

**Which Cultural Policy? Whose Cultural Policy?**

**Players and Practices in a Scottish Context**

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# LIST OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
Acknowledgements	(iii)
Abstract	(iv)
<b>Chapter 1</b>	
<b>Introduction</b>	1
: Historical Context	3
: Shifting Meanings of Culture	8
: The Symbiosis of Policy and Practice	11
<b>Chapter 2</b>	
<b>Literature Review</b>	17
: What is Cultural Policy?	17
: Who are the Audiences for Cultural Policy?	18
: Economic Impacts	19
: The Social Policy Impacts	26
: Creating a Cultural Policy Academe	33
: Elisions and Outsiders	39
: Gaps in Cultural Policy Research	45
<b>Chapter 3</b>	
<b>Methodology</b>	48
: The Research Perspective	48
: Setting the Scene	49
: Participants	50
: Instruments Used for Data Collection	55
: Design of Research	56
: Data Analysis	60
: Theoretical Perspectives	65
: Reflexivity	74
<b>Chapter 4</b>	
<b>Scotland's Cultural Policy Community</b>	79
: Introduction	79
<b>Part One: Identity Construction in the Cultural Policy Community</b>	81
: Citizens, Experts and Cultural Policy Heroes	81
: Status and Hierarchies	90
: Intertextuality: The Significance of 'Others'	95
<b>Part Two: The Role of Narrative and Representation</b>	104
: Fact, Fiction, Ficciones and the Self	105
: Imagery and Metaphors	110
: Representation of Social Event	116
<b>Part Three: The Discourses of Cultural Policy</b>	120
: Shared Knowledge, Understandings and Language	121
: Assumptions, Alignments and Aporias	124

<b>Chapter 5</b>	<b>Where Cultural Policy Is Made</b>	135
	: Introduction	135
	<b>Part One: Texts</b>	135
	: Genre Chains and the Movement of Meaning	136
	: Perceptions, Opinions and Interpretations	142
	: The Social Life of Texts	146
	<b>Part Two: Networks</b>	152
	: Trust, Membership and Social Capital	152
	: Gossip	160
	: Experience and Experiences	163
	<b>Part Three: Other Abstract Spaces</b>	167
	: State Space: Knowledge and Power	168
	: The City and the Nation	172
	: The Public Domain	174
<b>Chapter 6</b>	<b>How Cultural Policy Is Made</b>	179
	: Introduction	179
	<b>Part One: Performances and the Production of Cultural Policy</b>	179
	: Performing in the Public Interest	179
	: Mythologising	187
	: The Artifice of Consensus	192
	: Exchanges: Knowledge and Activity	196
	<b>Part Two: Practising Power</b>	200
	: Productive Misreadings and Acting Outside the Norm	201
	: Knowledge, Desire and Becoming	212
	: Smoothing Spaces	219
	: Unintended Consequences and Unexpected Outcomes	226
	: Accidental Happenings, Serendipity & the Incubation of Ideas	230
<b>Chapter 7</b>	<b>Conclusions</b>	234
	: Reflections on My Research Experience	236
	: Main Outcomes	242
	: Implications for Practice and Research	246
<b>References</b>		256
<b>Appendix 1</b>		277
<b>Appendix 2a</b>		278
<b>Appendix 2b</b>		282

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## **Abstract**

This research is concerned with how cultural policy is made in contemporary Scotland. Focussed on deciphering and understanding the actions, behaviours, meanings and performances of those involved in cultural policy making and how a cultural policy community is created and maintained, a qualitative research approach was adopted. As such, the research is based on semi-structured interviews with fifteen key players from the cultural policy community

The influence and application of a range of theoretical perspectives shaped my data analysis and research outcomes in significant ways, leading me away from an initial positivist approach - where I had hoped for a 'cultural policy making toolkit' to emerge from the data - to a more nuanced understanding of the complex and unpredictable dynamics at play in cultural policy making. In particular, writings broadly defined as within the postmodern camp - namely those of Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze and Guattari - provided the possibility of new paradigms for the discussion and understanding of cultural policy making, leading me to unexpected insights into cultural policy making processes.

Key findings relate to the characters and their performances within the cultural policy community as well as the spaces where cultural policy is created. Firstly, the significance and impact of key players emerged as having less to do with their perceived status, influence or professional positions, than their ability to construct a 'cultural policy' identity, attune themselves to, engage with and affect an ever changing and fluid policy environment. Paradoxically, the data revealed that those who appeared at first sight to be the most powerful and influential often emerged as the least so. Notably, the most effective players seemed to be those who invested in their sense of self and social identities

and roles, clearly articulated values, principles and beliefs, bringing an authenticity to their performances in the cultural policy sphere. In addition these players demonstrated an almost intuitive understanding of the power of myth and storytelling in the construction of cultural policy.

Similarly, the most significant cultural policy spaces were not where I had thought them to be - for example, public agency boards and political committees - but rather in the more amorphous spaces of gossip, 'off-the-record' comments, newspaper commentary and opinions, networks and the assumed meanings in both the said and unsaid. My data also reveal an active engagement in the 'public domain' by the cultural policy community, a space that is constructed and defined by meanings, signs and values - the substance and language of cultural policy.

Finally, it is the performances of actors in the cultural policy spaces that bring cultural policy into being. The data disclose the power of speaking and writing in shifting and disrupting perceptions, views and interpretations, and in creating different spaces of encounter and creativity, leading to new understandings and unintended cultural policy directions. Indeed, my data suggest that it is more often than not the accidental happenings, productive outcomes of inadvertent actions, incubation of ideas and serendipity, that lead to the most effective and affective cultural policy outcomes - rather than the formulaic and process driven approaches required of local and national government and its agencies in the name of public accountability.

The main implications of my research and recommendations for future action include: the desirability of wider dissemination of cultural policy research to practitioners, and an

increase in practitioner-led research; recognition of the diversity and potential of atypical and informal cultural policy spaces; and the need for professional development opportunities and programmes to take cognisance of the latent resource inherent in practitioners who, with some encouragement, confidence-boosting and on occasion guidance in developing themselves as ‘readers’ of cultural policy discourse, could contribute to a more active and engaged cultural policy community.



## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

This thesis presents the outcomes of my research into, and analysis of, the processes involved in establishing cultural policy at both national and local levels in Scotland. It has sought to identify how political and professional influences impact on cultural policy and how a cultural policy community is formed and maintained. Although my research questions were concerned primarily with the development of the Scottish Executive's 2000 National Cultural Strategy and Cultural Policy development within Glasgow City Council since 1998, the primary focus of my research was the unwritten, unspoken and sometimes unconscious processes behind, under and within the creation of cultural policy.

My main interest was, and is, in uncovering how particular cultural policy outcomes, directions and practices and not others come to be pursued, and how the contents of cultural policy documents are often overtaken by events and their purpose and aims changed by unintended consequences. By its very nature, the answers to questions in this respect would not be found in official policy documents, records or reports, but rather in the interactions and relationships between those involved in the cultural policy sector. Therefore, the data for my research were gathered not from policy documents or official records, but rather from interviews with fifteen key policy makers, decision makers and opinion formers in the cultural policy sector.

Whilst the methodological approaches I adopted are typical within social science research generally - qualitative research based on semi-structured interviews - the intention and focus of the research are not so commonplace. So too my sense-making of the data, which is shaped and informed by my professional role, experiences and relationships within the

cultural policy community. More often than not commentary on cultural policy is developed in the abstract, based on personal and public opinions and desk research which draw on a plethora of mixed-quality information, sometimes of dubious factual accuracy, from a range of sources including the internet. The perspective and understanding I bring as a professional in the field, is atypical; more of an 'insider' view than that of an 'outsider'. This of course brings its own potential distortions and risks - but no more so than from an 'outsider' or non-'cultural professional' (Holden, 2008, p.7) perspective.

Indeed, as a professional in the cultural sector for over twenty five years, involved in developing and managing a wide range of arts, sports, leisure, heritage, museums, library, information, youth and community services, I believe my research makes an important contribution to a field often perceived by professionals as being populated by commentators and critics with little direct experience in developing or implementing cultural policy. My research offers a professional perspective and reflection on contemporary cultural policy development, which I hope will go some way to encourage other professionals and practitioners to engage more fully with cultural policy discourse, rather than believing that the critiques and commentary is the business of only those *not* involved in delivery. As a professional doctorate, hopefully this EdD thesis will facilitate further insights for workers in the cultural sector into how cultural policy is - and can be - influenced and implemented.

This research is important in that for the first time, it attempts to identify, unfold and explain the human interactions, relationships and processes which shape and influence policy and action in the cultural sector; none of these are ever explicitly referred to in official policy documents or reports. In terms of professional practice, the skills required to

operate and interact as part of a wider policy community are equally non-explicit, yet are a necessity, particularly at a senior level, if policies are to be delivered on. My data reveal to some extent the skills, techniques and experiences applied and utilised by those working in the cultural sector, giving a clearer understanding of the professional expertise required of cultural workers. Yet, in addition, the data were especially revealing of the many ways - sometimes conscious and often not - in which policy is developed and implemented, giving I believe a new perspective on, and understanding of, Scotland's cultural policy community and the context in which it operates - a perspective which is not currently articulated or recorded.

## **Historical Context**

To assist understanding of my data and analysis, my research needs to be located within the context of the wider cultural policy community history and discourses; not least of all because the underpinning cultural issues and debates permeate much of the content of my data, the analysis of which is presented within chapters, four, five and six. Without doubt the burning cultural policy question of the day is whether or not culture should be valued - and therefore supported by the public purse - for its own intrinsic worth, or should it be utilised or colonised for social and economic policy ends. No matter the cultural subject, this debate is never very far away.

Although this is often regarded as a relatively modern quandary, the evidence suggests that instrumental approaches to cultural policy have been the norm since government ever became actively involved in cultural provision. Looking back in time, in 1759 the British Museum was opened to the public and from its beginnings the British Museum was a new

type of institution. Governed by a body of Trustees responsible to Parliament, its collections belonged to the nation, with free admission for all. Entry was given to “all studious and curious persons” (The British Museum), linking public enjoyment with education. Bennett (1998, p.122) argues that by the nineteenth century, the development of public museums and galleries was driven by a self-conscious intention to “shape public morals and behaviour...through the ‘civilising powers of the arts’” (Belfiore & Bennett, 2006, p.143). For example, in Glasgow in the 1890s, The People’s Palace Museum and Winter Gardens were initiated by Glasgow Councillor Robert Crawford, Chairman of both the City Council’s Health and the Galleries and Museums Committees. Crawford firmly believed that the city should be involved in looking after people’s cultural needs, as much as their physical needs (O’Neill, 1998) and that the industrial working people of the east end should have as much access to cultural assets as anyone else - clearly the concept of social inclusion and the contribution of culture to health and wellbeing is not such a modern one after all. In a speech to the Ruskin Society of Glasgow in February, 1891, Crawford said:

Is it possible for any public body to deal effectively with institutions and conditions of life apparently so widely removed as PUBLIC HEALTH AND MUNICIPAL ART?... You, I am sure, will give no hesitating answer to this question. It is of the very essence of that common bond which links together the members of this Society, that these two extremes not only do, but must meet and blend together to their mutual advantage... The heart that vibrates

to the truly beautiful in Art will vibrate also to human suffering (Crawford, 1891, p.4).

It is not surprising, and indeed I would suggest to be expected, that government of all scales and persuasions, in the main, take an instrumental view of cultural policy. They are in the very business of selecting, balancing, distributing - and importantly justifying - what levels of funding the various areas of public life should be awarded. However, what is a more contemporary issue is the level of interest in and depth of debate around instrumental approaches, debates and critiques which have in themselves impacted and influenced cultural policy. This is discussed in further depth in chapter two where I review the cultural policy literature.

Similarly, there is a view that 'public/private' partnerships are also a modern phenomenon; one that weakens democratic accountability and privileges the private sector over the public. Neither the theoretical and political implications, nor the technical details of public/private finance initiatives - which have been utilised in a range of school, housing and hospital building programmes in recent years - are the subject of discussion here. However, it is worth pointing out that in cultural policy terms, the concept of public/private partnerships are not entirely a late twentieth century creation: The People's Palace in Glasgow, opened in 1898, was funded from profits from the East End Exhibiton of 1891, compensation money from the Caledonian Railway and from money from the sale of the old Bridgeton bleaching green in 1866 and deposited in the Clydesdale bank to one day fund museum and gallery facilities in the East End of the city (O'Neill, 1998). At the opening ceremony, on 22 January, 1898, Lord Rosebery said: "This is a palace of pleasure and imagination around which the people may place their affections and which may give

them a home on which their memory may rest” (The Glasgow Herald, 1898, p.6). Just as the People’s Palace was made possible by private funding, so too, Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Musuem - arguably Glasgow’s greatest treasure house - was not built by the Corporation (as the local authority was then known), but by a society of businessmen who established the Society for the Promotion of Music and the Arts, which organised the 1888 exhibition to raise the money for a new museum and art gallery in the West End. They handed over the project to the Corporation to run when it was near completion in 1901. This philanthropy and active relationship between the public and private sectors in Glasgow has been at the heart of the City’s cultural life - the majority of the City’s great art collections are the direct consequence of bequests to the people of the city. Without businessmen such as McLellan, Hamilton and many others, Glasgow would not have its collections of old masters and Impressionist paintings - a rarity in any civic collection. And of course, the most famous of all, the Burrell collection, eight thousand objects covering some of the great periods in world art history - including Islamic art, medieval art, the Impressionists and early Renaissance. The support of the private sector also influenced and supported new directions in the Arts: without the forward looking Tearoom commissions from Miss Cranston, Charles Rennie Mackintosh may never have created some of his most iconic pieces.

Indeed, in the Ingram Street Tearooms - comprising seventeen interior spaces designed between 1900 and 1912, and currently midway through a conservation programme supported by private sector philanthropy - we can see the development of Mackintosh’s style emerging from late Victoriana, the influence of Chinese and Japanese art, the Glasgow Style, ending in his design for the Gent’s billiards room, hinting in his new twisting shapes and lines, at the new Art Deco style to come. There are many more

examples I could give regarding the impact of public/private partnerships on the historic development of the visual arts in Glasgow - and indeed elsewhere. But rather than give a comprehensive account of the history of public/private initiatives in the cultural sector, my intention instead, has been through the Glasgow example, to give a sense of the fundamental links between Glasgow's cultural and business communities - a historic link *continued* by a new generation of businesses and philanthropists, rather than the creation or emergence of an entirely new and contemporary political or economic phenomenon as some social policy commentators - such as the Cultural Policy Collective (2004) - would have us believe.

Notwithstanding, a historical review suggests that public commentary and debate on cultural matters have influenced cultural policy decisions over a long period of time. Indeed, Belfiore and Bennett (2006, p.182) claim that this has been happening for nigh on two thousand five hundred years, a proposition fully expanded in their book recently published in November, 2008 (Belfiore and Bennett, 2008). However, sticking with the more recent past and influences, in 1965 we see the influence of earlier decades' debates on arts and culture in the White Paper *A Policy for the Arts, The First Steps*, produced by the UK's first Arts Minister, Jennie Lee. Whilst there is a distinctly Labour Party intent to widen access to culture for the majority, a process of moving resources out from the centre to the regions, later to be described as 'democratisation of culture', an approach which dominated cultural policy until the early 1980s (Vestheim, 1994 and Hollis, 1997), nonetheless, the White Paper is clearly influenced in the main by the thinking of earlier generations. On reading the White Paper it would seem that the dominant influences were writers from within the 'Bloomsbury Group' such as Clive Bell and Roger Fry, who had in turn influenced John Maynard Keynes, Chairman of the Council for the Encouragement of

Music and the Arts (CEMA) from 1942-1946 and the man widely viewed as creator of the Arts Council of Great Britain, dying suddenly in 1946 before the Arts Council's Royal Charter was ratified (Upchurch, 2004). Their vision of a light-touch government, increased financial support for artists, commitment to sustain and strengthen all that was considered the best in the arts - and by so doing improving both the image of the UK abroad and improving human welfare (Upchurch, 2004), was very much echoed in the sentiment of the White Paper. In keeping with the Labour Party's 1959 *Leisure for Living* manifesto, referenced briefly in its 1964 general election manifesto *Let's Go With Labour for the New Britain*, the White Paper also prioritised an increase in local and regional cultural activity (Hollis, 1997). Indeed, this White Paper was hugely influential across the country. For instance, in Scotland, Fife County Council were the first to adopt the key policies of the White Paper at a local level, setting up in 1966 its own arts unit, 'The Arts In Fife' within its Education department.

## **Shifting Meanings of Culture**

Following Jennie Lee's White Paper, many local authorities across the UK went on to develop and fund new arts policies and programmes. They were also at the forefront of challenging widely held definitions of what constituted culture (Mulgan & Worpole, 1986), influenced and informed by commentary and activity from cultural workers and academics on the one hand, and on the other, by the changing needs and interests expressed by local communities. In addition to funding access to what were regarded as the mainstream or 'high' arts, support for recording studios, popular music, publishing, computer art and so on became common practice by local authorities and in particular by the Greater London Council. Its radical cultural policies between 1981 and 1986 moved cultural policy very



clearly away from the needs of the artform and biased towards the audience/participant (Mulgan & Worpole, 1986), becoming one of the first national focal points for the 'instrumental cultural policy v arts for arts sake' debates. Herewith, the cultural democracy debate emerged, with cognisance of the 'cultural industries' and their role in creating jobs and redefining 'culture' at its centre (Mulgan & Worpole, 1986). By the 1980s local authorities collectively were recognised as being the main providers of cultural services - albeit reluctantly in some quarters such as the Arts Council of Great Britain (Mulgan & Worpole, 1986), this in itself hinting at the tensions, differences and debates to develop in future years, between what many professionals regarded as instrumental approaches advocated by local government and defence of an 'arts for arts sake' approach by some national cultural agencies.

I have indicated earlier that practice was influenced by cultural policy literature and vice versa - framed of course by broader political, social and economic policies and events. Just as the kernel of the cultural policy ideas and development of the 1950s and 1960s can be traced back to those of the Bloomsbury group, their contemporaries and successors in the major cultural institutions and government, so too, the new concept of cultural democracy and the resulting practices of the 1980s can be found in the writings and development of ideas emerging as far back as the late 1950s. Raymond Williams and Richard Hoggart (the founding director of the first university Cultural Studies department in Birmingham University in 1964) were writing about new definitions of culture as early as 1956, challenging elitist definitions and repositioning culture as 'ordinary', ubiquitous and belonging to, and created by, the many, thereby, introducing the idea that practices within social life - such as fashion, cinema, dwelling spaces, sport and popular music - could be

deemed to be 'culture' (Rojek, 2007). Of course, definitions of culture have changed throughout history:

...different centuries, different countries, even different decades have different notions about what is or is not 'art'.

Consider how each of the following has been both within and without the magic circle of 'art' in recent centuries -

Needlework; Gardening; Cooking; Films; Jazz; Photography; Oratory; Dance (Pick, 1988, p.x).

But what is important here is the theoretical tradition from which these more contemporary ideas and definitions emerged. The impact of Cultural Studies literature, and in particular that associated with the Birmingham School over the following decades including Stuart Hall's socialist/political theories and feminist studies by Angela McRobbie (Rojek, 2007), was significant: new definitions of culture and new activities were identified as worthy of support and funding, new policies were focused on widening access and in particular targeting the most disadvantaged and also a new literature related specifically to cultural policy and practice developed. Indeed, an early indication of a Cultural Studies shift from 'theory' to 'action' is embodied in "Angela McRobbie's now famous declaration that cultural policy is 'the missing agenda' of cultural studies" (Scullion & Garcia, 2005, p.116).

## **The Symbiosis of Policy and Practice**

In recent decades, two pivotal publications, one in 1988, by John Myerscough, *The Economic Importance of the Arts* and the other nearly a decade later in 1997 by Francois Matarraso, *Use or Ornament? The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts* have become central to the ensuing debates, in so much as they were perceived as providing for the first time, robust evidence of the economic and social impacts of arts and culture, as well as providing the focus for the development of a cultural policy research academe. Certainly, in the 1980s, establishing the economic importance of culture, and in the 1990s, doing the same for social impacts, were very much part of the overall zeitgeist of their times and were concepts embraced by cultural professionals, commentators and politicians of all persuasions.

Myerscough's *The Economic Importance of the Arts*, published by the Policy Studies Institute in 1988, provided for those working in the cultural sector not only what seemed to be the definitive word on this subject, but established what was to become for many over the following decades, an axiomatic truth. Just as Myerscough's 1988 publication became a seminal text in terms of the economic importance of culture for those working in the cultural sector and researchers alike, so too did Francois Matarraso's *Use or Ornament?* on the social impacts of the arts published in 1997.

Over recent years these publications and their themes have been further developed and critiqued by cultural workers and researchers alike. However, these critiques did not seem to begin in earnest or reach such a critical mass that the 'cultural policy field' could be judged a 'discipline' until the introduction of the term 'social inclusion' into the

government policy vocabulary by the Blair government of the late 1990s. At this point, interest in, and concerns about, the use - or from a critical theory perspective, 'colonisation' - of culture for social policy and political ends began to emerge. For example, on the web site of the ICCPR (International Conference on Cultural Policy Research) it is stated that its establishment in 1999 and *raison d'être* was "...to counteract the prevalence of instrumental arts-management-approaches which became more and more dominant in the scientific debates on cultural policy issues". Notably, this conference, its founders and subsequent contributors, have become central to the development of the new academic discipline of 'cultural policy studies'.

As landmark publications and academically credible analyses of their subjects, (despite criticisms), Myerscough's and Matarasso's work have not only endured, but singly and jointly, have continued to shape and influence cultural policy, its purpose and applications, and ongoing research, evidenced in many of the cultural policies of the past twenty years, whereby performance is judged substantially on the urban regeneration, economic and social policy impacts. For instance, in the *Charter for the Arts in Scotland* (The Scottish Arts Council et al, 1993), a major national cultural policy document in its scale and scope, its introduction opens with a description of a press conference involving Myerscough and the city of Glasgow leaders in 1992 on the Monitoring Report on Glasgow's year as European City of Culture. Apart from the significance of Myerscough's involvement itself, the report states that the event:

...summed up some of the major changes that have taken place in the Scottish arts scene - and in the arts elsewhere in Britain - in the past ten years...it demonstrated the

seriousness with which the arts are now taken in Glasgow and throughout Scotland, as an aspect of public policy and economic development, and a major responsibility of local government (The Scottish Arts Council, 1993, p.12).

In the same vein, the titles of the Department of Culture, Media & Sport policy reports speak for themselves regarding the centrality of economic development and social inclusion strategies in cultural policies: 1999 sees the publication of the Policy Action Team 10 research reports, *Arts and Neighbourhood Renewal* and *Report to the Social Inclusion Unit*; in 2000 publication of *Centres for Social Change: Museums, Galleries and Archives for All* and in 2004 publication of *Culture at the Heart of Regeneration*.

In 2000, the Scottish Executive's first national cultural strategy, *Creating our Future, Minding our Past* states unequivocally that "the contribution culture can make to wider Scottish Executive priorities such as social justice, economic development, regeneration and equality are realised" (Scottish Executive, 2000, p.2). Five years later in the Cultural Commission report *Our Next Major Enterprise*, a similar assertion is made: "The Cultural Commission strongly supports the Scottish Executive's acknowledgement of the value cultural activity brings to society and the central role it can play in policy areas such as education, health, employment, regeneration, justice and communities" (Scottish Executive, 2005, p.5). *Glasgow's Cultural Strategy* of 2006 also asserts the economic and social policy importance of culture for the city in a clear introductory statement as to the strategy's purpose: "It's about helping people do better at school, making it easier to find employment or take part in additional training or education, and improving the health of the whole population" (Glasgow City Council, 2006, p.1).

More recently, the Scottish Government's consultation document on *Delivering A Lasting Legacy for Scotland* from the 2014 Commonwealth Games, clearly sees the Games as an opportunity to deliver on a wide range of government economic and social policies. The document states:

Hosting the Commonwealth Games presents Scotland with great opportunities...to improve people's health, to help get people into work, to increase the confidence and international profile of Scotland and to make Scotland a more environmentally-friendly nation to live and work in (The Scottish Government, 2008, p.4).

What I have intended to demonstrate in this chapter is not so much the inevitability of an instrumental approach (which nonetheless considering the nature and function of government, I believe *is* inevitable in relation to public subsidy of culture), but rather the influence cultural policy discourse and debates have on policy decisions and directions.

Notably, as an example of policy influenced more by the 'intrinsic-worth' arguments, or the 'autonomy tradition' (rejecting instrumental logic) as coined by Belfiore & Bennett (2007, p. 145), Sir Brian McMaster's Jan. 2008 cultural policy report *Promoting Excellence* reflects the current in-vogue distaste for target-driven, instrumental approaches. This perspective appears to be in the ascendancy within policy-making circles generally, reflected in press coverage of debates concerning target-driven approaches to education and health services (Parris, 2008, p.15). Within cultural policy circles, *Promoting Excellence*

signals government support for a move away from former instrumental approaches: "...we must free artists and cultural organisations from outdated structures and burdensome targets, which can act as millstones around the neck of creativity" (James Purnell, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport cited in McMaster, 2008, p.4).

The following chapter discusses the range of literature that has emerged over recent decades as a consequence of interest in, and critical commentary on, instrumental approaches to cultural policy; as well as reflecting on the impact and influence of this literature on the cultural policy community and development of cultural policy. Chapter three describes my methodological journey and in particular, the changes in direction arising from my early attempts at data analysis and subsequent influence of theoretical approaches. Analysis of my data discussed in chapters four to six, is much more revealing of the human dynamics of cultural policy discourse, the actual processes of influencing and being influenced, rather than simply the influence of ideas themselves. A cultural policy community emerges from my data as a vital, living, but ever-changing human phenomenon, influenced in the abstract by ideas, discourses and cultural artefacts themselves, but equally so by human interactions. There are no seismic revelations as such; rather analysis of my data reveals nuances of meaning and insights as to how this policy community defines and re-defines itself, responds to, selects and de-selects ideas, opportunities and relationships in the process of bringing cultural policy into existence.

The generous and often candid reflections and observations from all fifteen interviewees provided rare insights as to how they thought about, influenced, shaped and directed cultural policy in Scotland. As such, this thesis provides a substantial evidence base about key players in the cultural policy community - as individuals - and about their engagement

in cultural policy processes, rather than about their considerable personal and professional achievements. I believe that the research does provide new insights, meanings, possibilities and guidance for those of us working in the cultural policy arena. I also hope that my analysis has captured the sometimes playful and irreverent, occasionally ironic, at times earnest, yet always altruistic approach displayed by all the interviewees to the subject matter.



## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### What is Cultural Policy?

As an academic discipline, cultural policy is a relatively new area of interest and study, its credentials formalised in part with the publishing of the first volume of the *International Journal of Cultural Policy* in 1994, the establishment of a number of Centres for Cultural Policy Studies, including Princeton University in 1994 and Warwick University in 1999 and the inaugural International Conference on Cultural Policy Research held in Bergen in 1999. However, as an initial indicator of the complexity of this particular area of research, ‘cultural policy’ is known not only by this term. In other words, for those engaged in the sector, a number of other descriptions and areas of work are included under the term ‘cultural policy’. Of particular significance is cultural policy research in the disciplines of education, economics, arts management, cultural studies, health, psychology and social policy.

Nonetheless, although the sector generally can be regarded as multifarious, the various territories within ‘cultural policy’ are often quite distinct in their separateness to each other and seem only to be linked in the context of wider debates and discourse about policy directions and intent. This Review seeks to map out the range of literature that occupies the terrain known as ‘Cultural Policy’. In view of the volume of material that could legitimately be referenced in this complex policy arena, this Review is indicative rather than comprehensive.

## **Who Are the Audiences for Cultural Policy?**

Despite the emergence of what at first seems to be a clearly defined cultural policy research sector, the territory of cultural policy is a confused, diffuse and contested arena, a consequence of the location of cultural policy in both academic and practical contexts, and therefore subject to the influences, interests and redefinitions of a variety of audiences, commentators, makers and implementers of cultural policy. Whilst the audiences are diverse, they can be broadly defined as those involved in implementing, governing and funding cultural policy on the one hand, and on the other, those concerned with researching, critiquing and evaluating cultural policy.

The different interests and demands of these groupings have meant that cultural policy research is essentially concerned with two things. Firstly, investigating the impacts of cultural activity - to assist with practice and on occasion to justify and advocate prioritisation and funding decisions (Harlan et al, 2000; Bound, Holden & Jones, 2007; London East Research Institute of the University of East London, 2007). Secondly, to critically evaluate the nature, intent and direction of cultural policy - to influence and inform cultural policy as well as the development of a cultural policy academe (Miller & Yudice, 2002; Lewis & Miller, 2003; Scullion & Garcia, 2005; Selwood, 2006; Rojeck, 2007). The following sections consider the relevant literature in both these contexts. Much of the cultural policy literature concerns itself with identifying the impacts and value of support for, or engagement with, cultural activities/events/artefacts. This is undoubtedly a direct consequence of overarching government economic and social policies, and since the early 1980s a focus on “evidence-based policy making” (Belfiore & Bennett, 2007, p.135).

## **Economic Impacts**

Cultural policy literature of the 1980s suggests that wider economic realities and national government policies were indeed influential. The Conservative Government's prioritisation of the economy, the need for the public sector to demonstrate value for money (which included partnership with or awarding of contracts to the private sector) and the introduction of urban regeneration programmes in response to the demise of heavy, manufacturing industries which had dominated city economies, seemed to be as much drivers of new thinking on cultural policy as opposition politics and cultural studies.

For example, these policy priorities are all reflected in key cultural policy publications of the mid to late 1980s; even where the publications are introduced by Labour party politicians and cultural spokespersons and are presented almost as Labour Party cultural manifestos, as in Mulgan and Worpole's 1986 *Saturday Night or Sunday Morning?*, and Bianchini, Fisher, Montgomery and Worpole's 1988 *City Centres, City Cultures*. Both these publications argue for enlightened partnerships with the private sectors and amendments to planning legislation, (Mulgan & Worpole, 1986 and Bianchini, Fisher, Montgmoery & Worpole, 1988), integrated approaches to cultural policy and infrastructures, (ideas reflected in the eventual creation of the Dept. of Culture, Media and Sport in 1997, Mulgan et al, 1986 and Bianchini, et al, 1988), pluralistic leisure provision, which recognises the diversity of cultural definitions and cultural interests (Mulgan et al, 1986 and Bianchini et al, 1988), and a recognition of the economic importance of the cultural sector (Mulgan et al, 1986 and Bianchini et al 1988).

As noted in chapter one, Myerscough's 1988 report on the *Economic Importance of the Arts* was a research project very much of its time - a time when the language of business and economics had been adopted by government and many parts of the public and voluntary sectors - not always willingly - and when economic value became the reasoning for public subsidy. This was not a uniquely British phenomenon, with broadly similar developments in North America and mainland Europe (Bianchini & Parkinson, 1993).

The literature suggests that experiences in other countries where economic and urban regeneration impacts were already being reported and evaluated, influenced thinking in the UK. For example, Robert McNulty, president of Partners for Liveable Spaces, visited the UK in 1988 to speak about these very issues and his experience in the US, much of which was reported in planning journals (McNulty, 1988). Myerscough's report of the same year was the result of research commissioned by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation UK Branch and the UK government's Office of Arts and Libraries, supported at Scottish and regional levels by national and local agencies and local authorities. The study was the first in-depth study of its kind into the economic impact of the arts anywhere in the UK and its selection of Glasgow, Merseyside and the Ipswich region of Suffolk ensured a wide and differing geographic/socio-economic spread.

Identical methodologies were deployed in each study enabling comparisons to be made and commonalities to be presented as conclusions of national significance. Bench marks were established in terms of future collation of comparable statistics - including employment, tourism, venue and event attendance figures - as well as economic formulas such as "proportional multiplier analysis" (Myerscough, 1988, p.90), giving an aura of science and authority to an aspect of social life generally seen as difficult to define, often leaning more

towards the amorphous “spiritual...and in many respects inaccessible” (Carey, J. 2005, p. xii). Significantly, this research became one of the first endorsements - both in its approach and its conclusions - for cultural policies to be utilised as instruments for direct interventions in expanding economic sectors such as tourism and urban regeneration (Bianchini & Parkinson, 1993), a trend which had developed across Europe and North America throughout the 1980s.

Notably, Myerscough’s report did not restrict itself only to the “tangible economic impact of the arts; for example, as a source of direct employment and stimulus to allied industries through the spending by arts organisations and their customers in the regional economy” (Myerscough, 1988, p.1), but also considered the less tangible effects. For instance, it examined effects such as improving the city’s image and making it more attractive to employers and employees and “boosting the confidence of the business community by adding to the vitality and vibrancy of an area, thereby contributing to quality of life and longer term appreciation of property values” (ibid, p.1). The endurance of this concept is seen sixteen years later in Hughson’s discussion about Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Gateshead’s unsuccessful bid for European City of Culture, 2008, which not only included sport as an integral part of its cultural menu, but located culture generally within civic planning and urban regeneration programs, assisting with the ‘re-imaging’ of the cities as “cities of culture” (Hughson, 2004, p.319) - not least of all because “a city of culture equates to a city of prosperity” (ibid, p.321). Bernstein & Blain (2003) describe the utilisation of cultural and sporting events such as the Olympics and World Cup by the media in a similar ‘re-imaging’ or construction of national identity, portraying “an idealized version of society, reminding society of what it aspires to rather than what it is” (Bernstein & Blain, 2003, p.13).

These themes have been developed and further researched, with many publications advocating the use of cultural policy as an urban regeneration tool: Bianchini discusses the use of cultural policy as an “image strategy” (Bianchini & Parkinson, 1993, p.15) with Glasgow as an example, starting with the opening of the Burrell in 1983, the Garden Festival in 1988 and then European City of Culture in 1990, to attract business and grow economic confidence. Booth & Boyle confirm that “Glasgow’s adaptation of 1990 European City of Culture was primarily concerned with the use of culture for urban marketing and tourist promotion” (ibid, 1993, p.44).

With the development of the concepts of *The Creative City* (Landry & Bianchini, 1995) and *The Creative Class* (Florida, 2002), both synonymous with an economically successful city, cultural policies have come, not surprisingly, to be regarded by government and its agencies as central to their economic strategies. Indeed, Griffiths appears to anticipate Florida’s concept of a ‘creative class’ nine years earlier in 1993, in his description of a ‘service class’ who in his assessment have “become the main audience for the cultural and related industries, with their focus on fashion, taste and style” (Griffiths, 1993, p.42). This approach has been facilitated by the development of tools such as Florida’s ‘Creativity Index’, which measures the four factors he considers necessary for economic success. These are the levels of: (i) creative class share of the workforce; (ii) levels of high-tech industry; (iii) innovation measured as patents per capita; and (iv) diversity measured by the Gay Index, which Florida sees as a “reasonable proxy for an area’s openness to different kinds of people and ideas” (Florida, 2002, p.334). Similarly, Landry’s *Creative City Toolkit for Urban Innovators* outlines a number of ideas, strategies and creativity indicators including “hard measures such as calculating the number of arts events in an area; and

softer measures such as the extent to which people are satisfied with lighting in their neighbourhood” (Landry, 2000, pp.239-240). All of this literature locates cultural policy firmly in an instrumental context and in the service of wider economic regeneration strategies.

However, these approaches are not entirely without critical comment. The extent to which culture really influences business decisions and the credibility of evidence on which such conclusions are based are queried by Griffiths, citing a critical 1989 study of the impact of arts policy in Amsterdam, which “indicates that cultural issues were far less important in the decisions of business leaders than was generally believed” (Griffiths, 1993, p.43).

Similarly, Booth & Boyle whilst noting the success of the utilisation of culture for increasing tourism in Glasgow, also note “that there is little evidence to back up claims of positive economic impact on local economic development as a consequence of the 1990 City of Culture celebrations” (Bianchini & Parkinson, 1993, p.45).

McGuigan draws the same conclusions with reference to the Greater London Council’s cultural industry strategies, observing that the strategy was “more important for its conceptual innovations than for its practical achievements” (McGuigan, 1996, p.83), questioning the evidence for who actually benefits from investment in cultural services. As noted by Griffiths (1993) there are inevitably a range of actual and potential beneficiaries - whose interests will not always be compatible. Therefore assumptions as to benefits can only be that - the methods and claims are not backed up by evidence according to Bailey, Miles & Stark (2004).

Such critiques lead onto examination of methodologies of economic and urban regeneration impact studies and here too the reliability of some of the methods used are brought into question: a year after Myerscough's 1988 publication, his definitions of the arts, his methodologies and his results were contested by economist Gordon Hughes (Belfiore, 2002). Holden claims that not only are current methods of assessing impacts being held to account, but references a 2004 paper which states "the DCMS have confirmed that there is no ready-made and reliable methodology in place for calculating the economic impacts of cultural institutions" (Holden, 2004, p.17). Bailey, Miles & Stark highlight the "lack of long-term tracking that might validate claims that there are impacts and benefits beyond those individuals and groups directly involved" (Bailey, Miles & Stark, 2004, p.50) and eleven years earlier, Griffiths (1993) noted that one of the reasons for the Amsterdam research conclusions was the problem of determining the multiplier effects of arts and cultural projects - a key method utilised by Myerscough in his research (Myerscough, 1988). Another area of criticism is the lack of analysis as to whether or not investment in culture has been "beneficial in creating conditions for their production, as distinct from their consumption" (Griffiths, 1993, p.43), another indicator of economic impacts and also discussed in the Boyle & Hughes account of the economic impacts of Glasgow's European City of Culture celebrations in 1990 as a significant omission (Bianchini & Parkinson, 1993).

Despite these critiques, within the policy community, if not the wider public, the economic impact of culture remains a foregone conclusion and truism, a victory in a sense of the sectors' advocacy of the significance, albeit in an instrumental context, of cultural policy. However, the success of this approach has, according to O'Regan led to the cultural policy community becoming a "victim of its own success" (O'Regan, 2002, p.9) with the cultural



policy-making institutions being eclipsed by others in the public policy-making field, primarily those with responsibilities for broader economic and social policy agendas.

As Cunningham reports, “cultural industry arguments have indeed been taken seriously, often leading to the agenda being taken over by other, more powerful industry and innovation departments” (Cunningham, 2004, p.107). In part, this can be regarded as the consequence of a postmodern definition of culture which “encompasses literally everything and in so doing, obscures important and useful distinctions” (McGuigan, 1996, p.6).

Griffiths points out the dangers in this approach, whereby if all forms of expression are seen as being of equal value, and also it is assumed that culture is economically important, then “potentially commercial success is more likely to end up as the sole arbiter of worth” (Griffiths, 1993, p.45) and the subsidised cultural sector will be at risk.

