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**Abstract:** Largely undocumented in the published accounts of cultural policy history in the United Kingdom, the Arts Enquiry was a privately funded survey of the arts in war-time England. It was launched in 1941 as an initiative of the Arts Department at Dartington Hall and funded by the trustees of Dartington Hall, who spent £19,000 on the study over its 6-year history. The Enquiry brought together artists, intellectuals, philanthropists, and arts professionals in specialist committees to examine the visual arts, music, drama, and documentary film. Three book-length studies were published: *The Visual Arts* (1946), *The Factual Film* (1947), and *Music* (1949). This article examines the history of the Arts Enquiry, its entanglement in the cultural politics of the period, and what it reveals about policy formation in the United Kingdom, as well as the historiography of cultural policy.

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**Key words:** arts council, Dartington Hall, The Arts Enquiry, Keynes, Mary Glasgow

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## **‘Missing’ from policy history: The Dartington Hall Arts Enquiry, 1941-1947**

### **Introduction**

Largely undocumented in the published accounts of cultural policy history in the United Kingdom, the Arts Enquiry was a privately funded survey of the arts in war-time England. It was launched in 1941 as an initiative of the Arts Department at Dartington Hall in cooperation with the Nuffield College Social Reconstruction Survey. Funded by the trustees of Dartington Hall, who spent £19,000 on the study over its 6-year history, the Enquiry brought together artists, intellectuals, philanthropists, and arts professionals in specialist committees to examine the visual arts, music, drama, and documentary film. Three book-length studies were published: *The Visual Arts* in 1946 (183 pages), *The Factual Film* in 1947 (260 pages), and *Music* in 1949 (224 pages). For the twenty-first-century researcher, these studies provide detailed descriptions of England’s cultural infrastructure at the middle of the twentieth century, with recommendations for post-war development.

This analysis is part of my extended study of the influence that intellectuals, philanthropists, and ‘private sector’ actors had in the early formation of cultural policy in the West, with particular attention to the post-World War II cultural infrastructure that was established in the United Kingdom, in many Commonwealth countries, and in North America (see Upchurch 2007 and 2004). I came across references to the Enquiry during my archival research into the origins of the Arts Council of Great Britain and located two of the published studies in the library collection at Duke University in the United States, where I was working as I finished my doctoral thesis. In addition to the studies, I obtained copies of meeting minutes from the Dartington Hall archives and was able to include a summary description of the Enquiry in my thesis. In December 2009, I travelled to Dartington Hall to examine the archives. Sources for this article include the meeting minutes of the Arts Enquiry’s Central Group and the Visual Arts Group, Rachel E. Harrison’s unpublished PhD thesis about the visual arts at Dartington Hall, and Peter Cox’s published memoir about his 40-year

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career at Dartington leading the development of arts and educational programmes.

My research and analysis reveal that a narrative about the small circle of people involved in the establishment of the Arts Council of Great Britain (ACGB) that has dominated the historiography of UK cultural policy formation is a highly selective account written by two Arts Council insiders, B. Ifor Evans and Mary Glasgow. Their narrative appears in an often-cited 1949 book titled *The Arts in England* which they co-authored. I describe their narrative as ‘selective’ because both Glasgow and Evans knew about the Arts Enquiry and even had direct involvement in its early years, but ended their involvement when Glasgow lost control of the report-writing process. She attempted to exclude and discredit the Enquiry and its recommendations from the policy development process and, in her narrative, to give an impression that the ‘history’ of public advocacy and funding for the arts began with the establishment of the Arts Council and its predecessor organisation, the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA).

This article seeks to introduce the Arts Enquiry as a substantive research initiative undertaken for policy advocacy purposes and to begin to contextualise it within the politics of the 1940s to understand why discussion of such an extensive study is largely missing from published histories. Using unpublished sources and a published account by Cox, the Enquiry’s administrator, I will describe its origins as a project of the Arts Department at Dartington Hall near Totnes, Devon. The next sections examine the Enquiry’s entanglement in the politics of the period and the activities and key recommendations of its visual arts subcommittee. Finally, I examine the published and unpublished accounts of the Arts Enquiry, then examine the Evans/Glasgow narrative and suggest its limitations in the light of this evidence, and point to the relationship between the history of arts policy and policy analysis.

