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Popular music policy making and the Instrumental Policy Behaviour Process

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Abstract

Popular music policy making incorporates the art and rationality of 'governmentality'. In doing so it seeks to move beyond benign policy making efforts and some of the prevailing approaches to cultural policy studies – primarily arts policy – to apply interventionary strategies into the space dominated by global recording companies. Major recording companies and the business-as-usual approach of Return on Investment dominates local and national popular music through the macro-level perspective of global trade regimes, thereby avoiding the micro-level activities needed by citizens locally. Critical approaches to the potential loss of localised music production in the face of globalisation are drawn from the heterodox, interdisciplinary schools of institutional economics which, in this case, uses instrumentalism to create a model that insists on research-based popular music making policies that respond to citizen needs. Using examples from the Australian experience, the Instrumental Policy Behaviour Process (IPBP) is proposed as a model for generating localised, resource-allocating approaches to popular music policy making.

Sometimes I get it wrong but I'm not the only one.
'Slow Jam', *Get Ready*, New Order, 2001

Introduction

In the collision between the advanced capitalist logic of a globalised post-industrial society and national governments, there is a lot of wreckage. Musicians' careers are destroyed and dreams go up in smoke when popular music thrives only as a marker of contemporary mores, trends and social and political fashion, which positions the marketplace as the dominant measure of accomplishment. Somewhere in the mix, government has an important role to play in offering musicians and their public the sounds and sensations that go beyond the next international sensation. This is the space of popular music policy making, where the struggle between global corporations and local music making highlights the pleasure of music making and the need to hear it, consume it and celebrate life in specific social spaces. There are few if any models for how to proceed in this quest for popular music policy making, yet there are powerful academic tools available that can be applied to the task of building frameworks that work at local, national, even global levels, drawing on incipient cultural policy making strategies.

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The issues that popular music policy making highlights can be incorporated within the traditions of institutional economics and instrumentalism. In both traditions, the approach is critical. That is, these traditions promote interventionary policies initiated by governments to support and enhance the musical engagement of citizens. This occurs while acknowledging the complex ways the commodification of culture negotiates both the exchange value and the use value of popular music and thus detailing the knowledge needed to explain the processes of production and consumption. Such an approach recognises that markets fail and the role of government is to support musicians and the infrastructures they use to make and deliver music in the localities in which they live and work. The principle of 'a role for government' has become somewhat orthodox within development policy since Michael E. Porter's study *The Competitive Advantage of Nations* (1990) and can be seen as a methodological engine supporting selective popular music making policy initiatives. The Instrumental Policy Behaviour Process used here encourages concept building that does not leave popular music to the marketplace alone, while encouraging policy activism that engages the full range of local and global musical activity.

Approaching popular music policy studies

Popular music policy making is no easy task. It has to navigate its way through what the American writer Gary Willis characterised as 'a necessary evil'. In this negative view of government (adapted from John Locke's notion of social contract), Willis argues that 'a vulgarised theory . . . teaches that government is founded on a necessary *loss* of freedom, not the *enhancement* of liberty' (Willis 1999, p. 297, italics in original). This vulgar theory is a virulent form of political libertarianism that has spread in concert with a US-centric style of 'free' market economics in the current World Trade Organisation-era of globalisation, or neoliberalism (Bourdieu 1998). Government and its policies are seen as limits, buffers to progress and above all, constraints to economic growth. In contrast, Willis argued that seeing government and all it has accomplished as 'a necessary good' incorporated the broad sweep of services undertaken by the state. Indeed, if the positive aspects of government and policy can be re-imagined, then the task of making popular music policy will be enhanced. The challenge is to create a theoretical structure that incorporates some universal truths about the advantages of government policy and apply that to the cultural realm, then more specifically to popular music policy making. Such an enterprise will work across interdisciplinary fields. Michel Foucault noted that the process of creating government policies can be characterised as 'governmentality', which incorporates both art and rationality (Foucault 1991, p. 91). Popular music policy making requires this combination of art and rationality in order to meet the needs of citizens in a world where such needs are increasingly subsumed by the irrationality of the market and its aggressive proponents.

This article argues that the art and reason of governmentality is more challenging than other forms of policy making when popular music policy making is the objective. The reason for this is that popular music policy making is imbricated, as a matter of necessity, with 'the market' yet in its essence popular music is aligned with 'the people'. These alignments generate a struggle between both interests: the exchange value and the use value. (Appropriating Foucault, rationality suggests that the market will bring the greatest rewards, while art tells us that pleasure is its own reward.) The political economy that results from acknowledging these dual concerns

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takes both interests into account in attempting to create a democratic popular music policy regime that modulates multiple articulations between the policy making process and abstract concepts such as citizenship and capitalism. Furthermore, this political economy recognises that popular music policy making is somewhat like development policy: it needs committed theory building and analysis to enable the best outcomes to emerge from the struggle between art and commerce.