Statements by government ministers on the need to find a new language to discuss culture and its worth can in part be seen as a response to this wider colonisation of both cultural policy and its language: in 2004, Tessa Jowell, Minister for Culture, Media and Sport said: “Politicians have enough reasons to support culture on its own merits to stop apologising for it by speaking only of it in terms of other agendas” (Gray, 2007, p.206). A year earlier, the Arts Minister, Estelle Morris says: “I don’t know how to describe it. We have to find a language and a way of describing its (arts and culture’s) worth” (Holden, 2004, p.18).

As Gray notes, the fact that ministers have made such comments, alongside statements from the United Nations in its 2001 Declaration on Cultural Diversity, calling for culture not to be treated as mere commodities and goods (Gray, 2007, p.206), indicates how complete the appropriation of cultural policy and its language by other policy fields has

been and how deep-rooted is the instrumental use of culture. Frey declares that the “economics of art has established itself as a major discipline” (Frey, 2000. p.1) demonstrating an ease with the language and practice of arts and economics.

## **The Social Policy Impacts**

Just as Myerscough’s 1988 publication established in the cultural policy arena the economic importance of the arts, despite significant criticisms of methodologies and results, so too, in 1997, Matarasso’s *Use or Ornament? The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts* became a reference point for ‘proof’ of social impacts for practitioners and decision-makers alike, “establishing a near-consensus in Britain among cultural policy-makers” (Merli, 2002, p.107). Important as the first study of its kind with its move from “‘hard’, quantitative indicators to ‘soft’, qualitative ones” (Belfiore, 2002, p.98), Matarasso’s report was seen at long last, to validate, for many working in the cultural policy sector, the testimonies and experiences of participants, artists and cultural administrators. It showed “that the outcomes of work, which had often been seen as too ‘soft’ to be taken seriously, could be analysed and described methodically” (Matarasso, 2003, p.337).

As with Myerscough, despite the iconic status of this research amongst many policy makers, Matarasso’s research has been the subject of criticism, particularly in relation to his research methods and his ideological perspective (Belfiore, 2002, Merli, 2002). Merli claims that Matarasso’s research is methodologically flawed in that “the data collected cannot support conclusions about the hypothesis of the research project” (Merli, 2002, p.108). She unpicks both research questions asked, and their answers, observing that

subsequent links with abstract ideas cannot be observed or measured in any meaningful way. In particular, Merli is critical of Matarraso's influence on British cultural policy, believing his underpinning political ideology is essentially one of restoring social control through participation in the arts.

However, as Matarraso subsequently points out, Merli does not offer any evidence for this claim, "relying instead on vague, often journalistic, assertions" (Matarraso, 2003, p.341), and instead demonstrates her own ideological position which is rooted in the emancipatory, political ideology of Cultural Studies, a key influence in Cultural Policy as an academic research discipline. Belfiore questions the validity of an evaluation method that claims to "place outcomes at its heart" (Belfiore, 2002, p.98), yet focuses on short-term outputs, with no capacity for long-term monitoring. She also highlights that Matarraso notes, but fails to address, the "cause-effect link" by not considering any other possible influences on supposed outcomes of participation in the arts (ibid, p.99).

Matarraso responded to both authors' critiques noting that his intention had always been "practical, rather than academic" (Matarraso, 2003, p338), therefore making any longitudinal study unrealistic, claiming that his approach drew on direct experience and that his research was as valid as that applied by academics and emphasising a divide between those who are 'practitioners' in the cultural sector and those who are 'observers/critics'. He goes on to claim that one of the intentions of his research was to encourage "practitioners to undertake more, and better, evaluation of their own work" (Matarraso, 2003 p.338), suggesting that they are as well placed as academics - if not more so - to critique their work.

Belfiore and Merli make valid points about methodology, but fail to provide any substantive evidence for Matarraso's alleged political/ideological position; although indirectly, they allude to the problem of the emergence of a new, 'hybrid' player in the cultural policy arena - that is the 'consultant/researcher' - whose potential allegiance to the commissioner of consultancy work, usually government/political in nature, can be regarded as potentially compromising research independence. (This issue is covered in more depth in the next section). Rather Matarraso confirms his own intention to give equal status and validity to the experiences and evaluations of practitioners with those of academics, which at one and the same time, highlights tension between the two perspectives, and implies that it is this tension that underpins academic criticism of his work.

Just as with Myerscough's work in relation to economic impacts, and despite criticisms, Matarraso's work has also had a significant impact in terms of defining the main focus for cultural policy debates. This is seen in particular, in the contemporary discourse around the purpose and function of museums and galleries. Newman and McLean (2004, p.169) identify a conference at the University of Leicester in 2000 as being the focal point for "academic and practitioner thinking" coming together on the role of museums and galleries in tackling social exclusion, noting the alignment of this conference theme with emerging government policy on culture and social inclusion. Referencing historical analyses of the roles of museums in affirming dominant cultural values since the nineteenth century (Bennett, 1995; Duncan 1995), work by consultant/researchers on the themes of cultural policy and social inclusion (Matarraso, 1997; Belfiore, 2002) as well as museum practitioners (Fleming, 1997; 2002), Newman & McLean conclude that "there is a considerable gap between the rhetoric of museum and gallery practitioners and some policymakers and the reality of the situation" (Newman & McLean, p.177) in respect of

social policy impacts. They see this as a “lack of understanding of what is actually meant by social exclusion” (ibid, p.176), assumptions - rather than evidence - as to social inclusion being “something that happens naturally when people come into museums and galleries” (ibid, p.176), mistaking increasing attendance or engagement alone as indicators of social inclusion impacts, and seeking to maintain funding through support of government social policy agendas, avoiding asking “fundamental questions about the role of museums and galleries in society...in case the answers are not politically helpful” (ibid, p.177). Newman & McLean not only demonstrate the impact of Matarraso’s work on the overall policy debates, but on the way these debates have led to instrumental uses of museum and galleries in addressing social policy, despite research evidence questioning the evidence for such approaches.

As indicated earlier, there are a number of other disciplines involved in the cultural policy sector, producing literature that for all intents and purposes seems to exist in parallel, but rarely, if ever, interacting with other cultural policy research. This scenario reflects the diversity and multiplicity of cultural activities and initiatives, and the different contexts in which culture exists and develops. For instance, in the area of ‘Education’ there is a plethora of research material concerned with investigating the impact of arts and culture on Education. Indeed, within ‘Education’ itself, there are distinct sectors which co-exist, but nonetheless are developed separately - for example, Adult Education and the Arts (Jones, 1999 & 2008); school education (Karkou & Glasman, 2004); and educational support (Kinder & Hartland, 2004). Occasionally, research relevant across a number of educational sectors has been commissioned, for example, training for teachers, youth workers and artists (Lynch & Allan, 2006), but this is the exception rather than the norm.

Even within these discrete educational areas, there are disputes as to what is legitimately within or without the defined territory. For example, in an adult education context there is debate as to whether or not arts projects from:

...health education, local history, urban regeneration schemes, community development and leadership training (*can be regarded as*) part of the arts in adult education...alongside the regular arts courses which most of us (adult educators) would recognise. These include painting classes, literature courses, art history, music appreciation and the like (Jones, 1999, p.3).

Indeed, the debate expands into a questioning of the role of the arts in influencing adult education or vice versa, in either developing new cultures or reinforcing cultural values (Jones, 2008, p.12). In all instances however, and regardless of the specifics of the debate, the Arts and Education discussion is in effect about the instrumental role of the arts. This is evidenced also in literature concerning the role of the arts in mainstream education.

Kinder & Harland report that:

...in order to improve the effectiveness of secondary arts education, pupils should be encouraged - through primary education, extracurricular participation, and parental support - to be involved in the arts from an earlier age (Kinder & Harland, 2004,p.56).

Karkou and Glasman (2004, p.57) indicate the different rationales and forms of arts education by describing the range of practitioners involved - arts teachers, theoreticians, arts therapists and artists - all with different perspectives on their roles, impacts and most effective working contexts, whether within the formal curriculum, learning support or special education - but in descriptions of outcomes, all concerned with an instrumental approach to arts and culture.

Just as research into social policy impacts within Education & Culture has been developed within discrete specialisms, this has also occurred in the area of Health. In Sweden, studies in Public Health have investigated over a long period of time the impact of participation in culture as a determinant of survival. In the Konlaan, Bygren & Johansson study of 2000, a positivist approach was taken, measuring attendance at cinema, concerts, museums and art exhibitions over a fourteen year period, 1982-1996, amongst 10,609 individuals and correlating levels of participation with levels of mortality over this period. To enhance reliability of the results, adjustments were made and statistically calculated in relation to:

...age, sex, educational standard, long-term protracted disease, smoking, physical exercise, cash buffer, music making and reading books or periodicals. They were included in the model as well-known determinants of health and possible determinants of participating in cultural events (Konlann, Bygren & Johansson, 2000, p.175).

Although there was a clear acknowledgement that the study could be regarded as flawed in some respects, missing out emotional responses and other potential cause-effect factors,

there was nonetheless a view that some correlation between participation in culture and impacts on health could be concluded. Similarly, in the fields of music therapy and the cognitive sciences, positive psychological and neurological effects of participation in music are claimed, influencing communication skills and emotional development (Schogler, 1998; Robb, 1999; Trevarthen & Malloch, 2000). Qualitative research in the area of creative engagement in palliative care has provided research results which advocate such engagement (Jarrett, 2007), in many instances, like Matarraso, presenting the experiences of users and practitioners as evidence of positive impacts.

Many more such examples could be cited; however, the intention here is to demonstrate the many and varied contexts in which cultural policy is evaluated, shaped and implemented. Matarraso's research, for all its flaws in methodology and claims, has influenced many fields of cultural policy development and research by giving status and authority to a range of qualitative indicators, including personal testimonies, case studies and observations. Whilst no one approach to research into the social impacts of cultural policy can make definitive claims about results, from a professional/government/funder perspective, the plethora of disciplines engaged in these studies - from education to health, museums to sport - and the diversity of methodologies and methods utilised - from qualitative to quantitative methods, from positivist to ethnographic approaches - collectively give credibility and validity to claims for social impacts, and subsequently, directions in practice and the case for support.



## Creating a Cultural Policy Academe

Although cultural policy is recognised as existing in many contexts, the appropriation of the term ‘Cultural Policy’ to define a discrete area of academic research, is, as noted at the beginning of this chapter, a relatively recent occurrence. At the heart of the debate surrounding the concept of a ‘cultural policy research academe’ is the tension between what is perceived to be research ‘true’ to the principles of rigorous, reflexive academia, and that more concerned with “advocacy disguised as research and...policy-based evidence making” (Belfiore & Bennett, 2007, p.138).

*The International Journal of Cultural Policy*, founded in 1994 by Oliver Bennett, Director of the Centre for Cultural Policy Studies at the University of Warwick, states that “although the journal includes some material on the technical aspects of cultural management, the emphasis of the journal is on cultural policy and politics (kulturpolitik)” (International Journal of Cultural Policy). In 2004, Bennett notes that “the field of cultural policy research comprises two very different worlds, both of which appear largely oblivious (if not indifferent) to the other’s preoccupations...distinguished by their respectively highly theorised and untheorised positions” (Selwood, 2006, p.40). Similarly, the web site for the International Conference on Cultural Policy Research, which claims a “close partnership with the *International Journal of Cultural Policy*”, explicitly rejects what it terms “instrumental arts-management-approaches” (ICCPR beginnings) in favour of a focus on research and policy of a high academic standard.

In making distinctions between the plethora of cultural policy research undertaken to assist practice - performing primarily advocacy and funding-request functions - and that laying

claim to contributing to a 'Cultural Policy Academe', theoretical contexts are usually the defining factor. As with Bennett, most of those self-consciously contributing to the cultural policy research academe, see cultural policy as concerned with "progressive politics...and social movements" (Lewis & Miller 2003, p. 8). This academe and its key players are influenced by the theories and agendas of cultural studies, in particular "the Birmingham School and the influence of Foucault and ideas of 'policing' and governmentality...a route clearly associated with Tony Bennet (2003), whose engagement with cultural representation and analysis moved so significantly to issues of policy and exploration of the 'critical' and 'applied'" (Scullion & Garcia, 2005, p.119).

McGuigan regards this theoretical direction as having come about as a consequence of a "desire within cultural studies to become useful in a more practical sense than in the past" (Lewis & Miller, 2003, p.28), giving as an example the Australian development of Cultural Policy Studies within the Key Centre for Cultural and Media Policy in Brisbane. Scullion & Garcia (2005) also note the influence of these developments on those working in the field, helping crystallise thinking behind the development of a cultural policy research academe - although they also highlight the fact these developments and research are "almost all based in North American higher education institutions, the others in British and Australian equivalents" (Scullion & Garcia, p.115) - a fact which could lead to allegations of introspection and a focus on Western and developed countries' cultures. Miller & Yudice (2002) claim that "looking at cultural policy through the lens of cultural studies encourages us towards...understanding...how certain forms of cultural expression are privileged and with what effect, such that the systematic inequalities of a society can be both highlighted and countered" (Miller & Yudice, 2002, p.191). Rojek claims that "Cultural Studies is not only about theory but also about the direct government of culture"

(Rojek, 2007, p.63) and that it needs “to be political” (ibid, p.159). For all of these writers and researchers, Cultural Policy Research is a reformist project and should not simply be concerned with matters of practice, but should be reflexive and capable of driving change within a progressive political agenda.

The cultural policy literature suggests that cultural policy commentators are arguing on a number of contradictory and conflicting fronts: some argue that their work should be underpinned by a reformist agenda, seeking to affect change and the direction of policy (Miller & Yudice, 2002; Lewis & Miller, 2003; Rojek, 2007). They and others then also seem to argue that their status as ‘objective’ or ‘independent’ commentators should be protected, allowing them to speak out without concern for government views or influence (McGuigan, 1996; Lewis & Miller, 2003). Yet critics such as Fredric Jameson (1991), regard their adherence to a theory rooted in Cultural Studies, as transgressing the claims of academic objectivity, being so clearly - in his view - of a left-wing, liberal bias, committed to an applied agenda with clear emancipatory outcomes.

However, as indicated by Selwood (2006), asserting independence of thought is fine in theory but if influence is to be meaningful and not merely hoped for, in the real world of research requiring funding, audiences and subjects for investigation, cognisance has to be made of the practical demands and interests of the sector:

...whilst government bodies are known to have responded to ‘progressive political agendas’ developed by cultural policy researchers, the vast majority of research commissioned by

government agencies tends to pertain to their prescribed practical operations (Selwood, 2006, p.40).

Selwood draws attention to the fact that by its very nature, government and its agencies are unlikely to want to commission or publish research whose content, conclusions - and publication - it has no say over (ibid, p.45). Whilst arguing for cultural policy academics to be more assertive in staking a claim in the practical orientated policy arena, Selwood notes the risk of other disciplines appearing to offer more meaningful research methods and outcomes. In particular, Selwood reminds the reader that:

...DCMS have recently been looking to both medical and social sciences' research models as potentially having something to offer in relation to the difficulties of developing evidence-based policy. (DCMS 2003a, Attachment A.)  
(Selwood, 2006, p.45).

Significantly, Scullion & Garcia, see Cultural Policy as:

...interdisciplinary...drawing on the social sciences for both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies and to articulate its social and economic role...From the arts/humanities... to understand policy making in the past and influence its future development and implementation...as well as cultural studies, from which come a concern with sign, representation and identity and,

indeed, definitions and experiences of culture and its role in society (Scullion & Garcia, 2005, p.122).

Selwood, whilst concurring with this also highlights the difficulties with this position - falling often within and between the two government-funded higher education funding councils' remits - the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). Yet as Selwood points out, DCMS itself has acknowledged that it should be working in partnership with the two councils "in order to extend its capacity to develop 'evidence-based policy' ...and that it should draw 'on the resources of the wider research community' (DCMS 2003a, pp.4,6)" (Selwood, 2006. p.42). Selwood argues that this then presents an opportunity which the cultural policy academe should be grasping.

Nonetheless, a distrust of wholly practical and management oriented research has left some in the cultural policy community potentially disconnected to the area it most wants to influence. Selwood notes that the division between management and 'thinking' was not always the case within the cultural sector, pointing out that historically, the Arts Council and its senior management "boasted some of the most influential thinkers of their day: Maynard Keynes, Richard Hoggart, Roy Shaw and Raymond Williams" (Selwood, 2006, p.44). Indeed, in response to criticism from Bennet (2000) who implies "that critical intellectuals - in this case, academics - have nothing to learn from practical intellectuals" (Lewis & Miller, 2003, p.39), McGuigan (2000) states that he does not believe this to be the case:

As a critical academic, working in a university, I have a great deal to learn from workers in the communication and cultural

industries. University researchers and teachers are not especially privileged, although they may, under the most favourable circumstances that are not particularly widespread, still be allowed to think for themselves and speak with a critical independence (ibid p.39).

Developing this theme to wider questioning of academia, Selwood states that “there may be some justification in asking how well-equipped academics necessarily are to deal with the issues at hand” (Selwood, 2006, p.44), referring to the comment by the consultant Adrian Ellis, who observes “that there may be insufficient management information for either consultants or academics to successfully tackle the problems with which they are presented” (ibid, p.44).

However, rather than advocating practical intellectuality over critical intellectuality, or vice versa - or indeed a Social Science approach over an Arts/Humanities approach, Selwood (2006) and Belfiore & Bennett (2007) argue that the strength of cultural policy research is in fact its location in all of these camps. Rather than take ideological positions which stultify progress, there should be commitment to an academe which draws on the multifarious disciplines, methods and theories available to it. In their current research part funded by AHRC into the historical roots of current cultural policy debates around the social impacts of the arts, Belfiore & Bennett argue that:

...understanding how current beliefs in the transformative powers of the arts have developed over time and attempting to trace the trajectory through which they have become

commonplace beliefs is an interesting and useful exercise in its own right (Belfiore & Bennett, 2007, p.148).

However, believing that the current cultural policy debate is stuck in a “false and sterile dichotomy between ‘intrinsic’ and ‘instrumental’ value of the arts” (ibid, p.148), Belfiore & Bennett argue that the humanities can illuminate “the role and functions of the arts in present society and...make a significant contribution to the construction of a strong and coherent theoretical framework for the elaboration of more rigorous arts impacts evaluation methods” (ibid, p.148). Whilst there are no recommendations for specific and immediate changes in policy direction arising from this research, what Belfiore & Bennett hope to achieve is a deeper and more “nuanced understanding of the historical and philosophical roots of contemporary cultural policy debates” (ibid, p.148) - in particular the key debate concerning instrumental uses of culture versus appreciating culture for its own intrinsic worth - assisting ultimately in the development of more holistic and relevant cultural policies.

## **Elisions and Outsiders**

Whilst agreeing with the view that the strength of Cultural Policy is, and should be, its interdisciplinary nature, and that both the worlds of academia and praxis should be the territory for both research and intellectual input, (Selwood, 2006; Scullion & Garcia, 2005; Belfiore & Bennett, 2007), notable elisions in the references within Cultural Policy seem to suggest that the sector - and therefore the development of an academe - still has some way to go to overcome its prejudices and to become a first port of call for policy and decision makers. For those working in the cultural sector - especially those with an arts management background - the omission of the work of John Pick from a large part of

cultural policy critiques is noticeable. Gray (2007), is one of the few exceptions, referencing Pick in his discussion about the different kinds of instrumentality of culture, as described by Pick (1988) and Bennett (1995).

Pick was the first professor of Arts Administration Studies at City University, London in 1976, and through his many publications, came to be regarded by many working in the field, as an authority not only in the practical area of arts administration, (*Arts Administration*, 1980; *Managing the Arts? The British Experience*, 1986) but in arts and cultural policy (*The State and The Arts*, 1980; *The Arts In a State*, 1988; *Vile Jelly*, 1991). In particular, he became a major critic of the Arts establishment, primarily in the manifestation of the Arts Council of Great Britain. But his criticism was highly regarded not least of all because of the quality and depth of his research and publications on the history of the Arts Council, (Pick, 1980), but also on his study of government arts policies from ancient Greece to the present (Pick, 1988).

Although not located in a Cultural Studies perspective, his approaches nonetheless, were concerned not merely with informing Cultural Policy, but in influencing and changing it. He regularly questioned definitions of art and culture (Pick, 1988, p.x), no doubt drawing on the work of Cultural Studies thinkers such as Raymond Williams, questioned models of government subvention in culture (Pick, 1986, pp.149-167) and the nature of Arts Policy (ibid, p.147-157), the Arts Economy (ibid, pp. 95-114) and Arts Planning (Pick, 1988, pp.97-113). In this sense, his work is worthy of inclusion in the Cultural Policy academe - but it would seem his roots in different traditions - management and practical policy - have led to his work being largely ignored.



This is a great pity, as in many senses, Pick's work encapsulates the benefits of being engaged with praxis, and critical evaluation. This exclusive and precious attitude of some in the Cultural Policy academe - justified by aligning itself with the reformist agenda of Cultural Studies - has been demonstrated in the clear boundaries drawn round the subject matter considered within the *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, the curricula within Cultural Policy Research departments, and the International Conference on Cultural Policy research.

From reading much of the literature, it becomes clear that one of the key audiences is the cultural policy academe itself: a means of both excluding and including. This is not simply a matter of language or content - the theoretical location also means that much of what is written is clearly for students and researchers of cultural policy. It is for "a purpose within rather than beyond the academy" (Scullion & Garcia, 2005, p.115), for contributing to the discourse within the confines of the academe, "focusing on meaning, representation and interpretation" (Scullion & Garcia, 2005, p.116). In addition, critiques of publications such as Schuster's *Informing Cultural Policy* (2002) which is described by Bennett (2004) as "a cultural policy discourse from which history, values and meaning...have been drained" (Scullion & Garcia, 2005, p.118), and omission of any significant research from one of the biggest players in the cultural policy sphere - Education - add to the perception and creation of a Cultural Policy research academe which has very clearly defined boundaries and exclusion zones.

This is not in itself a particularly negative development, however, the risk it presents of dislocation from praxis is real, despite Bennet's claim that it is overstated (Lewis & Miller, 2003, p.39), and this can only be to the disadvantage of both policy and practice. Indeed,

this tension is no better witnessed than in the uneasy relationship between academic researchers and the development of another player in the cultural policy field - the cultural policy 'consultant'. Belfiore & Bennett (2007) note that the development over recent decades for cultural policy research to be "underpinned by an advocacy agenda, even when the research agenda has been disguised as one of dispassionate enquiry" (Belfiore & Bennett, p.137), has put pressures on researchers to provide evidence for advocacy, rather than report the actual research findings per se. They see this as being a space cultural policy consultants have been happy to fill - as would some "academics who should have known better" (ibid, p.137). The not-so-hidden judgement is that this has resulted in tainted research, concerned only with affirming the outcomes desired by the commissioner - usually government or its agencies.

However, the willingness of consultants and those most interested in practice orientated research - such as Schuster (2002) - to ignore questions of validity and authenticity of data and outcomes is not as clear-cut and one-sided as Belfiore and Bennett suggest. In his book, Schuster (2002) asks questions about the "relationship of researchers to funders: is available data being minded regularly and appropriately; are methodological developments being applied to data gathering and analysis; what is the role of government...in creating and utilising culture-related data?" (Scullion & Garcia, 2005, p.118). Nonetheless, Bennett believes that:

Schuster's emphasis on the 'applied'... 'advocacy-inspired research' (Bennett, 2004, p.243), focuses attention on cultural policy as public policy and as a policy goal of government, but excludes the conceptual engagement with

issues of governance and of identity and representation that such policy might be seen to generate...thereby exposing a particular danger of policy research - the exclusion, deliberate or otherwise, of the self-reflexive edge of a theoretically 'critical' approach (ibid, p.118).

Selwood however, takes issue with this viewpoint, noting that in the key cultural policy journals - including the *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, of which Bennett was the founder:

...much of the academic literature on cultural policy is relatively general...with scholarly research that interrogates and critiques the effects of specific English policy initiatives...rather less common (Selwood, 2006, p.43).

Selwood also notes that most British universities encourage their academics to undertake government commissions, encouraging 'knowledge transfer' and increasing the budgets of departments. Yet despite this, Selwood detects a continued reluctance amongst cultural policy academics to engage in such research, primarily for ideological reasons, leaving the way for consultants/researchers from think tanks such as Demos, Comedia and the Institute for Public Policy Research to fill the gap. Claims and counter-claims are made about the respective roles of academic researchers as opposed to consultant researchers - as has been earlier discussed in relation to Matarraso's research on behalf of Comedia into the social impact of the arts. Underpinning this debate is the suspicion that research cannot be principled if it is commissioned by government or its agents and undertaken by consultants.

However, evidence for this is mixed and only highlights the intrinsic tensions within a policy area that aspires to be both critical and practical. Yet these tensions and concerns are of relevance to a range of disciplines, not least of all in Education, where research into the methodological developments arising from "...shorter contracts...greater formal control by the local and national state over research...the chronic job insecurity of research workers...the increasingly incestuous links between policy and research/evaluation" (Stronach, Allan & Morris, 1996, p.495), could provide insight and direction for the cultural policy academe.

There are signs that those occupying the terrain of the 'cultural policy academe' rooted in 'cultural studies theory' want to move on from critique to influencing directly in the policy sphere (Miller & Yudice, 2002; Lewis & Miller, 2003; and Rojek, 2007). However, this will only be achieved by cognisance of significant others in the cultural policy field - albeit from different theoretical traditions and approaches - and an admittance of these others into the cultural policy academe. This will be essential not only for a relevant cultural policy academe, but for better informed cultural policy practice. Indeed, "the border that separates...research fields can also be the cutting edge of each" (Di Maggio, 2003, p.23). Notably, researchers such as Selwood (2006) believe that academia can engage meaningfully with policy and praxis - critically interrogating and influencing both; a viewpoint reflected perhaps in the increasing number of university departments renamed and self-consciously involved in cultural policy *and* management. For example, De Montfort University, Leicester's 'Cultural Planning Research Unit' (established in 1995) changed its name in 2001 to 'International Cultural Planning and Policy Unit', and University College Dublin built on its 1986 Higher Diploma in 'Arts Administration' to establish MA & Mlitt programmes in 'Cultural Policy and Arts Management' in 2001. The

web site of the recently relaunched (2007) *Cultural Policy, Criticism and Management Research*, the ejournal of the Department of Cultural Policy and Management, City University, London (itself a renamed department from the former department of Arts Administration) states that “there are at least 19 programmes in the UK that are either wholly or partially concerned with this area, Cultural Policy and Management” (City University London). In moving the two disciplines of cultural policy and management further together, Goldsmiths and City Universities collaborated in 2006 to found the UK Cultural Policy and Management Network. Whilst debates around research practices and boundaries will undoubtedly continue, these developments should in themselves assist development of a more rounded, collaborative and mature academe.

## **Gaps in Cultural Policy Research**

As demonstrated throughout this chapter, much of the focus of cultural policy research literature is concerned with proving the impacts of culture or critiquing the function, content or role of cultural policy. My main interest has been in understanding how cultural policy is made and how a cultural policy community maintains itself. Literature on these specific aspects is limited, ranging from broad based research into policy networks (Waarden, 1992; Blom-Hansen, 1997; Marsh & Smith, 2000; Raab, 2001), to more recent work by Tepper (2003; 2004) on the strategic role of meetings, particularly in a cultural policy context, Di Maggio (2003) on the application of network analysis to arts and cultural policies and practice and Upchurch (2004; 2007) on the influence of social networks in arts policy formulation.

Although set in an American context, Tepper's work proposes some interesting ideas about more effective use of meetings, setting agendas and informal and formal forums for advancing policy development in the cultural sector, counter-acting what he perceives to be a fragmented sector, where it is difficult to promote new policies, or have them discussed at significant government levels. In particular, his strategies for mobilising a range of actors, keeping ideas incubated waiting for the right window of opportunity and facilitating policy transfer and knowledge uptake (Tepper, 2004) had resonance with some of my research interests, but like the other available literature, only partly answered my questions.

Similarly, both Di Maggio's writing specifically in relation to the cultural sector and the more broad-based literature available on policy networks focussing on actors, function, structure, institutionalisation, rules of conduct, power relations and actor strategies (Van Waarder, 1992, p.32; Marsh & Smith, 2000, p.20) offered possible approaches to my research, but seemed limiting in terms of illuminating meanings, ideas and actions in the cultural policy sphere. In asking questions concerned with getting at how certain actors and not others participate in policy networks, and seeking to understand "what goes on in their bargaining" (Raab, 2001, p.551), Raab came closer to the kind of literature I was seeking to assist answer my own questions about the processes of cultural policy development.

Indeed, earlier research (McPherson & Raab, 1988) presented ideas on possible methods for data gathering, if not necessarily on analysis.

Upchurch's recent research into Canadian philanthropist and diplomat Vincent Massey, highlighting the significance of friendships and social networks in arts policy formulation, utilises a range of published and unpublished sources. Interestingly, she notes that published work was "only partially revealing" (Upchurch, 2007, p.240) and that only on

examining unpublished material - specifically diaries and private correspondence held in archives was she able to “reveal the private activities and friendships...that helped to engage him in the work of cultural development” (ibid, p.240). She goes on to say that this correspondence revealed Massey:

...as one of a clique of wealthy art patrons in Great Britain who were working to reform existing national cultural institutions...By reading his diary sequentially, I was able to track his interactions with some of the leading cultural patrons of Great Britain. Their ‘clubbiness’ and associations came more sharply into focus in this reading, rather than when considering the same actors through the lens of an institutional history (ibid, p.244-245).

Whilst this research seemed to be going in the directions of the kinds of interactions and dynamics I hoped to reveal, it seemed to be based on ideas about power and individuals’ motivations which led to assumptions being made about the status, influence and impact of relationships. It did not take me any closer as to how decisions are actually made and how relationships are forged and maintained in the cultural policy arena. It is this gap that my research aims to fill, developing from, and gratefully acknowledging, the volume and depth of research in the cultural policy sector to date that will underpin and inform my work.

## **Chapter 3: Methodology**

This chapter explains the methodology I adopted and adapted in researching, analysing and writing up this thesis. Under eight headings I explain the journey from my original plan for studying my research problem through to changes in thinking and approach, mainly resulting from new perspectives emerging at the data analysis stage. I begin with an outline of my research perspective, then discuss the context for my research followed by a description of how I selected the participants/interviewees. The next section explains how I collected my data and my thinking behind the methods used, leading onto an explanation of the design of my research and questions, arrangements for transcribing data and editing of transcripts. I then give an account of how I developed the data analysis from my original ideas, which proved unproductive, to new strategies that emerged in the writing of the analysis itself, informed by my reading about a range of theoretical perspectives. I finish this chapter with a section that looks reflexively at my role and influence on the data analysis, followed by a brief summary of the key features of my methodology.

### **The Research Perspective**

A qualitative perspective was adopted from the outset, as my research was concerned less with public records of cultural policy, and more with uncovering the unrecorded and unexplained dynamics of the policy making process - asking 'why' and 'how' particular policies came to be developed, rather than 'what' these policies actually contained. I believed that the answers I sought were most likely to be located in the 'realities' of individuals' perceptions and social relations rather than in official documents and institutions and as such I adopted an ethnographic approach to my research, to be based



around one-to-one interviews with significant players in the cultural policy sector. Whilst intuitively recognising, albeit to a limited extent at the outset, the complexity and opaqueness of the policy making process, my initial research proposal gave the impression that the interviews would reveal a ‘toolkit’ for operating in the cultural policy sector. This positivist bent in my initial assumptions about my research was challenged throughout the research analysis stage, leading to quite a different approach to the one I started out with.

## **Setting the Scene**

To set boundaries and give focus to my research, I chose to concentrate my research questions on the development of the Scottish Executive’s National Cultural Strategy of 2000 and Cultural Policy development within Glasgow City Council since 1998. The decision to do so was related to my own professional involvement in these policy areas and the resultant familiarity with, and access to key players, documents and potential research material. When I made this decision, I was aware that the selection and content of these specific national and local policy events and documents were in themselves of secondary significance, chosen only to locate my research questions in a specific time and place, and that my prime interests were in the broader processes of cultural policy development.

At this point I was less conscious of my own ‘role’ as a player in both the processes of policy development and in my research itself, believing at this early stage that I could establish an objectivity which would somehow keep me separate from, and unable to affect, the data collection and analysis. It soon became apparent that as a professional in the sector and a key player in the minds of many others, including those interviewed, this

objectivity was unrealisable - and in the context of the overall aims and objectives of my research, undesirable.

## **Participants**

At the outset, my thinking about methodological approaches to my research was influenced by McPherson and Raab's *Governing Education, A Sociology of Policy since 1945* (1988) which had been a pivotal text for me when researching and writing my MEd dissertation completed in 1992; the subject of this dissertation was the establishment of an arts policy within the Education Department of Fife Regional Council, formerly Fife County Council, since 1966 (McConnell, 1992). McPherson and Raab's research was based on interviews with twenty people who were significantly involved in the making of policy for Scottish secondary education between 1945 and the early 1970s and was concerned with the ways in which the education policy community was influenced by "individual identity and the micro-politics of personal relationships to wider analysis of power" (McPherson and Raab, 1988, pxii). As my anticipated outcome for my research was to provide a similar perspective on the creation, direction, support and development of cultural policy at national and local levels in Scotland, it seemed logical to me to adopt a similar approach to data collection - in other words, qualitative research based on semi-structured interviews with key decision makers, practitioners and opinion formers in the cultural sector. Having decided that my research would be based on interviews with key players in the cultural policy sector, my next task was to decide who to interview.

It became clear to me early on that much of the detail I would be looking for would be privileged information and could only be available through discussion with individuals who

significantly influenced or had in-depth knowledge and experience of, cultural policy development nationally and locally. A degree of familiarity and trust between myself and prospective interviewees would be essential - both to gain access to the individuals and to elicit views, opinions and information which were not widely available or on public record.

Without doubt, my professional status and track record of engagement with policy makers and opinion formers at senior levels both in Glasgow and nationally over a number of years were defining factors in making access to key individuals at all possible: without this professional status, track record, and interaction with the prospective interviewees, it is highly unlikely that access would have been granted. It was not until the data analysis stage of my research that I began to appreciate the significance of these pre-formed relationships in shaping and influencing the data collection and the data analysis itself; recognising that underpinning all of my interviews was a previous professional history and relationship, with much being assumed in terms of mutual understandings and awareness of events.

Based on my own professional experience of cultural policy development, I determined that there were four categories of interviewees required for my research, all of whom were significant influencers and creators of cultural policy:

- (i) Politicians - government ministers and local councillors;
- (ii) civil servants and local government officers/cultural professionals from national and local organizations;
- (iii) opinion formers - media: editors and journalists; academics;

- (iv) national agencies - chairs/key board members and chief executives/senior officers.

Further to an initial pilot/test-case interview, which took over an hour to conduct and over twelve hours of transcribing approximately eight thousand words, I decided primarily on grounds of time and resources, that around twelve interviews in total would be sufficient. Also, in comparison with the McPherson and Raab research based on twenty interviews and the huge tome they produced as a result, the number I was considering seemed appropriate to the prescribed length of my thesis.

I set out to interview at least three individuals from each category, each of whom were identified for their role either directly in developing policy, or as opinion formers/commentators on cultural policy at either national and/or local levels. In a country as small as Scotland, these individuals were self evident by the nature of their positions - for eg. national and local newspaper editors and journalists; local authority chief arts/sports officers; civil service cultural services department heads; chairs and chief executives/officers of national cultural agencies such as the Scottish Arts council, Heritage Lottery Committee et al, academic researchers within the cultural sector, Government Ministers responsible for culture, Local Government Chief Officers and chairs of Cultural Services Committees.

I drew up a list of thirty-one names of individuals from all four categories; all of whom I knew personally and had either worked with or liaised with on a range of cultural issues over the years. I had assumed that not every approach for an interview would be successful, but I was proven wrong on this, and as I had decided to speak to everyone

directly before sending a formal letter of request, I miscalculated my numbers and ended up asking fourteen people from my list (in addition to my pilot/test-case interviewee) when I met them at cultural events or meetings! Fortunately, all of the individuals were on my short list, all categories were covered by a minimum of three in each category and four of them had current or previous roles in more than one category.

Without giving away too overtly the status and positions, and therefore names, of my interviewees, in summary I interviewed key players as follows:

- (i) one local and two national politicians involved in cultural departments and services;
- (ii) two civil servants and one local government officer - all involved in cultural services and two of them with significant professional experience in delivering cultural services;
- (iii) one senior academic and four journalists, three with editorial experience; two of the journalists also have considerable experience in the cultural sector serving on various cultural boards and committees at national level and therefore could also be included in category (iv);
- (iv) three chairs of national and local agencies and one senior member of a cultural organisation's board who was also a key professional within the media sector.

As part of the ethical considerations surrounding my thesis, I decided that I would give each of my interviewees pseudonyms to protect their identities; (although all of us were aware that anyone with any knowledge of the cultural sector in Scotland would be able to

make fairly good guesses at their identities through quotations and other references). Nonetheless, I have no intentions of confirming or denying any such guesses and the existence of pseudonyms offers some degree of protection against direct misrepresentation - if not against inference. I spent many months considering appropriate pseudonyms - such as those of Greek and Roman gods of classical mythology - influenced by my reading, and ideas thrown up by my data analysis.

However all of these ideas seemed to be open to misinterpretation and loaded with potential and perceived value judgements about my interviewees. Therefore, I decided that in this particular instance, a positivist approach was the most desirable and that I should try and find as 'objective' a formula as possible to avoid unnecessary attention being focussed on the supposed 'hidden meanings' behind my pseudonyms. I decided to consider appropriate anagrams, words and phrases which I could align with my fifteen interviewees. Fortunately, my first stop - 'cultural policy' had fourteen letters which took care of fourteen of my fifteen interviewees, and as my first interviewee had been a 'test-case' interview, I decided that I could legitimately separate this pseudonym from the others. In order of interview dates, I therefore aligned my test-case and first interviewee alongside the letter 'T' for test-case and then each of the remaining fourteen interviewees alongside the fourteen letters of 'cultural policy'. I then proceeded to choose the first male or female name as appropriate from the 2008 edition of Collins "Babies' Names" (Cresswell, 2008). This seemed as satisfactory and neutral a solution as any (See Appendix 1).

## **Instruments Used for Data Collection**

The main instrument used for data collection was semi-structured interviews with all fifteen interviewees. Although some answers to my research questions could be found in part in policy documents, minutes of government and council meetings, it was clear to me from the beginning of my research that this material would only give an official and institutional viewpoint, and not any details of the intricate dynamics at play in developing and forging cultural policy. Semi structured interviews seemed to offer the best means of engaging with the interviewees on their reflections, impressions, understandings and opinions on how the cultural policy process actually developed - allowing me to guide the general theme and direction of the interview, but at the same time, minimising constraints in discussion and providing the facility for each interviewee's unique perspectives to emerge.