### **The Elmhursts, Dartington Hall, and the origins of the Arts Enquiry**

The Arts Enquiry was developed and sustained by two employees of the Arts Department at Dartington Hall, Christopher Martin and Peter Cox, as well as by the trustees of the Dartington Hall

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Trust. They included Leonard and Dorothy Elmhirst, the founders of Dartington Hall, who not only funded the study, but also participated in some of the Enquiry's meetings. Understanding the Elmhirsts' commitment to such a project requires a brief discussion of their histories and their development of Dartington.

Dartington Hall in South Devon, England, is a fascinating study of the synthesis of art and science, of experimental education and rural development, of ideas from the United States, India, and England. It was, and still is, a complex institution, and the following short description provides only the barest outline of its history. The Elmhirsts' purchase in the 1920s and restoration of a ruined fourteenth-century manor with surrounding land was funded by Mrs. Elmhirst's inherited wealth. She was the former Dorothy Payne Whitney Straight, an American heiress and philanthropist and member of the Whitney family. Her brother Harry's wife, Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, founded the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York. Dorothy's parents had both wealth and political careers; her father, William Collins Whitney, was Secretary of the Navy under President Grover Cleveland at her birth, and her mother was Flora Payne, whose family held Standard Oil Company wealth. After his political career, Whitney used his connections to make millions in transportation, utility companies, tobacco, and banking. By the time Dorothy was 17, both parents had died, and she and her siblings inherited substantial fortunes. She married a self-made financier, Willard Straight, who died of influenza during war service in France during the First World War, and later married Leonard Elmhirst from Yorkshire, England.

If the money to restore Dartington came from the United States, the inspiration came from India, from Leonard's experiences working for Rabindranath Tagore, the poet and Nobel laureate, at Tagore's farm and schools in India. Leonard was the unconventional son of a Yorkshire vicar, who attended Cambridge and afterwards continued his work with the YMCA there by volunteering to work in India. After this first experience in India, he resolved to study agricultural economics in the United States at Cornell University, the alma mater of Dorothy's deceased husband. He met Dorothy while he was fundraising for a residential home for international students studying at

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Cornell. Subsequently he was introduced to Tagore, who hired Leonard to lead rural reconstruction activities on his properties in India. Leonard later became Tagore's personal assistant and travelled internationally with him before marrying Dorothy in 1925. By then, he had observed the implementation of Tagore's ideas about rural development and education and had resolved to take those ideas to rural England. After he and Dorothy married, they restored Dartington Hall in the late 1920s, establishing the Dartington Hall Trust in 1931.<sup>1</sup>

So while its intention was explicitly local, and its project the 'rural reconstruction' of the Devon countryside, Dartington Hall at this point in its history was a focus for international ideas and influences led by its founders. It synthesized Leonard's passions for farming and rural industry underpinned by scientific and economic research, and Dorothy's passions for progressive education and the arts. Local employment would be stimulated by modernising and operating the estate's farms and developing small industries such as sawmilling, building, textiles, and crafts. An experimental, co-educational boarding school was started for the Elmhirsts' children and other students whose parents' sought alternatives to single-sex, class-bound, English boarding schools. Believing the arts to be essential to individual and community well-being, the estate had an arts programme open to participation by students, estate workers, and community members. Cox writes that the Elmhirsts considered their Dartington project to be experimental, with results that might be shared nationally and internationally (2005: 6).

Initially, Leonard and Dorothy personally managed many of the estate's projects and activities. In most cases, Dorothy initiated the arts projects, inviting artists to be in residence for master classes and regular tuition and encouraging all estate workers to participate in classes and performances. By 1934, costs had grown to the point that the Elmhirsts established an Arts Department to provide programme and budget oversight and hired Christopher Martin as arts administrator. Martin presided over a rich period that saw Dartington become a refuge and residence for artists escaping fascist movements throughout Europe; they included the Ballets Jooss,

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<sup>1</sup> See Michael Young (1982), *The Elmhirsts of Dartington*, for a detailed discussion of their lives, marriage, and development of Dartington Hall, written by a student of the boarding school and close friend of the family.

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Michael Chekhov, Hans Oppenheim, and Willi Soukop. However, with the outbreak of war, most of the artists were interned or evacuated, leaving Martin 'with a mere skeleton of a Department and a depleted endowment' (Cox 2005:11).