A 'popular music policy formulation' has been previously proposed to explain how policy negotiates use value and exchange value within a system of commodification (Breen 1999, p. 211). Consequently, at certain moments in recent history (such as those documented in the 1993 publication of the anthology *Rock and Popular Music: Politics, Policies Institutions*), incipient policy attempts have sought to ameliorate the hegemonic power of the market so that governments could develop popular music policies. Despite these moments, the prevailing scenario has seen the popular music industry generate standardised global fare, floating free of local production attributes, much like a manifestation of 'free' capital, where the ethic of the global market sublimates localised activity (Harvey 2005). Interventions by governments into global popular music circulation have been informally characterised by free market proponents and most classically trained economists as an unacceptable hindrance to the freedom of popular music to do what it has always done – move unhindered in a global system of exchange. In this sense, popular music policy can be seen as a limit on the magical beneficence of the market (its 'hidden hand'), which has taken on such power that calls have been made to fence it in, lest it run away with 'enfeebled, overburdened states' (Habermas 1999, p. 425). Ultimately popular music policy can be caught within the extremes of two vulgar theoretical assumptions: (i) popular music just happens, and (ii) the market will provide. Such an ideological pincer movement cannot easily be assailed with the common sense of policy making.

While resistance to the ideology of the market may appear to be futile – especially in the face of highly orchestrated corporate campaigns to facilitate unfettered global circulation and the pleasures of consumption that accompany it – there are other forces afoot. These forces have been organised around cultural policy making driven by research into localised meaning making that has moved from the rhetorical and the critical through the interventionary work of critics such as French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, to the practical. Colin Mercer has suggested that a 'cultural movement' has emerged that expresses the desire of governments and policy makers to incorporate culture in its broadest sense defined by an understanding of relationships:

> of tension, conflict, reciprocity – with the broader and bigger-picture issues of economic development, community regeneration, social inclusion, diversity, *convivencia* (learning how to live together) and, ultimately, that elusive but measurable quality of life. (Mercer 2003, p. 1)

This view of political economy involves management of the relationship between the market and the corporations that dominate it, the state and its citizens in the context of globalisation.

For its part, cultural policy making is a pragmatic turn in the history of political economy, in that it incorporates a commitment to the state's role in determining how cultural capital is enhanced, while acknowledging the power of (money/finance) capital. Approaches vary from nation to nation and culture to culture, but they cannot avoid the charge, made by Edward W. Said when discussing some of his motivations for writing *Orientalism*, including that he was '. . . consciously trying to express

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dissatisfaction at the consolidated walls of denial that had been built around policy analysis studies passing themselves off as uncontroversial, essentially pragmatic scholarly enterprises' (Said 1993, p. 41).

The type of cultural policy making advocated here will often be controversial because it is ultimately political: insisting that the state take seriously the allocation and distribution of resources for popular music. *This* cultural policy studies does not readily accede to the limitations on market regulation that democratic states increasingly promote. The process of, and struggle over, resource allocation – the basic tenet of economic analysis, and in recent years a principle of liberalism abused by political parties of every democratic mainstream complexion – concedes citizen interests to the dominant ideology of free markets, seeing the role of government as facilitating market activity in the WTO-era of globalisation. This development model pushes hard against and rejects explicit attempts at cultural policy and associated social provisioning. Pro-market advocates ask why policy is required when popular music culture comes delivered by the hidden hand of the market. Consequently, and as something of a survival tactic, cultural policy making writes and works against, yet within free market policy. The inherent contradiction is that cultural policy seeks out then manages the 'crack in everything, that's how the light gets in', as Leonard Cohen put it in his song 'Anthem' (1992). More technically, cultural policy making takes the traditions of critical discourse, setting up normative objectives that are expressions of democratic aspirations (McQuail 1994).

These generalisations about the terrain traversed by a discussion of cultural policy studies require a codified set of normative proposals. In other words, there is a requirement for empirical data (measurement), as Pierre Bourdieu's work on assessing cultural capital made clear, and as Tony Bennett noted in comments recorded in *Cultural Studies:* '. . . people with the capacity to do sophisticated statistical and economic work have a major contribution to make to work at the cultural studies/policy interface – perhaps more than those who engage in cultural critique' (Bennett 1992, p. 35). Consequently, there is a need for critically engaged, research-informed policies that deliver needed services. The question then becomes two sided. The first concerns the structural issue: what government agencies and institutions exist to take responsibility for policy research and the implementation of popular music policy?; secondly, what empirically informed, critical approaches are adopted within those institutions to create, develop and deliver popular music policies?

Institutional economics to instrumentalism

One error that popular music policy studies makes is to believe that it is inventing the field. The more likely reality is that the ideas and resources for cultural policy making have been established for nearly three generations in Western democracies, making it possible for popular music policy making to ride the coat tails of the existing bureaucracy and state infrastructure, if available. Quite simply, the liberal state apparatus is a generic public interest system of administration.