As in all research methods, this one had its own inherent advantages and disadvantages. The main advantage of the one-to-one interview was namely the facility it gave for more detailed and personal responses. The main disadvantages were practical - primarily time and resources. Interestingly, in my research proposal I had stated that another disadvantage was the reliability of the research itself, believing that individuals' dependency on memory could distort events and factual reporting. Indeed, I had assumed that I could verify and amend the data by referring to official documents and cross-referencing transcripts, assuming that there was one actual 'true' and 'accurate' version of events. However, once data analysis was underway, I abandoned very quickly any checking or cross-referencing of transcripts for 'accuracy', as the meanings emerging were more significant and beyond any literal interpretations of official documents or interview transcripts.

## **Design of Research**

Having decided that the processes of cultural policy development were to be my area of investigation, the first stage of my research design was to clarify my aims and objectives from which my research questions would then be developed. Despite the changes emerging at the data analysis stage of my research, the overarching aims of my research remained relevant. They were to analyse the processes involved in establishing cultural policy at both national and local levels in Scotland; to identify how political and professional influences impact on cultural policy development; and to analyse how a cultural policy community is formed and maintained.

Similarly, the seven objectives outlined in my research proposal also remained relevant throughout, with perhaps only the first objective becoming less meaningful: comparing and assessing official actions and processes and informal actions and processes. This comparative approach proposed was symptomatic of my initial belief that I could in fact establish the ‘true facts’ and develop a ‘toolkit’ for developing policy. The other six objectives were as follows:

1. Establishing the views of key policy makers and influencers;
2. Identifying the motives for both formal and informal action;
3. Identifying and exploring the beliefs and perceptions which shape motives for formal and informal action;
4. Assessing the extent to which these motives influence and shape policy and practice;



5. Describing and examining formal and informal networks and structures which participants explicitly refer to or detail;
6. Identifying and exploring the values, commonalities and processes which bind the participants in a policy community.

Having clarified my aims and objectives my next task was to articulate my research questions. Undoubtedly, scale and access to material were defining factors in setting the boundaries of my research focus, primarily in relation to the selection of material/areas for research and the development of research questions. Firstly, as an overarching cultural policy document the National Cultural Strategy gave me the opportunity to both limit the scale of my research to the development of a specific document and at the same time, due to the wide-ranging subject matter referred to in the document itself, to select from a broad range of professionals for interview. In developing the research proposal, I also believed that this would minimize the impact of the potential refusal to be interviewed by some and widen the choice for further interviews with individuals recommended during the course of my data collection. As events transpired, there were no refusals and further interviews were not necessary. Secondly, although in theory any of Scotland's thirty-two local authorities' Cultural Strategies would have been appropriate choices for a local research focus, as Director of Cultural and Leisure Services at Glasgow City Council, my easy access to policy documents and materials made Glasgow City Council the logical choice for my local area of research. Thirdly, the fact that my research was primarily concerned with the 'behind-the-scenes' processes of policy development and the dynamics which create and bind a cultural policy community, meant that the number or diversity of policy documents or the need to be comprehensive in selection of cultural policies was less of an issue, as the focus was not mainly on the content of the policy documents themselves, but

rather the processes behind their development, implementation and consequences - intended or otherwise.

It was my view that the selected focus of my research would give high quality data for analysis of the policy processes involved in the development of cultural policy at both national and local levels, as well as analysis of the development and maintenance of a cultural policy community: the National Cultural Strategy was comprehensive in its reference and application to the cultural sector involving most of the key players in policy development and delivery at national levels, and Glasgow City Council's cultural policies were both easily accessible and amongst the most comprehensive in terms of scale in Scotland.

Therefore, for the reasons outlined above, my research questions were based on these two strategies. Initially I came up with the following four research questions:

1. How were the national cultural strategy and Glasgow City Council cultural strategies developed;
2. What were regarded as the key justifications for establishing national and local strategies and by whom;
3. What were expectations in terms of policy impacts and by whom;
4. What had been the impact of these strategies on policy and practice.

Subsequently I prepared thirty-two technical questions and prompts related to each of these questions for use in the first stage of my data collection - a test-case interview (see Appendix 2a) which was conducted some six months ahead of the others. Nonetheless, the

data collected in the test-case interview were also included in my data analysis. These questions were intended to encourage as much flow of information, opinion and reflection from the interviewees as possible, as it would be these recollections of intentions, views and significant factors at the time, which would give an indication of the dynamics at play, and the relationships between and within organisations, as well as elucidating the notion of a policy community - its structures, binding values, commonalities, connections and processes - all of which directly and indirectly affected policy development and direction.

However, having reflected on some of the answers to my questions during the test-case interview, I decided to add another research question (with an additional nine subsidiary/prompt questions) to my original list of four, specifically seeking responses as to how individuals or organizations were identified and consulted regarding cultural policy development and decision-making (see Appendix 2b). My main reason for doing this was that these new questions were answered in my test-case interview - albeit through a longer route of prompts and subsidiary questions. As it became apparent that I wanted and needed answers to these questions, it made sense that I plan in future interviews to ask the question up front, rather than in a roundabout way. And of course, if the questions and answers were that significant, the research questions should reflect that. The richness and variety of answers to this question in the following fourteen interviews confirmed for me that this additional research question had been key in eliciting new insights to the policy making process.

The pilot/test-case also highlighted the technical demands of this particular form of data collection and indicated the advance planning and attention to technical detail I needed to apply to the data collection process. In particular, I was fastidious about ensuring

throughout each interview that the recording machine was working properly, as losing an hour's interview would not only be soul destroying in itself, but a repeat interview would be very hard to rearrange. Undoubtedly, interviewees had agreed to a significant commitment in doing the interview and subsequent reading of transcripts and editing, time I could never have expected to be granted again if my technology had failed.

Over a period of three months, all fourteen interviews were undertaken - eleven in my office - and three at interviewees' place of work. Almost one hundred and twenty thousand words were transcribed over the following two months, and each interviewee was sent a copy of the transcript asking for their corrections to factual inaccuracies and any other editing they wanted to undertake. Six interviewees chose to amend or edit their transcripts and the impact and significance of this is discussed in chapters four, five and six, which deal with the data analysis and presentation of results.

## **Data Analysis**

Further to the results of my test-case interview, I had anticipated producing a large volume of raw data and had attempted to address this in my research proposal by proposing a systematic way of analysing and making sense of this data. For a number of months after collecting my data I had nagging doubts that I had not collected enough data from my interviews and that there were perhaps two or three significant others I should be interviewing. I had assumed that descriptions of more recent cultural policy events, initiatives and discussions would provide insights not available within my existing data and that in effect, my data would become outdated and irrelevant as events and new initiatives inevitably and unavoidably overtook my work rate.

Eventually I came to realise that I was still taking a positivist stance - albeit unconsciously - initially attributing greater significance to the recording and description of events, places and individuals, than to unravelling 'how', rather than 'what', policy was created.

Gradually I became aware of the limitations of such an approach to my research questions and began to question much of my planned approach to the research.

For instance, my analysis plan as outlined in my Research Proposal reflected my unconscious positivist stance, suggesting that my data could readily be interpreted by reducing the content into preconceived boxes and grids. The plan was set out in four distinct phases: firstly, I proposed taking notes and jotting down immediate ideas and thoughts during the actual interviews, noting that whilst this would be unstructured, it would nonetheless assist me later on in writing up the analysis, especially in terms of my own role.

Although I attempted to do this at the outset of the first two interviews, I eventually gave up this strategy; it had become evident to me that a more conversational approach and engagement with the interviewee through eye contact and appearing to be in a listening mode was going to be more productive than a more formal interview set up which resembled more of a doctor/patient, teacher/pupil relationship, with me taking notes. Of course, the fact that I knew all my interviewees well assisted in this approach and I believe resulted in richer data than would otherwise have been the case.

The second part of my analysis plan was that I would take notes in a structured way during the transcribing process. I started off intending to categorise my thoughts, reactions and

comments to each transcript as it was being typed under the three headings of 'Researcher Self', 'Personal Self' and 'Professional Self', using codes and numbers to be handwritten in a separate log book. Suffice to say, this lasted again for all of two transcripts - partly due to time constraints, but primarily due to what started to feel like a forced and meaningless task. What had started out as an attempt at engendering a more reflexive approach to data analysis, resulted at this early stage in a prescriptive and stultifying process, if not a "male and mechanistic management of reflexivity" (Stronach, Garratt, Pearce & Piper, 2007, p.179).

This was unfortunately only compounded by the third part of my analysis process, which was to be the most formal analysis of the final transcript. I had adopted Hilary Radnor's (2002) suggestions on coding and structuring for my analysis of my pilot interview which consisted of a five part process of: Topic Ordering; Constructing Categories; Reading for Content; Completing Coded Sheet; Generating Coded Transcripts; Analysis to Interpreting the Data (Radnor, 2002, p.71). This led me to create within the research proposal an analysis grid with topics, categories and codes, the intention being that each transcript would be analysed on the basis of these topics and categories, with cross referencing and analysis across transcripts coming later.

However, after the analysis of my first interview, I began to feel that this approach was more concerned with extrapolating sentences from my data which would give factual - and as I came to realise, superficial - information on who said what, what policies individuals espoused, what meetings they attended and how this related to written policy statements. Certainly, if seeking to research written and spoken 'evidence' of whose or what ideas influenced whose or what policies, Radnor's approach would have yielded a wealth of

verifiable 'facts' which could be traced to specific individuals, places, times and reports. But these were not the kinds of answers I was seeking to my research questions as it seemed to me that my data held deeper and more complex meanings in relation to cultural policy development than was at first apparent and could be unlocked by Radnor's approach.

Indeed, I felt as though I was actually forcing an interpretation on my data, seeking out bits of transcript which would fit in with my prescribed system, rather than uncovering unexpected concepts, themes and issues as I progressed. My problem now was to find a way to unlock these meanings and to identify what ideas, theories and tools could assist me in this task. However, this dilemma was not easily or immediately resolved as I was still unsure at this stage as to how I could achieve a more authentic analysis process.

The only positive outcome of this experience, was that I was becoming very familiar with the transcripts which would prove to be invaluable when eventually my data analysis took a more productive direction, meaning that cross references and recall of comments and statements were readily available to me. It was only after many months of being stuck in trying to make the first three parts of my analysis plan work that I began to consider possible new directions offered by the fourth and final part of my plan, where I had proposed that I look at the data and the initial analysis from more abstract, theoretical perspectives. I claimed I would "draw in the main from a Critical Theory perspective which would assist an analysis which would not only interrogate the data, but would also locate the data in a wider societal and political context" (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000, p.140 ).

I was not really sure as to why I had included this fourth section in my original analysis plan, as it now seemed so at odds with the approach engendered by the first three parts of the plan. My only explanation is that due to the nature of my professional work whereby providing 'clear policy evidence' for reports, and making and implementing decisions was the norm, my behaviours were inevitably inherently 'positivist'; yet the qualitative nature of my research topic suggested more postmodernist approaches, and somehow I had tried to accommodate both within my research proposal. It was only in the course of my research that these tensions became apparent and the resultant impasse in progress reached. Indeed, a combination of frustration with little progress in my data analysis and increasing work pressures and demands, and what felt like an ever increasing reading list of new literature as I tried to find alternative approaches to my data analysis, led me on a number of occasions to seriously consider giving up on completing this thesis. Eventually however, reflection on the more abstract perspective recommended in the fourth section of my original analysis plan, my on-going reading of new literature - helpfully nudged in new directions by my supervisors - and finally the actual process of writing, led to a break through and a change of emphasis and direction in my approach to my data analysis. As my research progressed and stalled, then progressed again, I came to see that not only did I have more than enough data, but that interviewing any more significant people would not have presented opportunities for further insights. Whilst not claiming that my data analysis has led me to uncover generalisabilities which could apply across time - making events, and changes in context almost inconsequential, there is nonetheless an element of new events being simply that - new events. There is also the fact of the human processes involved in developing policy continuing on, almost regardless.



Undoubtedly, my choices and range of data, the particular period in time, the context of relationships, roles and status in addition to national policy events and developments, alongside the limitations of methods used to collect and analyse data all impact on my research and my findings, and as far as possible, I have attempted to record the nature of these impacts throughout the thesis. Nonetheless, there is a sense in my conclusions that there are some emerging themes which have a relevance outwith all of the above.

## **Theoretical Perspectives**

As a consequence of the shortcomings of my original analysis plan, and guidance from my supervisors, I began to consider more fully the function of theoretical perspectives in analysing my data. Whilst initially thinking I was taking a ‘mixed’ approach to theory - in other words, selecting the parts of theories which I felt comfortable with and felt worked for me and my research - the reality was that despite claiming in my research proposal, borrowings from Critical Theory and Interpretivism, I had, in the course of my data analysis essentially rejected these and moved in the direction of philosophers and theorists broadly described as being in the postmodern camp, such as Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze and Guattari.

Just as important, were a range of writers such as Boyne (1990), Simons (1995), Taylor (1995), Goodchild (1996), Marks (1998), Horrocks & Jetvic (1999), Strathern (2000), Beer (2002) and Colebrook (2006) amongst others, all of whom over a long period of time, helped me understand some of the major concepts within what is termed ‘postmodernism’ and their applicability to my data analysis and the understandings I hoped to reach. At its most basic, I came to see that contrary to the interpretations guided by Radnor’s writing,

my data was not all it seemed to be but held “manifestations of deep structures or essences that lie beneath the surface of appearances” and that...“to understand anything properly it is necessary to grasp the substance that stands under superficial display” (Taylor, 1995, pp.28-29).

Reading about Foucault’s work and ideas, moved me from a literal interpretation of the content of my data to a more reflexive and incisive analysis, seeking out the hidden meanings constructed by the author/interviewee and their implications, rather than the verification of ‘facts’. Crucially, my early readings about Foucault’s work assured me that turning back from a ‘literal’ interpretation of my data could open up other possible meanings. Of particular resonance for me was Foucault’s view that no piece of writing could be seen as “laying claim to a status of absolute truth” (Beer, 2002, p.4) and that our “view of the present and our vision of the future were inevitably constrained by our understanding of the past” (ibid, p.9). According to Foucault, each historical period has its own ‘episteme’ - the grid or network which allows thought to organise itself - and that this limited the totality of experience, knowledge and truth (Horrocks & Jetvic, 1999, pp.64-65). Creating and utilising the concept of ‘archaeology’, Foucault encouraged breaking free of such constraints and limitations, which invariably shape our whole view of the world, by excavating the unconsciously organised thoughts which make up the ‘episteme’ of each historical period (ibid. pp.64-65). Without trying to over simplify post modernism, and recognising the differences and occasional animosities that existed between the postmodern philosophers - for example Foucault vs Derrida in 1963 when the two intellectuals fell out over Derrida’s deconstruction of three pages in Foucault’s *Madness and Civilisation* - it nonetheless seems to me that Derrida’s concept of ‘deconstruction’ which is concerned with trying to uncover and dismantle the various and varied meanings

and interpretations imbedded in texts, engender an approach to data analysis similar to Foucault's concept of 'archaeology'.

Another useful prism through which to analyse my data were the concepts of 'Desire' and 'Becoming' developed by Deleuze & Guattari and central to their idea of what philosophy should be and its function in society. 'Desire' is interpreted by Deleuze & Guattari as a 'force of actualisation' (Goodchild, 1996, p.4.) which is "concerned with the driving force behind creation and relation" (ibid, p.6) - in the context of my research, the phenomena that motivates and moves players in the cultural policy sector to act in the ways that they do - and that 'becoming' is the connection of 'desire' to the action they take, or events they make happen as cultural policy makers, often leading to unexpected and surprising outcomes: For Deleuze & Guattari, 'becomings' are infinite and like the rhizome, moving in unpredictable directions 'of the zigzagging line'. Like Foucault and Derrida, Deleuze & Guattari emphasised the 'underneathness' of discourses; yet their concepts of the 'rhizome' and the 'fold' were not so much concerned with sub structures and their deconstruction, but rather more with the sporadic and unexpected directions thought and action take. Just as events, ideas and initiatives in the real cultural policy world happen and emerge unexpectedly, often with no obvious roots, folding into one another, so too "...rhizomes spread laterally without anchoring securely... Forever without stable identity, the rhizome cannot be understood. Its place is the displace of interstanding...Understanding values depth and interiority; interstanding relates to surface and exteriority" (Taylor, 1995, pp.32-33). Both are implicit in the range of concepts espoused by postmodern writers and have given me ways of thinking about my data which seeks to look beyond a linear and literal interpretation of words spoken and written. Significantly for my data analysis, postmodern theories offer the viewpoint that there is really no one version of the 'truth' and in reading

and reflecting on the transcripts of my interviews, what has emerged are ‘truth effects’ rather than ‘facts’, ‘evidence’ and ‘absolute truths’. That is ‘truth effects’ are the things people come to recognize as the truth, and as a consequence, how and what they present as ‘truth’, affects or shapes Scottish cultural policy.

Reading about postmodernist concepts made me think about the impact of historical perspectives and interpretations in approaching my data analysis. In particular, Deleuze & Guattari encouraged me to look at discourse and the development of ideas as rhizomic with no roots in history or linkages with time - chance ruptures independent of other structures and roots. Foucault’s writing also made me think about the limitations and constraints of history, noting that our present understandings are influenced by representations of our past and vice versa: and as such we should attempt to rethink and dig under these historical interpretations. However, it was the practical application and development of postmodernist ideas in the writing and work of historians and artists that was of most assistance to me, not least of all because they explained and simplified what more often than not were exceptionally complex ideas - indeed I have compared my attempts at grasping their meaning as akin to trying to catch a bucket of steam! For instance, these ideas were developed in a practical sense by historian Edith Wyschogrod who has written extensively about the ethical dilemmas facing historians in seeking to record ‘the truth’ of history and human experience:

The historian is placed in a Catch-22. Obligated by her vow to restore the past in its actuality, she nevertheless recognises the impossibility of doing so...How is she to breach the unsayability of what must be said? Must she not devise strategies to trick

language into revealing its limits so that she can at once respect and defy them, artifices that are exhibited not in a straightforward manner but by resorting to other artifices? (Wyschogrod, 1998. pxii).

Wyschogrod's writing made me relook at my data, leading me to contemplate the influence of time, places, events and individuals both on what my interviewees said and on my interpretations. In particular, Wyschogrod's utilisation of author Jorge Luis Borges' concept of 'ficciones' opened up new perspectives on the edited transcripts of five of my interviewees, discussed in detail in chapter five.

As explained by Wyschogrod, 'ficciones' are what fictions become when retold and imbued with the experience and meanings of the narrator - something at once familiar and located in the original fact or fiction, but changed inevitably in character by being handled by the narrator and by passing through time and space. Indeed, Wyschogrod's likening of 'ficciones' with "coins which have lost their pictures and matter only as metal, no longer as coins...as Nietzsche and Derrida would have it, their 'wornoutness'" (ibid, p.32), combined with her argument for care to be taken in assuming too much about the veracity of accounts of events, as they too must be seen as constructs of their time, for "there is no straightforward way to match our propositions about events with events themselves...as this space prior to historical description is one in which signs disappear" (ibid, p.3), changed how I looked at my data. It was as if my data had metamorphosed from one-dimensional 'statements of facts', to potential palimpsests with layers of meaning waiting to be uncovered.

Two other writers/artists who aided my understanding were Daniel Barenboim and Edward Said. In a recorded conversation between the two, Said spoke to Barenboim of the impossibility of performing music without the influence of memories of previous performances, bringing the history of experience into the present:

...a listener has accumulated memories of other performance that one has heard by you and many others. So, it's a fantastically rich experience, which is, in fact, an experience in organising, re-organising, dis-organising, and organising sound again. Sound is no longer just linear but also horizontal, diagonal, top to bottom, bottom to top, middle to forward, middle backwards, and then across pieces, in such a way as to create, in effect, a new whole - the meaning of which is paradoxically withheld (Barenboim & Said, 1998, p.140).

Earlier in their conversation Barenboim discusses the impossibility of truthful representations of music or fidelity to the original artistic intent: "...the score is not the truth. The score is not the piece. The piece is when you actually bring it into sound" (ibid, p.22). He goes on: "I think that in the end it is false modesty to say, as a performing musician, I am the servant of the music. My only interest is fidelity. All I want to do is play the music as it is in the score. It is either a very great arrogance, or false modesty, because it is an objective impossibility" (ibid, p.56).

In the work of Francis Bacon, (whose work Deleuze wrote about), and in particular in his portraits, we see the representation of human beings, but not in a traditional photographic sense. Rather, “we see human beings as flawed, variable, self-contradictory, subject to the fugitive and contingent” (National Galleries of Scotland in Association with the British Council, p.1). In his own words, Bacon said: “I’m always hoping to deform people into appearance; I can’t paint them literally...It (*his art*) lives on its own...so that the artist may be able to unlock the valves of feeling and therefore return the onlooker to life more violently” (ibid, p.1). Bacon’s art is not what we expected; he has led us to different ways of seeing, thinking and feeling. He has taken different routes in portraiture - following a rhizome? Deleuze and Guattari’s rhizome refers to and describes the unpredictability and ‘tunnel-like’ and ‘sprouting’ diversions concepts, ideas and thought can take. These concepts assisted me in my data analysis, and in particular in understanding interviewees’ descriptions of performances and encounters in the cultural policy sphere.

Other concepts which have aided analysis and provided fresh perspectives on my data include the social capital concept described by Putnam (1993) which illustrated how networks in the cultural policy community operate:

... social capital, namely as features of social life-networks, norms and trust...enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives. The norms include reciprocity, cooperation and tolerance (Catts, R. 2004, p.2).

Throughout my data, trust, reciprocity and cooperation are either referred to directly, or are implicit in some of the comment, emerging as key ingredients in the cultural policy

community network; the concept of social capital facilitated my cognizance of the significance of these attributes and dynamics within my data. Schuller (2000) notes the widespread acceptance and advancement of social capital as a key policy concept across a number of European countries, including Scotland, “Netherlands, Finland and Ireland” (Schuller, 2002, p.2), with the World Bank as the concept’s “most influential proponent” (ibid, p.9). However, both Schuller (2000) and Putzell (1997) highlight the ambiguity and complexity surrounding social capital, not least its potential downside - or “dark side” (Putzell, 1997, p.943) - which can affirm and promote illiberal and “patriarchal relations within society” (ibid, p.945).

Nonetheless, social capital’s flexibility and perceived ubiquitous utility, whereby “it can be used in so many different ways and in different contexts” (Schuller, 2000, p.17) has informed my data analysis. It has accommodated the complexity and range of possible interpretations of networks, actions, motivations, trust and human interactions described and discussed in my data, not least of all because “social capital is used to refer both to the *preconditions* for social and economic progress and as an *outcome*” (ibid, p.17).

An important text for my revived approach to data analysis, was Fairclough’s *Analysing Discourse* (2003), introducing me to a range of methods and concepts which helped unravel for me the richness of my data. In the context of my thesis, ‘Discourse’ is used to mean the overarching framework of language, behaviours and values within which personal, professional and national identities are developed. Fairclough sees discourse as ways of representing - and indeed creating and recreating - aspects of the world: “...the ‘mental world’ of thoughts, feelings, beliefs and so forth, and the social world...Different discourses are different perspectives on the world” (Fairclough, 2003, p.124). On reading



and revisiting my data - further to reading Fairclough - I became aware of a cultural policy discourse being drawn upon by all the players; a discourse referenced in a number of ways: by use of a common language, metaphors, assumptions, shared knowledge and understandings of policies, histories, viewpoints and ideologies.

Much of my analysis utilises the approaches and methods described by Fairclough who advocates a “transdisciplinary” (ibid, p6) approach to discourse analysis which eschews a merely technical, linguistics-oriented approach concerned with the shape, forms and usage of language. Rather Fairclough draws on a range of theories and methods which firmly locate “texts as elements in social processes” (ibid, p.6). Whether looking at genre chains, speech functions, representations of social events or grammatical mood, bit by bit, the meanings within the texts revealed themselves in varied ways - just like looking through a kaleidoscope, bringing with each twist a new perspective and reordering of the same constituent parts to reveal a different picture every time. Hart says that “as a researcher the aim...is to elicit from the literature the ways in which core ideas, concepts and methodologies have been employed in argument and how they have been operationalised for empirical work” (Hart, 1998, p.142). Fairclough’s tools for analysis enabled me to do just this - and importantly, led me to understand that there could be no simplistic outcomes to my analysis, but rather what I would uncover would be layers of interpretations and meanings which would illuminate the cultural policy process in all its complexities - and possibilities.

## **Reflexivity**

It could be argued that many of the descriptions of cultural policy spaces, performances and players in the forthcoming chapters are rooted in my own views and experiences of where and how cultural policy is developed. Indeed, it could be argued that the spaces, performers and performances are partially, if not totally, my creation - by the physical act of discussing with my interviewees and colleagues the nature and dynamics of the cultural policy community, I have in effect helped construct it: "...a piece of qualitative research must of necessity be personal, as it contains all the perceptual premises, histories and values held by the persons who participate" (Laughlin, 1995, p.2).

Throughout the course of my research it became increasingly clear that it was - and still is - impossible for me to separate the roles of practitioner and researcher and that this had to be reflected in my research, particularly the data analysis. For instance, I had to take cognizance of the implicit influences of my employer regarding research interpretations, outcomes, and recommendations, as well as being aware of the risks of entering into a discourse with peers using a 'professional shorthand' (Bell and Nutt, 2002) - a cultural policy language which could have left me and my interviewees open to assuming mutual understandings where there were none, and leading to discredited data.

Also, although my interviewees agreed to be interviewed and to accept the outcomes of my research, I had to be conscious of the power relationships between me and my interviewees and between my employer and interviewees' organizations - all of which may in some instances have resulted in them feeling unable to refuse participation in the research. Or conversely, it may have led them to attach unintended reasons, or accolades, in being asked

to be interviewed - especially when others were not! Indeed, I did receive some comments from two people operating in the cultural sector who had heard of my research and were interested to know why I was interviewing some people and not others (including themselves!) Failure to openly acknowledge that “I cannot avoid being the same person wearing both (or several) hats” (Bell and Nutt, 2002, p.75) could have distorted both the collection of data and its analysis. Furthermore, in view of the status of many of my interviewees the concept of ‘informedness’ was particularly pertinent.

There is certainly the potential for my research to expose my interviewees to unfair and vexatious publicity and for their comments to be misinterpreted - and my awareness of this very fact, in itself affected how I thought about and wrote up my analysis. Tickle (2001) notes that the Chamberlain research of 1983 which controversially, albeit unintentionally, exposed the identities of interviewees resulting in intrusive and damaging publicity for them, is “a warning, especially with regard to power in the control, use and distribution of data” (Tickle, 2001, p.347). So throughout my research, including the design, data collection and data analysis stages, I have had to consider my role as a researcher and how my professional and personal roles impacted both on my interaction with my interviewees, but also on my analysis of what they said; and in addition I have had to consider how the ways in which I represent my interviewees and their words in my work will impact on them - and how that in itself has affected my analysis and articulation of that analysis.

Finlay recognises that reflexive analysis is difficult and that:

...the researcher treads a cliff edge where it is all too easy to fall into an infinite regress of excessive self-analysis at the

expense of focusing on the research participants. In the face of external criticism, researchers might become furtive, sanitizing their accounts of research, or they might retreat, avoiding reflexivity altogether (Finlay, 2002, p.532).

The qualitative research process itself has the potential to transform the very phenomenon being studied: “Interviews augment experience, rather than simply reflecting it” argues Beer (1997, p.127); “they alter meaning, instead of delineating it. They change people” (Finlay, p.531). Undoubtedly, how I see and interpret the world, my particular interests in, and professional engagement with the cultural sector determined whom I interviewed and the language I used to engage with the interviewees:

Reflexivity, in some ways, is the worst threat of all, because it demands that the researcher confront her own moves and motives...the challenge is not to eliminate ‘bias’ to be more neutral, but to use it as a focus for more intense insight (ibid, p.542-543).

Hopefully, I have managed to achieve this in both the analysis and the presentation of results, eschewing a prescriptive methodology and embracing a more open-ended, creative or even iconoclastic approach to reflexivity as advocated by Stronach, Garrett, Pearce & Piper (2007).

Equally, how I internalize debates and discussions and how I derive meaning from the data is affected by my experiences and interests. As a musician, I would sometimes describe

my data as either Bach-like or Debussy-esque: Bach-like because I could see counterpoint, repetition and development of themes; or alternatively, the language used by the interviewee, my recollection of their tone of voice and their subsequent comments and/or rewritings left a more impressionistic - 'Debussy-esque' - experience and meaning. Just as Debussy rewrote the rules of musical composition, referencing the pentatonic structures of Javanese music and whole tone scale, so unfamiliar to Western ears, so too some ideas expressed in my data appear as irregular and fragmented, strangely dissonant without any formal resolution, like a number of Debussy's late works. Comments 'float' in the way Debussy himself described his works as having 'floating chords' (Claude Debussy). These works and experiences not only affect my interpretations of my data, but also give me analogies and different understandings of theory and its influences.

Although I noted earlier that I had gravitated towards a more postmodernist theoretical perspective, I am aware nonetheless that other theories - such as critical theory and feminism - have influenced and informed some of my opinions and views, and thereby potentially affected my data analysis. The concept of colonisation of culture for social and economic policy ends - a widely debated issue within the cultural sector generally - comes from a critical theory paradigm - and makes me aware of issues of class and gender which have influenced so much of my professional and personal life and work. As the product of a working class family and community, and the beneficiary of higher education, I am also aware of the dislocation I have had for some time with my class, heritage and community - primarily as a consequence of my engagement with arts and culture and its policy community - which is essentially a middle and upper class community. This will undoubtedly have influenced my interpretations of my data - for instance, it is possible that my construct of a 'cultural hero' is perhaps partly rooted in my own experiences of

adopting an almost evangelical zeal in widening access to culture, and seeking to advance the perceived role of women - especially mothers - in the cultural sector, a sector historically not empathetic to women, or the working class. In other words, it is possible, that my own experiences, and internalization of theoretical influences and ideas have led me in certain directions and interpretations of the data, asserting meanings for other players and events which are only really meaningful for me. Awareness of these possibilities do not preclude them from happening, but they do enrich and add to meanings and insights.

In summary, the key features of my methodology were a qualitative perspective and an ethnographic approach, with the main method of data collection being one-to-one semi-structured interviews with fifteen key decision makers and opinion formers in the cultural policy sector. I have also given a reflexive account of the theoretical perspectives which have influenced both my personal/professional outlook and my data analysis. These ranged from recognition of the influence of critical theory and feminism on my personal and socio-political viewpoints, the impact of a positivist perspective on my working and research practices, through to the borrowings from social capital theory, discourse analysis and postmodernism in my data analysis.

This chapter has explained not only the methodology applied in undertaking my research into the development and maintenance of a cultural policy community in Scotland, but importantly, has mapped out the journey I have travelled in finding the most effective methods to unravel the rich meanings and insights contained within my data. It was a long, testing, but ultimately rewarding, journey and I hope the observations, conclusions and results presented in the next three chapters are equal to the time and thought generously granted by all my participants.

## Chapter 4: Scotland's Cultural Policy Community

### Introduction

This chapter is the first of three concerned with the results of my data analysis. Reminding myself of my research topic throughout the analysis - to analyse the processes involved in establishing cultural policy at both national and local levels, identify how political and professional influences impact on cultural policy and how a cultural policy community is formed and maintained - one word came to dominate my thinking and writing: "how?"

As discussed in chapter two, much has been written about the content, context, history, direction and impacts of cultural policy. Some of this work alludes to the input and influence of significant individuals operating mainly in the political, national agency, media, academic or business/sponsorship sectors (Pick, 1980, 1986, 1988, 1991; Mulgan & Worpole, 1986; Hollis, 1997; Holden, 2004; Upchurch, 2004, 2007; Selwood, 2006). Yet there is little focus on *how* these contributions are made, *how* key players engage with the cultural policy development and implementation process and *how* their influence helps create a cultural policy community. Where researchers and writers have attempted to investigate the impact and influences of individuals, what has resulted is essentially a descriptive (albeit fascinating) "Who's Who" approach, describing professional and personal networks alongside policy decisions and events (Paxman, 1990; Schlesinger, Miller & Dinan, 2001; Upchurch, 2004, 2007).

For instance, in his *Friends in High Places* Paxman describes the control of cultural policy from the end of the second world war until the 1980s by the 'establishment', evidenced in

part by the fact that by 1980, “eight out of the twelve men and one women who had held the positions of either Arts Minister or Arts Council of Great Britain Chairman had been educated at either Eton or Winchester” (Paxman, 1990, p.289). He then goes on to describe the diminishing influence of this ‘establishment’, as the consequence of a more influential and “new, larger, educated class...more fragmented, more eclectic, and politically diffuse” (ibid, p.327). Schlesinger et al, in their *Open Scotland?* adopt a more comprehensive methodology, including desk research, semi-structured interviews and ethnographic field work (Schlesinger et al, 2001). Yet both publications give what is at heart a descriptive account of names, networks and events with the addition of some critical commentary on possible implications for the future policies and behaviours of government. (Notably, knowing many of the characters described in the Scottish publication, and very much conscious of those key Scottish players absent in Paxman’s book as a consequence of its London-centric focus, I was aware that I could have given quite different accounts of events, networks and conclusions - reminding me yet again that so much of history is not strictly the ‘truth’, but only the interpretation of a selective amount of data by the author).

Bearing in mind the limitations of a “Who’s Who” listing and, paradoxically, the boundless possibilities of interpretation of events and associations, this chapter attempts to move if not beyond, certainly underneath, a literal listing and linking of key players, policy documents and events. Rather it seeks to illuminate the varied and complex ways the cultural policy community defines itself, how individual actors within this community construct and position themselves as key players, and how ultimately it influences and creates cultural policy.



## **Part One: Identity Construction in The Cultural Policy Community**

The construction of a personal, professional and philanthropic identity, linked to the identity of the wider cultural policy community, if not nation, emerged from my data as a phenomenon central to the functioning of the cultural policy community and ultimately, to the creation of cultural policy. This section explores how this process unfolds in practice.

### **Citizens, Experts and Cultural Policy Heroes**

One of the most intriguing and consistent themes to emerge from my data was the perception of many interviewees of their role not only in the cultural sphere, but in Scotland, and sometimes more widely, as a champion, ‘super-citizen’ or ‘hero’ figure, in both the policy community and wider civil society. Fairclough describes how society identifies and defines itself partly through the creation of a distinctive and readily recognisable stock of ‘characters’ which are pervasive through social life, have considerable continuity over time and exist at a high level of abstraction and generalisation, citing the ‘manager’, ‘therapist’ and ‘politician’ (Fairclough, 2003, p.161) and ‘citizens’ and ‘experts’ (ibid, p.184) as contemporary examples. Whilst not as commonplace as these examples, nonetheless within the cultural policy community there is recognition of a ‘major player’ type at a high level of abstraction which draws in particular on the “public spirited, high-minded, even, on occasion, self-sacrificing” (Marquand, 2004, p.78) character of the expert and citizen - yet becomes more than this - a ‘cultural hero’ figure imbued with all the classical heroic, and almost god-like qualities implicit in the term ‘hero’.

Reading across the data reveals a relatively common (and what feels often to be unselfconscious) way in which the interviewees identify themselves as cultural heroes: whilst all the interviewees use the first person throughout the interview, nonetheless, they also position themselves as being more than 'I', not simply a representative or spokesperson of a wider grouping or entity, but almost as if they are somehow an embodiment of the group or institution. Implicit in their descriptions is their authority and leadership role; there is no overbearing boasting, but rather an assumption that their status and role are simply understood - almost as if they have "a fame in the classical sense: as being seen to be favoured by the gods (Bonnie Greer)" (Kane, 2007, p.4). For example, in describing his role in the development of a National Cultural Strategy Caius - whose main business is not in the cultural sector - says firstly that his involvement is an indirect one, yet goes on to describe a role which is god-like in its suggested omnipresence:

*I think it has been often rather indirect; I engage with so many different people who are either contributors or involved or at the receiving end of it. So I suppose I am in constant dialogue - almost every day - where some aspect of the cultural agenda comes up. (Caius)*

Similarly Robert indicates that there is no real need for him to be involved in the day to day running or development of things - rather, like Caius, his influence can appear indirect, but in his eyes, and in the eyes of other 'cultural heroes', it is actually omniscient and supremely powerful:

*If I had got involved (in the detail) I would have been less useful and less involved in the Arts than I have been...it wasn't that we had conflicting interests (himself and his company v. government and civil servants), it was just that I was probably better at it (delivering a major sporting/cultural event for Scotland) because I actually - the Company - owned (the venue) and therefore it made much more sense to us to get the (event) to Scotland... I was able to influence...in bringing (the event) to Scotland...the politicians had also achieved their objective...I would have to say that in simple terms, I was better at it than them, but of course, I really had more ammunition than them and it was really better that I kept out of the political circle. (Robert)*

What we have here is both a description of a benign influence and action behind the scenes which has a god-like omnipotence and beneficence about it - in other words, it is an influence and action intended for the greater good and benefit of the country - and at the same time, Robert also positions himself as an almost god-like manifestation or embodiment of the 'Company': the 'Company' made flesh! Interviewees regularly interchange 'I', 'we' and 'our' as a means of identifying themselves very clearly with an entity larger than, and outwith, themselves.

Another example is in reply to my question about the nature of his personal involvement in the national cultural strategy, whereby Lachlan in his first sentence establishes the indivisible link with his own self and his organisation/newspaper:

*I suppose the newspapers set a climate of what politicians think is permissible for them...I don't think that newspapers, the media, necessarily influence the details of particular decisions - although they can - but they always set the climate, the tone, in which those decisions are taken.*

*(Lachlan)*

Again, the individual and the organisation/newspaper have become one and the same. A key feature of being a 'cultural hero' is the ability to present oneself as "someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself" (Campbell, 1988, p.135). They are not only one citizen trying to engage in the public domain, but significantly are experts acting on behalf of a wider citizenry and in the interests of the country. Robert typifies this when he says:

*I think the kind of skills or personality or character that I've brought to the things, it's not very easy to attract to the arts, because business men in general are deeply interested in what they do...they are very committed people...I felt in most of these cases that I actually had a contribution to make when people such as (the PM) was looking for a businessman with an interest in the arts. (Robert)*

Caius is also clear about the motivation for his engagement in cultural policy: it is not simply about culture, but is about national identity and implicitly, personal identity as a cultural hero too:

*They (cultural organisations/projects) bring you into dialogue on matters of responsibility for heritage, Scottish identity, cultural questions that impinge pretty closely on that much more than in a sense political issues do - you know I have never really been a political activist, but I viewed the cultural world as a very important part of the development of Scotland, as well as the business. (Caius)*

Aaron is more explicit about his role as expert, citizen and cultural hero in relation to cultural policy and national identity:

*As the idea sort of took shape both in our minds and the Arts Council, in politicians' minds, future ministers, you know we began to realise that this was - had - a great potential for how Scotland might be seen outside Scotland; it was partly a national cultural strategy for Scotland within Scotland, but I was always more excited about what it would say about Scotland to the outside world; and I used to button hole politicians and say: "this is a way in which Scotland could project itself and show that devolution isn't just a kind of parochial measure; it actually puts us on the international*

*scene because with the arts - it can sort of demonstrate what a country is like". (Aaron)*

By constructing an image of what they believe the nation's identity is, or should be, these interviewees at one and the same time, also construct their own identities as 'cultural policy heroes'.