Martin responded to the situation by getting involved in Devon arts and education planning and research, becoming an investigator for the Nuffield College Social Reconstruction Survey directed by G.D.H. Cole, the economist and Labour Party intellectual. Cox writes that Cole suggested to Martin a study of arts organization in England and Wales, which resulted in the Arts Enquiry (2005: 12). Adding research to the Arts Department programme was in keeping with the Dartington project and the Elmhirsts' interests; Leonard was a founder and financial supporter of P.E.P.,<sup>2</sup> which assisted in the Enquiry and published the visual arts report. Another important contact for Martin at this time was Mary Glasgow, the administrator for the newly-formed CEMA, and Cox recalls that early relations were friendly with Glasgow and other staff there. In his reports to the Trustees, Martin saw the Enquiry as an opportunity for his Arts Department to develop contacts with national arts organizations and to gather information that could be used to shape a post-war policy for the nation, as well as a direction for the Department itself (Harrison 2002: 203-206, also 221).

However, Martin suffered from tuberculosis, and his health deteriorated in the 1940s causing his premature death in August 1944 (Bonham-Carter 1958: 136). By this time, the Enquiry was well into the development of its first report on the visual arts, which was dedicated to Martin. Peter Cox, his assistant, was appointed Arts Administrator and assumed direction of the Arts Enquiry. As this ambitious study progressed, extending beyond the war, the Elmhirsts continued to fund it as Martin's legacy (Harrison 2002: 206).

## **Cultural Politics and The Arts Enquiry**

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<sup>2</sup> P.E.P. stands for Political and Economic Planning, one of the two organisations that later combined to form the influential Policy Studies Institute.

The archival records show that Martin and the Arts Enquiry became entangled in the plans and ambitions of Mary Glasgow, Kenneth Clark, and John Maynard Keynes for continuing CEMA's work beyond the war. In previous published work (see Upchurch 2007) I have argued that Keynes and Clark were part of a clique that also included the Tory Minister R.A. Butler, art collector and philanthropist Samuel Courtauld, and Canadian diplomat Vincent Massey, working together to establish a post-war cultural infrastructure that would ensure stable funding for CEMA or a successor organisation. Minutes and letters in the archives show that at the beginning of the Enquiry, Martin and Glasgow were friendly, and she supported the Arts Enquiry initiative as a fact-finding exercise that would – at private not public expense – assemble potentially useful data and information about the practices of artists and cultural institutions in England. As administrator of CEMA, she agreed to serve on the Arts Enquiry Central Group (as the central planning committee was called), which grew to include G. D. H. Cole; Dorothy Elmhirst; B. Ifor Evans, then at the British Council; F. A. S. Gwatkin, solicitor for the Elmhirsts and the Trust, who served as the group's Chairman; Mary Agnes Hamilton of the Reconstruction Secretariat; Dr. Julian Huxley, the renowned biologist and brother of the novelist Aldous; David Owen, secretary of PEP; Eric Walter White (later Deputy Secretary of CEMA); H.L. Beales, and J. Wilkie, secretary of the Carnegie Trust UK. Martin was named director of the Arts Enquiry, and Cox was secretary.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, the Central Group's meetings were held at Glasgow's office at CEMA at 9 Belgrave Square in London, indicating the degree of early cooperation between the Enquiry and CEMA.<sup>4</sup>

However, the aims of the Enquiry began to shift with the development of the visual arts report, which was chaired by Julian Huxley, and with those changing aims, Glasgow withdrew her support and participation. Huxley knew from his experience in the United States that visual artists had been commissioned by government in the New Deal's Federal Arts Project, and he was eager to see central government funding of the arts instituted in Britain. He became involved in the Enquiry

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<sup>3</sup> Peter Cox, in *The Arts at Dartington* (2005), p. 24, omits Beales and Wilkie and includes Ivor Browne, the theatre critic. However, Browne is not mentioned in Central Group minutes.

<sup>4</sup> Dartington Hall Trust Archive. T/AAE/1/A/2 Minutes 4 November 1942 Arts Enquiry Group.