The example from Australia's experience illustrates this point. In this case, the value of the existing public administration structure became apparent when the Federal Government and some state governments attempted popular music policy initiatives in the 1980s and 1990s (Breen 1999). The efforts at popular music policy making happened at Victorian state and then federal government levels as a result of the election to government of social democratic-oriented Labour Parties. Initiatives

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were taken to establish institutions that would facilitate and enhance local music making for young people, including instructing musicians in song-writing and performance, as well as training in support service expertise for road crews and band management. However, knowledge about the popular music industry at this time – in the early to mid-1980s – was captured within the music industry. The idea of acquiring knowledge by conventional educational methods was unheard of. The prevailing expectation embedded by record company executives and employees and reproduced by rock musicians, was that 'the school of hard knocks' would allow the 'talent' to flourish. This view, loosely derived from the notion that good popular music emerges much like good writing from some sort of writer's garret, meant that popular music policy needed to position itself to confront a significant prejudice against policy making itself. For their part, the policies had to be shown to be relevant to the everyday educational needs of young people. Furthermore, the Australian initiatives emerged against a pronounced recession in which young Australians were enjoying the fruits of successful bands such as Men At Work, INXS and Midnight Oil. The prospects of encouraging young people to participate in popular music policy making helped provoke the policy initiatives at a local level, while the appeal of export income generated by major offshore success played into the idea of popular music as a source of macro-economic activity when measured in terms of such esoteric standards as national productivity.

Insights from the Australian experience suggest that resistance from the established music industry majors made it difficult for the state to build the institutions necessary to support multiple stakeholder needs. On one level, the policies were directed at training young people, while in contrast, the music industry needed to maintain its global perspective, based on seeing Australia as a healthy market for major new releases and a resource for new talent. Unsurprisingly, the music industry was not directly involved in the policy making, neither funding programmes nor organisations that served a public good. The task of establishing institutions to deliver the popular music policies within a broad framework of youth policy worked most effectively at local or community based levels, where bands performed as the result of modestly funded song-writing workshops and clinics. Meanwhile, industry representatives from major Australian companies were occasionally involved on boards and in an advisory capacity, while the majors were generally noticeable by their absence. This changed when Australian music copyright law was reviewed by the Prices Surveillance Authority in 1990–1991 and the majors became antagonistic in resisting Federal Government plans to end importation monopolies with parallel importation rights.

In documenting the Australian effort at popular music policy making, it was clear that the major sticking point for policy makers was the epistemological vacuum about the operations of the music business. The policies were launched into bureaucracies and local support structures where the knowledge vacuum of the music business constrained informed policy making at the points of greatest need. Nothing could prepare the politicians, the activists, the researchers and administrators from traditional (that is, non-popular) arts bureaucracies and state-sponsored organisations for the type of negotiations required to work with the globalised popular music industry in a national setting. It was a complex and unequal power relationship. And while there were limited resources to draw on for popular music policy making knowledge, a healthy bureaucracy existed that was committed to arts management in line with reformist Labour Party policies. Indeed, there were commitments to

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intervene in the business-as-usual activities of the music industry, which required that new knowledge be created based on specific national cultural formations – the needs and interests of local music producers and consumers.[1] In the Australian social-democratic context, there was no need to invent the bureaucracy, but there was a need to inform, educate and empower it to implement popular music policy. The fact that bureaucrats had been, and continue to be, devalued and under-utilised in the face of the market-oriented political attacks promulgated by free market libertarians in the lead up to the WTO-era, made its task much more difficult. Furthermore, the principles underlying (what Americans refer to as) public policy have been established and agreed and can be read as a set of behavioural principles. Generally, policy does one or more of the following:

- it reconciles conflicting claims on scarce resources;
- it establishes incentives for cooperation and collective action that would be irrational without government influence;
- it prohibits morally unacceptable behaviour;
- it protects the activity of a group or an individual, promoting activities that are essential or important to government;
- it provides direct benefits to citizens (Theoroulou and Cahn 1995, p. 2).

The question is, where to go for the 'tradition' that incorporates these principles. Popular music policy advocates can look to existing models of public administration as well as critical development theories to enhance the opportunities for interventionary initiatives. Within the academic domain, there are two inter-related pathways that have been under researched and overlooked. The first, institutional economics provides a critical entry point to the ideology of 'market logic', while the second, instrumentalism, builds on institutional economics to offer a conceptual model for establishing and implementing policy requirements. Both areas share a commitment to a political economy of 'enlightened intervention' into economic theory and orthodoxy (Rima 1997, p. 1).