Analysis of the data's grammatical mood and modality further illuminates how the interviewees position themselves as citizens, experts and cultural heroes. Grammatical mood is concerned with how things are stated and presented, and modality is concerned with what the interviewees commit themselves to in their interview and transcripts, in terms of ideas and values they hold to be true. "Modality is important in the texturing of identities, both personal ('personalities') and social, in the sense that what you commit yourself to is a significant part of what you are - so modality choices in texts can be seen as part of the process of texturing self-identity" (Fairclough, 2003, p.166). It would not seem unreasonable to assume that those who present themselves as 'major players', 'experts' or 'cultural heroes' would make mainly declarative statements indicating at one and the same time the certainty of their status and views. Whilst this is the case to some extent, it is clear the overall picture is more complex, with the interesting phenomenon of the interviewees' personality, private and public - their 'style' - becoming much more bound up with the views themselves: "Identity is to do with who one thinks one is, what one believes and what one does" (Sarup, 1996, p.xv).

For instance, Lal is the archetypal civil servant - his quietly spoken and measured personality seems to fit the stereotypical views of civil servants; the transcript of his

interview reveals a very carefully crafted presentation which ensures that not too many direct views can be quoted. For example, he regularly puts forward his own questions and answers as part of his answers to my questions of him:

*“What’s the message that we wish to communicate to other people about our identity?” ...I see the debate about national cultural identity having become more externally focussed...and less internally focussed. (Lal)*

Later, when discussing the potential diminution of creative input if cultural policy moves away from an arms-length model of governance, Lal says:

*It’s a risk that has to be managed, again it’s part of a wider challenge: “how do we foster public sector entrepreneurialism?” ...if it’s the creativity...then it’s perfectly possible to create a protected space around individuals that enables them to be more challenging of the status quo and find a channel to release resources to back up some of their ideas...it is a more controlled model but needn’t be a suffocating model. (Lal)*

Yet on examination, there are clear signals of the power and influence behind this interrogative approach. The questioning at first suggests someone else is directing the agenda; but this is only partly so, because the answer is the interviewee's, but because it is given as an answer to a general question, the implication is that there is wider engagement with the process as well as wider ownership of the answer. The reality is that Lal is able to direct quietly and effectively the direction of the debate, using a grammatical mood which suggests a sense of wider ownership and engagement; in terms of modality, as he both asks the question and comes to the conclusion, he is also taking on the cultural hero mantle, with all the god-like and all-knowing qualities as described earlier, as he is now, in effect, in the business of predicting - and ultimately directing - intention and the future.

It seems to be a key feature of all those interviewed that in the main, they are able to position and assert themselves in hugely powerful positions of influence on cultural policy, not simply because of the status accorded them by their positions in business and public life, but because of their capacity to be, and importantly, appear to be, huge influencers behind the scenes and to have the backing of the wider policy community - partly through their ability to influence others through their dialogue and interaction with them. Other interviewees make declarative statements about things they hold to be true, but significantly at the same time manage to imbue many of these statements with a sense of themselves. For example Lancelot gives his views on the creation of his post and in doing so indicates the necessary integration of his personal and public selves with his transformational 'purpose' if progress is to be made:



*I got invited by the FM to consider this post...it was one...area of government which he felt was underperforming and...wanted to see it given more credence, more energy and more direction...By creating my post it would go some way to try and redress that. Part of that was symbolic and sending out signals to the civil service as much as to colleagues; and part of that was practical to give some external input...my role is to assist them (Ministers) ...and that also kind of implies, assisting Scotland as well - if that's not too naff a thing to say. (Lancelot)*

Fairclough talks about “the dialectical nature of the relationship between the discursive and non-discursive world and how the latter ‘internalises’ the former” (Fairclough, 2003, p162). The data suggests that the ways in which personalities invest (and inhabit) social identities and roles, and how much they associate with the ‘truthfulness’ and factuality of what they say, is central to their ability to act as cultural heroes. This is reflected in grammatical mood, where the interviewees make statements that are definitive and value laden - in other words they intend no doubts about what they are saying; they assert their public authority and identity through what they say, how they say it and how they lead the listener and reader to believe not necessarily always in what they say, but more significantly, believe in them as citizen, expert and cultural hero.

## Status and Hierarchies

Interviewees assert their position and status in the cultural policy world by identifying themselves in the cultural policy sphere as a 'significant character/type' - a 'cultural hero' - by making statements about the cultural policy world including other players in it and their relationship to, and in, that policy world. For example Tallulah's high status and leadership role in the sector is also demonstrated in her text:

*When I say 'we', it's usually myself and/or my Secretary or CEO and I have been working quite a bit with the Scottish Executive... also with sportscotland trying to get them involved more in knowing what we are doing but also making sure that they weren't taking over the role that we are supposed to do. And so now, it's mainly direct links with the Scottish Executive. (Tallulah)*

One of the ways in which Uma defines her status and leadership role in the cultural policy hierarchy is to reference key players, projects and policy ideas, which importantly establish her high status as the leading advocate for the particular policies:

*On public platforms no matter what opening it is or who I have to deal with - last week I dealt with very rich people who had lent us their Art - both on the public platforms and here when I am having them in for supper - I will speak to them. I will tell them about the projects that we are doing -*

*constantly calling to mind the benefits it's had here - and that does seem to work. (Uma)*

Finally, Uma also claims endorsement for her approach and policies by significant policy agencies - made all the more significant by their international status and function outwith the cultural sector: “*And you know the World Health Organisation is on my side*”(Uma).

In a similar way, key player status is asserted by Ulysses by locating his role via his newspaper in influencing policy at the highest level:

*We also got involved... with something which has now been adopted as national government policy...we get little credit for this, but I like to think we can claim it...We saw the benefits of this and we challenged both local and national government to follow this example. We now have (this policy) in all of Glasgow schools ... and its something that has been trialled also on a national basis. So we like to think we played our part in shaping and influencing that.*  
*(Ulysses)*

There is no covert or indirect suggestions being made here - rather, very directly, Ulysses is demonstrating the power and status of himself and his organisation - ‘we’ - in determining key policies which are then taken up by local and national government; and by describing the policy world, the other players and his role as the ‘leader’, has, more importantly, located himself as a leading policy influencer.

As noted earlier, by establishing themselves as “dialogical characters engaging with others rather than simply delivering a monologue” (Fairclough, 2003, p.176), interviewees create the impression of dialogue with a wider audience - even though in this instance, the only audience is myself the interviewer. In creating this dialogue, speaking with authority to a wider and more general audience, the status of the interviewee as an expert and leader in the field is also asserted. Caius creates dialogue with a wider audience by giving the impression that there are conversations with others taking place:

*To get an acquisitions policy - one of the other things I developed with him...is to say: “Let’s place the national gallery absolutely at the top level of the world...and let’s be perceived as in that league by people who will put the money up”...and it will lift people. (Caius)*

Caius’s dialogue shifts from discussion with experts and speaking on behalf of institutions to also including more personal commentary, which has the effect of making the reader and listener feel as though they are more personally engaged at a human level:

*I was taught...my father used to say: “never buy something if you don’t have the money”. But I said: “we are not buying, we’re not even committed to buying it”; but we’re saying we want to buy. (Caius)*

This is someone who is both like everyone else - and therefore someone we can relate to - but at the same time is an expert, and whose opinions have status and importance. He and other interviewees speak personally and on behalf of the cultural sector: Aaron says:

*When I took up the... job with a sort of interest (in the arts) already in place...and my opposite number at that stage in Glasgow...was also interested in and had a passion about the arts. I mean we were both sons of writers... so you know we sort of came with a kind of pedigree as it were, which tilted us towards the arts. (Aaron)*

The interviewees move easily from the personal to the general, speaking personally and on behalf of the sector, drawing in the listener and reader through personal anecdote and references, making their proclamations no less 'god-like', as one would expect from a cultural hero, but rooted in human experience we can all empathise with. For example, in making general statements about the 'rightness' of cultural access policies, Uma says:

*It was my father who stood in the halls of Kelvingrove and said to me: "This is wonderful it belongs to us, all this art belongs to us; and when you're a big girl you've got to make your contribution to the fact that this belongs to the City." Great, and that in fact imbues everything we do. (Uma)*

Amin Maalouf (2003), notes that in terms of perceptions of ourselves, we tend to assume that we are primarily influenced by "our 'vertical' heritage, that of our ancestors, our

religious community and popular traditions, rather than our ‘horizontal’ one transmitted to us by our contemporaries and by the age we live in” (Renshaw, 2003, p.102-103). Yet Maalouf claims this is not the case, influenced more fundamentally than we are aware by the horizontal heritage. My data indeed suggest that whilst invoking our vertical heritage as demonstrated by the number of my interviewees describing childhood and familial influences on their opinions and beliefs, there is more uniformity and commonality in their cultural policy perspectives and roles than they might be conscious of. By locating their private stories in spaces concerned with culture - in Uma’s case the museum, in Aaron’s the world of the playwright and in Caius’s the world of buying art - their rhetorical statements about cultural policy resonate not only with mere mortals, but have an authenticity, legitimacy and commonality in the cultural policy world which in turn places them as characters in the public cultural policy sphere.

This device of locating themselves as individual human beings (in all of these instances as sons and daughters), is an example of “the ‘informalisation’ (Misztal 2000) of identities which has been such a marked feature of recent public life, the public appropriation of the private and the ‘ordinary’ (Sennett 1974), the ‘conversationalization’ of public language” (Fairclough, 2003, p.182/183), contributing to a texturing of identities, combining the private and the public, divine but rooted in the human, at once ordinary and at the same time extraordinary, all of which cultural heroes require to secure their status in the cultural policy hierarchy.

## **Intertextuality: The Significance of ‘Others’**

Texts do not exist in isolation, but have ‘audiences’ to whom they are addressed, consciously or unconsciously excluding and including a range of other speakers or ‘voices’. They draw on discourses and other texts external to the text itself, create difference between voices and “assume and anticipate differences between ‘author ‘ and addressees” (Fairclough, 2003, p.42). This relationship with other texts and voices - ‘intertextuality’ - invests significant power in the author, in effect endowing them with the ability to create their own identity, as well as that of others through their representation and interpretation of ‘others’ voices. Intertextuality allows the author to give prominence to some voices over others and through direct or indirect representation of what others say, the author can manipulatively or unintentionally attribute assumptions, statements and identities to others:

*I think you have asked about everything that I feel and you feel deeply passionate about...The Prince of Wales gets it...a lot of people get it, Lord XXX gets it. The wee woman that runs my community centre, that cleans out the café who’s now, happily talking about being to the theatre once and she wants to go back, she gets it too. (Uma)*

This section looks at how the participants in my research position themselves in relation to other voices - how their own identity and those of ‘others’ are developed through and in text. Within the cultural policy community different social identities are created and referred to by the interviewees in ways that establish the ideological stance of the interviewee, their views on key players, as well as their respective roles and functions

within the policy community. For instance, Lachlan introduces a social type he perceives operating within the cultural policy community - the philistine politician - which he fine-tunes considerably, almost rewriting in part, when given the opportunity to edit his transcript:

*Could a politician make a case for valuing pure aesthetics in post-devolution Scotland without getting pilloried in the media? I doubt it. Can you imagine the headlines if the First Minister said the parliament was so beautiful it was worth £400m? It would be such a change for Scotland if value for money wasn't always ruled by the meanest, most practical measure, like bargains in a supermarket. (Lachlan)*

By use of emotive words such as 'meanest', Lachlan implies his disapproval of such a stance and social type. Throughout he infers his own social type as a cultured, liberal intellectual interested in the cultural welfare of Scotland by positioning himself in opposition to the 'philistine politician' social character:

*Our policy line on opera is in turn informed by our general attitude of wanting Scotland to be confident and ambitious...Even though I am not an opera lover, I think the prevailing Executive attitude towards opera is awful. Being tough on crime for votes is one thing; being tough on opera for votes is quite another. (Lachlan)*



Interestingly, from the perspective of the politicians I interviewed, the social types illustrated by them were similar to those introduced by Lachlan, but views differed - explicitly and implicitly - on what social type held the moral high ground. Politicians clearly believed their challenge to the cultural establishment through policies concerned with inclusion and access were morally superior to those concerned with a cultural policy based on aesthetics alone: Uma describes some of her political colleagues by paraphrasing 'others': "*When pushed they will say that...the horny-handed sons of toil...locally elected members are too stupid to have anything to do with culture*" (Uma). In the one statement, Uma positions her political colleagues in a 'manual labour background' social group and at the same time introduces - through attribution of the comments on her colleagues to another social type - an educated, but prejudiced elite. Both types/groups are identified as policy makers in the cultural sector. Uma's identity also emerges from this statement (and the following ones) as a character who is better educated than her colleagues, but unlike the other 'educated' type, holds a moral high-ground as she recognises and values the important contribution of 'local elected members':

*Actually the local elected members in here are a pushover as far as the access agenda is concerned for I...shifted their minds to this. (I) moved them in committee, moved them in presentations, to see and to talk about and to give examples of how things had changed amongst the young people and the older people too in their wards. And you'll recall many, many times XXX - not a man who's had a huge education, speaking passionately, more eloquently than I could ever do about how things have changed. (Uma)*

Indeed, Uma infers she is superior to both social types - superior to the first on the basis of her broader education, cultural knowledge and powers of persuasion, and superior to the second on the basis of her shared political ideology with the first, and also in her own eyes, lack of social prejudice and superior moral and ideological standing.

In discussing selection of the membership of the National Cultural Strategy steering group Padma noted:

*I wanted people that...recognised the importance of the Scottish Parliament and the importance of governance of culture at a Scottish level; and people who were prepared to think in those terms rather than just thinking in terms of what their own interests were...I wanted people that I felt could see the bigger picture; the role for government... in the whole area of arts and culture, and also people who I thought were committed both to that, but also to...the whole issue of widening access. (Padma)*

In effect, Padma wanted people - a social type - like her; a type, by inference, superior to those who did not agree with her or see the need for change:

*I think there was some resistance to what I described - not necessarily changing the length of arm but to making the arm a bit more obvious. I felt there to be an understanding*

*for the Arts Council that they operated within that parameter; not that politicians wanted to be engaged in day to day decisions, but that the plans that set the planning framework for the Arts Council had to be re-done within the parameters of the cultural strategy; and I think there was some...concern about what I was doing. (Padma)*

Through the introduction of other voices in the interviews, the types of social characters in the cultural policy community are established. By positioning themselves in relation to the other voices introduced in the texts, each interviewee defines themselves in the context of one of the social types or groups. Equally, the interviewees also define themselves in terms of voices they exclude.

Yasin and Uma both discuss similar events - Glasgow, European City of Culture in 1990 and the industrial relations surrounding the reorganisation of cultural services in Glasgow. Both use their accounts to locate their own and each others' roles in the policy community, and to construct a more abstract identity which places them as performers in the cultural policy networks; as well as linking them to current and future policy developments and directions:

*From the early days I have been involved in the arts and cultural policy of the Council...decisions such as the decision to bid for the City of Culture...I was involved in that over the years...I was also involved in a major restructuring of culture and leisure. (Yasin)*

It is clearly established that in his own account Yasin was a key player for some time in cultural policy in the city; however, Uma was not part of the decision making process during 1990, nor the lead figure in later industrial relations, yet manages to imply involvement through association with ‘we’:

*We'd done all the things, we'd been there, we'd seen it,  
done it bought the tee shirt...which said Glasgow 1990 on  
it and then we went for 1996 and ...then we went for  
1999...we wanted to change cultures as we had put all the  
sectors together... (Uma)*

It is significant that although both Yasin and Uma worked closely together especially during a period of massive organisational change, there is no reference to each other's role: in effect they define each other through excluding each other. “Identities are relational, who one is, is a matter of how one relates to the world and to other people” (Fairclough, 2003, p.166).

As with Lachlan, neither Uma nor Padma give their opposition an authentic voice with which to put forward their differing viewpoints; rather they express the perspectives of the ‘others’ based on their own ideologies. This ‘framing’ of other voices incorporated into the texts reflects the interviewees’ ideological position and affirms their own identity in relation to the other voices. In other words, the ‘others’ are brought into existence in each interviewee’s text primarily as a means of stating a position and establishing the position of the author.

An example of this is where two interviewees refer to the same issue and incident, yet give very different interpretations of the other voices. For instance, Iain says:

*The debate about the Tramway stunned me. There were about twenty people using the most extreme language and using the media and therefore we had a sort of quasi crisis generated by twenty people...the thing that struck me most...was how incestuous and narrow and how closed it was and how irrelevant that was to the vast majority of people in Glasgow - I think it was absolutely, completely irrelevant. (Iain)*

In Iain's world view, this event was in his own words irrelevant, emphasised in his omission of the other voices involved, other than his own interpretation of what they were doing. However, Lachlan states in discussion about the same topic:

*If we had not aired the issues and criticised the lack of consultation and been a forum for both sides of the argument would the proposed compromise to allow the visual artists to retain their space have been thrashed out so quickly? (Lachlan)*

In contrast to Iain, this issue was regarded by Lachlan as worthy of significant national newspaper coverage - and although Lachlan says he aired both sides, by excluding any

reference to the voices concerned directly, and by the implication that only one side was 'correct' (note again the emotive language: 'lack' of consultation, 'compromise...thrashed out', 'threat posed') Lachlan asserts what side of the debate he is on and his pivotal role in promoting the debate and securing the outcome.

The interviewees set the context of the cultural policy community in their interviews by directly or indirectly referring to a range of voices. How these voices are introduced informs and shapes understanding of the policy community and the identities of the interviewee and other players. For instance, "the relation of an utterance - (or text) - to others may be a matter of 'building on' them" (Fairclough, 2003, p.42), as in Tabitha's interview, whereby she introduces voices which will build on her proposition that regular and consistent informal engagement with community groups and national organizations is both the way in which she does her job, and has proven - for her - to be the most effective way of delivering cultural policy:

*This weekend has been an excellent example where a very informal situation has allowed me to...take further some of the cultural diversity work that we've been involved in...formally and informally within the service. But what it did do was allow us to ...begin to understand...culturally how difficult it is...to become part of a culture that's already obviously within Glasgow. And that is about how do you apply for money, how do you...ensure that your culture is properly recognized. (Tabitha)*

Notably at no point throughout a fairly lengthy discussion on the issues emerging from her conversations with community members regarding grant aid and support for minority communities, are the community voices referred to or quoted directly. Rather the events and issues are paraphrased by the interviewee, placing her firmly in a position of authority - and obligation - as a government worker required to respond to the informal dialogue. The voices are also 'building on' earlier descriptions of how Tabitha does her job and engages with the various communities and national cultural agencies. In all of these examples, voices are introduced in ways that the interviewees are 'polemicizing with' them (ibid, p.42), quoting and paraphrasing the arguments from various voices to make their points; with the effect of clarifying the issues but more importantly, creating an impression of their leadership roles in the various debates. In other words, their identities are created in relation to and through their creation of the other voices.

Finally, some interviewees introduce other voices by "presuming that they were already known to the listener" (ibid, p.43). Lancelot described on a number of occasions ways in which ideas were initially put forward and then picked up on by others:

*I floated the idea of cultural rights which I'd been thinking about for a while, completely changing the kind of dialogue and the approach to how things are perceived in the country...I think the contributions I made...were to flag up that I felt they were going to be a significant sea change in the way that cultural policy was developed... and the cultural sector within that was the creative driving force. (Lancelot)*

However, the other voices were not directly quoted, nor was it explicit that the original ideas had been Lancelot's. It was presumed that I would already know the answer that this was his idea (confirmed later in the interview when I asked him outright), and that the other voices would be already known to me and the wider audience, again contributing to the creation of Lancelot's role and identity - he had assumed that his role and contributions were known within the cultural policy community, and as such was asserting his leadership position. Within my data, intertextuality emerges as a significant device, with both the including and excluding of other voices assisting in the construction of the interviewees' own identity as well as that of the other voices.

In all of the extracts from the data, we see the authors assume the power to tell others what is and what should be; they create the legitimacy to do so not just through their personal and professional roles and positions, but by constructing and establishing their 'cultural hero' identities through effective use of dialogue, drawing on their personal heritage and experiences to connect with their 'audience' and at the same time to draw out common values and truths which they transfer to the abstract concepts of cultural policy, interlacing statements about the material world and in the other world of what we all feel.

## **Part Two: The Role of Narrative and Representation**

In this section I discuss how narratives, story telling and representations are deployed in constructing Scotland's cultural policy community. The data reveal how personal histories and the imagery utilised, construct and deconstruct 'cultural heroes' according to their leading roles in "master narratives and urban legends" (Fulford, 1999, p.x-xi), as well as attempting to define a national identity - constructs however, which change in time and



space, as easily as the images in a kaleidoscope are changed with a turn of the wrist. What also emerges from the data is that the story is rarely - if ever - under the control of the narrator. Once in the public domain, the story takes on its own life and can and does reconstruct the story-teller often in ways that are both unintended and unexpected.

The stories we tell are often reshaped in/for the public sphere.

And then, when these narratives are in the public sphere, they shape us...Sometimes these 'public' narratives become powerful myths and, even though we know how they came to be constructed, they still have a powerful force, they impel.

There is also the problem of how the narratives are heard, how they are interpreted. We cannot (always) know the effects of our narratives. The self is somehow implicated in the representation of the Other, but we cannot control the effects of our narratives (Sarup, 1996, p.18).

Speaking on this phenomenon Marianne Faithfull in a newspaper interview said: "People only know my name - they don't know what I do," but Faithfull is aware she's viewed by some as a legend: "I don't analyse it...The legend has its own life and I don't have to worry about it. It just does its own thing, really, and I do mine" (Mottram, 2006, p.12 ).

## **Fact, Fiction, Ficciones and the Self**

Throughout the data interviewees utilise narrative to explain not simply sequences of events, but also to give impressions and feelings of events and to locate their own selves,

their own identities in the stories. By its very nature “narrative is selective, and may be untrue” (Fulford 1999, p.15) with distinctions between ‘facts’ and ‘fictions’ blurring or more often metamorphosing into ‘ficciones’. This process becomes more apparent in the data which was rewritten by the interviewee; that is where the original transcript was reviewed by the interviewee and the content amended in certain parts by him or her. Out of the fifteen interviewees who were sent their transcripts for approval/amendment, six chose to make amendments. Out of the six only three - Ulysses, Lachlan and Caleb - made amendments of any real textual significance; another - Octavia - made some minor grammatical changes and added a footnote, which although short, changed the tone of the original and the meanings I consequently construed. In her additional footnote Octavia said:

*I have read through this and made some very minor changes where there was slight confusion...I was altogether too sanguine...I would have made different responses if I'd done the interview a week later having attended...(an event).*  
*(Octavia)*

Octavia is stating that if the interview had been undertaken a week later, she would have made different responses and given a different account of events, as her experiences of recent events had reshaped her views, understandings and as a consequence, the construction of her identity. By including the footnote a different reading and interpretation of the transcript was inevitable; an example of how time and space, different takes on facts and fiction, lead to different perspectives - ficciones - and to different identities.

On reflecting upon the few minor grammatical changes made in the two transcripts by Lal and Tallulah a number of unwritten possibilities emerged - they were either too busy to pay much attention to the transcript - which in the case of a busy traveller and someone not too concerned about written texts i.e. Tallulah - is highly possible; or as in the case of Lal, whose profession demands the utmost attention to detail, especially in written texts and anything which could be regarded as a historical document, minor amendments could reflect huge confidence in what they had said at interview, indicating total control and command of their brief - and understandings of the policy world they inhabit. Both of these cases of barely-amended-at-all texts indicate the power of the unwritten word, and the influence and symbolism of what is not said or done. Of course, by adding my own interpretations of the texts, intentions and subsequent actions, I, too, change and reconstruct the data and its meanings.

Returning to the four transcripts which were amended, when asked in interview “*Was that your influence?*” Ulysses answered as follows: “*Yes, there’s no question because I did some research on the paper myself because I was working on the launch... at the time*”. In the edited version the reply to the question has subtly changed in emphasis and meaning:

*Yes, there’s no doubt I had a significant influence and my approach was in turn influenced by the fact I spent around two months researching the... background before I actually took operational control. (Ulysses)*

In the edited version we have a more assured player confident of his 'significant' influence; he also has strengthened the time given to his research - now two months research as opposed to 'some' in the original interview statement, which in turn suggests more important research of greater depth than that described in the original interview. This new depth of research, strength of opinion and more confident 'man of action and clear purpose' continues throughout the amended version. The 'facts' have changed/been embroidered - his view in the edited version is more decisive and describes action that actually took place after the original interview. Just as writing for Foucault "is a technique for transforming himself" (Simons, 1995, p.8), so too for some of my interviewees. In short, a new identity is being constructed, albeit one related to the one constructed in the original interview - a *ficcione*.

Facts and fictions are recast in a process, it would seem, concerned with defining and locating the self in the narrative, an identity which subtly changes with each retelling: For instance in the edited version of his interview Caleb removes completely the following sentence from the original transcript : "*And I certainly see that in my very limited experience of my time within (the arts company)*". It could be read that in the short space between doing the interview and editing the transcript Caleb no longer considers the experience of his time limited; with the passing of time and through the very act of editing the transcript, both his perception of himself and his construct of his own identity have changed. Indeed changes in the transcripts clearly demonstrate how what appear to be only small changes in grammar and sentence order, actually subtly changes the meaning and presentation of self: In the original transcript Caleb discusses the change process and his role in it: "*It's been very interesting just to observe the sort of tensions and how you actually create change because that's what it's all about*". Here he is in quite a passive

role, observing tensions and how change is created. In the edited version, this sentence has become two and the meaning has also changed: “*It is even more difficult when you try to change the rules of the game. Creating change, of course, by definition creates uncertainty and it has been very interesting to observe the sort of tensions this generates within the organisation*”. He now seems to be saying that he is no longer merely observing how change is created but that he is actively involved in changing ‘*the rules of the game*’; in the edited version his only observation is ‘*the sort of tensions this generates*’. By reviewing and editing the transcript, he is also in effect reviewing and editing his role and identity from an observer to an active player.

This process of review, change, reconstruction, retelling a new story and identity is replicated by all interviewees who chose to amend their transcripts directly, as well as by those who made minor or no tangible amendments. My data reveal how even a short passing of time can change, even if only subtly, the meaning of a narrative: either as a consequence of direct intervention by handling and processing the transcripts or in the retelling of the story, as in the editing of the transcripts by some of the interviewees, or the overlaying of a new story on the old - a palimpsest - arising from new influences, many unconsciously absorbed, on historical recall. Sarup states that images of the past influence the present and the future in an almost continuous way as the world around us becomes ever busier, fuller, fragmented and noisier (Sarup, 1996).

And so, our current and past experiences of the world influence our retelling of the world whether describing past, present or future as demonstrated by the interviewees who amended their transcripts. In one sense history was rewritten - and rewritten again, the boundaries between facts and fiction blurring, leading to fictions.

## **Imagery and Metaphors**

A range of imagery and metaphors are referenced by interviewees throughout the data which functions on a number of levels: it asserts their role as players in the cultural policy community through use of recognised and shared imagery and metaphors; it describes and affirms their understanding of the cultural policy community; and at the same time as part of the very process of the interview itself, it redefines, transforms and recreates the cultural policy and the cultural policy community. The symbols and images are very much drawn from a visual vocabulary which could be described as a cultural policy ‘iconography’. However, this iconography is not unique to cultural policy, drawing on images and symbols that are widely used in a range of contexts including both written and verbal material.

Imagery commonly used and applicable to a wide range of discourses and contexts appear in all of the transcripts. Describing her views on the National Cultural Strategy, Uma says: *“It’s really motherhood and apple pie”*. Independently, Lancelot utilises the exact same description in response to the same question. Using such a well used image and phrase, both quickly establish their perspective of a policy document which they regard as congratulatory and trying to be all things to all people. Throughout her interview Uma uses a range of images to establish immediately, succinctly and in a very visually descriptive way her views and impressions of policy development and details. For instance, her disdain for some organisations and their members who regard local authorities and other public sector agencies as merely sources of funding is encapsulated in her comment *“We need to have some courage when dealing with certain bodies who clearly see any public organization with funds as a dripping roast”*. Similarly, she captures the disdain she

believes 'antipathetic others' in the cultural sector have in relation to policies concerned with widening access to culture with the following image: *"I think that the most common view I have from those who are antipathetic is: 'oh, for goodness sake, access - it's all about banging a tambourine down the community centre.' Far from it"*.

By juxtaposing her visual images of the policy groups she is describing, she also quickly and simply summarises the intrinsic nature and interests of these groups, their polarity in terms of policy interests and the task she herself has in balancing and addressing the wide differences between the two groups she has to liaise and work with in the cultural policy community. On the one hand she has: *"The glitterati... and the luvvies"* and on the other, the local elected members, *"The horny handed sons of toil"*. In addition the challenges she faces in arguing the case for cultural policy support within the council are also clear in the following visual image *"He's not wrong when he describes the Group in here as being like a bear pit"*. However, this is a challenge she is not only up for, but one she will take on, because she is passionate about the cultural sector and widening access to it - emphasised again by another visual image, whereby her fundamental and personal commitment is in no doubt:

*It made me vow that in my time...no question will ever, ever  
be put forward and treated any way seriously about charging  
for museums. That non charging policy, I drank it in with my  
mother's milk. (Uma)*

In other interviews there is a similar use of imagery: Yasin tried to encapsulate the superficiality of cultural policy development in his image of civil servants and politicians

*“Just shifting the chairs around”*. Similarly, his image of a museums policy which he thought was not strategic, but more concerned with creating new facilities for their own sake, is encapsulated in the phrase: *“You’re only worth it, if you’ve got a new toy to play with at Christmas”*. Padma in describing the distance between government and cultural quangos noted *“The arms length was very long*, and Aaron described his efforts in trying to drive forward change in national arts policy as *“Trying to turn round an oil tanker”*.

In all of these examples, the images are commonplace, utilised in a range of contexts, including everyday speech, and are easily understood. The referencing of this imagery by all the interviewees indicates their ability to describe a specialist policy area - cultural policy - in general terms and images. As politicians, decision makers, opinion formers and cultural services providers, being able to explain complex policy issues simply and succinctly could be seen as a necessity, and the application of simple imagery with a wide currency assists greatly in this respect, as well as making the interviewees effective players in the cultural policy community.

Regarding the more subject specific images related to the cultural policy community, the image of a ‘cultural establishment’ is a predominant one. For example, Lachlan refers to *“The cultural establishment...a small group in the know and well connected”*, Octavia talks about *“the Edinburgh monied mafia”*, and Padma describes a key individual as being from *“a background... very much... part of the Edinburgh Arts Establishment”*. Lancelot refers to *“a cultural establishment within primarily Edinburgh but Glasgow too”* and *“there is an establishment in Scotland...the physical embodiment in the national institutions”*. Caius’ description of a cultural establishment is implicit: *“I have a lot of*



*friends in the cultural world*” and others recognise themselves as being part of this establishment: Robert says:

*It is more likely that more mature people will be more useful in the sense that they will know more, they have lived longer, they will know more people because of their business or professional interests, or academic interests. Over a long period they will have acquired contacts. (Robert)*

In all of the interviews, it is assumed that the image of a ‘cultural establishment’ is understood by both interviewer and interviewee - as well as by the wider constituency of the cultural policy world.

In trying to encapsulate the role of the media in relation to cultural policy Lachlan describes the media as “*A kind of licence system; a reward system*”. The use of the image of “*licence or reward system*” helps articulate succinctly the role of the media in the context of cultural policy debate in the public sphere. As in the earlier examples of more widely known and utilised imagery, the images used in the context of cultural policy development - whilst intended for a more limited audience - nonetheless are utilised in a similar way; i.e. to help simply and succinctly encapsulate key ideas, roles and issues.

In the context of establishing one’s own identity within the policy community and at one and the same time contributing to and drawing on the cultural policy discourse, the use of metaphors - especially the metaphor of ‘Scotland’, or ‘champion for Scotland’ as the

rationale for involvement in the cultural sector - becomes increasingly prevalent and meaningful:

*Although in theory we were not supposed to represent geographical interest...living in Scotland and being interested in the arts in Scotland I concentrated on the Scottish part of the Committee's interest at that time.*  
*(Robert)*

Much of the cultural policy discourse concerns the connection between a 'healthy, vibrant, confident and successful Scotland' and the level of support for Scotland's cultural sector: Lachlan's organisation's view is that "*Scotland is a rich enough country and...an ambitious enough country - to have a terrific, properly funded opera company.*" It therefore becomes all the more pertinent and productive in the cultural policy discourse that support for culture is explicitly linked with personal, well intentioned and magnanimous motives and the advancement of the country:

*(My support) is driven a little by... self-education, but the context of it is really where Scotland...is moving and progressing...and perceptions as to how things are moved along...I have always found that the framework of the arts and heritage are more than the backcloth, they're part of the framework without which society moves. (Caius)*

The use of metaphor equally applies in discussion about policy development at more local levels, with individual actions in the cultural sector being described in abstract terms - for instance as the actions of a 'cultural service' rather than one individual's engagement: "*I think what this will do is lead to us thinking as a service we need to have much broader discussions with other (multi-cultural) organisations*" (Tabitha).

Similarly other metaphors such as the 'city' and the language of battle is also brought into play, introducing to the discourse an heroic element with heroes and champions now the main actors, making the story - its characters and format - a more familiar one and thereby an easier one to relate to a wider audience:

*The battle... had been one of grabbing opportunities. We were dying - and the City that refused to die grabbed opportunities without a strategy and I came along in 1996 in the middle of chaos...the battle was there to change cultures.*  
(Uma)

The metaphor of 'battle' is used by other interviewees and has helped shape the cultural policy discourse, as well as facilitate the cultural policy narrative, understanding of the issues and widespread dissemination of the central ideas: "*Newspapers can be used as blunt weapons*" (Lachlan). The strength of the language was commented on by one of the interviewees: "*I noted the inordinately emotive language used*" (Iain). Nonetheless, the ability of the cultural policy discourse to deploy the language of battle has given a heroic quality to the debates and ensured media coverage of what certainly would be regarded as issues largely irrelevant to the wider public.

## Representation of Social Events

One of the striking features of the data is the way in which each interviewee's "social narrative is precisely located in space and time" (Sarup, 1996, p.23). That is they define themselves, their roles and cultural policy in terms of stories about specific events that happened at specific times and places. For example Tallulah states:

*I had a meeting in Jamaica, I had lunch with (major corporate CEOs) and they are definitely keen to get into Scotland...Now if they didn't think I had the knowledge to do that they wouldn't be coming to me.*  
*(Tallulah)*

Tallulah is keen to stress not only the significance of her own role, but relates events which she presents as 'evidence' and affirmation of her role, significance and identity:

*The mere fact that I was elected onto the committee in 1990 in Fiji against the Legal Advisor who had been there since '86 and to stand up in front of three hundred and odd people to say why I was best for the job and then get. I think that was good, and I didn't get it because I was a female...I got it because I was the best person for the job and over the past four years I've*

*proved it. And then having been re-elected unopposed  
last week, I think that proves it as well. (Tallulah)*

This more personal representation of events is particularly interesting, as the many texts created within policy communities are usually written and presented in general and abstract terms. It seems that the personal representations are specifically intended not only to locate the interviewee in the event, but to help form their own identity - not only within the event itself - but more generally within the policy community. This is done by intermingling personal accounts of social events and abstract generalization, stressing the pivotal connection between their own personal engagement and the outcomes and direction of events.

At one and the same time their own personal story becomes an integral part of a more general narrative - each inextricably linked and dependant entirely on the other: In telling the story of his involvement with securing a major art collection and new gallery, Caius also lets the reader/interviewer know via the unfolding of the story the centrality of his role, but more importantly, his identity as a major player in the cultural policy world. This is both explicit and implicit in the representation of the event; for instance by personally “*speaking*” to key players such as local politicians or as he describes them as “*goers*”, as well as directly to the artist - “*a pal of mine*”. Caius confirms close personal relationships and positions of influence and power with these other key decision makers and opinion formers. In terms of Fairclough’s three elements of representation of social events - “*processes, participants and circumstances*” (Fairclough 2003, p.132) - Caius emerges as the initiator and facilitator of the processes - “*I went to the Scottish office and...the City council...*”, engager of the participants - “*I spoke to XXX...arranged a meeting with YYY*

*and ZZZ (all three senior politicians)...and got (the artist)...” and creator of circumstances - “So we sat and got (the artist) and (the politician) to produce his wonderful civic speech...and I told the Scottish Office...close that building down and ...the building was gifted for nothing...” - and finally he delivers the policy outcome he desired - a new gallery and collection. In his own words: “And so it was game, set and match!” Implicit in this narrative and representation of events, is the proposition that there is no guiding policy or strategy, but rather something more amorphous but directly related to the juxtaposition in space and time of individuals within the policy community determining cultural policy: ‘synchronicity’, Jung called it, a seemingly acausal linkage of events which have great meaning or effects in human terms (Campbell, 1971). When asked about the process of taking forward a new strategic direction in cultural policy in Glasgow Yasin seems to be alluding to this very phenomena: “I can’t imagine it was strategic you know; but rather sheer luck and chance; I think it was a combination of both”. (Yasin)*

He goes on to describe how policy change was brought about by a combination of circumstances - *“through the crisis of the budget in Glasgow”*; processes - *“merging sectors and departments...”* and participants - *“(new) people who are in charge of (culture) come in with new thinking...”* - along with the repetition of the current ‘Grand narrative’ about the benefits of culture for economic and social regeneration which had developed over the past decade:

*I would have thought the combination of those factors and also finding out the best story to tell...I also think just telling a story that makes you feel more confident - a story about the benefits of culture and sport is one*

*that people in all sectors of society can buy into,  
whether you're young or old or whether you're poor or  
you've got good income. (Yasin)*

This linking of personal narrative with more generalised narrative allows an easy progression to a further level of abstraction which could be described as a 'Grand narrative'. It is at this level that the development of the construct 'Scotland' and 'Culture' emerges and allows the interviewees to move easily between their personal and more generalised stories to a totally abstract one. In one paragraph Aaron moves from personal discussions and story: "*I talked to my Director about it - the idea of a national cultural strategy*" - to a more generalised story: "*We were hugely excited about the potential of devolution and a cultural strategy. I can't tell you whose idea it was - it's sort of one of these ideas that was sort of there and who actually originally inserted it I'm not entirely certain, but we talked about it many times...*" - to a more abstract story about culture as an articulation of the character of Scotland: "*We talked about how it would be a good idea to have a national cultural strategy which would set the kind of the tone if you like - not targets, I hate the idea of targets, but set the tone of what Scotland, the new sort of newly devolved Scotland might be about*".