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through his associations with P.E.P. and the Elmhirsts and was named to the Central Group. Using his influence, Huxley began to invite professionals like National Gallery director Kenneth Clark to bring their expertise to the Enquiry's research and deliberations (Harrison 2002: 212-216). Initially, the Central Group had envisioned that non-specialists (Martin, Cox, and others employed by the Enquiry) would compile or research area surveys and write up their findings, and this was the method used initially.<sup>5</sup> However, Huxley insisted that the work of his visual arts group be more than a fact-finding exercise, arguing that it should invite knowledgeable professionals to participate in deliberations that would result in policy recommendations for post-war implementation.<sup>6</sup>

As a result of this change in approach, the Central Group was dissolved after drafts of the visual arts report began circulating and included policy recommendations.<sup>7</sup> The explanation for its dissolution is found in the foreword to the published report which stresses that members of the Central Group served in a 'private and not in an official capacity' and disbanded by the summer of 1944, to leave the survey to a set of 'specialist committees' in each artistic discipline (*The Visual Arts*, Dartington Hall Trustees 1946: 5). The issue caused Martin and Cox to assert the Enquiry's independence and ask for the Elmhirsts' support (Harrison 2002: 225-226). Indeed, the published report states that: 'The terms of reference were not restricted, nor was there any necessity to put forward proposals likely to be acceptable to the Government' (*The Visual Arts*, Dartington Hall Trustees 1946: 10).

However, the issue of policy recommendations specifically regarding a post-war Arts Council caused Glasgow and Evans to suggest that the Central Group be dissolved, and other civil servants who were involved agreed. For Evans 'pointed out that as a member of the British Council, he was in an embarrassing position if he was concerned with a report that criticized the British Council Films Division. He felt that the Central Committee should dissolve itself in order to

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<sup>5</sup> Dartington Hall Trust Archive. T/AAE/1/A/1, The Arts Enquiry, p. 2

<sup>6</sup> Dartington Hall Trust Archive. T/AAE/1/A/6, Minutes of the 4 February 1943 Arts Enquiry Group (Executive), p. 4, minute (6b) Recommendations.

<sup>7</sup> Dartington Hall Trust Archive. T/AAE/1/B/15, Minutes of the 30 May 1944 Arts Enquiry.

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preserve the independence of the reports'.<sup>8</sup> Glasgow went further: 'She felt that the Enquiry claimed on the one hand official support through the Committee, and yet on the other tried to have the advantage of being a purely private venture sponsored by the Dartington Hall Trustees.

'Mr. White [Eric White] said that in the early days of the Enquiry the Central Committee had been able to give the right sort of guidance but now that the method of working by specialist panels had been fixed as a result of trial and error he thought that the Central Group should dissolve itself.'<sup>9</sup> The Group did so at the 30 May 1944 meeting following this discussion.

Glasgow set out to undermine the Enquiry according to Cox, especially with Keynes, her chairman at CEMA (Cox 2005: 25). Frustrated that she had lost control of the project, she complained privately to Cox that the scope of the report had widened and that the Central Group had been misled about the nature of the report and the timing of its completion. She told Cox that the government departments involved were disappointed with delays in the project, which she blamed on the use of specialist groups, and those departments 'would proceed to make their own plans without reference to the Arts Enquiry'.<sup>10</sup>

Actually Keynes's response to this situation, as recorded in correspondence with Huxley, is quite benign (Keynes had a reputation for acerbity).<sup>11</sup> The reason may lie in his social relationships. Keynes was acquainted socially with the Elmhirsts, and by 1944, he and Leonard had been on friendly terms for years. The Dartington Hall archive includes correspondence between the two that begins in 1932 and continues until 1945 (Keynes died in 1946). They had many mutual interests: both were Cambridge graduates, although Keynes was ten years older; both were married to women immersed in the arts; both owned or operated theatres; and both owned and operated periodicals. Their correspondence discusses these mutual interests; in one set of letters they discuss the editorial position of *The New Republic*, which the Elmhirsts owned.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 2, minute 4.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Dartington Hall Trust Archive. T/AAE/1/B/5 Notes from 'Discussion between Miss Glasgow & Peter Cox.'

<sup>11</sup> Dartington Hall Trust Archive. T/AAE/1/B/15, Minutes of the 30 May 1944 Arts Enquiry.

<sup>12</sup> Dartington Hall archive. See LKE/General 21, file G, 'Correspondence with Keynes' includes letters 1932-1945.

With Glasgow now hostile towards the project, Cox had concerns about how the government would receive the completed reports and recommendations, but he needn't have worried. Whatever may have been Glasgow's motivation and efforts to discredit the Enquiry, Kenneth Clark shared reports and information with Keynes and R.A. Butler before recommendations were published (Sinclair 1995: 42; Cox 2005: 26). The next section looks at his role and the recommendations of the Visual Arts Group.

