in June 1995, Afterimage); 'Conversations before the End of Time' by Suzi Gablick (1995); ' Evictions, Art and Spatial Politics' by Rosalyn Deutsche (1998); 'Citizen Artist' by Durland and Burnham (1998); 'Art, Activism and Oppositionality' by Grant Kester (1998) and 'News for Nowhere. Activist Art and After' by Greg Sholette (1998). Relevant projects to have taken place in the USA in the 1990s included those curated by Mary Jane Jacob such as Places with a Past in 1991 in Charleston, Culture in Action in Chicago in 1995 and Conversations at the Castle in Atlanta in 1998.

[87] For further information on this symposia go to: http://interrupt.org.uk/

[88] Participation edited by Bishop (2006) is a collection of theories and artists writings and a variety of positions "that will allow students and researchers to think more widely about the claims and implications of the artistic injunction to participate" (p. 13).

Twentieth Century' (2007) and Will Bradley and Charles Esche's 'Art and Social Change. A Critical Reader' (2007).

[I still need to add analyses of these texts]

Critics of socially engaged art (on aesthetic grounds)
[I need to make connections between the paragraphs and conclude this section, it's a bit repetitive and jumps around]
All of these theories explored, to varying degrees notions of collaboration, process, public space and performance. Some writers have declared this 'renewed' interest in social issues[89] characteristic of the New Labour years and was a result of increases in funding for this type of work connected to their social inclusion policy[90]. It has been deemed nostalgic by some commentators and for JJ Charlesworth (May 2000), the significant difference between the aims of artists in the 1960s and 1990s and 2000s was that in the 1960s there was still a belief in transforming society beyond capitalism, instead,

> "what now passes for radical politics is a miserable blend of puritanical environmentalist catastrophism, scientific obscurantism and anti-capitalist sentimentalism." (Charlesworth May 2000).

There were many criticisms of the 'new' role art was playing in delivering the social inclusion agenda. Some of these criticisms were aimed at the flaws in the policy itself as an illusion of change rather than actual change and accused socially engaged artists of being paid to happily perform that illusion. Other criticisms focused on socially engaged art as having abandoned the aesthetic autonomy of art in favour of instrumentalism and a worthy, protestant ethical art. Doherty, in her essay 'Social Work, Social Sculpture' (2000), maps some of these criticisms, referencing claims that policies of "accessibility" relate to a "devaluation of the role of the artist in a so-called audience led culture" leading to a "crisis of social remedy over content". Politically and socially engaged projects were deemed to be dealing in "impotent empowerment" (ibid, p.?). There were a number of critics who considered socially engaged art as "Blair's art", for example, according to Peter Suchin, Loraine Leeson, is the "text book political artist":

> "It is rather unfortunate then, that Loraine Leeson's current alignment with New Labour's lip service socialism can only serve to smooth-and indeed consolidate – Labour's false image as promoters of equality, access and integration. Encouraging schoolchildren to make 'art' about their experience of disenfranchisement and exclusion is, intentionally or not, nothing less than the neutralising of dissent in advance of its potential manifestation." (Suchin 2007, p.10-11).

Charlesworth describes how the "new art" is obsessed with audience inclusion and excluded people above "artistic insights" giving it the "credentials to become the official

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[89] "Social conscience and political engagement in art is back in the mainstream" (Charlesworth May 2000), "Political art is back" (Charlesworth month? 2002) and "never in recent times has the demand for art and culture to find new forms of integration with the world been more keenly felt" (Charlesworth November 2000).
[90] Matthew Higgs, Julian Stallenbrass and Jonathan Jones have also written critically about this connection between socially engaged art and New Labour.

art of the new administration" (Charlesworth May 2000, p.?). Speaking of Anna Best's work, Saul Albert describes it as performing "the Arts Council's brief exactly – "bridging the gap" between access and excellence (Albert 2003). Andrew Brighton, in mourning the decline of artistic autonomy and arms length arts subsidy compares New Labour's cultural policy with Soviet Socialist Realism (Brighton 1999).