Institutional economics

Institutional economics bases its currency on the work of Thorstein Veblen who was a vociferous critic of excesses that accompanied the rise of US industrial capitalism in the early twentieth century. His best known work, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, traced the emergence of the middle class and the socially backward yet economically powerful forces that generated unproductive activities such as 'conspicuous consumption' (Veblen 2001). Veblen's numerous books included an animated, progressive economist's perspective on runaway consumer capitalism and the likelihood that public policy would struggle to stand for the public interest as the culture became defined by market interests alone. This critique offers contemporary cultural critics and policy makers a means of laying claim to alternative approaches to market determinism, by recognising that the historical roots of the contemporary political economy are not only conceived by the market, but have antecedents within critical practice. Fundamentally then, institutional economics offers optimism in the face of economic triumphalism and concomitant cultural policy defeatism.

Veblen's theoretical work was endorsed and supported by John Commons, whose 1931 essay, 'Institutional economics', pressed for a system of public management of market economics that was morally based and dedicated to the public

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interest. Within the US, Commons established a resistive school of ethically driven social science based on an advocacy model that incorporated both individual and social interests within institutions that reflected 'collective intentionality' (Hodgson 2006). Of course, collective intentionality itself is open to nuanced interpretations. For example, in the contemporary US policy context, collective intentionality has promoted the view that government is a 'necessary evil'. As former Labour Secretary Robert Reich noted, contemporary US society can be characterised as 'a culture of impertinence', where the civilising influencers of political discourse are set aside by impatient entrepreneurial ambitions (Reich 2006). This can be contrasted to the regulated system of Western Europe's planning regimes based on the principle of universal services to all citizens (Rifkin 2004).

For institutional economics, business interests and the public interest coexist in a pragmatic, humanistic environment. In the US, the *Journal of Economic Issues* is the primary example of institutional economics, reflecting the marginal yet strongly felt oppositional views of progressive economists and social scientists. The ideas associated with the just cause of collective interests have been advanced by both academic and public policy bridge builders. Indeed, it could be argued that institutional economics produced a beach-head for a movement that viewed policy as an instrumental tool. The list of protagonists includes people such as Beatrice and Sidney Webb who influenced the formation of the London School of Economics, Aldoph Lowe, John Maynard Keynes and Robert Heilbroner, among others. While this is not the place to review their contributions in detail, suffice to say their normative ambitions played out in policy activism to reflect a commitment to heterodox approaches aimed at the provision of resources across society through institutions that reflected the depth and range of citizen's interests, by drawing on interdisciplinary approaches from anthropology, psychology, politics, sociology and history (Forestater 1999).

As a system of engagement, instrumentalism pushed enlightened interventionism in line with what become known as 'the Keynesian revolution'. Adolph Lowe and Keynes produced the intellectual foundations for instrumentalism which aimed at creating a set of plans for the economy. In this model, as Robert Heilbroner put it, Adolph and Keynes produced 'blueprints depicting possible routes from present realities to desired destinations' (Heilbroner 1992, p. 1025). More precisely for the purposes of this paper, the plan was 'to reengineer the range of micro choices to those that are consistent with the macro outcomes society desires' (Rima 1997, p. 1). This approach emerged during the Great Depression in the lead up to the New Deal in the USA, when democratic theory was reconfigured around citizen interests and regulation to produce equitable goals for society.

Instrumentalism combined with liberalism to offer a philosophy of generosity – a 'duality' of theoretical economic welfarism and social fulfilment through 'the marketplace of ideas' (Napoli 1999, p. 151). In the years after World War 2, liberal philosophy tolerated the rise of a multiplicity of political opinions, while failing to recognise that its tolerance offered the advantage to its opponents – specifically, those economistic proponents who objected to liberalism's social openness and took the marketplace of ideas to mean the dominance of *their* economic ideas. This narrowing of economic options resulted from liberalism's naïve belief that a common sense approach to economic, social and cultural diversity would be maintained in line with New Deal progress. As liberal post-World War 2 governments sought to balance individual interests with collective ones, the collective gave way to the prevailing social order, where the ideology of the market gained supremacy and

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where individuals were pitted against one another in a quest to realise economic theories based on ideas of competition as nature. Known as the 'conundrum or riddle' of instrumentalism, the challenge of instrumentalism was making personal freedom compatible with the social order of the market (Rima 1997, p. 8). The question for popular music policy making, therefore, is how to navigate through the conundrum, to find the policy instrument that will directly impact the delivery of services to meet citizen needs. Answering that question will mean that the instrument will produce either blunt or sharp interventions, depending on the prevailing context. Blunt intervention would include education and training for musicians and industry managers, while sharp intervention may include requirements for specific demands for investment by major record companies in the development of national popular music industry and culture.

These days, the current context is defined by the dominant economistic social order, especially when seen from the international standard or benchmark, namely US business culture. Despite considerable debate, there is little doubt that in the WTO-era, 'monetary essentialism' has gained the ascendancy over democratically inclined models of instrumentalism (Hardt and Negri 2004, p. 155).