### **The Visual Arts Group and Its Recommendations<sup>13</sup>**

The role of committees in British public life and his own role as a committee member are documented by Clark in a passage in his memoir. Its illustrative quality and seeming candour make it worthwhile to quote here in full; he is referring to the war years:

How did I fill my days? Chiefly by sitting on committees. The Mint Committee, the Post Office Advisory Committee, CEMA, The National Art-Collections Fund, the Council of Industrial Design (for which, with Francis Meynell, I had drawn up the charter), the National Gallery Concerts, and, my only worthwhile activity, the War Artists Committee. I suppose I was a good committee member, for the number of my committees continued to swell, so that for twenty years they took up more than half my time. Committees often seem to be a complete waste of time; but the convention has grown up that decisions must have the backing of a committee. [...] Usually the upshot of a meeting is a foregone conclusion, fixed beforehand by the executive director; or the decision is taken by one forceful personality. [...] The nicest committee I have ever sat on was the National Gallery of Scotland; the nastiest was the National Theatre (1977: 55).

Clark's passage illustrates the coordinating and consensus-building position of committees, while downplaying his own very active coordinating role. Sinclair, in his history of the ACGB, concludes that many committee decisions were influenced by Clark: 'If Keynes was to create the machine of the Arts Council, Kenneth Clark was its grease', and Clark was 'the primal committee man of the war. It was he who translated the practices and retrieved the opinions of one committee

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<sup>13</sup> This section is largely taken from Anna Upchurch (2008), *Maynard Keynes, Vincent Massey, and the Intellectual Origins of the Arts Council of Great Britain*, Ph.D. thesis, University of Warwick, 124-133.

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for another, both a catalyst and a gun dog' (Sinclair 1995: 43-44). Clark was allied with Keynes on CEMA; on the National Gallery board of trustees, where Keynes was a trustee and Clark was the museum's director; and later, when Keynes appointed Clark to the new Covent Garden Opera Trust. Clark doesn't mention in the quoted passage that he was involved in the visual arts group of the Enquiry, possibly because members had agreed to be anonymous. Clark's full involvement in cultural policy advocacy during the 1930s and 1940s has yet to be thoroughly documented, although Craufurd Goodwin has examined his arguments for public funding for the arts in a 2005 article.

*The Visual Arts* report was the first of the four planned studies to be launched and published and is remembered by Cox in his account as the most organized and productive of the working groups (Cox 2005: 25-27). Populated as it was by museum administrators and educators who were accustomed to committee work and to drafting reports, and chaired by Huxley, the group and the resulting report set a standard for organization and responsiveness that did not continue in the studies for music, theatre, and documentary film. Also there were existing reports which served as the basis for discussion, with content that could be incorporated in drafts. In addition to these logistical advantages, some of the committee members worked for museums and schools which already received government funding so were accustomed to reflecting upon policy and doubtless were there to protect vested interests. Clark was recruited to a committee whose members were serving in a private capacity, not as representatives of their institutions. Interestingly, they are not named in the published report, but are described as: 'artists, designers, gallery directors, art critics, art school principals, teachers of art and secretaries of art societies. As many of these hold official positions, it was agreed from the outset that the group should remain anonymous' (*The Visual Arts*, Dartington Hall Trustees 1946: 6). The minutes of the first visual arts group meeting on 18 November 1942 show these 'anonymous' members: Huxley, as chairman; R. P. Bedford, Misha Black, Kenneth Clark, Barnett Freedman, Philip James, Audrey Martin, Henry Moore, Eric Newton, Dr. John Rothenstein, E. M. O'R. Dickey, Philip Hendy, C. C. Martin, and Peter Cox, secretary.

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Gwatkin attended, to represent the Central Group and the Dartington Hall trustees. In his comments, Huxley told the group that documents about their work should be treated as confidential.<sup>14</sup> Their organizational affiliations are not given in the minutes, but Clark was director of the National Gallery, Hendy would be his successor to that post, and Rothenstein was director of the Tate Gallery. Henry Moore was the sculptor, while Misha Black was a designer, and Barnett Freedman, an artist and designer.

