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Cultural Policy 10/13/2015  
Notable Quote Assignment #2

**Strom, E., & Cook, A. (2004). Old Pictures in New Frames: Issue Definition and Federal Arts Policy. *Review of Policy Research*. 21(4), pp. 505-522.**

*“As arts advocates sought to fend off budgetary and ideological attacks in the late 1980s and early 1990s, they moved away from arguments about the intangible, individual benefits of cultural participation, and began to rely more heavily on arguments about the positive externalities of the arts, in particular on what we have called “instrumental” arguments—those claiming that the arts are useful in achieving unrelated goals (Strom, 2004).”*

Based on the data presented in this article, it seems that arts advocates have had to rely on concrete, tangible data of the measureable benefits of arts and culture to justify and legitimize public arts funding from the federal government. While studies on the economic impact of the arts are extremely important and valuable, it is unfortunate that reliance on those studies has come about as more of a protective mechanism rather than internal recognition in their intrinsic value to the sector in general. This also explains why there seems to be much more emphasis on the economic and social impact of the arts rather than “art for arts sake,” or the deeper individual benefits of arts and culture. It is equally as unfortunate that the United States has not successfully been able to advocate for the arts from both sides, balancing both the economic and social community benefits of the arts with the more internal, individualized, and intangible benefits of the arts that are so integral to its value. If the federal government is not able to incorporate the more intrinsic benefits of the arts into advocacy and policy, then I don’t see how the general public will ever be able to view the arts as more than just another economic engine, which really diffuses the power and potential of arts and culture in the United States.

**Mankin, L. D. (1995). Federal Arts Patronage in the New Deal. *America’s Commitment to Culture*. pp. 77-94.**

*“The Arts Projects also faced the problem of incorporating creative people within the confines of a governmental bureaucracy. Creativity requires freedom and to the artist rules and regulations can be like ropes tied around a pair of creative hands (Mankin, 1995).”*

It is unclear what the government’s role should be in the arts and culture sector of the United States. As a democratic country, the arts are an essential and expected manifestation of the right to freedom of speech, yet it seems that when this right is exercised within the confines of public funded arts, there is often a wave of criticism that follows when content is controversial or experimental. There seemed to be significant tension around controlling content in WPA art projects in order to avoid conflict, critique and controversy, and while this helps to bolster a broader support base, it waters down the potency and potential of art in the minds of the public, while also creating a more “nationalized” or government curated art program, which endangers democracy and

freedom of the first amendment, making government seem more like the socialist power of which it is so fearful. We must also consider how bureaucratic government regulations, politics, and systems might limit the essential nature of the artist, thereby limiting the effectiveness of the arts in general. This dichotomy is an interesting one in that there is a fine balance within the government's relationship with arts and culture and the artists who work within the sector.