Cultural studies in the corporate context

Cultural studies – especially the UK version streaming through Raymond Williams and Stuart Hall – has offered a way of analysing, reading, imagining, and practising a politics of counter hegemony to business culture's hegemony. This has been a necessary antidote to the raging success of the ideology of US business on a global scale. The US globalisation imperative dominated by US corporations and advocated by US governments is ideological in its constitution. Over many years it has achieved hegemony, not only since the World Trade Organisation was formed in the 1990s, as the popular argument goes, but since the 'Open Door Policy' stretching back to President McKinley in the 1890s which became 'America's version of the liberal policy of informal empire or free trade imperialism' (Williams 1972, p. 97).[2] Somewhat curiously, cultural studies and its offspring cultural policy studies, have timorously responded to the hegemony of the US business culture and its impact on popular music. The exceptions are rare, although the work of Tony Bennett and Colin Mercer provide an entry point for cultural policy making within a nuanced framework, which can expand the knowledge horizon for specific policy shifts within a broader political struggle (Massumi 2002, p. 224). In this framework, popular music should sit quite comfortably, yet it is ill equipped for the full frontal demands of the business environment. This is because the prevailing business environment of the music industry is and has been set by the trade imperialism model of the hegemon. In contrast to the implicit pessimism of this synopsis, instrumentalism can be invoked to create a model for media and communications policy making based on a belief in the applicability of normative theory, where the intersection of business and public concerns requires an administration system which intervenes in the marketplace aimed at positive and equitable resource allocations for all citizens.[3]

This approach can be linked to the rise of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). There are a number of approaches to CSR. For example, the self-regulated model of most CSR approaches aims to promote sustainability and reduce social exclusion (Aaron 2002, p. 3). Knowledge of capital and the behaviour that emerges as a result of using institutional economics and instrumentalism will critique the often moralistic,

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ameliorative approach sometimes adopted by the CSR school which accommodates money capital in a move that ultimately makes few, if any public interest demands on firms and policy makers. Despite these criticisms, CSR can be viewed as a tactical means for establishing a public policy beach-head for democratically informed, state-managed resource allocation. On the other hand, CSR can be characterised as cynical corporate opportunism. Instrumentalism refuses glib opportunism by making demands on private, capital-rich firms that use CSR as a public relations exercise to fend off demands for resource allocation and social provisioning.[4] It is within this kind of complex corporate 'space' that popular music policy needs to operate and negotiate its way forward.

Instrumentalism just says 'no'

Recording companies operate seamlessly across the 'mediascape' of the global market(ing)scape, at least when viewed through the lens of the pre-Napster era of disruptive digital technology (Apadurai 1990). That is to say, popular music policy now walks a series of multiple pathways, where the industry system of production and distribution control has been ruptured by Internet networking technologies that 'rob' record companies of control. As if to emphasise just this point, Disney chief Robert Iger summarised the digital turn's impact on the traditional music industry when he said in May 2006: 'The consumer is now king. Today consumers have far more control over where, when and how they consume media'. Then to illustrate the kind of bottom-line financial orientation of the industry, he added: 'By focusing on protective legislation rather than marketplace dynamics, the music industry lost billions during the period 2002 to 2003' (Bray 2006, p. E3).

Despite the digital turn, the traditional model of popular music production – find artist, sign contract for minimal return to artist and maximum return to risk-taking global corporation, invest in recording/video, establish global marketing campaigns, guarantee monopoly control over sales and distribution and where possible own all Intellectual Property Rights in perpetuity (OK, change the Copyright Act to make it the life of the author plus 70 years), insist misleadingly that all business is 'in the interests of the artist' – still sees executives from the major companies coordinating releases by the likes of Madonna, Bob Dylan and Jay Z in orchestrated global marketing campaigns designed to maximise sales, have cultural impact and the clincher, realise Return On Investment (ROI). ROI itself has generated a universal language for business that has followed the global money markets' insistence on value being reduced to quantified profit results. This macro-level perspective offers an entry point to the imperatives of global music production-consumption and the global trade regimes that enhance corporate profitability, to the detriment of micro-level musical activity.

This approach incorporates a form of brutality that has been the point of struggle over generations. And while the nature of capitalism has been thoroughly theorised and analysed around the surplus value issue from Marx on, the way popular music companies are incorporated into the ideology of the market has meant that the reign of ROI has been tacitly accepted by policy analysts in one of those pragmatic and ultimately non-resistive moves that Edward Said complained about. If popular music policy makers were to address this subject more directly and thereby cut what amounts to a knowledge gap, they would improve their understanding of how the industry works and thereby build possibilities for intervening into the ROI system.

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Similarly, if policy makers were engaged with the process of commodification and its numerous constituents, the successes and failures of the market could be responded to with improved policy precision. Furthermore, industry insider details, such as those provided by Courtney Love (2000) about record company contracts, clarify how the music business operates and thus where policy activity and intervention could take place: in Love's case by insisting on guarantees of income for artists with recording contracts, or writing off recoupment demands to artists whose records do not sell.