Judging from the minutes, this was an active committee by any standards, meeting every fortnight from November 1942 throughout 1943. Huxley was a committed chairman, nearly always present, and appearing to miss only one meeting. Clark was nearly always present too, indeed, eight to ten of the 14 members were generally in attendance. This high attendance suggests that the members were paying some attention and indicates their seriousness about post-war planning for the visual arts, as well as indicating that some members were protecting their institution's interests.<sup>15</sup>

The published report takes a broad scope, addressing painting and sculpture, commercial art and illustration, industrial design and artist-designers, art schools, public galleries, and art in general education. The preface notes that the group's proposals were completed by November 1944, and it describes policy developments between this completion and the delayed publication in 1946, specifically that a new Council of Industrial Design had been appointed by the Board of Trade and 'is similar in many respects to the Design Council recommended in this report' (*The Visual Arts*, Dartington Hall Trustees 1946: 9-10).<sup>16</sup> Clark boasted in the passage quoted at the beginning of this section that he co-authored the charter for the new Council of Industrial Design, clear evidence of his coordinating role among committees and civil servants.

As the report went to press, the establishment of the Arts Council of Great Britain was

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<sup>14</sup> Dartington Hall Trust Archive. T/AAE/2/C1/3 Minutes of the Visual Arts Group, 18<sup>th</sup> November 1942.

<sup>15</sup> Dartington Hall Trust Archive. T/AAE/2 'Visual Arts'. See files B, C1, C2, D1, D2 for minutes of the group's meetings.

<sup>16</sup> See Jonathan M. Woodham (1996), "Managing British Design Reform I: Fresh Perspectives on the Early Years of the Council of Industrial Design," *Journal of Design History*, 9: 1, pp. 55-65, for a discussion of the membership of the early Council and its concerns with 'aesthetic judgement'.

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announced, and the preface states: 'This body will probably fulfil many of the functions allotted to the Arts Council proposed by the Visual Arts Group of the Arts Enquiry' (Ibid.: 10). The report's recommendations reject a Ministry of Arts in favour of 'an autonomous body with its own Board of Governors but with a Minister responsible to Parliament and with the necessary finance carried on the vote of a Government department as a grant-in-aid' with the responsible Minister to be the Minister of Education. The report recommends that the Arts Council have music, drama, and the visual arts 'in its scope' and states that including more artistic disciplines than these three 'would not be practicable', with no real explanation of this statement (Ibid.: 34). It details the new Council's activities in the visual arts recommending that it have the authority and funding to organize new collections and institutions; make grants to art galleries and centres; organize loan collections and travelling exhibitions; publish catalogues for its exhibitions; commission painters and sculptors; and provide bursaries to promising artists in the first years of their careers and grants to art students (*The Visual Arts*, Dartington Hall Trustees 1946: 35-37).

The report calls on the public to support the two new councils, concluding the preface in a critical tone: 'As the pages of this report will show, too many institutions concerned with the promotion of art and design have been founded after much effort and have subsequently been allowed to disappear or to be rendered ineffectual for lack of public interest and support' (Ibid.:10). Indeed, the report is critical of previous government and public support. Statements pepper the report, such as, 'Public taste has been vitiated by the low level of design which industry has produced in overwhelming quantities and cannot be improved until good design is made generally available' (Ibid.: 15), and 'Hardly anything has been done to form and improve public taste' (Ibid.: 16), and 'The majority of people do not know how to look at works of art. They need help and guidance. But far too little attention is paid by the galleries to this need for education' (Ibid.: 27). Thus, industry, government, educational institutions, and the national galleries have all failed to educate the public. In spite of this tone, the report sold well; of 2600 published copies, 2000 had been sold by July 1946, with 200 given away as complimentary copies and 450 remaining in

stock.<sup>17</sup>

The visual arts group and its central recommendations appear to demonstrate Clark's comment at the beginning of this section: that the outcome of committee work was often a foregone conclusion, an endorsement of a concept or influenced by a dominant personality. However, Huxley, not Glasgow, emerged as the personality who steered the group, who insisted on its independence and on producing recommendations. As a result, the Arts Enquiry would be ignored by Glasgow and Evans and overlooked by policy histories.