Critics of the instrumentalisation of culture through New Labour cultural policy have also included the Manifesto Club, in their 'Championing Artistic Autonomy' article and Minira Mirza's 'Culture Vultures' publication commissioned by the Policy Exchange. These arguments tend to refer to the loss of artistic autonomy as a result of these shifts in policy. These arguments are echoed by the American critic Dave Hickey who has stated that "non-object, non-portable art arose…as a strategic reaction to a commercial reality: all the walls were full!" (Hickey 1997, p.64-65). He rejects the bureaucratisation of the art world, which he says has turned all "that was joyful and spontaneous in art … into a pious improvement scheme replete with wall texts and pedantic catalogue essays", arguing that "All that bullshit about social power, was simply a distraction from the deeper truth of artistic beauty". Hickey was venomously against the intervention of the state in art, arguing that the market was the place for art - the more effectively you deliver 'pleasure' to the viewer the more successful your career. He attacked the National Endowment for the Arts for transforming "the institutional art world into a government regulated industry" (ibid).

The starting point for these criticisms is the premise that paying artists to carry out an instrumental arts agenda is an affront to artistic freedom. For some, this means reclamation of autonomous status for art (e.g. Bishop 2006; Manifesto Club 2006), for some a mutation of the term autonomous is in order (Esche, Freee, Beech – **dates?)** and for others, the rejection of the label of art altogether is called for (Holmes, Jordan, Leisure Arts Blog and Platform **– dates?).** The debate between Claire Bishop and Grant Kester illustrates the tension between these arguments that characterise this period[91]. What lies at the heart of these conflicts are some fundamental misunderstandings and ultimately different ideologies on what and who art should be for. **[needs more explanation about what I mean here].** Claire Bishop in 'The Social Turn: Collaboration and its discontents' (Bishop 2006), for example explains the expanded field of relational aesthetics as being linked by a "belief in the empowering creativity of collective action and shared ideas". She goes on to say that this

> "mixed panorama of socially collaborative work arguably forms what avant-garde we have today: artists using social situations to produce dematerialised, antimarket, politically engaged projects that carry on the modernist call to blur art and life" (Bishop 2006, p.?).

For Bourriaud and Kester, (whom Bishop describes as "supporters of socially engaged art"), art's role is to "rehumanize or de-alienate a society fragmented by capitalism, through acts of participation" (this echoes Etzioni's plans for community work to "remoralise of social life"). Bishop's issue is that this work needs to be analysed in terms

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[91] Bishop's 2006 essay in Artforum was followed by a letter of response by Grant Kester (May, 2006, Artforum) and a letter in return by Bishop again (date?). The Leisure Arts Blog has also followed the discussion extensively. (http://leisurearts.blogspot.com/2006/05/grant-kester-artforum-claire-bishop.html).

of its criticality as art (rather than politics or ethics), which she says is particularly pressing in Britain due to the fact that

> "New Labour uses a rhetoric almost identical to that of socially engaged art to steer culture towards policies of social inclusion. Reducing art to statistical information about target audiences and 'performance indicators', the government prioritises social effect over considerations of artistic quality" (Bishop 2006).

For Bishop, then it is clear that social effect and artistic quality are quite different things. She asks if the 'nonbelievers' (who reject any connection between art and social effects) and the 'believers' in social change if they have any (conceptual) place to meet? The 'social turn' in art is coupled, she thinks, by an ethical turn in art criticism that prefers process over product and collaboration (or 'authorial renunciation' which she equates to the Christian ideal of self-sacrifice)[92] over singular authorship to the extent that, "accusations of mastery and egocentrism are levelled at artists who work with participants to realise a project instead of allowing it to emerge through consensual collaboration" as "emphasis is shifted away from the disruptive specificity of a given work and onto a generalised set of moral precepts."[93]

Critics of socially engaged art (on political grounds)
[I need to make connections between the paragraphs and conclude this section, it's a bit repetitive and jumps around]
There is another angle on the critique of the relationship between socially engaged art and New Labour's social inclusion policy which does not come from the point of view of rescuing art from instrumentalism but instead critiques the underlying problems of the policy itself and calls for the radicalisation of socially engaged art, in other words, the return of a campaign for cultural democracy. As mentioned, such critics include the Cultural Policy Collective, who have argued that such a policy demonstrates a refusal to face necessary redistribution and has offered "very little to progressive social change" (The Cultural Policy Collective 2004, p.4).