The question is, at what point should an instrumental approach stand fast against the business-as-usual profit approach of the popular music industry? Instrumentalism insists, even demands, policy activity that will not be reduced to a bare minimum by the ROI language of the market, or the macro view. Such instrumental insistence is perhaps more important than ever given the performance of various social democratic and progressive governments at every level, regional, federal, state and local – perhaps most importantly, the symbolic nature of Tony Blair's in the UK – whose commitment to social policies seem to fade under the grey weight of market fetishism associated with ROI.

This is not to say that the solution is non-market-based initiatives. In that scenario, the *de facto* default becomes folk music, where we endlessly 'strip the willow' in a world the economy never reaches. This non-market terrain would become an anagram for refusing to understand how markets operate, where and why capital moves and how to utilise capital for humanistic betterment through equitable resource allocation. Such an approach would signal a deliberate move away from engaging with the market and the risks therein. That course of action would lead to a policy dead end because popular music is so thoroughly articulated at every level through the globally brokered systems of capitalist production and distribution that policy making has to engage the complex world of the market. To work with this system is to insist on sector-specific policies that follow 'good development practice . . . monitoring and evaluating and especially a rigorous comparison of goals and outcomes' (Sachs 2005, p. 80). If the administrative principles of development policy are utilised, it is essential that the commodity form and its constituents be included so that the processes of the market place are incorporated into policy settings. Moreover, instrumentalism requires rethinking the intersection of corporate and popular music making in terms that draw on generic policy making principles – bureaucratic management – as well as normative policy goals and objectives.

Instrumental Policy Behaviour Process (IPBP)

When seen from the institutional cultural policy perspective offered here, the popular music policy experiment in Australia that lasted from 1982 until 1996 did not succeed. The reason for this was the absence of knowledge and skills within the existing bureaucracy to work with and, where necessary, work around the global recording industry. In short, there was a failure of principles in the cultural policy arena because a theoretical superstructure, such as instrumentalism could not, as it were, stand up and just say 'No' to the demands of global firms whose interests were in selling music not making it as an expression of locally defined everyday life. In situations where the enlightened intervention of instrumentalism makes demands – and still does, for example tax law is non-negotiable, failure to pay taxes leads to fines and sometimes to prison terms – a traditional cultural policy model is defined by allocating public funding through administrative support for 'the arts' (Schuster 2001).

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The market-oriented recording industry operates in a parallel universe to the arts and is largely defined by the process of commodification: the relationship between cultural activity and the ROI fetish. In fact, the recording industry has positioned itself as a global entity devoid of national identity – until such times as it needs to present itself as local – thereby avoiding public demands to make a contribution to localised social and economic development because of a 'higher calling' to meet its responsibilities of the global market, namely the financial elites who are ROI-fetishists. Its primary interest is marketing pre-existing global products. The recording industry learned most of these techniques from the advertising industry. In Australia, the recording industry adopted a policy avoidance strategy. It worked in two ways: (i) powerful opposition to Intellectual Property Rights reform to change the monopoly import restrictions enjoyed by the major record companies, and (ii) failure to make financial contributions to localised popular music industry development during the years of the policy initiatives.

Instrumentalism takes seriously the policy avoidance strategies of the recording music industry. Operating at a localised/national level, instrumentalism implements a 'full frontal challenge to the conventional wisdom that economic outcomes can be left to the operation of the market mechanism' (Rima 1997, p. 1). Furthermore, the micro choices instrumentalism re-engineers will best be locally orchestrated through policy efforts where the requisite epistemology is available. Importantly, in the WTO era, the type of globalisation that opposes national policy making has recently been debunked and questioned by knowledge experts and 'insiders' (Stiglitz 2000). As *Business Week* put it in a headline about resistance to the imposition of global policy making: 'Free Trade Can Be Too Free' (Coy 2006, p. 102). Therefore, it is at the local level – which may in effect be defined as the nation state – where popular music policy making can work to avoid 'a simplistic answer' to 'a complex internal problem' (Easterly 2006, p. 10). This site of policy making will be 'micro' in its dimensions, seeking to document and map the process of local production-consumption to local needs.

A range of efforts have been made to address the complexity of localised policy making in the contemporary globalisation context. The most prominent recent effort was the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO) document, *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression*, signed on 20 October 2005. The convention acts as a lever for nations to use in building a strategic policy mechanism for themselves against the strong forces of globalisation and what the advocates of the convention saw as direct attacks on their fragile local cultural industries by global cultural industries, such as the music industry and US film and television producers.