### **The Arts Enquiry in British Cultural Policy History**

The few published accounts of The Arts Enquiry give a mixed review of its influence on cultural policy in post-war Britain. Some argue that it was very influential, while others downplay its significance, citing the timing of its published recommendations as the central issue. Nicholas Pearson, in *The State and the Visual Arts*, discusses the Enquiry and its recommendations, calling *The Visual Arts* report 'a seminal document in the development of the Arts Council of Great Britain' (1981: 43). Using the published report as his source, he concludes that it influenced the government's decisions to establish the ACGB and the Council for Industrial Design, arguing that the Enquiry's recommendations were complete by 1944 and 'in circulation' before their publication in 1946 (Ibid.: 51). Andrew Sinclair, in his history of the first fifty years of the ACGB, also gives a partial account of the Enquiry, which downplays its significance (1995: 42). He finds several reasons for its implied ineffectiveness, including the timing of its published recommendations and that the Enquiry fell victim to the politics of the period. He writes that the involvement of Kenneth Clark and Julian Huxley in the Enquiry 'alarmed Mary Glasgow, who foresaw that the recommendations of this national arts enquiry might involve the future of CEMA and its post-war successor' (Sinclair 1995: 42). That the Arts Enquiry is mentioned in these published histories may be due to Eric White's inclusion in his 1975 account of the early years of CEMA and the Arts

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<sup>17</sup> Dartington Hall Trust Archive. T/AAE/1/B/18 Letter from P. Cox to L.K. Elmhirst, 4 July 1946.

Council. White worked for both organisations for decades, and he writes that the idea of an enquiry into music surfaced in letters exchanged with John Christie in his campaign to establish a national council of music (1975: 44-45). Ministers developed the idea of an enquiry in their negotiations with Christie, and later, White writes, ‘The idea of an investigation was subsequently taken up by the Dartington Trust at the instigation of Christopher Martin. The terms of reference of the Dartington enquiry were broadened so as to include all the arts; but in the event only three sections of their report were completed and published – those on the cinema, the visual arts, and music (1975: 45-46). White offers no further information, although as we have seen, he was directly involved in the Enquiry in the early 1940s.

Rachel Harrison, in an unpublished 2002 PhD thesis, agrees with Pearson that the Enquiry’s influence was significant. Her project is to expose Dartington’s influence on British modernism in the visual arts through the patronage and influence of Dorothy Elmhirst. Using extensive archival research at Dartington Hall, she constructs an account of the Arts Enquiry as a chapter in her thesis and argues that this work ‘brings to light new material which suggests that Dartington made a significant contribution to contemporary debates concerning arts promotion and arts funding, acting not only as a prototype for future arts administration in England but also funding the first substantial enquiry into the position of the arts in the inter-war period’ (2002: 31).

There is little doubt that the work of the Enquiry lost momentum (Cox 2005: 26-27). Detailed analysis of the groups for film, music, and drama is beyond the scope of this article, but briefly, the second to publish was the specialist group on documentary film, which initially circulated a draft report challenging the existence of the British Film Institute; the published report took a softer approach (Dupin 2006: 445). The groups on music and theatre were intractable, according to Cox, and while the music report was published, the theatre report was never completed because of the difficulty obtaining information from commercial producers (Cox 2005: 26). This again points to the Enquiry’s entanglement in politics, in tensions between the commercial and charitable sectors.



Influential cultural policy histories written by Janet Minihan (1977), Robert Hewison (1995), and Richard Witts (1998) include no mentions or discussions of the Enquiry, though the Evans/Glasgow book *The Arts in England* appears in the notes or bibliographies of all three, as it does in Sinclair's history. Although Dartington Hall was comparatively isolated during the war years due to its rural location and the difficulties of travel during war time, it would be wrong to assume that this distance caused the Arts Enquiry to be largely ignored in the historiography. By the 1940s, the Elmhirsts' 'experiment' at Dartington Hall in rural industries and the arts was nationally known.<sup>18</sup> Government departments and high-profile specialists were involved in the Enquiry, and all the visual arts group meetings were held in London. Today, the published reports are easily accessible in library collections around the world, as my experience at Duke University demonstrated. Instead we need to consider dominant narratives and their sources.

The dominant narrative in early UK cultural policy history is the story of war-time CEMA's evolution into the Arts Council of Great Britain. In shorthand fashion, it proceeds in this way: the Pilgrim Trust provided private funds to send musicians and artists out among the populace to boost civilian morale during the Second World War. The government quickly matched the private funding and assumed responsibility for the initiative, which was called the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts, and government subsidy to the performing arts was born in Britain. CEMA's 'missionary' work in the arts found an audience for theatre and orchestral music among classes of citizens who had never experienced live theatre or high culture before, and this success was such that the government determined to maintain the experiment during peacetime through the Arts Council of Great Britain. Names such as Lord Macmillan, then chairman of the Pilgrim Trust; Dr Thomas Jones, secretary of the Trust; Mary Glasgow; and John Maynard Keynes, appear in this narrative. In his BBC radio address announcing the establishment of the ACGB in 1946, Keynes sketches out broad contours of the story.