> "Social inclusion policy's real aim is to prevent inequality becoming too obvious. It can never be the weapon of those who wish to eradicate poverty altogether."
> (ibid, p.8)

The Cultural Policy Collective proposes the revival of a campaign for cultural democracy. Instead of "patronising participants and treating them as if they were undergoing a process of life-changing enlightenment", the Cultural Policy Collective suggest a culturally democratic outreach programme would "merit long-term support, offering groups and individuals full institutional status through paid participation" (ibid, p.26).

As documented in the Another Standard Journal (May 1981-October 1986) and Kelly (1984), the long-term ambition of the community arts movement was cultural democracy, which, says Morgan, by 1994 most people have never heard of and have no "sense of the history and heart of the movement". She suggests it is time to revive the campaign

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[92] Relate this to Habermas's thoughts that the continued disillusionment with the failure of the avant-garde project has been used to strengthen the conservative position on culture (p. 14, Habermas in Foster's Postmodern Culture).
[93] I could argue that many socially engaged projects (including many of the ones Bishop refers to) do not in fact happen through 'consensual collaboration' and are instead more artist-led. What does consensual collaboration mean and when and how does it happen?

for cultural democracy (Morgan in Dickson 1995, p.26). Dickson, the editor of the same publication, also calls for:

> "a national co-ordinating group of artists and artsworkers who can collaborate with funding bodies and local government. And only an artists grouping, run on a grass roots basis, well co-ordinated, and serving and advocating the needs of the particular constituencies, can guarantee effective lobbying." (Dickson 1995, p.14).

The real issues of inequality and poverty under New Labour were not being addressed, rather the issues were watered down, depoliticised and turned into problems for people to solve themselves. The Cultural Policy Collective refers to the efforts in the early 1980s towards cultural democracy around the GLC and how these were 'swiftly neutralised' by the Thatcher government. New Labour was quick to grab the baton and continue this neutralisation. The Cultural Policy Collective call for a recognition of this defeat in order to move forward and re-activate cultural democracy (Cultural Policy Collective 2004, p.10). However, people in the arts have responded to this transition from cultural democracy to corporate capitalism by justifying itself on economic and social grounds (ibid). Apart from The Cultural Policy Collective's publication, the cultural democracy campaign seems to have either gone unnoticed or disappeared without a trace. The 'new' socially orientated practices are operating in a context of "social atomisation and political disengagement" (Charlesworth May 2000, p.?).

> "[L]acking the ideological desire and political vision to transcend the humdrum functioning of the market system in order to effect social transformation, the government has begun to use culture as an instrument of social cohesion, manipulation and pacification." (Charlesworth 2002, p.361).

According to Charlesworth, this means,

> "empowerment without power, aesthetic autonomy without art. Whilst the possibility of progressive social change disappears from view, art becomes a vehicle for 'giving voice', a kind of therapeutic self-expression for the people, in a society bereft of alternatives." (Charlesworth May 2000, p.?).