Robert provides a similar narrative, beginning his story with a personal anecdote which establishes at the outset his position of power and authority: "*I was invited by the PM*". He then goes on to detail the organisations he has been involved with for many decades and then links the personal and the professional with the abstract notion of doing all this for Scotland:

*I served 12 years of a very great contribution to what turned out to be an amazing force for doing good in the whole country at that time. (Robert)*

Octavia demonstrates in the following quote the linking between the personal, the general and grand narratives activated by all the interviewees:

*I also think there were a lot of people involved with thinking about tomorrow's Scotland who felt that the arts and culture had to be part of that if we were really going to make Scotland a different place. (Octavia)*

By linking public narratives with the personal, all interviewees consciously or subconsciously defined themselves in relation to Scotland, culture and each other.

### **Part Three: The Discourses of Cultural Policy**

The debates, differences and aporias within the cultural policy community at a macro discourse level are few and easy identifiable: 'access versus excellence'; 'arms length versus political control/accountability/transparency'; 'arts/sports for arts/sports sake versus colonisation of arts and sports for social and economic policy ends'. Fluency with these debates and their history rather than association with one side or the other of the large debates is what emerges as being of greatest significance in identifying oneself as a member of the cultural policy community. In this section, I explore how this is revealed in my data.



## Shared Knowledge, Understandings and Language

Shared knowledge, understandings and language are more significant within the cultural policy community and in relation to construction of identity as an actor in this community than agreement and concurrence with the policies, histories, viewpoints and ideologies themselves. Many contributions indicated that not only was the interviewee a significant player, but had been so for some time - and in many instances had served what increasingly felt like a 'cultural policy apprenticeship':

*I would like to think that some of the things that were taken up as part of the (cultural) strategy had roots in things that I had been doing over the last fifteen years. (Lancelot)*

Understanding the history, being part of the action - having 'been there, done that, got the tee shirt' attitude was a crucial part in all interviewees' accounts of their roles and construction of their personal and professional identities and a key factor in binding them together:

*After the first devolution referendum and everybody was just in a kind of slough of despond...one of the things that struck me forcibly was that the people who did most to keep the feeling alive were our artists, were our performers...Scottish Poetry, Scottish literature and Scottish Music...were suffering from the same decline as the political classes...got a fresh wind, because of this adversity. The arts and*

*culture... especially played a huge role in shaping the politics in the interregnum between the referenda, I think they played a huge part, in not just keeping that flame alive but fanning it quite vigorously. (Octavia)*

In the cultural policy sector, personal and professional identities are often constructed as one and the same thing with non professional/private time and action often being inseparable from time and action in the cultural sector. In describing her understanding of the cultural policy discourse, its interconnectedness with politics and national identity, Octavia suggests not only a commonality of purpose, but shared understandings - mutuality - between herself, the reader/listener and a wider policy community, and indeed nation.

As in most professional contexts, specialist language/jargon becomes the norm amongst the main protagonists or professionals; although the cultural policy community is not so easily defined by professional roles per se, the use of a common language becomes one of the defining indicators of membership of the policy community. All of those interviewed used similar language to describe the world they were operating in, which included not only the names of artists, arts companies, key managers, board members, cultural institutions, academics and press contacts, but also included the language of policy texts and discussion:

*I believe that access is giving people excellence and its not a case of the rich get fantastic performances and the poor get crappy workshops. (Uma)*

Although part of the wider policy and government vocabulary, words and phrases such as ‘access’, ‘excellence’, ‘participation’, ‘transparency’, ‘accountability’ and ‘arms-length’, have become pivotal words in the cultural policy sphere, encapsulating many cultural policy debates and differences:

*I didn't detect a desire to move control of cultural policy decisions back from a series of arms-length institutions who had themselves fragmented culture into a series of discrete areas. (Lal)*

However, the point here is not merely the common usage of key words and phrases, indicating as it does at a simplistic level a ‘shared language’ by the disparate members of the policy community, which both binds them together in a common discourse, and identifies them as members of the policy community, but more significantly, the ease with which even those who are not politicians or bureaucrats use the language:

*It is quite hard to enunciate value for money in the arts if you are not putting bums on seats or if you are not assisting some policy area like social inclusion. So the arts seem to be linked politically to economic policy or to tourism. (Lachlan)*

To ensure cultural policy debates are widely aired in the media and other forums, and the policy community has the widespread influence it seeks, either openly or not, the capacity of its members - and especially those whose main business is not the cultural sector - to internalise and utilise the language is hugely important and meaningful:

*We have a good understanding that whatever we deliver in Scottish Opera must be all encompassing; it must go out, it must be throughout Scotland...it has to be for every part of society - therefore it cannot be elitist, it has to be quality and it has to be within the financial guidelines laid down.*

*(Caleb)*

Remembering that the cultural policy community is an abstract concept and is very definitely *not* an official grouping or forum, has no defined membership, has no fixed or tangible meeting place and has no written down or clearly enunciated agenda, the evidence of an influential and coherent discourse is all the more impressive. Clearly, one of the significant factors in identifying oneself as a ‘member’ of the cultural policy community is the ability to ‘learn’ and utilise the language - at the same time, this use of the language contributes to the cultural policy discourse which in turn reflects back to you who you think you are (or might be), and what you believe; a perpetual circle of influence on identity and discourse.

### **Assumptions, Alignments and Aporias**

A number of key positions were acknowledged by interviewees as underpinning cultural policy discourse. They spoke knowingly and fluently of these throughout the interviews assuming shared meanings of language and ideology, aligning themselves with particular perspectives - yet at the same time recognising the irresolution - or the ‘impassibility’ - of some of their perspectives with the ideas and perspectives of others within the cultural

policy community. The common ground throughout was that *meanings* - not perspectives or ideology - were “shared and taken as given” (Fairclough, 2003, p. 55) - the precondition for any kind of policy community to exist.

However, there was one overarching assumption shared by all - and that was that ‘culture is, and should be, publicly funded’. Without exception every interviewee assumed that the area of discussion - cultural policy - was wholly a public sector responsibility. At no point was there a different paradigm, looking perhaps to other models of funding such as in the USA; there was no question that responsibility for the cultural sector lay solely with government and the tax payer. Where there were concerns about the status quo, it was more to do with questions about levels of subsidy from the public purse, or what NDPB or tier of government should provide the funding; or how ‘accountable’ the cultural sector should be to government. Speaking of press support for cultural policy in the city Ulysses made the following observation:

*The campaign to establish a fairer funding formula for Glasgow’s art galleries and museums which are funded from local council tax in sharp contrast to Edinburgh’s art galleries and museums which are funded by national government ...Some of our coverage... led to clashes with government ministers, not an uncommon occurrence for us.*  
*(Ulysses)*

Whilst the main concern always seemed to be that there was never enough public funding there was also recognition of the role of sponsorship and engagement of the private sector:

*“The sponsorship part is surely important...but you are looking to get your pound of flesh, your money back in quite a determined way”* (Robert). But this was very much seen as a peripheral issue, ‘icing on the cake’, with the core responsibility for funding and support of the cultural sector resting with government at national and/or local levels. Some of the interviewees went further than this and seemed concerned that the Government didn’t rise enough above mere financial issues and understand the value and benefits of aesthetics alone:

*I find it very strange that politicians in Scotland only focus on cost and completely ignore the potential aesthetic value...aesthetics are hugely valuable to a country.*  
*(Lachlan)*

This assumption was further exemplified in the discussions with Aaron about difficulties with current and future funding of the Arts more generally:

*You know it would be wonderful to think that a government understood what could be achieved and really made a commitment... in terms of funding. The funding is important in itself clearly but its equally important for the signal that it sends out about the arts and its potential and that message is not one that at the moment is getting through. (Aaron)*

There was no mention of the possibilities of the problem and the solution resting anywhere other than with the government, the solution always seeming to be additional allocations of public funding.

Although there was a common ground of understanding and shared meanings, nonetheless, interviewees aligned themselves with clearly stated positions that were often in direct opposition to each other, with no prospect of resolution. For instance, on one hand the idea that ‘cultural policy is better served by being managed at arms length to government’ and on the other ‘the cultural sector should be efficient and effective, transparent and accountable to government’. Interviewees were explicit in stating their alignments:

*Politicians shouldn't be interfering. Politicians' primary role is to set up and to create an arms length infrastructure that will deliver what they perceive as being desirable or being for the common good. (Caleb)*

Notably, even where there was a divergent view expressed, familiarity with, and fluency in, the key arguments and ideas was evident:

*If as a politician you've got to take the flack for things that are meant to be dealt with by arms length organisations, why then don't you direct these policy areas a bit more? (Yasin)*

This viewpoint is further explained as part of a process of increased political engagement in leading not just the debates but actually the cultural policy initiatives as well:

*One has to see (this arts project) in terms of a ministerial view that emerged about what the task was; and the need to take a view of what function within that task the project could serve. And the normal (arms length) institutions are not the owners of the overall strategy and therefore they can't be the owners of the answer how does a particular tool fit into that strategy...when it came to the decision to find some way to connect the project to the interest of deprived communities that's an imperative which I think one can only imagine coming from Ministers. (Lal)*

Interviewees understood the policy language of more transparency, accountability and 'more for the public pound' which currently imbues the whole public sector and used the language freely and with ease throughout each interview. For instance: *"In the late 1990s there was an increasing need to provide evidence for the impact and effectiveness of policy"* (Iain). Speaking about engagement with the processes behind policy development, Tabitha uses only policy language:

*People absolutely want to see policies now which refer to accountability in terms of where resources are going, how they're part of getting that resource, how they're part of the planning process; people want to be much more involved now in developing that kind of policy. (Tabitha)*



In describing Glasgow City Council's decision making processes regarding cultural matters Uma states: "*I think we are one of the most open transparent and accountable bodies there can be*". Giving her views on the 2000 National Cultural Strategy document Octavia notes:

*It had lots of hard information in it. For instance, trying to put commercial values on the creative industries...because we were still all in a kind of post-Thatcherian thing that you had to prove value for money above all other things.*  
(Octavia)

These opposing views have become more prevalent since devolution; on some occasions this either increases tensions within the cultural policy community and/or reignites debate. On the one side, there is the view that politicians are colonising culture for social and economic policy ends and in effect undervaluing culture and undermining the creative process:

*Its view of good Government is middle managerial and consumer orientated - it judges itself on whether it services its customers speedily and effectively ...and that an arts investment is valued for these kinds of things...I think culture has become more managerial and less creative. (Lachlan)*

On the other hand, there is the view that as culture is almost totally funded by the public purse, the subsidised cultural sector must be held accountable in much the same

ways as other public sector services such as health, criminal justice and education. The tensions created by these contradictory positions were clearly understood by interviewees:

*I think it is going to establish the desire and need to deliver greater effectiveness and efficiency...Now that is a term and a concept I'm entirely comfortable with within the private sector...but I don't see that happening within the cultural sector in Scotland at the minute and I don't see that because instead I do see this thing of dependency whereby bluntly the view is the Government bails you out, the Government basically writes the cheque for everything. (Caleb)*

However, despite firmly held opposing views, the interviewees demonstrated fluency in both sides of the debates and the willingness and ability to still engage in dialogue and give advice. For instance, Caius recognising that the drive for more accountability and efficiency can result in an overly process driven and bureaucratic system and that politicians in particular have to be aware of this trap, he proffers this advice:

*Where possible the minister should try to get into some dialogue with chairman of these bodies (quangos) to ensure the whole thing does not become a process resulting in the national cultural strategy document. Because the vitality and the opportunities (will be lost.) (Caius)*

The assumption that ‘culture is important and good’ seems at first sight to be a position of agreement. However, two opposing reasons for holding these views emerge from the data: culture is important or good ‘either in its own right or as a mechanism for delivering social or economic policies’. These two polar positions are the subject of continuous and often contentious debate within the cultural policy community. On the one hand we have the ‘culture for culture’s sake’ view clearly expressed: *“I believe that the arts absolutely has to be judged on its own merit”* (Aaron). And the alternative: *“We need to look at a tourism, culture, and sport agenda as one of the key economic drivers for Glasgow”* (Yasin). And even more explicitly, we have commentary on the need to engage in the debate inherent in the assumption:

*I didn’t think I would ever say this, but I think that the whole issue of arts for arts sake and sports for sports sake should be re-engaged. I think one of my big disappointments is that people haven’t articulated this, they have not been brave, they have sought to be relevant in areas where the relevance is at the very most tenuous, and the constant desire to be socially relevant, I think, has been a mistake. (Iain)*

Despite the contradictions, there is common ground in the assumption that culture is important and good. All interviewees assumed that culture was hugely important and good for society - even if there was disagreement as to the utilisation and perceived function of culture in society. Again, no interviewee suggested anything contrary to this view. This appeared to be a given:

*The Arts were absolutely at the heart of the school...It was a true inspiration and I came back from that suddenly with a new vision about how important the arts could be. (Aaron)*

Inherent in almost all the interviews is the assumption that ‘culture is an essential ingredient in defining not only personal, but national identity’:

*I believe that the Arts are part of Scotland’s public life, part of Scotland’s public persona, in a way that you wouldn’t think of them in the same way in England. (Aaron)*

This assumption that culture defines national identity is further expounded by Octavia:

*...it was obviously important that it (cultural strategy) was emblematic of what you wanted Scotland and the Parliament to be... it wasn’t just going to be a Parliament with tartan fringes but it was going to say something or do something inherently different and perhaps reshape its own priorities. (Octavia)*

Throughout their interviews most of the interviewees emphasise their own role and the importance and potential of their role for the nation:

*I've got to try and get through to them that the knowledge that I have is quite a lot when it comes to top class sport... and with that I have got contacts with the top people (internationally) and I've got to make sure that I keep the top people in our country informed as to what is going on...I should be able to phone up and just say look I really need a meeting - being one of the top post-holders within Scotland we shouldn't have to go through the bureaucratic line.*

*(Tallulah)*

Indeed, not only is 'I' used to describe role and status, as discussed earlier, but also to show ownership of other key players, including those at the highest possible level: *"It is important for us, for all the other countries to see that I've got a First Minister who is fully committed to sport"* (Tallulah).

All of those interviewed assert that culture is a significant element in defining their own identities, that of the nation and their role in the nation. Assumptions, alignments and aporias contribute to the cultural policy discourse, as well as providing individuals a shared platform - or perhaps more appropriately, a menu - of ideas and beliefs from which to engage in the cultural policy community and to help construct their identity as a member of that community.

This chapter has looked at how key players in the cultural policy community have created and recreated their identities through discourse, narrative and representations. Importantly, the data have shown that there is no linear progression or evolution in the process of

'becoming' a cultural hero, but rather a more rhizomic approach, as described by Deleuze and Guattari, seems to be at play; identities are reshaped in response to unplanned and variable influences, the one common feature perhaps being the ability of key players to stay connected to whatever the new, unintended or unexpected development in the cultural policy world is and relocate themselves within a new policy environment. They have an 'atunedness' to the zeitgeist not only of the time, but of the moment.

## **Chapter 5: Where Cultural Policy is Made**

### **Introduction**

This chapter maps out the spaces where cultural policy is developed. My data suggest that in keeping with the postmodernist tenet that there are indeed many realities, there are also many spaces where cultural policy emerges and evolves. Recognizing that no one space appears forever more important than another - although they will undoubtedly be of greater significance at different times for different individuals and organizations - the following 'map' of the cultural spaces is not meant to be read in any kind of hierarchical order.

Nonetheless, connections between some of the cultural policy spaces emerged during the process of, and writing up of, the analysis and as such have shaped the presentation of the cultural policy spaces map under three headings: 'Texts', 'Networks' and recognising that both of these are by definition also 'abstract spaces', a third section which looks at the 'Other Abstract Spaces'.

### **Part One: Texts**

In many senses, 'texts' is a self evident 'space' where policy evolves and is developed. However, through the processes of re-reading, and re-thinking about my data, informed by my on-going review of literature, I came to understand that texts cannot be taken at face value. For instance, as discussed in chapter four, the editing of transcripts by a number of interviewees highlights the transcript - the text - as a significant cultural policy space - recreated, developed and refined by the interviewee's editing. As such, I came to see that texts, including my data and other writing, reports and documents, are complex constructs,

with many possible layers of meaning and connections, understood as much by what they omit, as by what they state; where ideas and actions are regulated in unspoken, yet often overt ways, where there can be more meaning in the spaces between lines of text than in the text itself and where interpretations change with time and experience.

## **Genre Chains and the Movement of Meaning**

Analysis of the ‘genre chains’ and movement of meaning - ‘mediation’ - of texts as developed by Fairclough, unravels much of this complexity, giving insights as to how my interviewees “draw upon the socially available resource of genres in potentially quite complex and creative ways” (Fairclough, 2003, p.69), thereby contributing to, describing and at the same time recreating and transmogrifying the cultural policy community.

Interviewees give me information and in various ways attempt to influence my - and future readers’ - views and understanding of cultural policy. However, the means by which this is achieved are many and variable, if not labyrinthine and not immediately apparent.

At first glance it could be believed that all discourses and texts are conducted in one or more ‘genre’ - such as an office report, advertisement, press release etc. - or as in the case of my research, the ‘interview genre’. Yet on investigation, it is clear that even within genres there is considerable variation - from a positivist, scientific, ritualised or prescribed format utilised in various scientific academic research contexts, to something much more variable as “advertisements for academic posts” (ibid, p.66-67). In practice, ‘interview’ as a genre, covers a wide range of social activities and interactions, ranging from the job interview to the political interview to the medical interview - and everything in between. By disentangling the types and levels of genre, and identifying the genre properties, mixes



and chains utilised by my interviewees, further insight emerges as to how cultural policy, and a cultural policy community is created and maintained.

When looking across the interviews at what and how genre is utilised, what emerges very quickly is the rich and complex mix of genres: the ‘off-the-record’ conversations from a number of the interviewees where they were conspiratorial and made clear that some of what was said on-tape or off-tape were ‘truthful’ comments but not for printing nonetheless: “*I would not want the passages used which give private information...*” (*Octavia*). In addition, the journalistic genres utilised primarily by those whose profession is concerned with the printed media sector - but not exclusively by them; official government report genres and more academic, essay/treatise genres - again utilised by civil servants/local government officers/public sector workers, but also by others. Indeed, my interviews were themselves part of the mix, with, as noted previously in chapter four, six interviewees choosing to edit in varying degrees of detail, the original interview transcripts.

Whilst in chapter four this editing was discussed in terms of how interviewees re-constructed their personal, professional and cultural identities, in this chapter, the editing is discussed as part of a cultural policy genre chain (beginning with an interview, moving through from the transcript to final edited version) resulting in mediation. However, ‘mediation’ is not simply the movement of words and data, but more significantly, “the ‘movement of meaning’ - from one social practice to another, from one event to another, from one text to another” (Fairclough, 2003, p.30). The complexity becomes more apparent when one considers the range of influences and intermediaries: the interviewees will have gleaned their responses to my questions from a range of sources, including

research, conversations with others, reading of texts (newspapers, reports etc), TV and radio commentary, critiques and opinions from stakeholders and so forth. If the subject matter is a topical one and being discussed by others in other media, thinking on the subject and therefore views could possibly be developed during the process of the interview itself.

Indeed, on examination of those transcripts which were edited, this ‘rethinking’ views and positions in relation to recent and current events is even more apparent - the most obvious examples being Octavia’s position that she would have made different responses if she had done the interview a week later. Lachlan when editing his transcript, added new information and opinions on recent cultural events to make policy comment and put into the policy development sphere, particular points of view for wider debate: In response to my question seeking examples about where he thought he had been an opinion former, Lachlan gave examples from his newspapers’ coverage of commentary by the Scottish Arts Council Chair on the Scottish Executive, the debate around the cost, value and aesthetics of the Scottish Parliament and the controversy surrounding the Scottish Executive’s funding of Scottish Opera.

In the amended version, all of these issues remained, but at the beginning of the paragraph he includes an entirely new item of news about Scottish Ballet and Tramway, asserting further his views about the subject and the protagonists. There had been no reference whatsoever to this matter in the original interview, but clearly the actual events and debates surrounding it with colleagues, artists and others had made an impact and as a consequence was included in the edited transcript. For example, Lachlan significantly amended and added to his transcript to explain in greater detail his views on politicians’ approach to

cultural policy and aesthetics, turning the more informal and less coherent language of the interview transcript into yet another genre - of the political/campaigning speech/exposition. In answer to my question asking for examples of where his newspaper had acted as an opinion former in either initiating or taking a particular perspective on a cultural policy issue, the following reply was given:

*We are aware of a sort of responsibility, because we know that we can provoke debate; so it is arguable for example that when XXX gave his interview to us...he rendered himself impotent and that's one of the reasons why the Arts Council appears to have disappeared from the scene in the sort of the big clout sense...it seems to have lost its voice. So that's an example of how us taking up someone's words has an impact on the arts; probably in a negative way that wasn't the intention. It was to start a debate and it did start a debate but it also scunnered the ministers. (Lachlan - unedited transcript)*

In the edited transcript the answer was changed as follows:

*We are aware we can provoke controversy as well as inform debate. A recent example was the proposal for Scottish Ballet to take over the Tramway and the threat*

*that posed to the visual arts space there. (We) ran that debate entirely. Other newspapers hardly covered it.*

*(Lachlan - edited transcript)*

This event was not referred to in the original interview, but was added in the edited version as a means of further explanation of a key point. The edited version goes on:

*We wanted to provoke a debate on arts policy in Scotland but as it turned out XXX rendered himself impotent by speaking to us rather than following protocol and discussing his concerns privately with ministers. But it was still an example of (our) influence, albeit negative and unintended in this case. That interview was one of the reasons why the Arts Council appears to have lost its voice. Obviously, its still working away at all its underlying administrative tasks but it seems now to have diminished influence.*

*(Lachlan - edited transcript)*

This interview and its edited transcript demonstrate the mixture of genres utilised by Lachlan and other interviewees, (particularly by those who amended their transcripts) not simply to record an event - this was already done much more successfully on the pages of the newspaper; but for a number of other purposes. Firstly to use it as a powerful example

of having significant influence in the cultural policy field; secondly, bringing the policy issues and values surrounding the event into my space not only as the author of this thesis, but as a protagonist in the event with overall responsibility for the Tramway, and therefore with influence on future development of the issue; and thirdly to clarify and emphasise the values, opinions and policy stance of Lachlan and his newspaper on the broader cultural policy debate in relation to aesthetics, access and colonisation of culture for social policy ends, thereby bringing yet further influence, action and ‘movement’ in the development of cultural policy. Interestingly, Iain also referenced this particular event and the issues surrounding it - again to not only register the event, but to use it to clarify his policy position. At face value Iain’s commentary seems to be simply taking an opposite policy position to Lachlan and suggesting that the ‘stakeholders’ - the public - would regard the policy irrelevant. However, in the context of Iain’s wider interview responses, there is also inherent in the text the clear recognition that despite the supposed ‘irrelevance’ of the event and the issues surrounding it, the event, the issues, the players, including Lachlan and the newspaper are hugely significant in the cultural policy sector; and there is also a sense of regret - or even chagrin - at Iain being excluded from that policy community:

*I found that the more I’ve done, the more critical and the more sceptical I’ve been about a lot of that evidence, the less I’ve been listened to; and I think if we could really draw a graph of me being on the outside and suddenly being partly on the inside and then being on the outside again, and you get the feeling that ‘He’s done his work we don’t want him again, we don’t want him saying any more...once that case has been articulated they just want*

*people to go away and shut up and my own personal  
position is that I'm becoming more and more sceptical.  
(Iain)*

What Iain seems to be describing is how the movement of meaning, “from one social practice to another, from one event to another, from one text to another” (ibid, 2003, p.30), contributes not only to cultural policy development, but also, at varying moments in time - “*being on the outside and suddenly being partly on the inside and then being on the outside again*” (Iain) - includes and excludes players, ideas and policies. Fairclough says “...the capacity to influence or control processes of mediation is an important aspect of power in contemporary societies...” (Fairclough, 2003, p.31) and the two examples from Lachlan and Iain surrounding the Tramway event and issues illustrate this very claim. In particular, the utilisation of the media gives Lachlan an “enhanced capacity ...to act upon and shape the actions of others over considerable distances of space and time...” (ibid, p.30) thereby becoming a significant player in the cultural policy sector.

These interviews and transcripts exemplify not only the development of a genre chain and meanings from interview, to transcript, to edited transcript/essay, but also the development of ‘text’ as a key cultural policy space.

## **Perceptions, Opinions and Interpretations**

In chapter four I discussed how in the context of identity construction, the meanings of texts could be altered not only by literal re-writing, but also by the simple act of human

handling. As a key space where cultural policy is developed, this section looks at how texts are both opened out to the influences of perceptions, opinions and interpretations and how these come to be perceived as a policy space in their own right.

For example, in discussing the thinking behind the decision to have a national cultural strategy in 1999, Lal notes that in the absence of clear intent: *“There was no clear detailed intention behind the commitment (to a national cultural strategy)...its origins were, and remain to me, a bit of a mystery”*, perceptions, opinions and interpretations filled the policy vacuum, effectively becoming the meaning:

*In a sense the first question in my mind, when I came across the proposed strategy is “why would one do it now, what makes this the right moment?” Now, I think I came to the conclusion that it was intended to be symbolic of the devolution transition - that it was something to do with attempting to crystallize a national identity to answer the question - “what is Scotland in a cultural sense?” rather than an attempt to produce an investment policy for culture as conventionally defined. (Lal)*

This quote indicates how perceptions, opinions and interpretation can influence thinking and gain common currency: - *“I think that as part of political devolution, people were highly conscious that over twenty years there had developed a more self confident, self aware cultural progress in Scotland” (Caius)*. Indeed, ‘perception is reality’ is stated so frequently in casual conversation, in the press (Macwhirter, 2009) and in all kinds of

writing - academic (Schlesinger et al, 2001) and fiction - that it is more often than not taken as a self-evident truth. By their very nature, perceptions are but one reality or truth, depending as much on the willingness of the perceiver to believe the perception as an axiom regardless of any other perspective or viewpoint.

In terms of the cultural policy community, there are a number of perceptions which seem to be almost tangible touchstones for commentators, cultural workers and policy makers alike. One of the most prevalent perceptions is that there are a number of networks - referred to with nomenclatures such as the 'establishment' - which are perceived to run 'things' from government economic policy to cultural policy: "*That kind of Edinburgh elite, social and financial and business elite*" (Octavia). Coupled with this are common perceptions of how these networks function and operate - in the past, present and future. Paxman writes: "The Establishment (assuming it exists) has changed form time and again, accommodating itself to both reforming liberal and radical socialist government and finding a comfortable home amongst the succession of consensus administrations which ruled Britain for thirty years after the war" (Paxman, 1990, p.x). Yet the power of perception, opinion and interpretation as a space where cultural policy is influenced and developed is evident in Octavia's comments where she describes how she believes the power and nature of the establishment is changing:

*I think they (the grandees/establishment) still think they matter and in some ways they do, because they can control at a boardroom level in financial and commercial circles, this kind of boardroom incest still goes on; but what they don't control is policy and they don't control*



*arts funding anymore - the sources of it - and I think it's  
time they woke up and thought about it. (Octavia)*

By stating these perceptions, opinions and interpretations, 'reality' is constructed.

Similarly, Lachlan's perceptions contribute to the 'reality' of what the National Cultural Strategy is, or has become:

*My perception of the National Cultural Strategy is that it  
was effectively the work of a small group of  
people...other voices...other ideas...and other people  
came into the process...It enunciated the existing  
consensus if you like. (Lachlan)*

Notably, when asked about their understanding as to how the National Cultural Strategy was developed, other interviewees did not simply limit their views to the hard copy document of the title, but rather spoke in broader terms about what they perceived national cultural policy to be, invariably going back in time before the strategy in question was published: *"I think I will have to go back to my early years at the (NPDB)...I might even go back just a wee bit further before that"* (Aaron). In effect, their perceptions, opinions and interpretations - not only the text of the National Cultural Strategy - has become a space where cultural policy is constructed:

*I think we've got to turn the clock back a couple of  
years...we are very reactive to what is  
happening...and would like to think it's a dynamic*

*process and its continually changing, continually reacting and hopefully engaging with whatever is happening...how did we then take the paper and shape it, if you like in terms of its cultural strategy.*  
*(Ulysses)*

Tabitha encapsulates this when in discussion about the process of cultural policy development she said:

*A policy is only correct at the time when it has been written down...it's about making sure that you're not just writing down policies or writing down strategies, that you are actually living and implementing and working with them all the time...it can sometimes be disappointing as in people think that you develop a policy and that's it sorted. (Tabitha)*

In short, texts are shaped continually by perceptions, opinions and interpretations, often becoming policy development spaces in their own right.

## **The Social Life of Texts**

A significant phenomenon emerging from my data is the way in which texts - which include a wide range of current and historical written material such as academic pieces, newspaper features, conference speeches and presentations, reports, books - become at

once artefacts, entities almost in their own right, often separate to their specific content, ideas and authors, being referred to and quoted by players in the cultural sector as if their very existence was in itself a statement of policy; if not a physical truth. For instance throughout my data, the titles from the *National Cultural Strategy*, (Scottish Executive, 2000) Myerscough's report on *The Economic Importance of the Arts* (1988) and Matarasso's *The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts* (1997) are regularly referred to, not only in terms of comment on the content of the publications, but simply as titles, as if the physical existence of the books/reports/documents and their titles is in itself a cultural policy reality. For instance, Myerscough's broad concept, which is the title of his book, is inherent in Lachlan's statement:

*We think a vibrant arts scene is the necessary precondition for a vibrant economy and a vibrant society; that in a first world economy that the arts play an incredibly important part. (Lachlan)*

Similarly, Uma's portrays the national cultural strategy as an endorsement and affirmation of her own views on cultural policy:

*I think that the national cultural strategy is an admirable document in that it talks about culture and says its good for you...and I'm glad to see that the cultural definition is broad...and includes things like fashion, young people's culture etc. (Uma)*

Wyschogrod describes texts as ‘images’ or ‘symbols’ - “having no originals they are not the replicas of anything. Language itself has become volatilized into the image; the voice has given way to the grapheme, the written mark” (Wyschogrod, 1998, p.69). For instance, Iain discusses Matarasso’s cultural policy work as an embodiment or artefact in itself, demonstrating how widely Matarasso’s key works on social inclusion and the arts have been absorbed into the general cultural policy world:

*Take Francois Matarasso, who I know quite well and I quite like his work; but it’s clear his role is to articulate a policy case for the arts...He does it exceptionally well by writing the same thing in a hundred different ways. (Iain)*

In one sense, my data has become the ‘image’ or ‘symbol’ of the interview itself, this image in turn developing an existence in its own right, affecting and being affected by, the social life of others and other things and dissolving into new meanings. One example is Tallulah’s amended transcript which had few substantial changes - yet as she said more off-tape at the end of the interview about how she - in her own words - “really saw events” - suggests that the interview and the transcript had been given a life or status as a ‘vener’ of events.

Baudrillard, writing about the social life of objects, sees “the emergence of the ‘object’, that is, a thing that is no longer just a product or a commodity, but essentially a sign in a system of signs of status” (Appadurai, 1986, p.46); Tallulah’s interview and the transcript are, by her own admission, not wholly authentic, but are the image, the symbol, the ‘sign’ that she wants to give. Firstly, as a representation of her status: “*I am one of the few who*

*are leading up a multi-sport event and being head of it...you can't beat the knowledge and the contacts I've got"; secondly, as a representation of her power and influence: "It's not the right way of doing it but if needs must, needs must - I'll go direct to the Minister and if it is highly confidential I'll make dash sure that I get there and I'll keep pushing it until we get it"; and thirdly, as the representation and record of events and processes as she would like them to be regarded, confirmed by the after interview comments and minimal change to the transcript. Its content and purpose is as a veneer, an 'official' testimony. In effect it has been given a life and validity separate to other events and views, and unlike Octavia's amended transcript (where she states that the content would have been different if asked for at a later date), is to remain unaffected by time and space.*

Although on one hand there is the existence of text as an artefact in its own right with its own influence and dynamic, there is also another 'text', another cultural policy space, which influences and is influenced by, its author and or its place of origin. What I am describing is how the author influences both the content of the writing/text and by the very association of their name with the text, how the text is perceived and received by the reader. When referring to certain places - such as Glasgow or the Scottish Executive - cultural policy texts take on an authenticity and validity not often justified by the content alone. In other words, the text is given or takes on attributes not directly related to content or ideas, but rather to a view of a certain place and the key players in that place. A rather stark example of this is given by Iain:

*The Head of Policy of (the non departmental public body)  
said at a seminar...evidence didn't really matter because  
there were only six people in Scotland that mattered in*

*terms of strategic policy. In other words...if he can influence them in whatever way he can, broader claims about the social value...or any evidence associated with it doesn't really matter. (Iain)*

Yet despite the potential irrelevance of the content of some policy texts, their existence in themselves can have a powerful influence on thinking, policy, practice and debate:

*For me the most important thing about the Cultural Strategy, which did say a lot of important things...was the fact that we had one, the fact we cared about it, the fact that we thought it was important. (Octavia)*

It is also clear from the data, that ideas and concepts themselves can emerge as 'things', with their own separate life and existence whose origins and source of creation become almost impossible to trace. When asked to describe where the idea for a National Cultural Strategy came from or how it emerged as a concept, Lal said:

*My first involvement was to ask...what a National Cultural Strategy was expected to be and the natural step in answering that question was to explore with the responsible Minister what he thought the manifesto commitment had been intended to deliver...but ambiguity about its purpose and origins remained...as the Minister passed ownership of the process of creating a National Cultural Strategy to his*

*junior minister who was if anything less connected to  
whatever its political origins had been than he was. (Lal)*

Similarly, a number of the interviewees spoke about tackling a “poverty of aspiration” - yet the idea seemed to be in existence of its own accord, utilised not only by those in the cultural policy sphere, but allegedly by some surprising others as asserted by Uma:

*I don't think social inclusion policies, or as I prefer to call  
them - by a phrase that has been taken up I am glad to say  
by the Prince of Wales, who is a hero in this instance  
because he gets it - I don't think a policy to combat  
'poverty of aspiration' can be expected to work if the  
greater things of life, things that open your mind to what is  
spirituality, are precluded. (Uma)*

The exchange of ideas and policies described by Uma - almost as if they were in themselves tangible ‘things’ or commodities even - give the impression not only of shared values and understandings in the policy sphere, but indicates a climate of “reciprocity, sociability and spontaneity in which they are typically exchanged” (Appadurai, 1986, p.19), marking out, yet binding, those involved in the cultural policy community and highlighting this exchange of ideas as a central feature of social life in this policy community.

## **Part Two: Networks**

When discussing how a policy community, cultural or indeed any other kind is established and maintained, without exception ‘networks’ are posited as the most important and consistent feature in such a process. However, too often, networks are seen in simplistic terms with many assumptions made about their membership and influence, and even more significantly, the consistency of their membership, collective action and viewpoints: “It’s not what you know, it’s *who* you know” (Engestrom, 2001, p.2). This common aphorism sums up much of the conventional wisdom regarding social capital. It is wisdom born of our experience that gaining membership to exclusive clubs requires inside contacts, that close competitions for jobs and contracts are usually won by those with “friends in high places” (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000. p.3). I have already discussed how perceptions, opinion and interpretations are made in relation to networks and amorphous constructs such as ‘the Establishment’. However, relations with other actors in the cultural policy sector are not always immediately apparent, as the community is not a clearly defined one, or its membership always obvious. Nonetheless, analysis of the data reveals the prevalence of informal social networks developed from shared norms, shared values, mutual trust and the ability to cooperate with each other as a significant space for developing cultural policy.

### **Trust, Membership and Social Capital**

Whilst more often referred to in the context of identifying ‘successful’ geographical or school communities and policy creation to replicate them, the concepts of social capital provide a coherent evaluative framework for further analysis of what creates, binds and maintains a cultural policy community. “Social capital is not ‘located’ in the actors



themselves, but in their relations with other actors” (Engestrom, 2001, p.4), and it is the shape and dynamics of these relations which are of interest in this section.

Tallulah implies regularly that her influence and position both in Scotland and internationally is based on trust - trust in her judgements, attitudes and approach:

*I have just been re-elected on to the (international body) so  
I think that speaks for itself on the work that I have been  
doing. (Tallulah)*

Tabitha describes the process of building networks and trust and emphasizes the need to engage not only in formal processes but in an informal context:

*My particular involvement has been in working groups and  
feeding in through national organizations or indeed  
through local responses to national cultural strategy  
development. But there is also this less formal way of  
informing these kinds of strategies where you are involved  
in networks, and you're involved in discussion in Scotland  
and also within Glasgow. It is really important that you  
are going out and you are meeting with local people, you  
are meeting with artists, you are meeting with workers,  
because they obviously have a role to play here as well.  
(Tabitha)*

Shared norms and values are occasionally explicit, but by their very nature, more often implicit in the data. For instance Robert does not say explicitly that there is an expectation of 'doing your duty' and responding appropriately when 'called' to perform, but it is implicit throughout his interview that this is a standard norm of behaviour for those involved in the cultural policy community:

*The PM was looking for a business man with a substantial interest in the arts and I said no, because I was much too busy - several times, and then eventually she said, you're not listening to me, and I said I would do it. I joined the National Heritage Memorial Fund at that time and I served twelve years. (Robert)*

His expectations of these values being shared by people he works with are more explicit and takes it as read that they too understand this to be the case:

*They are never going to give money to people whom they think will dissipate it or use it irresponsibly...In simple terms we...were then looking for somebody that people would be comfortable with... that public funds would be well spent and could be looked after. (Robert)*

Shared norms and values emerge as an important driver for coming together to act. What is apparent in my data is that shared social norms and shared values underpin both behaviour and motivation. Yasin describes exactly this when he says:

*In the old Scottish Office there were hierarchies of interest...You've now got the reverse where you've got a team of folk who really want to help Glasgow, because of our background and experience. (Yasin)*

All the interviewees indicate a desire to act collectively for a greater social good. “A shared moral sense - even within heterogeneous and pluralist societies constitutes an important agent in establishing identity and mutual obligation” (Healy, 2003, p.4). In describing his enthusiasm for a new involvement with a national cultural company, Caleb highlights the centrality of people with shared norms and values to developing policy and cultural product:

*Let's just say there are tremendous opportunities within Glasgow to be able to choose from within a whole fantastic range of things of cultural experiences that you can share with people you want to do business with...and that to me gives the climate within which the arts can flourish. (Caleb)*

Certainly, in a policy community which has no obvious point of entry or membership, this shared moral sense creates a backdrop or space for the cultural policy community to operate within. The shared norms and values are a pre-requisite for trust - whereby key players can be expected to act in ‘trustworthy’ ways involving a complex play of mutual obligations and reciprocity. Importantly in the fluid world of the cultural policy

community, with a never clearly defined membership or program of social activity, obligations and the exchange of 'cultural' - social - favours differ from purely economic exchange in two aspects. "First, there is no single currency for social obligations: they may be paid back in very different forms; and second, the timing of the repayment is often unspecified" (Engestrom, 2001, p.11).