However, this narrative was co-authored by Mary Glasgow and B. Ifor Evans and developed

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<sup>18</sup> See David Jeremiah (2006) 'Dartington Hall: a landscape of an experiment in rural reconstruction' in *The English Countryside Between the Wars* for an analysis of the Elmhirsts' development of the estate in its first decade.

at length in *The Arts in England*. The book is dedicated, ‘in affection’ to Thomas Jones, and in Chapter 2, the well-known narrative of the Pilgrim Trust and CEMA unfolds. *The Arts in England* is an account written by two participants to describe and chronicle what they regard as a change in patronage for the arts from philanthropy to a form of public patronage which they see as less intrusive and therefore, more enlightened, than state patronage as practiced in other nations (Evans and Glasgow 1949: 17). They state unequivocally that private patronage of the arts by very wealthy individuals is a phenomenon of the past in England, with salutes to John Christie, Sir Barry Jackson, and Samuel Courtauld, patrons whom they claim will not be seen again due to post-war higher levels of tax (Ibid.: 14-15). In addition to the Pilgrim Trust, the only other major philanthropic source they discuss is the Carnegie Trust UK.<sup>19</sup> The book describes the organization of and the statutory responsibility for professional arts provision in the country, focusing especially on music and theatre, two sectors where the ACGB concentrated its grant-making throughout its history. Implicitly and explicitly, the book valorizes the British system of government arts support, implying that philanthropy is no longer possible, or even needed, in this system. This articulate account is an interpretation of their terrain by two people who know it well, not a formal history, scholarly analysis, or extensive survey as published by the Arts Enquiry. Its tone is confident and assured, even acknowledging the heroic and inspiring nature of the CEMA ‘story’ of musicians performing in air-raid shelters to comfort and entertain frightened citizens, for example (Ibid.: 43).

Indeed *The Arts in England* is an early example of a body of work written about the Arts Council by ‘insiders’ – professional arts administrators and executive directors who were employed by the organisation. The 1975 book by Eric White cited earlier in this article, as well as books by Harold Baldry (1981), Robert Hutchison (1982), and Roy Shaw (1987) are other examples. Whether positioned by the authors as history, memoir, or critique, this body of work is an important primary source for students and researchers interested in the history of government funding for the arts and

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<sup>19</sup> The Carnegie Trust UK is mentioned to clarify the ‘agreement’ struck with CEMA that Carnegie would focus on supporting amateur music while CEMA supported professional orchestras and musicians. The authors believe that the amateur arts require a separate study.

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cultural policy.<sup>20</sup> The Arts Council's dominant position in the funding of arts and culture in the UK in the twentieth century, along with this body of documentation by insiders, leaves an impression that the 'history' of public advocacy and funding for the arts began with the establishment of the Arts Council.

### **Policy History and Policy Analysis**

That state patronage of the arts would replace private patronage and philanthropy in the emerging welfare state of post-war Great Britain was a narrative that positioned the new Arts Council as a permanent feature of arts funding and provision. The Evans/Glasgow narrative thus followed the larger post-war shifts towards government provision of social services. I am not questioning the general veracity of the Evans/Glasgow narrative – numerous accounts recall that CEMA evolved into the Arts Council of Great Britain with leadership from Keynes, Clark, Glasgow, and others. However, this selective and dominant narrative and our unquestioning acceptance of it obscures the complexity of the arts policy formulation process in war-time Britain. It obscures what we can learn about the development of an arts policy model that has been adopted by nations around the world and, for example, what we know about the choices and hierarchy of artistic disciplines and art forms that the model's proponents in many countries chose to support. It hinders policy analysis by obscuring what we can learn about arts advocacy, issue networks, the relationships of power between elites, and the roles of artists and intellectuals in the policy development process in the years before policy-making was managed by professional policy makers.

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<sup>20</sup> This is a comparatively large body of work in the United Kingdom. Similar examples of insider accounts are more scarce in Canada and the United States.

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his memories and reflections about Dartington and Totnes. The School of Performance and Cultural Industries at the University of Leeds has provided funding to support my research into the Arts Enquiry, and I thank Professor Mick Wallis at PCI for helpful conversations about Dartington and Professor Jonathan Pitches for his suggestions and comments on an early draft of this article. Finally I thank two anonymous reviewers, as well as Jo Caust, all of whom made helpful suggestions that improved this final version.

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