The principles of local interventionary action to promote micro policy making is the Instrumental Policy Behaviour Process (IPBP). The IPBP is a framework that defines the goals and objectives of popular music policy and the knowledge systems required to make and meet those goals and objectives. Drawing on the institutional and administrative machinery for popular music policy making that already exists in a generic form as government bureaucracies, the IPBP framework provides a basis for action. In keeping with the normative policy goals of institutional economics, an IPBP 'can be built that describes the historical and emerging situation and what ought to be achieved' (Breen 2007, p. 659). By creating an epistemological foundation for how the local popular music industry operates, instrumental decisions can be made based on how best to set interventionary policy priorities.

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IPBP offers a descriptive foundation on which to build a theory that encompasses corporate social responsibility, based on the ethical principle of linking (global) Transnational Corporations (TNCs) with localised institutions, their systems of production and micro-level policy making. At this abstract level, the instrumentalism of the IPBP establishes a direct, causal relationship between corporate behaviour, attitudes and values and the needs of local citizenry for popular music.

If the popular music needs of localised citizenry are unknown, then the starting point for IPBP is the one most frequently overlooked – research that explains the process of production and consumption within the complex systems of macro and micro-levels of cultural activity (Bennett 1998). Without targeted research that seeks to answer questions on the cultural needs of a population, the IPBP would be rendered valueless and destined to fail, as indeed would almost any policy initiative. This was another lesson learned from the Australian experience – the policy initiatives which were undertaken flowed from good ideas, not from research. In the Australian case, research was replaced by a policy ambition for national industry development built on intuition and self-interested arguments put by local music industry figures and youth policy advocates in the Australian Labour Party (ALP) who argued that a localised industry should be supported, in a kind of import replacement scheme. The ideas were well intended, while the absence of research outputs to direct the policies reduced the prospect of employing instrumentalism to create measurable outcomes.

Theory has to be based in reality. The IPBP describes itself as a process, which incorporates aspects of systems theory adapted to the multiple articulations of global business with local popular music production and its circulation. This approach acknowledges the threats and opportunities inherent in being part of the global trading system which involves a series of interactions between localised branch offices connected to regional coordinating headquarters, answering to increasingly centralised Head Offices. This style of centralised corporate reorganisation has recently manifested itself in the merger of Sony with BMG Music (Gallo 2005). Systematic feedback from head office to the regional-national-local offices are somewhat cybernetic – in the digital age this is more rather than less likely – and are part of the global marketing system that determines how choices are made between the allocation of private money capital for maximum profitability through the limiting lens of ROI. It is in this context though, that the primary dilemma of contemporary liberal policy making exists. That is, the formation of money capital relies on the creation of profit, which in essence incorporates the values of antidemocratic and unjust processes of exploitation. At a minimum, liberalism should not give these values priority but should see policy as the means to enhance democracy through equitable resource allocation and dignified living conditions. It is clear that political philosophy impinges heavily on the discussion if the popular music industry is viewed systemically as an extension of the prevailing global social and economic environment. Given this orientation, popular music policy making can be considered part of a broader cultural rights movement.

By explicitly invoking the systemic global processes of the popular music industry, the IPBP should be able to achieve two objectives: limit the knowledge gaps that undercut policy initiatives (as noted earlier about the Australian arts bureaucracy) and recognise the boundaries on public policies that result from the industry's ROI imperative and redefine them in line with citizen interests. If these two objectives can be established and policed, the IPBP can be used as the basis for proceeding to design policies based on research. To achieve the first objective, popular music

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industry specific expertise within the bureaucracy must be developed. The second objective will be met by anticipating and countering economic arguments about ROI as the dominant language in which most policy is written. On the other hand, citizen interests will not be defined 'outside' of the market, by social and cultural policy. The possibility of moving into the market – which is the challenge of economic sustainability – must be included in the discussion, yet not determine the discussion. This means that resources will have to be committed for long-term development, while being capable of mobilisation to new and emerging areas. Committed, targeted, micro-level research would indicate where best to allocate resources.

Such an approach means that detailed points of intervention will be identified in what could be characterised as the 'failed market strategy'. That is, at every point at which local popular music production is stymied, truncated, denied and suppressed by global interests committed to the maximised circulation and exploitation of global popular music commodities, a detailed popular music policy response will be made. This means that in the popular music policy making context, market failure means there is a 'role for government' because the local industry has not survived the pressures of global production.[5] This approach is already commonplace in the recent policy development literature arising out of the anti-WTO-era globalisation movement (*The Nation* 2006). Given this context, the IPBP approach is not limited to sector specific use, such as popular music. It can be adapted for other policy making contexts.

Instrumental insistence

IPBP cannot be defined by process-driven research alone. It insists on specific outcomes for policy (like tax law, it will insist on being accounted for), while acknowledging that the generic policy-making apparatus incorporates a level of expertise that accounts for popular music's specialisation. Unfortunately, generic policy making in a democratic context can confuse democratic principles with a misunderstanding of vested interests.[6] The cautions proposed by Thorstein Veblen help sensitise policy analysts to the pitfalls of caving in to vested interests and their predatory behaviour (Dugger 2006). Instrumentalism uses this knowledge of corporate behaviour to identify the constituents of the production and consumption process – including 'the alternatives and contradictions' – and strategically identifies where the most necessary policy actions can be taken (Middleton 1990, p. 60). This will produce a range of diverse policy options.