For instance Aaron gives an example of a business community giving to the Edinburgh Festival at a time of crisis, with social capital the currency being utilised. There was no indication of the timescale for reciprocity or payback - other than benefiting from having collectively contributed to the greater good. (Implicit in some of the names mentioned was the understanding that I knew that these individuals had gone on to give further investment of time and money in cultural philanthropy as part of the cultural policy community):

*The Festival was in a really fragile state - almost impossible to imagine looking at it now, but...with about two months to go before the Festival opened...there was a crisis. So I got a dinner together of all the leading top business men I could get, gathered them round a table and said: "look this is a crisis for the festival, so it's a crisis for Edinburgh, and I think you should reach into your back pockets and produce the money and launch an appeal but I need something to start it off with...Dear XXX came to the rescue and we launched the appeal. (Aaron)*

In this kind of exchange, the expectation of repayment “is based on the insertion of both actors in a common social structure. First, the donor’s returns may come not directly from the recipient but from the collectivity as a whole in the form of status, honour, or approval. Second, the collectivity itself acts as guarantor that whatever debts are incurred will be repaid” (Engestrom, 2001, p11). At the heart of social capital theory is the key function of the social network.

Although many theorists regard networks as forces for community good, there has also been increasing recognition that networks are not always in themselves inherently good, and that indeed networks can be burdensome for individual members in terms of repayment of ‘debts’, a force for negativity, exclusive and excluding, and as a result can become limited in new ideas. This would seem to resonate with Lal’s experience of attempting to engage with the cultural community in developing a new national cultural strategy:

*I was struck by the sense that no-one appeared to wish to see anything disrupted...reflecting on some other processes that I've experienced...one sometimes sees the seeds of the ideas around which a new consensus might form. I can't say that that was my experience of this process. (Lal)*

Similarly, Iain felt that despite recognition of his leading policy development role in a number of influential circles, his influence was diminished, but not by his own choosing:

*I've felt more and more marginal from that process as that initial upsurge of interest in evidence based policymaking, particularly in Scotland anyway, seems to have died away...I'm heavily involved in England with sportEngland, with the Local Government Association, with the office of the Depute Prime Minister, all of which are at a highly strategic level...but in the end politics wins out. (Iain)*

Whilst as noted previously, a number of interviewees made reference to an exclusive cultural establishment of sorts including Padma, Octavia, Lancelot and Iain - *"It's a relatively limited number of people who in some way or another have commitment to the development of the service"* (Iain) - the data suggest that there are at one and the same time two different kinds of networks operating: one as described by Robert, which is restricted to a fairly tight group of people - 'recruited' primarily for the purposes of fundraising and committee membership, but more significantly, another grouping, which I would regard as much more the cultural policy community proper: this grouping includes the more exclusive group members, or rather leaders within the exclusive group; it is less obvious in membership, manages to operate across social boundaries, engages and benefits both the individual and the collective. Notably, its membership operates for time limited periods, with membership changing and interacting as needs and new initiatives require; its members share in very broad terms the same norms and values, and has commonality of interest in similar outcomes – i.e. the 'public good'. The data also suggest that not all players play or engage in the same networks at the one time, with

some choosing - or having this option chosen for them - not to engage at all, even when they were in theory in very influential roles:

*When I was appointed XXX said to me: “You’re culture and sport - get on with it”. I felt I was operating within a kind of vacuum and so I was completely reliant on having a group of people around me plus getting out and talking to people. (Padma)*

My data suggest that the most effective cultural policy networks are changing and moving constantly depending on the issue or situation. But unlike more ‘closed’ social networks which have clear terms of engagement and limiting sanctions - these cultural policy networks (as it is likely that there are a number operating at any one time) - are more akin to “the ‘structural hole’ argument advanced by Ron Burt, (2000) in which social capital is an outcome of a network in which people can broker connections between otherwise disconnected segments.

These connections are more akin to bridging social capital and facilitate easy and fast access to different segments of information and knowledge across social or technical boundaries” (Healy, 2003, p.5). Basically, bridging social capital describes how individuals benefit more from connections with people who are different from them than with people who are similar. With most of those interviewed, the depth of connection varies between individuals, and the ability to connect with groups and individuals not directly known to each other is one of the features of the cultural policy community dynamics: “A structural hole indicates that the people on either side of the hole circulate

in different flows of information” (Burt 1998; 258). By establishing strong relations with contacts on both sides of the structural hole, an individual can span the hole and gain access to both information flows” (Engestrom, 2001, p 12).

This description of a more complex, less structured and ever-changing network seems more in keeping with the dynamics of the cultural policy community emerging from the data.

This does not diminish the requirement for shared social norms, shared values, trust, reciprocity, mutual obligations and expectations - or indeed the ‘reward’ of being a player in the public sphere and being seen to demonstrate ‘civic’ behaviour’ benefiting the wider cultural community. However, the overriding theme emerging from the data, is that the networks are multi layered, amorphous and ever changing spaces, and the concepts of ‘structural holes’ and bridging social capital present a more appropriate fit.

## **Gossip**

Bergmann sees gossip as a central feature of the “contradictory, indeed paradoxical loyalty structure of friendship and acquaintanceship” (Bergmann, 1993, p.151). In the cultural policy community gossip has a bonding function and represents a significant space where information is gleaned and reconstructed and occasionally, policy shaped. Expanding Simmel’s writing on ‘secrecy’, Bergmann points out that if we have information on the personal affairs of a friend or acquaintance we are, on the one hand, obligated not to pass this on indiscriminately or to ‘make it public’. On the other hand, however, we are obligated to their other friends not to withhold from them indiscreet information we have about that friend. Gossip involves us in a “moral balancing act” (ibid, p.149); it is “the



social form of discreet indiscretion” (ibid, p.149). It is an “institutionalised solution to a structural contradiction” (ibid, p.151).

When describing the ‘relational structure’ of gossip, Bergmann explains there is always a “gossip triad” (ibid, p.57). There is, first a *subject* - in the cultural policy world, a decision-maker, opinion former, or cultural worker. Many of my interviewees named particular individuals - for instance, Caius: “*XXX’s ambition wasn’t focused*”. Secondly, there is the gossip *producer* - in this example, Caius, the member of the policy community who has a ‘tasty’ bit of otherwise secret information or “knowledge about private matters” (ibid, p.57). Thirdly, there is the gossip *recipient* - in this case, myself - but always someone, who Bergmann reminds us is “by no means merely a passive participant” (ibid, p.67). In addition to having some knowledge of the gossip subject they have to be willing to suspend the veto which we all have when someone signals to us that they have a private secret or knowledge to impart:

*XXX needed as it were to be - not energised, you  
certainly didn’t need to do that as he had plenty of  
ideas...but you had to occasionally get his ball out of  
the rough! (Caius)*

My data suggest that gossip is crucial not only in binding a policy community together, but in ‘including’ and ‘excluding’ members and ideas, as well as being pivotal in establishing the status of members of the policy community. The very fact of inclusion in the gossip triad indicates almost a rite of passage - being literally taken into confidence - and being marked out, albeit in a quite private way, as a bona fide member of the ‘group’. During her

interview, Octavia said: “*Well if this is for a private and not for a publications thing, it’s always been my view...*” Commentators on ‘those perceived to be in power’ often refer to private meetings, friendships, social gatherings as ways in which key players influence and are influenced by each other (Paxman, 1990; Schlesinger et al, 2001; Upchurch, 2004, 2007). Undoubtedly, gossip as a distinct pattern of human communication - “a communicative genre” (Bergmann, 1993) - is a key space where cultural policy is developed. This is illustrated in the following comments by Tallulah:

*I was asked if I could set up a meeting or something like that where we could discuss who would head it up and who would be on that group. Because there are people I know we know we do not want to head that up and I know there are people who want it, but we’ve got to make sure we get the right person in otherwise the whole thing will fail...As long as it’s private and there’s nobody else there...but if there were other people sitting in on it, it would go back and it’s very difficult when you’ve got to work with people in Scotland...you can be candid but you don’t want my personal thoughts getting out. (Tallulah)*

During the interviews, and indeed in other conversations with the interviewee, I can distinctly remember key moments when I became aware that I was being regarded as a trusted and accepted member of the policy community, and that I had truly entered the sphere of trust. Many of these moments were engaging in the process of gossip, were off-

the-record or literally off-tape moments where interviewees - key players - were imparting personal information about significant others to me in a secretive way, only meant for my ears and information. In effect I was being trusted to have access to privileged information: "*I think that private exchanges of views are invaluable.*" (Octavia) Finally, there is also another dimension to gossip whereby its content can take on very much a life and existence of its own as it is savoured and passed on, passing into history as a myth if not established truth. This process is discussed further in chapter six in the 'Mythologising' section.

## **Experience and Experiences**

The postmodernist writer and architect, Charles Jencks said:

All of us carry around with us a muse imaginaire in our minds drawn from experiences of other places and knowledge culled from films, television, exhibitions and popular magazines. It is inevitable, he says, that all of these get run together (Sarup, 1996, p.98).

The experience and experiences of key players, and the alterations to their understandings - and articulations of their understandings - based on new experiences of culture and engagement in the cultural policy development was commented on by a number of interviewees. Lal specifically referred to the significance of the appointment of an expert advisor for Culture - and the importance of that person's experience:

*It's noticeable that the person appointed has credentials that rest essentially on having performed, having achieved things personally in the cultural area rather than having been an administrator in a conventional sense. (Lal)*

Certainly, the cumulative experience and experiences of key influencers and decision makers has a marked effect on policies and policymaking processes - regardless of what that experience is. Just as Barenboim and Said described the ways in which the whole cumulative history of an individual's performance or reading experience is brought to bear in every future performance or reading, so too does the cultural policy history influence current and future cultural policy making:

In a certain sense, you as a performer playing Carter are also the same Daniel Barenboim who has played Beethoven and Bach and Wagner, so that whole history, as it were, is compressed into the performance of the piece...And similarly, as a reader or writer or teacher or critic, what I feel is that when I'm reading a contemporary work, say a play by Beckett, I've also read Shakespeare and all these other earlier plays, but also somehow forcing them into a kind of service of the contemporary work that's being performed in front of an audience as if for the first time (Barenboim & Said, 2003, p.53).

When asked what he thought he was bringing to the cultural development process, Lancelot said:

*Decades of consultation, discussion, and a broad consensus from a particular section of the arts and culture community...I suppose part of the reason that I was brought in was to bring that expertise...I think the influence of people probably like us...the roots that we have and the community orientated approach - these are beginning to permeate through - maybe because we are now in positions where we're getting into more senior positions within government and the establishment generally. (Lancelot)*

A very direct impact of the role of Lancelot was his introduction into national cultural policy, ideas that were being developed and implemented at more local levels. Notably, the experience and experiences of less public officials had been - and still is - as powerful, if not more so. In describing her experience of what she at first believed to be one of the most powerful and significant roles in the cultural policy world, Padma notes the pervasive, but almost unseen power and resistance of such officials:

*There was no (cultural) expertise amongst these government officials... Yet I found the initial officials that I was working with resistant to change. I found*

*very quickly and became aware that ...you got regular tickets to the ballet and the opera, you got invited to previews and press nights, but your engagements were very much an engagement whereby you had your annual meeting and made decisions about what the funding was going to be and there were very close, cosy relationships between influential figures in the arts and the officials.*

*(Padma)*

The suggestion is that the experience and experiences of government officials determined cultural policy, and only by introducing people and organizations with different experience and experiences - expert advisers and local government - could policy change be made. However, opinions and experience of other opinion formers - not least of all in the media - meant that such change would not, and could not be a foregone conclusion. Certainly, press commentary had a perceived impact on policy. Lachlan notes:

*Newspapers inform what Ministers think they can and can't do...Easterhouse may be the perfect place for it, (the National Theatre) but the announcement smacked of political opportunism. The National Theatre's base is Easterhouse because it fulfils a Social Inclusion agenda, but what about an arts agenda? (Lachlan)*

In other words, experience and experiences come up against, and are limited by, other forces, which in turn shape experience and policy.

### **Part Three: Other Abstract Spaces**

In addition to ‘texts’ and ‘networks’, other ‘abstract spaces which emerge from my data as significant in the cultural policy community are - State Space, the City and the Nation, and the Public Domain - all of which are discussed in this section. Key spaces referenced by my interviewees are not simply understood as geographically defined, physical spaces, but are primarily, socially constructed, abstract spaces, which both constrain and enable action in the cultural policy community:

That is to say that spaces and places are not isolated and bounded entities, but material and symbolic constructions that work as meaningful and practical settings for social action because of their relations to other spaces and places (Richardson & Jensen, 2003, p.7).

The first space discussed in this section is probably the most abstract and at the same time negative - in my data, interviewees recognise and refer to a preconceived and rigid prism where cultural policy is made - or rather - contained.

## State Space: Knowledge and Power

“Rather than question just how images emerge from life we explain life from some already formed image” (Colebrook, 2006, p.154).

Within the data, a number of interviewees referred to a ‘restricted’ and ‘restrictive’ space - a ready formed image, often described in terms of either existing organisations or places where cultural policy is conceived. Padma says:

*I was very conscious of the fact that culture was seen very much in a kind of prison; and whereas much of the cultural scene was delivered at local level, when people talked about culture in Scotland it was seen very much as being Scottish Opera, Scottish Ballet, National Galleries, Scottish museums etc.; so I wanted people that could see the wider picture. (Padma)*

In *A Thousand Plateaus* Deleuze and Guattari describe this way of seeing the world from old paradigms as ‘State Space’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Lal also describes how those involved in the discussions and debates around the development of the National Cultural Strategy spoke from within their current paradigms - a kind of ‘prison’ as described by Padma - referencing what was familiar and therefore mitigating the scope for significant change and new directions being forged:



*Most of the debate was about bits of coverage rather than about prioritisation within the coverage and essentially a debate about what culture meant and where the boundaries of that stopped ...there wasn't a desire to re-interpret cultural policy through a series of connections to other policy areas - cultural policy was still being seen in essence as a thing apart, and as an area where there was a kind of professionalisation operating. (Lal)*

Other interviewees were also familiar with this space where 'new' policy is interpreted via 'old' meanings - and in particular a number drew attention to the power of the social relationships between those involved in the cultural policy community. At one and the same time, the interviewees noted that policy not only "...depended largely upon the assumptions, or mind-set, or the age in which they were promulgated" (Strathern, 2000, p.1), but like Foucault recognised "that the most important aspect of power lay in social relations" (ibid, p.30). Importantly, there was also the recognition that whilst these social relations - and the power of them - are in one sense between named individuals and institutions, nonetheless, they are more than physical relationships. Rather, as described by Deleuze and Guattari:

These social formations...exist on the level of meaning: it could be a genetic code, a convention, a value, an ideal, a tradition, a custom, an institution, a language, or a religion for example. Power operates through the construction of a certain kind of meaning that organizes social relations, shaping desire, the unconscious, and

ultimately consciousness. Indeed, if one dismantles an actual social formation, the meanings still remain as a grid through which one interprets reality, and through which new relations will be formed. God is overthrown, but humanity is put in its place; a Tsar replaced by Stalin (Goodchild, 1996, p5-6).

In the cultural policy field, old policy is sometimes replaced with ones developed through the same 'grid', from within the same 'state space', a paradigm difficult to change and one which is full of unspoken allure and familiarity for those involved, resulting in the same power relationships, engagements and impacts. Lancelot states:

*It was...the kind of approach to culture that you'd expect to be written by - perhaps those who didn't want to change much - which was kind of what the national cultural strategy is: motherhood and apple pie - that's a good description of it. (Lancelot)*

Yasin spoke of the need to be aware of this phenomenon, of this rigid space, and to create an environment where things could and would be done differently:

*For the first time ever we've got some coherence...I think I've brought the kind of coherence of cultural language and approach; it's seeing someone who's supportive of arts and culture but who is never a prisoner of the key opinion*

*formers or those whom people presume to be the key opinion formers - and movers and shakers in the cultural sector...I think in recent years to be fair to Edinburgh it is using some of that kind of approach to address its perceived 'stodginess' in that it is a much more dynamic creative thinking place to be...but we also need people to be thinking more critically about where we spend things so that we don't just take as received wisdom: 'here's what you need to spend in this sector or that'. (Yasin)*

The data suggest that recognising and understanding the dynamics at play in sustaining this 'state space', and the magnitude of the power of the social relations themselves and the ideas, values and traditions which underpin them, is crucial if cultural policy is to be developed in ways which stakeholders feel to be authentic, relevant and meaningful.

Having examined how this space can become, as described by both Padma and Yasin - a 'prison' for policy, stultifying its development, in the next sections I look at more positive spaces where cultural policy is nurtured and enhanced.

## **The City and the Nation**

The City and the Nation - Glasgow, Edinburgh and Scotland - are regularly referred to by all interviewees, yet rarely are presented merely as geographical locations. Rather they are imbued with personalities, behaviours and emotions and are presented “simultaneously as a field of action and a basis for action” (Richardson & Jensen, 2003, p.8). For instance, Aaron says:

*If they could see that the festival wasn't this kind of thing forced on them by outsiders, nothing to do with Edinburgh itself, was actually really loved by the people of Edinburgh, I think that's a very good example. (Aaron)*

Similarly, Octavia says: “*I'm very biased because I lose all sense of perspective about Glasgow. I'm a fully paid-up large G small N Glasgow nationalist*” (Octavia). Not only does Octavia align her self in favour of all things Glasgow, but she also talks about the city as if it were a living, breathing entity with intellectual capacities and needs:

*..the kinds of questions the City was asking of itself were questions that I realised that we ought to be asking in other things that I've been involved with...you are able to back the process allowing Glasgow to make a case internally for what it had and what it should do*

*with it...it was able to tell people not just kind of mouth music, but 'we've got an important national collection here'...and say: 'hey guys, this is what we do and you need to help us out'. (Octavia)*

Similarly, Uma describes the city in human terms:

*This is a poor city and the budget cut...took the feet from it, so we had to look at the best ways of spending public money which would benefit the city and the City's reputation. (Uma)*

Clearly, the city in all these instances is a geographical location. However, the way it is referred to is very much in the context of being a symbolic space where cultural policy is developed and has human impacts. Ulysses talks of “*social evils that plagued Glasgow*”, as if the city was in fact a human being open to human disease. Caleb speaks of a ‘deserving Scotland’:

*I think Scotland deserves and should have an outstanding opera company as part of its cultural heritage and bluntly unless people like me do something about it then we won't have it. (Caleb)*

The ‘humanising’ of the city and the nation through language makes the case all the more potent and emotive and assists in capturing ideas of economic and social need. In a similar vein in relation to both the city and the nation, Robert says:

*I would have no compunction irrespective of (political) parties about approaching somebody to ask him to do something that was for the greater good for Scotland or Glasgow if I thought it was important, (I'm) deeply supportive of anything in the arts that we can do that will in turn bring about our economic regeneration or something that makes the City more attractive in order that we might attract people, businesses and so on, and there, is in my opinion no better way to do that than through the culture side. (Robert)*

Abstracting the city and nation into something more than simply a physical location ensures that there is empathy and identification with both, making them powerful spaces for the development of cultural policy.

## **The Public Domain**

Fossum & Schlesinger describe the public domain as “a communicative space (or spaces) in which relatively unconstrained debate, analysis and criticism of the political order can take place” (Fossum & Schlesinger, 2007, p.1). In my data, interviewees demonstrate not only awareness of the abstract concept of the public domain, but importantly, actively perform in it as a means of engaging in cultural policy debate and development.

*In my view post devolution Scotland has actually encouraged and created in my experience - and I have to*

*say my experience is based on twenty years in Scotland - a far more open level of debate and contribution...and that to me has been one of the big advantages of devolution.*

*(Caleb)*

What we have here is not only endorsement and participation in the construct of the public domain, but a concern with, and an implicit understanding that the effectiveness of the public domain is contingent on the quality of engagement and debate: “An effective public sphere can be defined in terms of the quality of the dialogue which takes place within it, as theorists of the public sphere (eg. Habermas 1989, Arendt 1958) have implied” (Fairclough, 2003, p.79-80).

In leading the National Cultural Strategy development, Padma spoke of the importance of bringing a range of voices on board if the strategy was to have any impact at all:

*It was very much a question of trying to talk to people who were working in the field who had if you like, a kind of range of skills...it became quite clear that we had to bring other people on board and get other people involved...the consultation process was always going to be important...So the strategy was something which if you like, engaged the wider group of people that were involved in the sector.*

*(Padma)*

Marquand defines the public domain as a dimension of social life and the product of a set of activities, not least of all dialogue: “For the public domain is quintessentially the realm

of engagement, debate and contestation” (Marquand, 2003, p.32). A consistent feature throughout the data is interviewees’ understanding of this dialogical context for the public domain. For example, when asked to describe her involvement with development of cultural policy Octavia says:

*I used to have a large number of conversations with the late First Minister about the initial Cultural Strategy, because obviously I was very excited about the idea that one of the first things that the Scottish Parliament would do was to have a Cultural Strategy...I just remember having a lot of conversations, probably as far back as the time of the Referendum; because at that time, those of us who were devolutionists - we were all kind of excited about what we might have and might be...people were being asked, “how do you think tomorrow’s Scotland should reflect our cultural aspirations” and so forth...There’s been a thread of conversations with politicians or civil servants over the years - the thread for me has been trying to look at Scottish arts holistically. (Octavia)*

Asking questions, engaging in debate and on-going dialogue are referred to as almost a backdrop to the whole cultural policy process:

*The hearts and minds...need to be taken along...I flagged up at the meeting that I felt that cultural rights were*



*going to be a significant sea change in the way that cultural policy was developed and that creativity was the role that should be furthered most for the Scottish benefit and that the cultural sector within that should be the driving creative force...that was their contribution...and in subsequent discussion seemed to be picked up by quite a few...I was surprised in a very pleasant way and impressed by the quality of the debate...and the quality of contribution from everybody... (Lancelot)*

Marquand (ibid, p.32) has described the public sphere as a relatively recent phenomenon - no more than just over a hundred years old - and in need of careful nurturing and tending, as it is not a 'natural' state or inclination; rather it eschews the natural instincts of loyalty to family and friends, and the dynamics of the market/business environment of buying, exchanging, bartering and selling in favour of a more altruistic construct:

*We made a conscious decision...that we wanted to move the paper to be closer to its readership and its potential readership and we didn't want to ignore the real social problems that the city had...that was a conscious decision taken at that time...we were looking at specifically what we could do on an...agenda by not preaching...but trying to engage them in a healthier lifestyle. (Ulysses)*

Interviewees describe and actively support - and through their dialogue and actions construct - the public domain, suggesting that whilst the motivation to maintain the public domain perhaps does not emerge from 'natural' or inherent impulses, nonetheless, there is an implicit understanding that cultural policy is key to defining and constructing the public domain - and that the public domain is a key space for constructing cultural policy:

*Cultural issues are seldom black and white: there are two sides and both sides need to be debated...If you are trying to be a quality paper then your role is to deal with the shades of grey, to tease out the complications to allow for better policy decisions, rather than deal in black and white simplicities...I would hope that if we put forward a consistent and thoughtful line then in time it would be assimilated into the debate and in some small way influence decisions. I am beginning to realise that we have more of an influence than I thought we had, so therefore we probably have to take our role more seriously...we do need to be careful about how we use our influence. We should not be capricious. (Lachlan)*

The public domain may only have a short history in time (Marquand, 2004), but from the data it would seem that all the interviewees were not only conscious of the social construct described as 'the public domain', but also believed that the public domain is where cultural policy can most effectively be activated.

## **Chapter 6: How Cultural Policy Is Made**

### **Introduction**

In the previous chapters I have examined how performers in the cultural policy community construct themselves and others, and have mapped the spaces where cultural policy is developed. This chapter is concerned with how cultural policy is actually produced - in effect examining how the key players move within the cultural policy spaces, develop social relations and perform as cultural heroes, the creators of cultural policy.

### **Part One: Performances and the Production of Cultural Policy**

“The relationship between what is structurally possible and what actually happens, between structures and events, is a very complex one” (Fairclough, 2003, p.23). In this section I try to uncover some of the complexities of how movement in the cultural policy field is actualised, how cultural policy is produced and how the key players perform. In chapter five I discussed the ‘public domain’ as an abstract space where cultural policy is created. In the following section, I focus more on the performances of key players in the actual process of creating the public domain: in effect, performing in the public interest.

### **Performing In The Public Interest**

“In the public domain, citizens collectively define what the public interest is to be, through struggle, argument, debate and negotiation” (Marquand, 2004, p.32-33). Actions by key players are central to the creation and maintenance of the public domain and require an

understanding and ‘buy-in’ to its key values and value to society and a commitment to support the institutions, laws, behaviours and dialogue which maintain and protect it. For instance, Robert says:

*I've said many times the support that they (trustees) can give the council for the policy the Council is pursuing is hugely important, because Councils as we know being political bodies are not acceptable to everybody and when people who of the kind of standing of the people that we've got on (the Trust) are saying that they support the policy which the Council instituted and that they will do everything that they possibly can to help promote it, it gives great credibility and that's also very valuable as is the money which is collected of course. (Robert)*

Significantly, all of those interviewed were conversant with the underpinning values - selflessness, civic duty, commitment to the community and national good - and referred to them directly and indirectly throughout their interviews. Caleb responds to a question about his motivation to contribute to cultural policy by drawing on the idea of public service:

*What I felt is a sense of honour to be asked to do it; I would have thought most people want to give as well as take in this world and I guess I now have opportunity more with the job I am in now to perhaps be able to give public*

*service if you want to put it like that; that sounds a bit trite but it's not meant to be. Indeed my own company actively encourages me to do that...most people at my level within the company are actively barred from taking any private sector, non executive directorships, however, in my case they have been very happy for me to do anything within the public sector; in fact they have openly encouraged me to do so. (Caleb)*

Although interviewees express their motivation in different ways, the underpinning themes are concerned with a sense of duty and higher purpose - something outwith and beyond their jobs and private family interests. It is partly about improving cultural policy through engagement of a broader range of voices, but it is also about giving back to the community and in most instances, contributing to the advancement and well-being of the country as a whole. In addition, interviewees referenced their own and others participation in the key activities which are regarded as being the defining features of the public domain - debate, negotiation and dialogue - and in particular were aware of the need for quality engagement with a range of voices, and also of their leadership role in bringing this about in the wider interests of the cultural policy and the country.

Notably, the interviewees were aware that their roles were not one-off events or performances, but rather they saw themselves as regular and on-going contributors to the cultural debates: *“With something like Cultural Strategy, a much longer term, more considered approach is more appropriate” (Lachlan)*. Lancelot describes how through his

regular dialogue with players in the cultural policy community he would input ideas and policy suggestions - sometimes for immediate resolution, but not always:

*I think we want it all to happen tomorrow and the reality is it's probably going at the only pace it could go at - and we may look back at this in twenty years and think "wow, what a huge change we made very quickly there"...that is substantial and a cultural one is always the hardest; I mean these are generational changes we're talking about here - for them actually to be embedded in the kind of collective or individual psyche - to be embedded in ways of approaching things - I really think in a few years time when you look back on what was said yesterday - it will be seen as an absolutely seminal speech. A turning point.*  
*(Lancelot)*

There are many examples of how in performing in what interviewees perceive as in the public interest, new ideas and policy developments in the cultural sector are, or have been sites of dispute, or subject to some degree of debate and negotiation before becoming accepted practice - or not. In most instances, the interviewees themselves were the key protagonists, often leading initiatives and resultant debates, disputes and negotiations:

*There was a complete impasse...Anyway that sparked off a debate. (I began) talking to people...and so really*

*positioning that something had to be done; but there had been some deadlock, not out of - largely out of apathy - largely out of fear of taking responsibility. Because this was going to be controversial and I mean, I made every mistake in the book - but I don't have a fear of failure.*

*(Caius)*

When asked to describe how he went about influencing policy and promoting new ideas and developments Aaron made the following observations:

*I mean its dialogue, it's talking to people, getting to a position where you know you can sort of trust each other...if you could persuade, if you could sort of convince them that you understand their problems...and if you could just kind of convey the argument that actually, in all sorts of ways, the arts are tremendously important in a way that not everyone quite fully appreciates. And you can point to other examples where they're working and doing things and you sort of occasionally feel that you got the message across. It's that personal relationship; it's not done particularly round a table with bunches of people. A lot of it is, but when you're talking afterwards and having a drink afterwards or having a cup of tea afterwards and you just know conveying the notion that you're all in the same boat*

*really; and that there are specific examples of where you can turn a project round and demonstrate success. (Aaron)*

Again, as illustrated by this quotation, working in the public interest - engagement and dialogue with a range of voices and the possibility of negotiation and resolution of conflicting ideas and policies - are the interviewees' perceived means of ensuring effective cultural policy. Marquand says:

If the public domain is to be reinvented...the core executive at the heart of the state must be willing to let go. It must learn a new approach to governance - an approach based on the notion of social learning, in which 'key participants in the policy process...come together for discussion and debate.' This does not imply abdication. It implies that the state ceases to be a commander or a controller, and becomes a learner along with other learners - and, of course, a teacher along with other teachers" (Marquand, 2004, p 140).

Notably, a number of interviewees assert that policy directed from the top of government and or cultural organisations - as in the 2000 National Cultural Strategy - will fail unless it is driven by broad consensus and driven from within the policy community itself. This is a dynamic recognised and referenced by my interviewees, in itself affirming that it is not so much membership - perceived or actual - of a cultural policy elite or cultural policy establishment that ensures effectiveness, but more importantly, the capacity to act in ways



which engender debate, challenge current norms, explore and where possible reconcile difference and reflect the pluralism and complexity of the policy community in policies advocated and pursued. Marquand states:

If the history of the last century has one sure lesson, it is that change imposed from the top, measured and policed by procedures contrived at the top, rarely produces the desired results...If change is to stick, it must, in management jargon, be 'owned' by those affected by it. 'Ownership' is impossible without understanding; and understanding has to be built on wide-ranging, uninhibited discussion of the sort that command and control rules out (ibid, p.140).

A number of my interviewees referred to the need to move away from a top down approach and a return to listening to 'professional' or expert advice - not in the deferential way of the past, but in an attempt to listen, learn and find genuine solutions to ongoing policy issues.

Iain observes:

*What I find is that I'm deeply sceptical in Scotland of these broader consultation processes because I think that the broad consultation processes that I've been involved in are ultimately subordinate to a strategic political policy movement...I think that the process is more about form than substance...it's very difficult to generalise about an institution, but this is an institution that seems to be very*

*top heavy, which seems to lack intellectual depth throughout it and therefore it's driven by the ambitions of those at the top...one would suggest that their interests lie in the promotion of the organisations of which they are in charge rather than the broad world of sport (or culture).*

*(Iain)*

Caius also expressed reservations about an overly bureaucratic approach to creating cultural policy, and the resulting ineffectiveness of policy driven from the top. He says:

*It is very interesting how often you find if you try out an idea, and maybe no support, but maybe complete roadblocks - but that idea of sort of challenging policy - you know, why not? And if not, what's the policy alternative...The talent we have seen whether in the visual arts, the theatre, publishing and a whole series of areas where Scotland - not because it has been fantastically successful economically, but it has actually been quite a positive economy, given where it was coming from...so I think there has been an attempt to make it worthwhile to understand that - to express it say in a Cultural Strategy.*

*(Caius)*

It seems as though the respondents are calling not so much for a one-off twenty-first century reinvention of the public domain, but a recognition that for cultural policy to be

current, it needs to be vibrant and relevant continually and thereby constantly reinvented for its time. More than that, despite concerns of academics and public commentators about the perceived erosion of the public domain as a consequence of creeping and “popular centralism” (Marquand, 2004, p.131) and a media and communication network whose “modern methods...have given it enormously greater capacities for surveillance and control” (ibid p.133), my interviewees are well aware of the value of the public domain, and how best to perform to ensure its future. They understood that “the public domain is quintessentially pluralist” (ibid p.103) and that dialogue, empathy, integrity and tolerance “do not come naturally. They have to be learned; and they are learned in the intermediate institutions that populists instinctively abhor” (ibid, p.104).

Notably, my interviewees belong to a range of ‘intermediate institutions’ - which are often not their core business - including private firms, which along with voluntary bodies, local authorities and others, are all engaged in constructing and reinventing the public domain.

## **Mythologising**

My data reflect what seems to be a generally accepted phenomenon, that is that myth and myth-making are part and parcel of contemporary life - whether in politics, the media or the cultural sector. Discussing the phenomenon whereby ‘signifying systems’ are viewed as more ‘believable’ than the ‘material world’, Blain et al note:

It has produced...extraordinary disparities between what citizens believe on the one hand, and the nature of the actual drivers of their social, economic and political lives

on the other...no comfort can be taken in the inevitable appearance of the 'reality problem' as the twenty-first-century's main challenge (Blain, Ross & Sarikakis, 2005, p.5).

The place and power of myth is readily acknowledged in the media, for instance, most recently in *The Herald*: "It was largely a myth, of course, but myths like perceptions, do matter in public affairs and commerce..." (Macwhirter, 2009, p.17) In the world of art, there are many examples of artists - and their audiences - mythologizing their lives and personal experiences to such an extent that it is difficult to determine the separation between their lives and their 'created' art. Frido Khalo is one such artist, as are the more contemporary artists such as Bob and Roberta Smith and Grayson Perry. In literature, we need look no further than Robert Burns and James Joyce, both of whom have ritual celebrations based on their work and lives - Burns Day on 25<sup>th</sup> January and Bloom's Day on 16<sup>th</sup> June. Similarly, in the world of cultural policy, myth and the mythologizing of texts, individuals, histories and processes are ubiquitous. For example, Glasgow's accolade of European City of Culture in 1990 has been mythologised by a range of players, regularly referred to by cultural workers, policy makers, academics, the media and politicians as being one of the most significant years and events ever for Glasgow:

*Arts development policies took fairly significant and fairly successful roots in the early 90s helped along at that time in a very real sense by Glasgow's 1990 year of Culture, which I think was a sea change for policy in this country. It just gave*

*it such a platform and put flesh on the argument that there were economic and social benefits. (Lancelot)*

Winning and more importantly, mythologizing the accolade changed the city's fortunes and changed perceptions of the city at home and internationally. Notably, interviewees who spoke specifically about 1990 were very clear about the significance of mythologising the event and were happy to admit what they perceived as a lack of 'objectivity':

*So when things come around like 1990 - I was quite involved in writing about 1990...I really am a very bad purveyor of sound information about Glasgow because I tend to cherry pick and if there is a panel coming, as there was from elsewhere to look at Glasgow and its strengths or its weaknesses, or its plans for something, I absolutely give them the unvarnished spin...You had two choices with that, you could look at Glasgow and...the bits that had gone wrong and...the bits that had gone right...What I would do in a circumstance like that would be to pick out examples of good practice, pick out examples of vibrant community activities, pick out all these things, and I'll write about them...you just kind of take off the objective coat for as long as it takes to make your pitch for the City. (Octavia)*

Writing about the phenomena of Glasgow's reinvention of itself, (if not rebirth), and its impact on the sense of identity and ambition for other cities, Gomez says: "In short, Glasgow has become a model of paramount importance for Bilbao. The same kind of strategy as Glasgow used some years earlier is being implemented in the Basque city at present" (Gomez, 1998, p.114). However, whilst on the one hand accepting that "there is no doubt that this strategy has had dividends in respect of the number of visitors to the city...(and) that the image of Glasgow, both within and outside the city, has been radically reconstructed" (ibid, p.117/118) using 'employment creation' as her measure, Gomez questions the 'real' impact of cultural policy and investment in regenerating cities and suggests that in reality, the application of cultural policy in winning economic and regeneration policy arguments "seems to be part of a deceptive mirage" (ibid, p.118).

Yet in ensuing debates about whether or not urban strategies "that focus on cultural infrastructure investment and place marketing were a good mechanism for stimulating cities to recover" (ibid, p.117), regardless of what side of the argument commentators come down on, there seems to be an awareness, if not wholesale acceptance, that 'mirage-making' or mythologizing is as effective a strategy for regeneration as harder, more economically focussed interventions or measures:

It is the risky use of 'urban flagships' in a context of serious decline, as much as the subsequent political discourse built up around 'success stories' which stress that these are the key to prosperity, that were - and still are - in dispute...(yet) the potential success of Bilbao as an important tourist destination was not in question...We do not deny that the Guggenheim

Museum has changed Bilbao's former image, which was largely associated with either pollution or political violence, making it the new symbol of the City worldwide (Gomez and Gonzalez, 2001, p898).

It could of course be argued that economic indicators themselves are a flawed measure of economic success or potential - as the confidence arising from promulgation of 'myths', mythologizing of events and telling the story of the myth as suggested by commentators, seems to have an economic and social policy value which is at one and the same time difficult to measure, yet clearly perceived as having relevance and policy impacts. For example, Yasin summarised this in the following:

*One of the things Glasgow could tell about itself...was the success of 1990 Year of Culture...being able to use that and to demonstrate the economics of the city which were changing. (Yasin)*

Campbell explains this human motivation to mythologise events, people and artefacts as "our search through the ages for truth, for meaning, for significance...we all need to understand death and to cope with death" (Campbell, 1988, p.4-5). He asserts that the distinguishing feature of the human species from other animals is the "subordination in the human sphere of even economics to mythology" (Campbell, 1973, p.20). Even in analyses of contemporary culture, including "the colonisation of culture by media culture" (Blain & O'Donnell, 2003, p.20) Campbell's assertion of 'mythologising' as a central feature of the human condition - indeed "coeval with mankind" (Campbell, 1973, p.19), does not seem

very far away. For example, one reading of Blain & O'Donnell's analysis of the role of royalty in contemporary society is that it provides a "novel form of collective identity...to be offset (against) postmodern...social fragmentation" (Blain & O'Donnell, 2003, p.187). At heart, this appropriation and mythologizing of royalty as a cultural symbol does not seem too far away from Campbell's proposition that human beings are compelled by "two fundamental realisations - of the inevitability of individual death and the endurance of the social order" (Campbell, 1973, p.21). Mythologising is not only central to cultural policymaking, but links cultural policymaking to the human need and impulse to find meaning in human existence.