The dominant response to the wave of corporate capitalism sweeping over culture seems to have been an obedient process of justifying art's role on the terms of corporate capitalism without questioning those terms. Research documents post-PAT 10 were mainly focused on how to carry out the objectives of delivering social inclusion. Some individual voices against the notion of social inclusion tended to create an argument for arts autonomy (e.g. John Carey, Andrew Brighton, Manifesto Club – **add dates**). The response from The Cultural Policy Collective, however, was to set the alarm bells ringing because the agenda was too tokenistic and not seriously egalitarian enough. Their argument was not about fighting for artistic autonomy but exposing the hypocrisy of the neo-liberal agenda that relied on the notion of artistic autonomy in order to 'socially include' the excluded but without having to change or disrupt power structures. Social inclusion policy functions mainly as a "cosmetic mask to disguise unequal power relations" (Cultural Policy Collective 2004, p.11). The Cultural Policy Collective believed social inclusion policy would not work as it implied the combining of egalitarian

aspirations and the market – which are incompatible aims. Instead of a patronising and superficial social inclusion agenda, they argue for political cultural practice that is connected to bottom-up direct democracy (ibid, p.12).

The Arts Council's report on their arts debate[94], 'Public value and the arts in England: Discussion and conclusions of the arts debate' (Bunting 2007), states that

> "For individuals and organisations working within a particular social or community context, public funding for the arts appears to be biased towards 'elite' or high profile establishments and to pay lip service to social inclusion agendas. For more mainstream artists and arts organisations, public funding has become a political tool, preoccupied with diversity and disadvantage at the expense of genuine artistic quality." (Bunting 2007, p.23).

The results of the debate also showed that while there was appreciation of the need to be accountable, if the systems were too rigid this could "stifle creativity and hold back the development of artistic practice". The report states how participants of the debate wanted the Arts Council to take a stronger stand "on the very real tensions between artistic development and wider benefit, and between creativity and accountability", but also that "no funding system should try to iron out the tension inherent in the creative process…Rather this seems a tension to be enjoyed, celebrated and debated on an ongoing basis" (ibid, p.27). The need to take a stand whilst also embracing tensions seem a contradiction in terms and it is not clear as to how the Arts Council are managing this in practical terms.

Another reference to revitalising cultural democracy in the 21st Century is Meade and Shaw's special issue of the Community Development Journal on 'Community Development and the Arts: Reviving the Democratic Imagination' (Mead and Shaw 2007). In their editorial introduction they attempt to invigorate the concept of cultural democracy (ibid, p.417) by "reaffirming the importance of humour, risk, uncertainty and emotion in sustaining and enriching community development" (ibid, p.420). They outline the expectations placed on art to empower people and improve wealth and the increasing pressures on artists to prove their transformational, therapeutic and problem solving abilities. They argue that there has been a politicisation of the arts "as government extends its reach" and demands art carries out social and economic agendas (ibid, p.415). What this can result in, they warn, is art that "can provide a convenient means of political displacement, distracting attention from the real causes of social problems" (ibid, p.416).

Over fifteen years earlier, John Fox, Artistic Director of Welfare State International warned about these dangers and. In his discussion document for the National Arts and Media Strategy, 'A Plea for Poetry' (1991), he stated the need to, "restore the primary experience of the poet and poetry" in a market-driven economy where the Arts Council deliver consultants and experts in marketing, planning and sponsorship. The poet is not likely to be welcomed onto the centre stage, however, Fox concludes, unless "we

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[94] The Arts Council launched the Arts Debate in 2006-7 and aimed to "explore how public value is currently created by the arts today and what it would mean for the Arts Council and the individuals and organisations we fund to create greater public value." (p.4). The consultation targeted about 50 Arts Council staff, over 200 members of the public, about 80 artists and arts managers and about 30 stakeholder organisations. There were 1,200 contributions to the open consultation part of the debate and 150 representatives of the arts community at the final workshop.

change the fundamental premises on which we have built our society, its institutions and its economy, where people come before profit and long-term interest before short-term gain." He proposes instead that culture should be based on the mutual exchange of the gift rather than on commercial transactions and that one day poets will do Cabinet placements, doctors will prescribe saxophones and sable paint brushes, Arts Council officers will write poems, Models of Utopia will be exhibited at railway stations and the quality of living measured daily and reported on TV along with the weather (Fox 1991, p.?). Fox's pleas have not been answered to this day. Instead they have become commissioned acts of subversion by a company or government trying to sell their own dreams.