For example, if the prevailing US-centric style of empirical political economy is deployed, the emphasis will be on preserving the interests of the existing monopoly owners of copyright. In this instance, no public funds will be made available because the market-oriented industry is dependent for measures of popular music's salience on quarterly sales figures that increasingly include higher rates of return on intellectual property rights, mostly copyrighted music.[7] At the other extreme, state funding will be made available to support popular music activities. Sometimes – in a contradictory sense – state funding initiatives will be taken because policy makers see only market failure for local artists. In this situation, the subservient and dependent status of national popular music production to global production means there is little if any circulation of localised popular music within national boundaries and therefore, no economy resulting from popular music activity to support a dignified life for citizens engaged in popular music making.

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In Australia this played out with arguments made by major record companies that if the Copyright Law was changed to allow for parallel importation and thus the end of monopoly control of sales and marketing of their own products, the majors would be unlikely to 'invest' in the development of Australian artists. This proved to be an idle threat. However, if it had happened, and the majors had left the nation, the outcome may have been a flowering of local artistic and entrepreneurial talent filling the gap left by the predatory majors.

Conclusion

Popular music policy making can be seen to incorporate cultural rights which are articulated to economic development. The ultimate policy question therefore is: what level of human dignity can emerge from popular music policy making?

To answer that question is to return to the principles of instrumentalism which offer alternatives to the dominant macro-level goals of society. Inevitably, popular music policy making will struggle with the challenge to create policies that intervene in the increasingly taken-for-granted world of the market. The success of this struggle will involve contradictions as well as losses to the hegemonic interests of the global fetish of ROI. Nevertheless, policy will seek to reflect audience tastes and interests as it shifts in line with the processes of popular music production and consumption. The principles of instrumentalism insist that the institutions of government maintain a commitment to policies that support citizen welfare in the production and consumption of local popular music. To achieve this objective, policy activism must be informed by research that reflects a detailed understanding of how the processes of popular music making are constituted at macro- and micro-levels: locally and globally. The IPBP suggests a way of thinking through how policy engages with complex local and global interactions. Ultimately, the mark of instrumentalism's contribution to popular music policy making will be the realisation of governmentality as it negotiates both art and rationality.

Endnotes

1. Pre-existing film authorities could be seen as a model – ranging from the Australian Film Commission and Film Victoria to a variety of Cinematiques and the British Film Institute – although the expertise deployed by film industry bureaucrats does not readily translate into the high-speed production-consumption nexus of the music business (Attali 1985).
2. In a scathing interpretation of the Open Door Policy, Williams goes on to suggest that despite the foundations of the League of Nations and President Wilson and his ilk's apparent readiness to support international policy making: 'None of them had the slightest idea of organising the co-operative, planned, balanced economic development of world resources. Wilson aimed to use American power, inside and outside the League of Nations, merely to order the world so that such classical competition could proceed in peace. If this could be done, he was confident that American economic power could take care of the United States – and of the world'. The question this raises – and discussed recently by Niall Ferguson – is: what has changed? The answer is that war is now seen by the US as the means to assert American power as the global leader (Williams 1972, p. 97).
3. 'The role of instrumentalism is two-fold: given the macro-goal(s) which society adopts as a desirable end state, the task of instrumentalism as economic theory is to deduce the requisites for goal achievement. Its objective is to infer what is necessary in terms of individual behaviors and their underlying motivations for goal consistency, and to identify what sort of changes might be appropriate. Second, it is the further task of instrumentalism to formulate alternative strategies, techniques, or ''paths'' by which the goal or goals desired by society can become attainable. Instrumentalism is thus a regressive procedure for proceeding ''backward'' from a socially identified macro-goal to logically infer the behavioral patterns and social institutions that characterise the path(s) by

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which the goal becomes attainable' (Rima 1997).

4. In this instance, capital refers not just to money capital, but to intellectual, cultural and social capital as well – all of which are captured and accumulate within resource rich private organisations, often to the detriment of the polity.
5. See Michel E. Porter on the 'role for government', *The Competitive Advantage of Nations*, 1990, and at http://www.isc.hbs.edu/index2.html
6. In a recent case study, the range of considerations produced something akin to confusion, as styles of managerialism collided with economic systems of analysis to include: 'rational planning, instrumentalism, interest group activity, elite preferences, systemic forces, game planning, public choice, political processes and institutional influences' (Villicana and Venkataraman 2006, p. 549).
7. Copyright has been viewed as antithetical to the creative enterprise. Recent debates from the Free Culture Movement, Open Source software, Napster and monopoly ownership rights discussions have exposed the predatory nature of most copyright regimes.

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