## **The Artifice of Consensus**

"One way of acting and interacting is through speaking or writing, so discourse figures first as 'part of the action'" (Fairclough, 2003, p.26). One of the ways in which some interviewees perform in the cultural policy sphere, driving policy development, is to speak or write in a way that implies not only engagement with a range of voices, but engagement with dialogue leading to consensus; in effect, claiming a significant buy-in to, and support for, their values and assertions about policy. This is particularly evident in the transcripts of former journalists, although not exclusively so. For example, Aaron discusses the importance of the press in advancing cultural debate and policy in the context of the newspapers' role in the public sphere:

*I'm talking mainly about the broadsheet newspapers, but others as well - devote a really huge amount of their space to culture in Scotland. I haven't done a proper*



*assessment of it...(In England) the newspapers have a lot about art but I don't think they see art, in fact I know they don't see art or art subjects as part of the establishing the character of the country. In Scotland - whether it's sort of conscious or not I think the reason newspapers do devote a lot to a discussion on the arts and write about arts events I think, is because they see it as part of Scotland's public and social life. (Aaron)*

Although the reader is left with the impression that there are a number of others in agreement with Aaron's in relation to newspapers' role in the public sphere and in the cultural policy sector in particular, their separate and distinct voices are not represented other than as being in accord with Aaron. There is no dialogue between any of the voices, and whilst first reading of the transcript suggests engagement, dialogue and consensus building, closer examination suggests that what we actually have is no more than "a gathering of views, but in a way which separates and fragments them, leaving no possibility of dialogue between them" (Fairclough, 2003, p.45), giving the appearance of a policy perspective - primarily that of the interviewee - as one widely endorsed by other players in the policy community. For instance Lachlan says:

*We would always try to present an image of caring about the subject matter and being quite diligent about canvassing enough opinion, and we have quite a number of people who...work in art fields and all of them, I would hope, have behaved in a way that communicates to people*

*that they are serious about it and they are interested about the subject, that they care for the subject and so therefore if we write a contrary opinion...it has never been done out of malice, but hope that whatever opinion we do come up with then people do take us seriously. (Lachlan)*

Again, we have the sense of a general consensus of opinion and approach from a range of expert voices and yet none of the individual voices are given expression - their only function is to endorse the interviewee's views. What both interviewees have done is present categorical assertions of fact and "an assumed consensus (but one) which suppresses actual difference" (Fairclough, 2003, p.43).

As I noted earlier, whilst this 'artifice of consensus' is notable amongst journalists, it is also prevalent amongst those who are responsible for creating policy reports. For instance, Lal also refers to other voices in the 'communities', but they too are not given separate expression, but rather are referred to in the context of their engagement, influence and consensus regarding policy development:

*The debate about what image to project in the arts field seemed to me to be a debate that was essentially internal to Government; because again the fragmentation of institutions makes it unlikely that any of the external institutions would lead that particular debate...seeing the connection of cultural issues and community identity issues perhaps was more the product of debate that was*

*happening in communities - the increasing recognition that communities were becoming more sophisticated in their understanding of what constituted effective action to improve the long-term health of communities; and so an old fashioned perception that all communities really cared about was employment was being supplanted by empirical experience of what communities cared about when they were given a voice in community development. (Lal)*

Often the process of producing policy texts is “a process of moving from conflict to consensus...to a text where there is no intertextualizing of different voices” (ibid, p.43) and therefore it is not unusual for such texts to be peppered with categorical assertions - assertions which are presented as axiomatic and where “divergent voices...are smoothed into an apparent consensus in the co-existence of these assumptions” (ibid, 2003, p.44).

It would seem that creating the impression of having acted to achieve consensus is a significant act in the production of cultural policy, enabling the interviewees to appear to engage with a range of voices, promote dialogue and bring about an agreed position on policy - one which they are now able to present as a commonly held view. The interviewees are utilising an artifice of consensus to take out difference and different voices and at the same time endow their policy views with a significant authority, drawn primarily from the supposed endorsement of the other voices. It also goes without saying, that this process asserts their leadership role in the cultural policy community.

Of course, although the other voices are not engaged in the texts, it is not necessarily the case that they would be out of kilter with the views expressed. However, the reverse could equally be the case, meaning a few key players in the cultural policy sector - particularly those involved in the media and in the preparation of policy texts - gain primacy, power and influence in the cultural policy community through the illusion of speaking on behalf of a policy sector consensus.

### **Exchanges: Knowledge and Activity**

Fairclough claims there are two primary types of exchange in texts: “‘Knowledge exchange’, where the focus is on exchange of information, eliciting and giving information, making claims, stating facts and so forth; and ‘activity exchange’, where the focus is on activity, on people doing things or getting others to do things” (Fairclough, 2003, p.105). On one level, my data in its entirety could be described as a ‘knowledge exchange’, whereby in answer to my questions, the interviewees have imparted copious amounts of information, claims and facts. In addition, however, within the data there are a number of examples of ‘activity exchanges’ where the interviewees describe how they have motivated themselves and others to act. For example, Ulysess describes how by posing certain questions he created the circumstances and motivation for action that led to significant change and policy impacts:

*Was this paper reflective of Glasgow as you saw it; was it engaging with you the reader; was it engaging with the big issues that affected Glasgow and how did it relate to*

*you in national and local and international terms? That exercise helped us to formulate the policy for the paper as it stands at the moment. Now that is a living and breathing thing and has changed over the past three or four years. (Ulysses))*

Similarly, Caius describes how, through dialogue and discussion with various other players in the sector, he too activated new policy directions:

*You learned to, by informal contact - not in dark rooms - just in the margins of meetings - the good thing about Scotland is it is a small place and you meet everybody pretty regularly if you are going out to things. So you could very often find people who - if you had begun to take a stand or they could see you pushing things - people who would be supportive. (Caius)*

In both examples we have clear expressions of how posing questions and sharing information at ‘the margins’ of meetings and events resulted in an activity exchange leading to changes or development of policy. However, inherent in these activity exchanges is also an exchange of knowledge; in other words, the focus was not simply on activity or getting others to do things, but the utilisation of knowledge in creating the circumstances and motivation for action.

Fairclough describes a process whereby “people act (and act upon other people) in ways which are oriented to achieving results, greater ‘effectivity’ or ‘efficiency’” (Fairclough, 2003, p.110) and contrasts this with “‘communicative action’ - action which is oriented to reaching understanding...in the ‘lifeworld’ - the world of ordinary experience” (ibid, p.110). Where this becomes “problematic, and indeed potentially ‘pathological’, is the over-extension of strategic action as part of the ‘colonization’ of the lifeworld by systems (ibid, p.110). In effect, strategic action in texts includes giving an activity exchange “the appearance of a... knowledge exchange” (ibid, p.106). There are various examples of interviewees doing exactly this: Reading closely Lachlan’s edit of his transcript, and in particular paying attention to the values and policy views concerning matters such as aesthetics versus social inclusion, it becomes clear that this appears intended as an activity exchange, encouraging the reader, and in particular myself and potentially local and national government policy makers to act in the cultural policy field in a different way and akin to that desired by Lachlan:

*I do not think it is XXX’s role to be a formal part of the policy establishment. We need to keep ourselves separate. We are receivers of information and of views. We are often lobbied by both sides of an argument. Our role is to write about it, to express our view about it. Then we will always allow people to disagree with us on the letters page...On some issues we’ll have a big voice and influence and on others we may have very little influence even though we put our point of view strongly. It depends on the issue...Mind you, even though I am pleased he (First Minister) made the*

*speech, I am still concerned that the arts will really only be valued for their impact on other areas of government policy. It does not seem to me that we have an art for art's sake policy...It'll take more than one speech to lift the sense of gloom and disillusion in the arts community but it's a start. (Lachlan)*

The activity exchange - its constituent parts being “offers, demands, ‘selling, soliciting ‘custom’ - is presented as if it were knowledge exchange; on one level, one can say that the text is indeed giving information - but that is clearly not all it is doing, and it is giving information with more primary purpose in view” (Fairclough, 2003, p.111), successfully selling an idea, or creating a new policy direction. Iain also presents what seems at face value a knowledge exchange, but implicit in his commentary is activity exchange:

*As they shifted towards this supposedly more evidence based policy...I think that the work that I did, linking sport and regeneration of deprived urban areas, has had a major impact on the way people think about the potential for sport; and I think that I keep seeing that work re-appearing in various guises and various documents. (Iain)*

Iain is not overtly pushing his work and ideas, but there is undoubtedly a ‘sales tone’ if not a ‘sales pitch’ in many parts of his transcripts, commenting on the status and importance of his contribution to date - and therefore, by implication, contributions in future:

*So many people who were thinking through strategies were required to engage with people like me in order to have access to evidence which supported their strategic stance. So I think in a way I've always felt that my relationship with these people has been completely instrumental, and insofar as I could provide evidence for them and insofar as they were under political pressure to produce that evidence I had a role to play; and I think initially, that I had a substantial influence, particularly on sports policy. (Iain)*

In all these examples, the texts - the transcripts - themselves can be read as both sites of, and forces for, action in the cultural policy community.

## **Part Two: Practising Power**

Influence in the cultural policy community requires the mobilisation and utilisation of power. However, the dichotomy is that whilst power is inherently about control and directing movement, my data suggest that influence is at its keenest when breaking down boundaries and challenging norms, and being able to participate and act in the disruptive spaces created by forces outwith norms and direct control. "One attempts to enclose the entire world within one's territories and representations so that one can predict and control each move, each gesture, each becoming...Nevertheless, there remains an 'outside' to the world that one does not control; failure to think about such an outside does not prevent it from acting" (Goodchild, 1996, p212). This section looks at the varied and unexpected



ways power is practised in the cultural policy community, based more often than not on understandings and directions not originally intended.

## **Productive Misreadings and Acting Outside the Norm**

All great ‘dialogues’ in the history of philosophy were so many cases of misunderstanding: Aristotle misunderstood Plato, Thomas Aquinas misunderstood Aristotle, Hegel misunderstood Kant and Schelling, Marx misunderstood Hegel, Nietzsche misunderstood Christ, Heidegger misunderstood Hegel...Precisely when one philosopher exerted a key influence upon another, this influence was without exception grounded in a productive misreading (Zizek, 2004, p.ix).

Octavia described how the National Cultural Strategy was significant more for the fact that it existed, rather than for what it said or enacted - indeed its very existence as a written document, a tangible ‘thing’, gave it a capacity to encourage new thinking about cultural policy:

*Well I have to say that one of the things that people kept saying to me at the time that the Cultural Strategy came out was that it was too anodyne, that it was too woolly. Yes it was aspirational but it was inspirational in a kind of an*

*amorphous way...there's lots of that kind of hard information but there wasn't I don't think a lot of hard information about how we would get from A to B...but here we are two minutes into our new beginning and let's make sure we've got a Cultural Strategy. I thought that was really, really - a really life enhancing moment for a fledgling Parliament. (Octavia)*

In a similar, although less effusive and positive vein, Yasin said of the National cultural strategy:

*I think it was very much a kind of managerial view of cultural strategy and a kind of Scottishisation of it on the basis of 'we've got a new Parliament and here's what we do in Scotland'; but was it a really serious critique of cultural engagement and activities? On examination, no it probably wasn't...it's not been embraced by anybody; so it's one of those kind of things - it's just there because it's there...I don't think the way in which it was constructed or the way in which it was put together necessarily will really shape the direction of this new administration. The new administration is pulling together a more coherent dynamic on arts and cultural activities. (Yasin)*

It could be argued that this reframing of the National Cultural Strategy into an artefact - a virtual policy almost, but with real effects and consequences - rather than a text with its own inherent meanings, is an example of 'misreading', motivating the policy community to move in other directions.

Lancelot describes the allure of the 'norm', the safe and the institutionalised structures in relation to new cultural policy ideas being adopted and how difficult it is for government and those in authority to resist the old structures, the status quo and then to allow policy movement in divergent directions:

*It will be very, very difficult for them to take it on board or rather it will be easier for them to go, to meet, to pay lip service to the whole thing and to point to some random examples and say: 'well look' and they'll come up with two or three examples of good practice which we can all do and claim that it's a general thing but it won't be embedded.*

*(Lancelot)*

Zizek noted: "The most fundamental philosophical gesture is: not to close the gap, but, on the contrary, to open up a radical gap in the very edifice of the universe, the 'ontological difference', the gap between the empirical and the transcendental, in which neither of the two levels can be reduced to the other" (Zizek, 2004, p.xi). Yasin discusses how opening up the gap in existing thinking and practice when the opportunity presents itself is a crucial factor in creating a momentum for change and new directions:

*Sometimes there's an opportunity and you take it...it struck me partly through the crisis of the budget in Glasgow that out of that kind of horror really you had to face up to some pretty hard decisions and you could maybe drive some hard decisions through...but that can only work if the people who are in charge of that responsibility come in with new thinking; if it's just older colleagues that have been in it already... they're not actually going to change the service at all. (Yasin)*

Barenboim's discussion of how the actual act of performing music changes it and creates something new and unique at the time of performance, making it impossible to replicate exactly the music as written, experienced and understood at the time of composition, reminds me of an incident at school in my teenage years when I was involved in an extra curricular small performance/folk music group run by our drama teacher. I was a classically trained pianist, clarinetist and percussionist - and I was teaching myself folk/rock guitar. My friends and I had purchased scores of a range of Carol King and Bob Dylan pieces and had rehearsed them on piano and guitar - playing music which we believed was "authentic" King and Dylan. Our drama teacher was astounded at the sound - if not appalled, although he did try to hide his shock - declaring that what we were performing was King and Dylan opera style and that it bore no relation to what either musician/composer had intended!! Although embarrassed by our performance - we had not actually heard much King or Dylan - it stuck with me throughout my life, as I was constantly reminded that - to quote Barenboim again - "the score is not the music", and that what we had done was bring our unique interpretation, resulting from our equally unique

experience of classical music and absorption of our music education. There can be a similar dissonance when one listens to an author read their own work - bringing an emphasis and sound which is distinctly different to the experience of reading the work unspoken to oneself. In the cultural policy sphere, the performance of composing, interpreting, debating and amending the policy has in itself an impact and influence as evident in my data. Caius described in detail how certain policies were enacted - and how the outcomes changed from the original intention throughout the actual policy development process. He says of his role in delivering a major arts initiative:

*I negotiated with them for eight years before we eventually got agreement on the format...and then as the thing fell into place, it became clear that apart from restoring the building, that that should link with the National Gallery, but at the earlier stage that would have been dynamite, because that could have been like the tunnel out of Stalag 10! So that was then introduced, but it gave a restaurant, library and lecture space shared by both buildings. (Caius)*

On the National Cultural Strategy he says:

*I was a bit bemused by the National Cultural strategy, I though it was romantic, terribly aspirational - but if you know how things operate, translating that into practical steps was difficult to perceive. (Caius)*

In short, the intention, the process and negotiations necessary to deliver on a strategy can often result in a policy which is unexpectedly different to the original concept - developing in a rhizomic way.

Boyne discusses how difficult and counterintuitive it can be to consciously operate outwith the norm and indeed to be aware of, and to challenge, the dominant and accepted social structures:

All arenas in which we exist are structured in accordance, with, or in counterpoint to, one dominant social model. That model is the hierarchically ordered bureaucracy. Because of the grip that principles such as order, efficiency, predictability, goal achievement, role definition, planning, differential status, differential responsibility and differential reward have on our daily lives, in both personal and institutional contexts, and in ordinary or extraordinary situations, we find it almost impossible to think about difference without reducing it to variations upon that one original theme of which we ourselves are but a variation (Boyne, 1990, p.123).

Interestingly, Robert suggests that although appearing to be part of what other interviewees have termed 'the establishment' - in effect, the dominant social order - his influence and power actually come from operating not simply from within 'the establishment' but

importantly, at its most effective, from outwith and in between. Robert alludes to the importance and significance of the 'outside' of the usual power structure when he says:

*I was very supportive about the principle (of the national cultural strategy). I was not involved and I never tried to be involved because I've never actually thought that it was a good thing for somebody like me who comes from out with the political background. I have never really been involved in politics either at a local or a national level and I think in some ways had I been involved in politics I wouldn't have been as kind of useful as a non biased interest in the arts. It's a bit like painting - a lot of people say to me, look you have a very substantial interest in the visual arts, have you ever painted and I say no, I have never really tried seriously because if I painted...badly then people would say, 'then what can he possibly know about the arts when he paints so badly.' So it's a bit like that and the politics thing is pretty well the same. (Robert)*

Rather than following a cultural policy hierarchy, he and other key players follow cultural policy 'rhizomes', leading to unpredictable, divergent, fresh and unexpected policy results. The underlying message appears to be that formal structured approaches do not support authentic social relations nor produce grounded or authentic policy:

The obstacle that prevents social relations from developing is always the interest of some third party in the relation: conventions, values, expectations, economic structures, and political entities, whether real or imaginary, provide a script for social agents who merely play out the roles. For example, enemy soldiers confronting each other across a battlefield act out the contest that they are required to fight by distant political and economic entities, supported by nationalist, racist, or tribalist sentiments; their social relation is limited to an exchange of bullets, instead broadening out to become an exchange of jokes, songs, cigarettes, and memories (Goodchild, 1996, p.2).

Tallulah discusses her role in terms of actively trying to circumvent and avoid such third party interests:

*I will always make a point of speaking to them and just say 'Look, I need to have a meeting, a personal meeting and that can be done, because as soon as they hear that, there is absolutely no qualms, we can get in that way, or with people I know who have direct contact - I'll go there and circumvent the route. (Tallulah)*



It is not just a case of being on the 'outside' but more a matter of being 'alert' to the 'outside' and acting in particular ways: "Nietzsche's notion of the creation of 'untimely' concepts is taken up by Deleuze and Guattari as depicting the kind of political work they see as important: 'acting counter to our time and thereby acting on our time and, let us hope, for the benefit of a time to come' (Nietzsche, 1983, cited in Allan, 2008, p.57). An example of 'acting counter to our time' in the interests of 'our time and a time to come' is given by Caius:

*With each exhibition or purchase or move - you know there was vast hostility - I mean there was a horrific hostility about Glasgow and that overshadowed a lot of things and everything else was subject to a lot of critics who appeared, not on that Glasgow issue, but on exhibitions policy and purchases whereby they would say this is not good enough - it is a fake - and so on. Many years through this there was no understanding of aspirations at all - no understanding about what we were trying to do about Scottish art...I always said to XXX - 'You know eventually you will be a hero; this will all come round.' And so it has turned out to be - people are actually appreciating that they can get into the RSA building, see fantastic exhibitions - and well, the goods have been delivered. (Caius)*

Making things happen, Caius suggests, is being untimely, acting outwith the norm, unsettling the dominant structures:

*I think there is quite a lot of latent initiative, which the formal process absolutely smothers...There were all sorts of ways of getting them to bend and on side...the Cultural Strategy. It was maybe the wrong way to do it - but then I am just talking about something which is running here pretty vigorously and needs freedom, rather than process.*  
(Caius)

“Deleuze described his way of working with others as somewhat aberrant: ‘we don’t work, we negotiate. We were never in the same rhythm, we were always out of step’” (Allan, 2008, p.58). This best reflects how Caius and other interviewees see themselves operating - out of step, aberrant, subversive yet effective, part of ‘the awkward squad’ - even if policies take some time to actualise:

*I went in as a consenting adult - into a number of things - knowing that they were involved with being process driven and had a shortage of money. There were enough perceived problems in making what was there happen; you know to do anything new was a real - you were really then part of the awkward squad, whatever the merits of your idea. (Caius)*

Caius believes that effective policy will never come from official structures and processes:

*To actually get a policy idea like that...could never have derived from any review or assessment...very often you can't always see or predict...You have got to move - even things like acquisitions...doing things at the highest level.*

*(Caius)*

Challenging norms, reacting to opportunities, willingness to take risks and move in unknown directions, questioning current practice and thinking - force as opposed to power - all of these emerge from my data as pre-requisites for cultural policy development which is dynamic and relevant. Marks relates these propositions to Deleuze's assertions that philosophy, politics and art all need 'mediators' who will get things moving:

Deleuze believes philosophy, politics and art all need 'mediators', who will get things moving...We tend to be disturbed by movement because it undermines our reassuring perception of the world as static and stable: 'there's nothing more unsettling than the continual movement of something that seems fixed. In Leibniz's words: a dance of particles folding back on themselves'...

He suggests that we are at the moment in a 'weak phase' of thought, a period which has returned to abstractions and the search for origins, instead of looking at things in terms of movement... If we are oppressed, looking to human rights and the 'constitutional state' will not help

us. On the contrary, such frameworks will only restrict movement further (Marks, 1998, p.14-15).

Policy created within dominant social and policy structures - often encapsulated in written texts - appears doomed to be stagnant and consigned to a shelf indefinitely. Nonetheless, even these policies can have an influence in their ability to spark thinking in other directions.

### **Knowledge, Desire and Becoming**

For Deleuze and Guattari, 'desire' is a vital life force, existing in, but also beyond and apart from bodies: "It's organisms that die, not life" (Marks, 1998, p.29). Nonetheless, Deleuze and Guattari recognise that to achieve their "aim to make multiplicity, creation, and desire present in society" (Goodchild, 1996, p.4.) desire has to be awakened; and they see this as partly being through knowledge, albeit, knowledge of a different kind:

Knowledge is no longer a question of being able to repeat the main points of as many books as possible in a library, nor is it a question of being able to criticize their weaknesses and failings; knowledge is more like the capacity to direct oneself, through encounters with others, towards the most interesting and profound books in that library. Only through this knowledge can one awaken desire (Goodchild, 1996, p.5).

Examples of this dynamic - ‘knowledge’/’encounter’ awakening ‘desire’ leading to ‘becoming’ as a policy maker - are in evidence throughout my data: Lancelot describes how encounters with ideas and others awaken desire, a force for actualisation:

*I was brought in to do a consultancy on its feasibility but really it rapidly turned into leading the Bid and to leading the way in which we acquire the information and the ideas; generating some of those ideas and then packaging them as well...There were a few ideas that came out of that which are like those pebbles with the ripples coming out elsewhere. I suppose the one guiding thing...was that the primacy of the idea is absolutely paramount - wherever it emanates from and that it's the idea that needs to be good enough and the concepts good enough - then that's what needs to be supported and pushed through. (Lancelot)*

Lancelot also indicates how desire can lead to becoming in the sense of “transformation of habits into new modes of existence: ‘new percepts and new affects’ (Deleuze, 1995, p.164):

*I think if the culture changes say even in a small way, then that's a good thing...I can remember putting in ideas right from the start of that which had come from no place but then which either survived intact or got augmented as the process went on; and then it became other folks' ideas and all the rest of it - which is absolutely grand because the*

*idea at the end of it or what will result from that will be a fantastic thing and wherever the original idea - I know there were ideas that were there before I came along as well - but I had the grit in the oyster thing. (Lancelot)*

“Percepts, according to Deleuze (2004), differ from perceptions in that they are independent of the person who experiences them; affects...differ from affections and feelings by going beyond the strength of those who undergo them, but also denote transformations in bodily capacities. So percepts and affects are separate ‘*beings* whose validity lies in themselves and exceeds any lived’ (Deleuze, 2004 cited in Allan, 2008, p.67). As noted in chapter three where I gave the example of Francis Bacon’s work, it is sometimes easier to understand what Deleuze and Guattari are alluding to from the perspective of a visual vocabulary rather than the written word. In discussing her photograph portraits, the artist Diane Arbus “was fascinated by how pictures that were purportedly factual and objective could also register the intangible” (Phillips, 2003, p.50). As she noted:

Everybody has this thing where they need to look one way but they come out looking another way and that’s what people observe. You see someone on the street and essentially what you notice about them is the flaw...Our whole guise is like giving a sign to the world to think of us in a certain way, but there’s a point between what you want people to know about you and what you can’t help people knowing about you. And

that has to do with what I've always called the gap  
between intention and effect" (ibid, p.57).

In attempting to describe performances in the cultural policy sphere, a number of interviewees also referred to the significance of encounters with others who engendered new ways of looking at things. For example, Caius comments on the significance of encounters with others for awakening desire:

*I've never been driven by a sense of, kind of evangelical  
duty - curiosity, a bit of fun when you can get it - and also  
informing oneself - and also meeting interesting people.  
Artists - they may be very deficient in some of the routine  
things in life, but you know, they heighten your own  
perception of life. So I think that's what's drawn me.  
(Caius)*

Caius goes on to describe further his motivation - his 'desire' - to be involved in the cultural policy community:

*I am never conscious of it being 'giving of time'. I suppose  
if I had had that approach and added it up, that's quite a  
lot of time. It never seems to be like that. (Caius)*

In terms of 'becoming' a player in the cultural policy community Caius sees his role as most useful and effective when challenging the status quo, being subversive almost and encouraging the same in others:

*I am not against people with environmental interests getting involved in Scottish National Heritage, but you know the idea of diversity has got to be tempered with some basic, interest, knowledge or enthusiasm. Otherwise you get a body that finishes up being pretty impotent, because people stay close to the shore. It's not that you don't want them to be radical, it's the very opposite - but the very time you need them to be, they must be up for asking what can we go for what can we change. (Caius)*

Almost intuitively, Caius understands that it is not written policy that necessarily makes the difference, but the ability to understand the dynamics of creativity itself - the role of knowledge, desire and becoming. He suggests that meaningful policy does not come about through process but rather as a consequence of seeking change and being challenging:

*Civil servants will invariably protect ministers from their difficulties and they will inhibit new ideas because they want a quiet life. I think you've got to be discriminating that you can get some quangos which just fall asleep. And therefore ministers have got to have quite vigorous expectations and you know be challenging...But what you*



*and I are talking about is the territory as to how you actually develop policy and... policy is not just about ideas on paper - but it is about making it happen. (Caius)*

Interestingly, some interviewees confirmed the significance of knowledge, desire and becoming for cultural policy by giving examples of its absence. Lal notes how the difficulties in establishing any sense of ownership for the National Cultural Strategy by the cultural policy community appeared to lie in the fact that there was no obvious source of desire for the policy existing at all:

*One of the things I found curious about it was that even if one couldn't find an original author, it became quite difficult to find strong enthusiasts for the idea. So it remained something which was owned by the bureaucracy rather than owned by the stakeholders which seemed to me to be fundamentally unsatisfactory, because one thing I was clear about was that the bureaucracy was almost certainly not the right place to produce something useful within this general description of what was desired; but the process didn't throw up anyone who said in effect, let me write that Cultural Strategy for you - so we ended up doing that internally and in a rather conventional way. (Lal)*

Without meaningful encounters with individuals or ideas there would be no awakening of desire or spontaneous emergence of enthusiasm and interest:

*I suppose one of the continuing puzzles was that I couldn't detect any desire for policy to change and that was one of the things that made it harder to construct what one might describe as an overarching rationale for a different policy direction and it seemed to me if policy was going to stay the same then finding the themes for the Cultural Strategy was harder in a sense. (Lal)*

Without desire, there was little prospect of a 'becoming' that could bring about transformation of old habits into new modes of existence:

*It was an unsatisfactory process. It was unsatisfactory, I think, because the design of the consultation process was not particularly innovative...it wasn't a process which stood much of a chance of reaching out effectively to new voices; and by capturing those who were used to expressing an opinion in the cultural debate, it served merely to reinforce the fragmentation of the debate, because by and large people who did engage in the consultation, and the numbers were not particularly large, expressed a purely sectional interest in the impact, and...were interested in increasing funding to protect their areas of the cultural spectrum. I suppose from the meetings I attended what struck me was that the debate*

*never caught fire in any discussion at which I was present and it seemed to me slightly surprising that one could talk about a subject that often arouses passionate enthusiasm, and manage to have a discussion that had neither of these things particularly evident. (Lal)*

This particular commentary by Lal gives the most compelling example of the interdependence of knowledge, desire and becoming - and their significance for the creation of authentic, vibrant and meaningful cultural policy. When desire is absent, becoming is not possible - and policy created in this absence is destined to be nothing more than a bureaucratic document bound for an existence gathering dust.

Analysis of my data suggest policy making is at its most productive and effective when its players are allowed to be unpredictable, to perform in unexpected ways, to be spontaneous and to follow new routes of thinking, being and becoming.

## **Smoothing Spaces**

For instance, as long as it was assumed that the earth was the centre of the universe, it was impossible even to conceive of the elliptical orbits of the planets (Strathern, 2000, p.20).

Earlier, I examined how old paradigms, 'grids' of knowledge and outside forces could limit ability to think and act differently. So too, if cultural policy thinking is framed by earlier

and familiar paradigms, new ways of developing cultural policy and producing culture will be impossible to achieve. The National Cultural Strategy of 2000 was viewed by many interviewees as an affirmation of existing policy rather than a blueprint for new directions. Although interviewees discussed and explored ways in which these practices restricted policy development, at the same time, they were able to give examples of how some new policy directions sprouted, despite protocols and hierarchical structures put in place to 'advance' cultural policy. For instance, although Lancelot experienced the limitations of working within old paradigms, nonetheless, he also discussed how he felt new ways of working and thinking would emerge and develop:

*We are more in control of our own destiny now and I think that is beginning to kick in with folk that we actually can shape things, we can listen to what people in our own backyard have been saying for a while and thinking - and start to shape things the way that we want to shape them. It's a lot to do with confidence, either the kind of abstract national confidence thing and also a personal confidence, and that is beginning to translate into a confidence of institutions to say: 'well actually, maybe we don't need to think in the Victorian mode anymore - maybe there is another way of doing it.' (Lancelot)*

What Lancelot is describing is the possibility of the addition of new ideas and players into the cultural policy mix; ideas and players that could create the circumstances for new

directions. Similarly, in discussing how cultural policy is developed, Caius regularly notes the need to engage with new people, as the main way of ‘sparking’ new ideas:

*It is terrific to meet interesting and different people, and people who have great talents and are quite different from yourself. And in the Arts, you need people with really heightened talents...It is quite important that you get people involved who are not just safe, process driven choices ...from these other things happened. (Caius)*

Importantly, neither Lachlan or Caius are suggesting throwing away existing norms or practices, but rather adding to them with a view to new directions and possibilities opening up. In Deleuze’ and Guattari’s thinking, they too do not suggest “tearing up the script, forgetting or destroying external political and economic institutions, as well as internal conventions and expectations, for one is then left with no relation at all. Instead, revolution occurs through making additions to the script, bringing in unexpected amendments by borrowing strategies from elsewhere...Liberation occurs through addition” (Goodchild, 1996, p.2). Caleb also notes the possibilities that could emerge from new connections and strategies:

*I can see a whole range of opportunities where, if we collaborate with other organisations, we can deliver the same for less by simply becoming more efficient...I’m involved with a number of organisations and a number of activities - a very broad range of activities and*

*consequently I come into contact with a wide range of people. (Caleb)*

What interviewees are describing or anticipating are the ‘rhizomic’, ‘lines of flight’ of Deleuze and Guattari - encouraging unpredictable and unexpected policy turns as language, connections and ideas move out of their comfort zones and travel in new directions of policy thought and development, breaking down and resisting what’s familiar. Yasin describes this very phenomenon as he explains how policy ideas were implemented:

*It astonished me some days that because you come up with an idea - you see things can very quickly find their ways through the system - we had allies in certain departments or certain senior officials and the trick is to get that right. It’s a bit like electricity.*  
*(Yasin)*

A key “feature of the rhizome is ‘that it has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, *intermezzo*...” (Allan, 2008, p.61). This in-betweenness, according to Deleuze and Guattari is a space where movement happens. This imagery is reflected in Lal’s describing of this introduction to cultural policymaking as “...a bit like walking into the middle of a play and you know there was a beginning to the play but you weren’t there for it” (Lal). Octavia, in describing the ongoing debate about cultural strategy in Scotland notes that neither she - nor anyone else - are clear as to

when the debate started; rather it has been a continuum with different directions and priorities emerging at different times:

*If I did know that, how and when the cultural strategy debate began, I honestly can't remember...I'm going to have a conversation ...off the record on both sides, because I want to understand what he's about...in informing his Minister...and at the other end of it, what we're about.*  
(Octavia)

Octavia also describes how networks and relationships were significant for other unexpected discussions, in effect taking a rhizomic direction:

*You would be party to things that were private, but equally that you could take from these exchanges and that information, things that would be useful in other contexts.*  
(Octavia)

In a similar vein, Tabitha notes the unpredictability of meetings and networks and how ideas can emerge unexpectedly:

*I think there are lots of very good examples of how that happens nationally when you are at something and you meet somebody from the Scottish Arts Council, and an idea begins to form because you find there is something in*

*common that's happening...and allows you to develop something. And also, that happens with organizations and with individuals. (Tabitha)*

This is a clear example of changing meanings, and following Deleuzian 'lines of flight'. Deleuze and Guattari also constructed the idea of 'deterritorialization', a process which was intended to unsettle, "seeking to knock existing understandings and ways of acting into a different orbit or trajectory (Roy, 1994)...It creates 'chaosmos', a term coined by James Joyce and which Deleuze and Guattari considered an apt account of the effects of deterritorialization: 'composed chaos, neither foreseen nor preconceived' and precipitating new ways of thinking and acting...The potential areas for deterritorialization cannot be specified" (Allan, 2008, p.62-63). All of the interviewees described how policy was constructed in unexpected ways - and rarely through formal networks - although text could and does have impacts, but not always in ways that are intended. Examples of these views can be seen in the following quotes from Aaron and Caius both of whom indicate that in their experience, cultural policy is developed regardless of written or prescribed strategies:

*I said things happen despite them (cultural strategies)...I would say at the end of the day...that you achieve things by getting to know the people, by talking to them face to face. There are some who you instinctively know you're getting somewhere; others, it's like talking to a brick wall and you're not getting anywhere. (Aaron)*

and



*It is an interesting comment as to how do these (policy) things happen. Where did I go - did I write a letter to say what is your current policy position - is there a recent paper - No. I spoke to the people round about and you got a very straight steer...they said well that's all very well in practice, but you should have had a consultative forum and where's the minutes of this and...I'm not undisciplined - I understand that, I'm not against that. But what you are talking about is the territory as to how you actually develop policy - policy is not just about ideas on paper - but it is about making it happen...I think all I could add is to say again that written policy is not what helps ideas develop and is not the means for making things happen. (Caius)*

Power and force can appear to hold similar meanings, but in the context of analysing social relations, they can have contradictory meanings - one controlling and restricting action, the other facilitating and transmogrifying it. In the foreword to Deleuze & Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus* Brian Massumi says: "Force is not to be confused with power. Force arrives from outside to break constraints and open new vistas. Power builds walls" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.xiii). Power and force both limit and challenge social structures, resulting in policy directions which can be either predictable or unpredictable, resulting in either more of the same or creating the circumstances for unexpected new routes and developments. However, it is clear that 'power' can operate in oppressive ways, 'building walls' (ibid, p.xiii) as discovered in the exploration of 'state power' within my

data. 'Force' however, can 'break constraints' (ibid, p.xiii), facilitating 'lines of flight' and opening up new possibilities and ideas for cultural policy development in Deleuze and Guattari's 'smooth spaces'. These spaces are non-hierarchical and although at first sight it may seem that cultural policy power rests with those appointed to positions within a traditional hegemony, what emerges is that the way this 'power' is exercised is actually more rhizomic and subversive than would be expected, and that the main distinguishing feature of productive engagement in the cultural policy community is the willingness to engage and "being alert to opportunities to interrupt" (Allan, 2008, p.63). Interviewees in discussing and exploring how they perform in the cultural policy community gave examples of both 'power' and 'force' and confirmed that often they engaged with policy ideas - such as the National Cultural Strategy - with no concept of a beginning or end, but rather moving in and out of the middle, colliding with other players and ideas and constructing new policy as a consequence - albeit rarely, a written down policy, but rather policy as practice.

## **Unintended Consequences and Unexpected Outcomes**

In the creation of cultural policy - and indeed art itself - it is often the unintended consequences arising from practising power and interplays between and betwixt ideas, experiences, individuals, places, timings and artefacts which in themselves elicit policy. For example, appointments to positions of authority can result in unexpected dynamics emerging in the policy creation process as new ideas, developments, experiences and characters are introduced to the mix; leading to exciting synergies as well as dissonances which can result in divergences and new developments. What is interesting is that it is

often the unexpected players who can influence and change direction of policy - for instance, opinion formers such as academics and the media. Ulysses noted:

*I suppose you could compare the newspaper to a parliamentary lobbyist, but one with some considerable clout. When I meet with government ministers, I am conscious that I'm not there as an individual, but as someone representing the interests of 300,000 readers in the West of Scotland...the impact we have had on the city's cultural life - a couple of examples would include the...siting of the...proposed new National Theatre for Scotland...the expansion and growth of the city's library service. (Ulysses)*

Similarly, Lachlan noted the impact of his paper's campaign regarding a number of arts matters, noting that they were the only paper to cover the debates. From the academic world, researchers can influence and/or qualify policy. Iain notes:

*(On the basis of my research) sportscotland do not claim that sport leads to a decline in crime; what they do say is that sport as part of wider programmes has a contribution to make. I think myself and number of other people involved in this research have led people to make more measured statements about what they can and cannot achieve...in certain circumstances I'm*

*conscious of what I have been able to do; that is to stop some people looking foolish by making claims in the presence of those who are deeply sceptical of them.*

*(Iain)*

All three believe and claim to have influenced cultural policy, yet their roles are not ones we would immediately assume to have such an impact on outcomes.

Indeed, one of the constant themes throughout the research is around perceptions of power - and assumptions made about key individuals and their power and potential impacts.

Certainly one of the unexpected outcomes in relation to some of my interviewees - especially concerning those perceived to be in the most powerful positions in the cultural policy world - was their feelings of 'powerlessness', and ways in which other players who were not always obvious in their influence, contributed through their actions in 'silencing' them, despite being on the face of it, significantly more powerful than was probably their - and others - experience. The following quote from Padma reads like a sketch from "Yes Minister" - but was told with real seriousness and frustration at not being able to influence or move things:

*I will give you an example very early on when I became aware that there was some interesting thinking going on around the whole area of Creative Industries.*

*Creative Industries asked to have a meeting with civil servants to discuss where we were in terms of thinking.*

*I wanted to find out if there was any joined up thinking*

*about the Creative Industries, if there were any links for example between Scottish Arts Council, Scottish Enterprise and Scottish Screen. I had great difficulty making any progress and I eventually discovered that the civil servants didn't think it was my area of responsibility and nobody said that to me - just that meetings never got set up. I kept having to ask for meetings and you know eventually got to a stage where I was having to make lists of all the things I had asked for because they were not happening. And then it became apparent - eventually I learned that the things that were not happening were because somebody didn't particularly want them to happen, because it maybe meant increasing their workload. (Padma))*

However, to say what is being spoken about here is 'power' would be an oversimplification of what the thesis is substantially concerned with: how decisions and policy are made, how influence is brought to bear, and how we develop and utilize a range of meanings for 'truth' and 'objectivity'. In the cultural policy world the axis of power and knowledge is not where it is often assumed to be; nor is it to be found in any one constant place, time or thought; or person or groups of persons. Foucault said a certain kind of freedom could be as restrictive as a directly repressive society (Horrocks & Jevtic, 1999). Certainly in the context of cultural policy development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, where one would assume and anticipate a certain freedom in the free-flow of ideas and theories, my experience, and the testimony of others, is that we think, debate and express our views within a tightly

controlled and circumscribed framework of ‘acceptable’ ideas, where to buck against the ‘correct’ cultural viewpoint is not only anathema to the ‘guardians’ of the cultural community - (‘guardians’ as defined in and by the media, published cultural treatises, and by those participating in the range of Scotland’s cultural events, receptions, conferences, gatherings and seminars) - but is also ‘punishable; by exclusion from networks, power and influence, and ridicule in public and private forums.

Indeed, as I have tried to reveal in earlier sections, ‘guardians’ in this context are rarely nouns and are often more amorphous, existing more in the realm of assumed values and judgements than in people, institutions or texts, with effects and impacts often not as recorded or assumed.

In summarizing Foucault’s treatment of power, Deleuze says that “power is not essentially repressive; it is not possessed, but is practised. Power is not the prerogative of ‘masters’, but passes through every force. We should think of power not as an attribute and ask “‘What is it?’, but as an exercise and ask ‘How does it work?’” (Kendall, & Wickham, 1999 p.50). This ‘how does power work?’ question has underpinned my research and in particular my data analysis - and the answers have on occasion been unexpected and surprising, and always intriguing.

### **Accidental Happenings, Serendipity and The Incubation of Ideas**

It is a cliché, but one which draws on numerous examples from experience and history, that ideas only succeed when their time has come. For instance, it is only a few decades ago that current ‘green’ concerns such as renewable energy sources were regarded as the

obsession of a 'hippy' and 'flaky' minority; yet now it is central to political debate nationally and internationally. Another example is the development of the idea of 'democracy' and how that has been activated in countries such as China and Russia; and in a cultural context locally in Glasgow and Scotland we see the increasingly high value - aesthetically and economically - given to Charles Rennie Mackintosh artefacts in comparison to relatively recent decades when his work was regarded as that of a minor artist.

Historically, one of the most significant examples is the Impressionists - lambasted in their day as poor craftsmen and bad artists and now lauded as world masters, changing how we see and look at the world and art; and in the musical world, following a long period of 'incubation' - and what the medical world now describes as depression - Rachmaninov composed some of his greatest works - his second piano concerto, a work which regularly tops classical music polls of the most loved piece of music of all time. Both in the creative process of creating works of art and in the world of developing policy and theory, incubation of ideas and importantly, emerging at the 'right time' have been pivotal.

Lancelot noted the importance of on-going dialogue for providing the capacity to insert ideas that would only come to fruition or be accepted after periods of incubation and/or debate:

*I'd already bounced some of these ideas off senior folk in the cultural sector, the Arts Council and what have you - I'd floated the ideas to see if there was going to be a currency about moving in this direction...But over*

*the past few months I've been kind of flagging that up quietly to folk to see whether or not there is the capacity or the interest in going in that direction. So when it actually came to write it that kind of reference had already been made and I didn't need to go back to it - and the physical act of writing itself - for something as major as that you're talking about twenty pages or something - actually precludes an awful lot of wide consultation. (Lancelot)*

In a similar vein, Caius describes how ideas can be introduced as part of a longer term process whereby ideas and suggestions incubate and emerge at appropriate times, when the idea “*will find its time*”:

*You know the idea that the national institution should be represented in Glasgow is I think absolutely correct and it will find its time. I was very proud that I led the first charge to the barricade - but I think it's often not on the small things, it's the big things, because from these other things happened. (Caius)*

Closely related to the incubation of ideas is the happy coincidence of an idea or event emerging in a significant ‘place’ at an equally significant ‘time’. Interviewees spoke about both the incubation of ideas and serendipity. For instance, Uma spoke of new directions in cultural policy becoming possible when I joined the authority and she “*discovered the first*



*day we met that we were broadly wanting to do similar things” (Uma). And Lancelot describes how his idea was picked up years after he had inserted it into cultural policy debate:*

*Three years after that pebble was first thrown in the pond I sat in a couple of meetings where people who had quite independently been thrown into the meeting developed the idea - and of course there’s great moves now to look at implementing my idea and so that’s grand - absolutely fantastic. (Lancelot)*

Caius specifically discusses the need to show willingness to lead initiatives and champion ideas especially when they are not particularly welcome:

*It is a challenging role I think you need to have for them. A robust frame of mind is needed by people...and if they don’t try - for examples we were nailed to the cross to try and get the National Gallery into Glasgow - and I still argue that it is not dead. (Caius)*

My data suggest that effective players in the cultural policy community understand the significance and roles of serendipity and incubation of ideas in developing cultural policy and as such are willing to insert ideas and concepts, even where there is initial resistance, intuitively understanding that their time will indeed come.

## Chapter 7: Conclusions

The aim of this thesis was to establish how cultural policy in contemporary Scotland is developed, with a view to offering those working in the cultural services sector fresh insights into the policy making processes and ways in which they can influence and more fully engage in cultural policy making.

Jameson proposes that in the postmodern world “everything in our social life...can be said to have become ‘cultural’” (Jameson, 1991, p.48), echoing Williams who thirty-three years earlier had declared “Culture is ordinary...(it) means a whole way of life - the common meanings” (Williams, 1958, p.1). Yet for many ‘cultural professionals’ (Holden, 2008, p.7), this very ‘ubiquity’ of culture means that the cultural policy environment can often appear opaque, obtuse and diffuse. It is in concurring with Jameson’s and Williams’s propositions and therefore acknowledging the centrality of cultural policy for society - concerned as it is with identity, meaning and our capacity to re-think and shape our past, present and future - that I believe we cannot afford to leave cultural policy making and practice devoid of practical and critical intellectual enquiry. Ahmed starkly illustrates the need for practitioners to engage in, and influence, the cultural policy community as she describes the danger in the powerful, yet dangerous ways in which signs in contemporary life are ‘stuck’ to bodies in an attempt to make sense of frightening world events: “the bodies who ‘could be terrorists’ are the ones who might ‘look Muslim’” (Ahmed, 2004, p.32). Only a few generations earlier, similar labels - ‘Irish’, ‘Catholic’ and ‘Working Class’ - and the stereotyping and assumed allegiances and attributes that came with these labels, were often ‘stuck’ to my and many other families, with a range of consequences for individuals, the community and society at large. The current relevance of this perspective

is reflected in the recent comments by Shaheed Sadullah, editor of the English language version of the Jang newspaper, on relations between Pakistan and the West and what he believes are misconceptions and misrepresentation of Pakistan's stance on terrorism and foreign policy. He said at least three times in his speech and question and answer session at the Scottish Pakistan Network meeting on 26 February, 2009 that "Pakistan needed understanding, more than millions" (of pounds) (Scotland Pakistan Network, 2009).

Whilst not directly referencing cultural policy, nonetheless it seems to me that what is being requested is engagement with issues of cultural identity, difference, acknowledgement and appreciation - leading to understanding.

For some professionals, cultural policy may seem at first sight to have little connection with such issues and instead, focus only on the technicalities of promoting performances, exhibiting artefacts, providing sports and leisure opportunities or 'developing' audiences. However, cultural policy and practice are inevitably value laden, providing signals, guides and interpretations for social practices and as such influence, fundamentally, the ways we live our lives and in particular how we regard, and behave towards, others.

As such, "cultural policy is centrally concerned with the kinds of 'culture' that are deserving of public protection and the kinds of policies that are best fit to achieve these objectives" (Stevenson, 2001, p.6). In an uncertain world, where the role and meanings of culture are for ever shifting and where public debates ensue as to what cultural forms, practitioners and advocates should be privileged - and consequently publicly funded - it seems more important than ever that cultural professionals are both mindful of the effects and consequences of their decisions and practice and are equipped to 'read' and help shape cultural policy discourse. In this chapter, I reflect on my research experience and then go

on to summarise my research results and discuss their implications for practice and research.

## **Reflections on my Research Experience**

Speaking to a number of doctoral students and academic staff over recent years, it would seem that my research experience has not been entirely unique. It is a strange paradox indeed, that the more I read, researched and tried to 'learn from' and 'understand' my data, old certainties disappeared, and increasingly, I was left feeling that I really did not know much at all about my subject. At some stages I truly believed that ignorance was bliss, as at least before undertaking this research I knew what I believed and regarded as 'facts' and 'the truth'. I had set out on this research quest hoping to find quick and easily understood answers to my research questions as to how cultural policy is made, how a cultural policy community is shaped and maintained, and probably the most important *unstated* question of all - how does one engage in this process and become a member of the policy community - by interrogating, through semi-structured interviews, fifteen key players in the cultural policy world. However, it was in the failure to find simplistic answers, and the subsequent questioning which arose from the challenges to, and deconstruction of, my firmly held views and concepts, that unexpected and other more illuminating perspectives and possibilities unfolded. Through the intellectual labour of the research process I came to recognise and eventually value, the incompleteness of my knowledge and understanding, as well as the 'failure' to achieve my original research ends, as this very awareness opened up and made possible, other ways of thinking and acting.

In chapter three I have outlined in detail my 'research journey', describing how in the course of my research, I moved away from a positivist direction to a more tangential, postmodernist approach, accepting, by the time I came to write up this thesis, that there were no definitive answers to my questions - an outcome in itself reflecting the nature, complexity and ever changing nature of culture, cultural policy and its policy community. However, this was not a straightforward linear transition, but was a case of moving backwards and forwards throughout the research and writing up phases between enormous self-doubt and exuberant clarity. Initially frustrated by the enigmatic and what often felt to be, unintelligible writings of theorists and philosophers categorised as 'postmodern', I eventually began to see that meanings were layered, nuanced and open to variable interpretations - insights which paradoxically began to bring clarity to my analysis, where before there had only been superficial readings. I also began to realise that even my research questions had hidden meanings - primarily for and from myself - an insight I have no doubt would have been missing from my analysis without the mental gymnastics (and anguish) resulting from my reading of the 'postmodernists'.

As I moved betwixt and between the 'blissfully ignorant', the 'despondent learner' and 'enlightened researcher', what emerged as being of greatest value and assistance to me, was the developing ability to 'read' and understand myself and the learning journey I had embarked upon: not in an overly self-indulgent way - for "if trapped (in this introspection)...I ran the risk of presenting a study that had become blatantly autobiographical...it would have been too much about me" (Peshkin, 1988, p.20). Rather, recognising - as a consequence of my reading and data analysis - that "the more we can understand how structural forces shape us, the more we can escape from those constraints"

(Finlay, 2002, p.534) I began to find in my data unexpected routes to answers and insights I found both uncomfortable yet at the same time, liberating.

When asked by colleagues, family and friends why I was undertaking this research, my answers were always broadly the same - I enjoyed the intellectual challenge of something which would 'stretch' me: the research contributed to my professional understanding, as well as giving some direction and recommendations for future practice. Importantly for me, the research was time limited, demanded an outcome and would be credited accordingly (hopefully with the accolade of 'doctor') and would exercise and strengthen the more reflective parts of my brain that I never got to use at work, where the priority was to make decisions, act upon them, evaluate outcomes and if necessary justify it all. Whilst this was all 'true', during the course of my research other reasons and motivations emerged as being key drivers - most of which I had been only subliminally aware of at the outset of the research process, and was not necessarily keen to acknowledge.

For example, throughout most of my professional life I had firmly believed that I could separate all things personal from my work place and practices. This was partly a consequence of starting my career at a time when there was little workplace sympathy for, or accommodation of, the needs of working mothers or their children and as such, 'proving' that I could separate one role from the other was an important factor in career progression and success. However, once married to a high profile politician - who eventually became the country's third First Minister - this separation of roles, and emphasis on what I regarded as professional 'autonomy' and 'objectivity' became even more of an imperative for me. And so I believed that I could engage in a professional and intellectual pursuit - this research - which would at one and the same time assert my professional (and

personal) independence as well as demonstrate total objectivity in my professional work policies and practices. It was the depth of 'embeddedness' of this belief and possibility, which in retrospect made my move from a 'positivist' perspective to a more postmodern outlook so difficult and lengthy. In short throughout my professional life I had been firm in my resolve to 'ignore' the unique knowledge and perspectives afforded by my professional, but more significantly, personal, roles, status and position, naively believing that merely adopting this resolve would in fact make it a reality. Notably, the EdD programme had appealed to me for the very reason that it linked research to professional practice, and therefore, in my mind, focussed even more so on a professional work space which had clear parameters, demarking it entirely from personal, non-work spaces: "the EdD offers an opportunity to think through the practice of professionalism on site...and implies a strong place for the research as a contribution to the development of professional workers in the field" (Brennan, 1995, p.20). Little did I know that the interrogative, reflexive and critical enquiry demanded by the research process - and my supervisors - would not only challenge, but systematically, and completely, undo, over twenty years' determination to keep my professional and personal life-worlds entirely separate by refusing to acknowledge the influence and impact of one on the other.

Whilst acknowledging in the abstract the importance of reflexive practice as advocated by lecturers and my supervisors, in the context of my own research, through years of practised denial, I was initially incapable of grasping the full meaning of the idea that "each person brings to bear his or her lived experience, specific understandings, and historical background" (Finlay, 2002, p.534). I continued for some time, believing that I could indeed keep all personal experiences from - as I saw it - 'contaminating' my professional understandings and practice, all in my mission to demonstrate personal and professional

autonomy. One of the most 'epiphanic' moments of my research was at a fairly advanced stage of my writing, when reading Blain and Hutchison's *The Media in Scotland* (2008) I realised that having a knowledge of the subjects of the book both from my experiences as a cultural professional - and probably more significantly as the wife of a former First Minister, where my struggle with the media to maintain and portray an identity separate to, and unshaped by, my husband's position and role was at its most acute - not only *did* give me a unique perspective, which until relatively recently I had tried to deny, but undoubtedly influenced my reading of the book, its assertions and applications to my research. Once I began to accept the influence and impact of both *personal* and professional experiences in the motivation for undertaking my research, the tenor of my research questions, the analysis of my data as well as the writing up of my conclusions and outcomes, facing up to, and challenging, my own and others' preconceptions, not only became easier, but opened up my data to new interpretations and meanings: "By this consciousness I can possibly escape the thwarting biases that subjectivity engenders, while attaining the singular perspective its special persuasions promise" (Peshkin, 1988, p.21).

As my research progressed alongside my reading I became increasingly aware of the feelings of discomfort, concurrence or confusion that the various answers from my respondents engendered. Reflecting on this and my original motivations for undertaking this research, it became apparent that these feelings were not simply where I disagreed or agreed with a viewpoint expressed, although this was part of it, but increasingly were to do with my value judgements and assumptions being questioned by what I was uncovering within the data. For instance, unsurprisingly I was aware of my affinity with data and other writing that affirmed or sided with my own views on the importance of widening access, cultural democracy and diplomacy (Mataraso, 1997, 2003; Bound et al, 2007; Holden,



2008) as well as antipathy towards views which eschewed anything other than an aesthetic appreciation of culture, or an 'arts for arts sake' perspective (Dawber, 2003; Burlington, 2007). Indeed, it became apparent to me during the data analysis and writing up stages that I had expected my deep rooted views about the connections between class, cultural policies, practices, hegemonies and priorities to be affirmed by my data. However, what had emerged from my data had challenged these views, suggesting that whilst there were indeed some connections as I had previously believed, the various ideological positions adopted and deployed were in their own ways, limited perspectives, stultifying new thinking and constraining policy making and practice. On the one hand we have the propagation of the idea that social inclusion in relation to cultural policy is unachievable:

Social inclusion policy in the arts is only ever a token gesture and it's about time cultural workers came clean. Those building their careers by offering it unqualified support overestimate the capacity of cultural processes alone to bring about social reform...class division delineates cultural competence, diminishing the inclination of the marginalised to engage with more rarefied aesthetic practices (Dawber, 2003, p.37).

At the other extreme there is the denigration of public/private partnerships in the cultural sector as 'morally' deficient:

In practice, partnership undermines democratic participation, boosting market ‘solutions’ over collective provision and reducing the capacity of workers to fight for the redistribution of resources. The gurus of cultural regeneration replace politics and ideology with various vacuous notions of partnership and culture (Cultural Policy Collective, 2004, p.38).

My research experience, which encompassed application of postmodern perspectives and reflexive analysis of my data, led me to see the limitations of a positivist approach and entrenched ideological positions; and conversely, the range of possible outcomes and understandings offered by opening up to alternative theories.

## **Main Outcomes**

Without intending to sound defeatist or defeated, in one sense the main outcome of this thesis is failure - failure to achieve a toolkit, a map, a template, a coherent set of rules or guidelines that will explain and simplify the process of working as a professional in the cultural sector. In summary, the answers and ‘solutions’ I thought this thesis would provide at the outset of my research have failed to materialise. Fortunately, having read Stronach’s yet to be published missive *Appreciating Failure, Depreciating Success*, passed to me by my supervisor, claiming ‘failure’ no longer seems as bleak a prospect as it may once have been. Stronach suggests that it is the list of “forgotten initiatives...failed projects, draft articles, job applications, incomplete papers, unused

notes” (Stronach, 2008, p.2) which represent a more truthful - if not more useful - account of our efforts than the ‘achievements’ eulogised in our CVs. Indeed his advice - “Success doesn’t need much understanding. Failure does. Get better at failing” and “Know what you don’t know. Knowledge is more useful than ignorance, of course. But knowledge *of* ignorance is even more useful” (ibid, p.3) could in fact be the main themes for the outcomes of my research.

Notwithstanding my failure to arrive at a ‘to-do’ list for professionals in the cultural sector aspiring to excellence and success, a number of meaningful outcomes did emerge. Firstly, the data suggest that professional roles and status are neither guarantee of power and influence nor of effectiveness as a player in the cultural policy world. Helpful as both can be, it would seem that the influential players in the cultural policy world are those who understand the ever changing nature of the policy world they operate within and are open to rethinking and shifting their views and strategies; in the words of Deleuze and Guattari, moving ‘in-between’ concepts and ideas. Stronach states that the key managerial skill is ‘luck’, although he qualifies this by saying “don’t think serendipity is just a matter of luck. Make your own by failing often and failing well” (ibid, p.3). As inferred by my data, this seems to imply that learning to read changes in policy contexts, being open to the unexpected outcomes and directions arising from ‘failure’, and willingness to try different approaches are more likely to lead to successful cultural policy development and outcomes, than rigid adherence to the norms of policy and practice.

In particular, my data suggest that learning to read and utilise myth, narratives and other signifiers in the development and maintenance of cultural policy and its community will assist understanding of the dynamics at play in the cultural policy world and improve

opportunities for active engagement. Blain et al note that the challenges in the twenty-first century of reading and comprehending the “signifying systems” (Blain et al, 2005, p.5) within which the political and policy world is understood are considerable, and that there now exist “extraordinary disparities between what citizens believe on the one hand, and the nature of the actual drivers of their social, economic and political lives” (ibid, p.5). The utility and significance of building ‘cultural policy reading’ capacity amongst practitioners therefore seems all the more imperative.

Another outcome is the key role of cultural policy in shaping identity, whether personal, community or national and as such the need for awareness of contemporary cultural developments, particularly those outwith the usual cultural policy paradigms, creating the possibilities of new cultural forms and cultural policy alliances. In this respect, due regard needs to be given to the spaces where cultural policy is created and there should be recognition that culture lives, breathes and metamorphoses more often than not, in unexpected, informal, atypical and unusual spaces. In particular, cultural policy has a key role in creating and determining the quality of the public domain, linked as it is to issues of inclusiveness, participation, democracy and interpretation of signs:

In an increasingly commercial as well as a more multi-cultural public sphere...claims that we protect languages, cultures and aesthetic pursuits from the logics of both capital and the state are likely to be heard ever loudly as we progress into the next century...the availability of public places where ideas, perspective and feelings can be shared in modern societies is crucial for the development

of self, the creation of social movements and the fostering of a critically informed public more generally (Stevenson, 2001, p.5).

For cultural policy professionals to be more engaged in effective policy making, understanding the significance of the public domain as a key space for cultural policy development - and of cultural policy as a key determinant in the quality of the public domain - is a pre-requisite.

Hopefully avoiding appearing too ‘new age’ or woolly-thinking, my data also affirm the power of the improbable and unknown. Just as Taleb notes that the three most impactful technologies on the world today have been “unplanned, unpredicted and unappreciated upon their discovery...and well after their initial use... the computer, the Internet and the laser” (Taleb, 2007, p.136), so too my data suggest that the most successful cultural policy is often that which develops almost in spite of, rather than as consequence of, cultural policy planning processes. This is not a negation of planning or bureaucracy but rather an invitation to find ways of being empowered rather than restrained by these processes. The economist John Kay purports that economic, business and social policy successes are often best achieved when “pursued indirectly. This is the idea of Obliquity” (Kay, 2004, p.1). However, both Kay and my data do not suggest that this is merely a game of chance, but rather require recognition that people and communities are “complex organisms, imperfectly understood, their functioning depending on social relations” (ibid, p.4) and that more magnanimous and philanthropic motivations and behaviour, not primarily concerned with self aggrandisement or profit, but rather humanity, growth, depth, freedom and a sense of civic duty lead to more authentic and effective cultural policy.

## **Implications for Practice and Research**

Having asserted that I failed in effect to establish a quasi ‘professional development’ programme from my research, I feel there is nonetheless some scope for observations about professional practice and the role of research in cultural policy development, if indeed not recommendations, based on the outcomes of my thesis. Perhaps one of the most useful findings is affirmation of the huge complexity of the cultural policy field, and offer of an assurance to professionals that contestation, argument, contradiction, diversity and change are the norm in this policy arena. But this should not be regarded as entirely negative - research, analysis, investigation and exploration can lead to new insights and fresh understandings. For me, the cultural policy arena can seem as opaque and difficult as Bachs’ Forty Eight Prelude and Fugues. However, through listening to, and performing some of these works, I have come to recognise not simply melodic themes and their joyful and profound interactions in counterpoint, but the eventual realisation that “Bach’s fugue subjects can become practically anything, making his fugues an almost continuous sequence of surprises (Barenboim, 2005, p.12): much the same way as cultural policy is created. Similarly, listening to and performing the works of Debussy, for example his Arabesque No. 2, where the themes seem to be at one and the same time within grasp, and then capriciously distant, I have come to understand that in the same way as Debussy “didn’t really ‘break’ rules. He MADE new ones...opening... a new field of technique with astounding new theories in the complex world of harmony, melody and rhythm” (Shealy, 1921, p.4), so too the dynamics in cultural policy making.

In a visual sense, the recent exhibition of Suzani Embroideries from Uzbekistan at the Burrell Collection (Al-Gailani, 2008) is a perfect metaphor for the cultural policy world. At first glance, the richness and complexity of the embroideries can be overwhelming, making it difficult to see or understand any of the details or patterns - without study, direction, close viewing and patience, the idiosyncrasies and unique qualities of each embroidery is missed. Indeed, without the expert interpretation and guidance of the Curator of Islamic Civilizations, I would have missed much of the meaning and symbolism of the suzanis exhibited. In many senses, for me, the postmodern theorists have been to my cultural policy understanding, what the Curator of Islamic Civilizations has been to my understanding of suzanis - and cultural policy is as complex, rich, varied, elusive yet full of meaning as the suzanis themselves.

Whilst it could be argued that cultural policy research in itself adds to the complexity of this already diffuse, diverse and contested sector, I would argue on the basis of my own research experience for greater dissemination to professionals of research from across the broad spectrum of cultural policy research described in my literature review. This could be through encouraging cultural professionals to participate in formal programmes such as the EdD programme and attendance at relevant cultural policy related conferences and seminars. More than this, agencies such as Creative Scotland should, as part of its remit, support and encourage cultural professionals to reflect on their own practice - through facilitating work exchanges, placements and/or mentoring initiatives, publication and distribution of papers and newsletters concerned with policy and praxis, and their influence on each other. Local Authorities should engage their cultural professionals in leading the development of area/city wide cultural strategies within the context of their Community Plans and in partnership with other public, private and voluntary sector organisations. In

particular, the roles of health, education, economic regeneration and other areas of expertise should be acknowledged in the cultural policy arena, and mechanisms established for sharing and distributing cultural policy best practice, the latest thinking and writing across all these discrete service areas. Importantly, the building of relationships with the academic community - including relevant health, education, economics and management disciplines as well as cultural policy departments, should be encouraged, facilitating the development of research and evaluation methodologies and dialogue appropriate to the diversity of cultural policy activity.

This would assist learning in reading and understanding cultural policy, as well as building confidence and capacity amongst professionals to better inform and shape cultural policy. For instance, my literature review was completed after the first drafts of my data analysis chapters - primarily because of the volume, scope and diversity of literature which could be deemed to be within the 'cultural policy' sector. It took the reading of a wide range of material I felt directly relevant to my working environment, experience and practice - much of which was categorised under different subject headings, such as 'Economics' and 'Management' - for me to acquire the discernment and conviction to include the diversity and range of material in my literature review. Some cultural policy researchers and practitioners may feel that some of the literature I have included is outwith their view of 'cultural policy'. However, by reading the wide range of material - including that which I found to be lacking in substance or robustness - and relating it directly to my practice, I gained the insight, and importantly the confidence, to assert my definition of the 'Cultural Policy' field. I wish I could suggest a quick and easy way to learn the language of cultural policy - but my data and research experience suggest that it is a life-long process arising from a genuine and authentic commitment to, and engagement with, the cultural policy



field - borne out of personal and professional enthusiasm for the subject and sector - and an openness to continuous learning.

My experience suggests that exposure to a wide range of research material, including that from fields often not recognised as being concerned with cultural policy - such as health, management and education - will in itself create “a space for the sympathetic hearing of difference” (I’Anson & Jasper, 2006, p.78) and open up for practitioners potential new spaces for exploration and engagement and the possibilities of new partnerships, policies and practices. Even within the cultural sector, openness to specialist but often marginalised areas such as disability arts which “strategically deploy *difference* in order to make a political difference” (Allan, 2005, 32) can lead to new encounters and possible change. In addition, my data would suggest that regular opportunities to ‘encounter’ new ideas and different ways of implementing cultural policy - whether through organised and structured learning, and/or through creative and imaginative staff and personal development programmes - are crucial in awakening the ‘desire’ as described by Deleuze, so necessary for innovation in, and development of, cultural policy.

In addition, cultural policy research has the capacity to expose and analyse the underlying paradigms and unconsciously accepted rationales for current prioritisation of cultural forms and allocation of resources, as well as help illuminate and give meaning to developments in the world at large. For instance, in a recent newspaper feature, Nick Cohen saw correlation between what he perceived as the mass-produced, outrageously expensive, and self-consciously superficial contemporary art, exemplified in the work of Damien Hirst, with (until the advent of the credit-crunch), our celebrity and money obsessed society (Cohen, 2009, p.8). Exposure to different cultural spaces could offer up new experiences and

opportunities for different kinds of cultural engagement with new participants and new audiences, rather than privilege those already engaged, those in the cultural policy loop and 'in the know'. My data show that it is possible to shift opinions and practice, create openings for change and take unintended and surprising directions.

As a cultural professional I believe that my research brings a particularly relevant and unique perspective, not least of all as most cultural policy research is developed from within the academic community. Encouragement of, and support for, practitioner-led research would undoubtedly bring valuable new insights to both academic enquiry and praxis. I have outlined the range of research already available which explores and examines the impacts of individuals and networks on cultural policy - for instance, Fleming has noted the impact of "increased education opportunity...for three decades or more in producing a much healthier cross-section of society amongst museum recruits than ever before" (Fleming, 2002, p.220) and the subsequent impact on museum curatorial policy directions. Upchurch has recorded and analysed the role of influential individuals and social networks on cultural policy outcomes (Upchurch, 2004, 2007). However, my research has attempted to augment this body of work by seeking to uncover and decipher the ways in which individuals and networks perform in the cultural policy community, how they mobilise others to engage and create new policy directions and how in doing so, occupy and shape the public domain. My data reveal that it is possible through research and analysis to learn to 'read' cultural policy and recognise and influence performances within the cultural policy community. Whilst some insights have been gleaned, I would hope that this research would provide a basis for further research by practitioners into the usefulness of such qualitative research for practitioner learning, as well providing the basis for further investigation into the practice and influences of cultural policy networks.

Certainly, intending this thesis to be relevant in both a practical as well as critical context, dissemination of its content, key themes and recommendations could include publication of significant elements or ideas in a range of professional journals and conferences - including those not primarily concerned with cultural policy, such as health and economic policy and practice. In addition consideration could also be given to more general publications, including broadsheet newspapers and the broadcast media, which increasingly cover discussion and debate around cultural difference and diversity and meaning and signs in the life-world. An important and not to be underestimated means of disseminating key messages from my thesis is undoubtedly discussion about its content with my work based colleagues, who will contest, concur or develop its ideas in their own writings, presentations and work practices. This is possibly the most effective and valuable means of dissemination.

With fast-moving and unpredictable societal shifts, the pace of life literally speeding up - “pace of life speeds up as study reveals we’re walking faster than ever” (Macrae, 2007, p.1) - and unfamiliarity replacing certainty, the ability through research processes, to inject a ‘pause’, a moment for reflection and bring new ways of looking, reading and thinking to cultural policy making and practice - “generating influence, rather than exerting control” (Stronach, 2008, p.5) - and engaging in reshaping the social world seems all the more exigent. In fact, it could be argued that in the contemporary world, developing capacity and confidence amongst a wider group of professionals and practitioners to question, challenge and where necessary, change accepted theories and practice, is all the more urgent a task. Commenting on the current economic downturn, economic journalist Anatole Kaletsky stated:

Academics - and their mad theories - are to blame for the financial crisis...All these 'guilty men' (bankers, politicians, accountants and regulators) behaved as they did because they thought it made sense...John Maynard Keynes said: 'Practical men, who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influence, are usually the slaves of some defunct economist. Madmen in authority, who hear voices in the air, are distilling their frenzy from some academic scribbler of a few years back (Kaletsky, 05/02/09, p.1).

Appealing as it does to our more base instincts to find yet someone else to blame for our problems, and to vilify and pillory another scapegoat, Kaletsky's argument is persuasive if only in drawing attention to the power, pervasiveness and function of theory in the social world - despite many thinking it irrelevant and for a narrow, academic interest group only. He calls for a "paradigm shift...realistically, economics today is where astronomy was in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, when Copernicus and Galileo had proved the heliocentric model, but religious orthodoxy and academic vested interests fought ruthlessly to defend the principle that the sun must revolve around the Earth" (Kaletsky, 09/02/2009, p.37). If challenging and holding to account economic theorists and academics is now regarded as an imperative, is it not just as important that we educate not only wider society, but specifically cultural professionals to think about, challenge and recreate, if need be, cultural theory and policy? If some economists can declare that "great progress has been achieved in economics: happiness has been seriously measured and many of its determinants have been identified" (Frey & Stutzer, 1999, p.2) - is it not a role for cultural professionals to be both aware of

this development and to question whether or not we can reduce “happiness to a scale of  $n$  categories (e.g. 1 = ‘not happy’, 2 = ‘fairly happy’ or 3 = ‘very happy’)” (Johns & Omerod, 2008, p.141)? Indeed, should cultural professionals not be in the business of articulating the profundity of T.S. Eliot’s assertion that “culture may even be described as simply that which makes life worth living” (Holden, 2008, p.10) and in so doing, advancing a cultural policy which “should be an essential part of a wider political democracy. A community of self-governing citizens, a *demos*...which understands, creates and reinvigorates itself through culture” (Holden, 2009, p.34)?

As demonstrated in this thesis, theory has the power to diminish debate and development if too rigidly adhered to, limiting the possibilities of new ways forward being imagined and closing off our receptiveness to different ways of operating. The diversity, depth and range of activities encapsulated within the cultural policy arena should offer almost infinite opportunities for new ideas, solutions, thinking and initiatives to emerge. Whilst the creation of merged ‘cultural policy and management’ departments within universities suggest a loosening of the ideological shackles which for too long kept the ‘cultural studies reformists’ and the ‘practice-orientated managers’ separate, universities, national cultural agencies, local authorities’ education, cultural services and economic regeneration departments could do more to improve the quality of interaction and dialogue. My experience of grappling with new ideas and theories that initially felt counterintuitive - in my case the postmodernists - has shown that theory can lead to new insights and understandings, as well as facilitate richer dialogue, cultural policy and praxis.

In a speech to the Royal Society of Edinburgh, the principal of Aberdeen University, Duncan Rice championed not so much the return, as he believes they have never gone

away, but greater public recognition and appreciation, of, the ‘public intellectual’ and their critical importance for “introducing a citizenry capable of reasoning, ethical choice, and contemplation of our shared culture and its relationship with other cultures” (Rice, 2007, p.1). He saw a diversity of ‘public intellectuals’ from within and outwith the university sector which could include Holden’s ideal of the contemporary cultural professional: “In relation to cultural democracy, the role of the cultural professional...should be that of public educator and public servant...it implies a mature relationship where the public recognises, respects and benefits from expertise, while simultaneously being alive to its dangers and able to question its credentials” (Holden, 2008, pp.31-32). My research experience suggests that with the right kind of support, and specifically a forward looking approach to staff development which includes opportunities to engage with cultural policy research, and “a reconfiguration of relations between academic and other sites of knowledge” (Brennan, 1995, p.20) cultural professionals could become key public intellectuals contributing to “reflection on the nature of the good life - of what makes us tick as a distinctive national culture or a democratic society” (Rice, 2007, p.1). Or as Clive James put it: “...after World War II, the best of the Labour politicians knew what the gentry had but wanted the working class to have it too, and they were right. Any state that tries to eliminate the idea of gracious living will eventually impoverish everyone except pirates” (Holden, 2008, p.30).

Finally, recalling previous discussion of my preconceptions, motivations and research experience, I have come to realise that a significant part of the motivation to both undertake this research and subsequently the framing of the research questions was to do with the simple question which is always at the forefront of my mind: “Does what I do have meaning and is it worth doing?” Although I failed to find simplistic answers to my

research questions, the challenge of the intellectual quest represented by this thesis led me to new insights and understandings about the nature, complexity, affordances and significance of cultural policy and its community - and the good fortune I have to be part of it. Whilst advocating both the development of practitioner-researchers and fluency in 'reading' cultural policy, my data and research experience suggest as discussed earlier that we first have to become successful 'readers' of ourselves - unravelling our intentions, motivations, prejudices and understandings - as well as acknowledging, and learning from our 'failures'. Only then can we have a more active and engaged cultural policy community, contributing - if not too grand a claim - to a more responsive and responsible world.

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## Appendix 1

### **Pseudonyms for Fifteen Interviewees, taken from “Babies Names, An A-Z To Helping You Find That Special Name” by Julia Cresswell, Collins, 2008**

<b>Date of Interview</b>	<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Pseudonym</b>
2003:		
22 April	TC (Test-case)	Tabitha
23 October	C	Caius
24 October	U	Uma
11 November	L	Lachlan
17 November	T	Tallulah
18 November	U	Ulysses
19 November	R	Robert
19 November	A	Aaron
20 November	L	Lal
21 November	P	Padma
26 November	O	Octavia
1 December	L	Lancelot
1 December	I	Iain
4 December	C	Caleb
15 December	Y	Yasin

## **Appendix 2a**

### **RESEARCH AND TECHNICAL QUESTIONS ASKED AT INTERVIEWS WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICERS/CIVIL SERVANTS/CULTURAL WORKERS/MEDIA & ACADEMICS/POLITICIANS/NATIONAL AGENCIES**

#### **RQ1 How were the National Cultural Strategy and Glasgow City Council's Cultural Strategy developed?**

##### **Technical/Prompt/Pick-up/Subsidiary Questions:**

- 1.1 What is, or what has been your involvement with the development of the National Cultural Strategy and/or Glasgow City Council's Cultural Strategy?
- 1.2 Roles in Cultural Strategy development in other Forums (for example Scottish Arts Council, National Galleries, Scottish Library and Information Council, sportscotland, regional and local cultural and sporting organisations.)
- 1.3 Who else was involved/who were the key players?
- 1.4 What were their respective roles? How did interviewee liaise/relate/interact with them?
- 1.5 What are their current roles in relation to National and Local Cultural Policy development? (Professional, political and personal).
- 1.6 What are their experiences of engagement in Cultural Policy development?
- 1.7 Ask for specific examples of situations/discussions etc that happened in the Policy development process.

- 1.8. Seek references if possible/available to verify examples given.
- 1.9. Did the National and Local Strategies relate to each other?
- 1.10. Seek some views on why that may have been the case and the process involved in helping them relate to each other.

**RQ2 What were regarded as the key justifications for establishing National and Local strategies and by whom?**

**Technical/Prompt/Pick-Up/Subsidiary Questions**

- 2.1 Pick up on interviewees understanding of how and why the National Cultural Strategy was initiated. Similarly with Glasgow City Council's Local Strategy
- 2.2 What were the grounds for prioritising a Cultural Strategy?
- 2.3 How was the case advanced?
- 2.4 In whose interests do you think the Policy was developed?
- 2.5 How were the competing interests negotiated?
- 2.6 Seek views on why it was thought a formal Strategy was essential at this particular time.
- 2.7 Probe further on attitudes toward the justifications presented explicitly or implicitly.
- 2.8 Seek examples of justifications.

- 2.9 Identify who was involved and their particular roles?
- 2.10 What/who were the internal influences (for example Scottish Executive's Special Advisors, Civil Servant Departments)?
- 2.11 What/who were the external influences in this process eg Scottish Arts Council, DCMS, Local Authorities etc)?

**RQ3 What were/are expectations in terms of Policy Impacts and by whom?**

**Technical/Prompt/Pick-Up/Subsidiary Questions**

- 3.1. How were/are Impacts defined/evaluated and by whom?
- 3.2. What were/are the consequences of achieving/not achieving these Impacts?
- 3.3. Were the expectations in terms of Policy Impacts of National and Local Cultural Strategies explicit?
- 3.4. Probe as to how they became aware of these expected Policy Impacts and ask for examples.
- 3.5. Seek identification of others, organisations or individuals involved in defining Impacts.
- 3.6. Seek attitudes to Policy development and attitudes to those involved in the process.
- 3.7. Seek practical examples as to how relationships between key players were forged and maintained.
- 3.8. Seek opinions on how new directions and ideas are accommodated and ask for examples of this process.



**RQ4 What has been the impact of National Cultural Strategy and/or Glasgow City Council's Cultural Strategy on Policy and Practice?**

**Technical/Prompt/Pick-Up/Subsidiary Questions**

- 4.1. If there are impacts, ask for examples and views on how and why these impacts happened.
- 4.2. If the view is there has been no Impact ask why this has been the case and ask how current policy and practice have developed.
- 4.3. Ask for examples, key players and descriptions and views on how this process evolved and developed?

## **Appendix 2b**

### **ADDITIONAL RESEARCH AND TECHNICAL QUESTIONS ADDED AFTER TEST CASE/PILOT INTERVIEW**

**RQ5 How are individuals or organisations identified and consulted regarding  
Cultural policy development and decision-making?**

#### **Technical/Prompt/Pick-Up/Subsidiary Questions**

- 5.1. Who, or what organization would you choose to consult with regarding cultural Policy development or decision needing to be made?
- 5.2. What kind of issues or decisions would you want to discuss with them?
- 5.3. Ask for examples, key players, descriptions and views.
- 5.4. Why would you choose this organization or person?
- 5.5. What do you believe are the particular strengths of this individual(s) / organisation? Give examples.
- 5.6. How did you come to know of these attributes? Ask for examples, incidents etc.
- 5.7. How would you initiate contact and discussion with them? Ask for examples.
- 5.8. How long has this association existed with this organization/individual(s)?
- 5.9. What would you describe as the commonalities between you and them?

## **Concluding Questions**

Q6 Is there anything else you want to say about this topic that I haven't asked you?

Q7 Finish off by thanking interviewee; noting when transcript will be done for their viewing/amendment and outline what happens next.

