

***“Statistics in the Wake of Challenges Posed  
by Cultural Diversity in a Globalization Context”***

**“Informing Cultural Policy—Data, Statistics, and Meaning”**

**J. Mark Schuster  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Cambridge, United States**

“Informing Cultural Policy—Data, Statistics, and Meaning”

Mark Schuster  
Professor of Urban Cultural Policy  
Department of Urban Studies and Planning  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
10-485  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
U.S.A.  
jonmark@mit.edu

Paper prepared for presentation at:

"Statistics in the Wake of Challenges Posed by  
Cultural Diversity in a Globalization Context"  
International Symposium on Cultural Statistics  
UNESCO Institute for Statistics  
Observatoire de la culture et des communications du Québec  
Montréal, Québec, Canada

October 21 to 23, 2002

---

This paper draws on several earlier publications, most notably the recently published book, *Informing Cultural Policy: The Research and Information Infrastructure* (New Brunswick, NJ: Center for Urban Policy Research, 2002), but also: “Thoughts on the Art and Practice of Comparative Cultural Research,” in Ineke van Hamersveld and Niki van der Wielen (eds.), *Cultural Research in Europe*, Boekmanstichting, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 1996; and “Making Compromises to Make Comparisons in Cross-National Arts Policy Research,” *Journal of Cultural Economics*, Vol. 11, No. 2, December 1987.

Reading over the prospectus for this symposium, it is quite clear that we will have a lot of ground to cover in our two and a half days together. Thus, it is imperative that each of the speakers delineate clearly the portion of the field to which he or she will speak and to make clearly evident his or her own personal interests and biases.

In this spirit, allow me to make three opening disclosures:

## **Three Disclosures**

---

### **1. My interests lie more in policy than in simple understanding.**

My ultimate concern is what will be done with whatever cultural information the UNESCO Institute for Statistics will collect. I take for granted that the data to be collected will provide an imperfect, incomplete picture of the situation under consideration, and I want to make sure that we worry about the implications of those imperfections for policy making and decision making. It is one thing to collect data to say that one has collected data, it is quite another to collect data with the aim of affecting policy. I do not mean to suggest, of course, that we should lose sight of the question of how to generate data of the highest possible quality—that is, after all, one of the mandates of any statistical institute—but I do mean to suggest that any definition of “quality” with respect to data ought to pay attention to how those data are to be used and whether or not they fit that use.

### **2. I take seriously the difference between data and statistics.**

It has become quite common to treat the words “data” and “statistics” as synonyms. We prefer the word “statistics,” perhaps, when we wish to signal seriousness of purpose; but we prefer “data” when we don’t wish to threaten the system that is being measured.

But statistics and data are not the same. Statistics are measures that are created by human beings; they are calculated from raw data by people who are wishing to detect patterns in those data. We calculate means, modes, standard deviations, chi-squared statistics, slopes of regression lines, correlation coefficients, and so on; we aggregate in a wide variety of ways, we eliminate outliers, we normalize calculations, we truncate time series. In short, we generate mathematical summaries that we think are appropriate to the questions with which we are grappling at a particular moment in time. And we have debates about which statistic will capture better the particular element of human behavior in which we are interested.

This is why it is not only silly but perhaps even dangerous to say that we will “let the data speak for themselves.” We calculate statistics from data in order to say something about them.

I trust that the title “UNESCO Statistics Institute” has not been chosen only to signal seriousness of purpose but also to remind itself that it will be engaged in making decisions as to how best to summarize and present data via statistics, perhaps even decisions on how best to interpret those statistics, decisions that will have an affect on what one will claim to see in the numbers.

We would also do well to recall from the outset the difference between statistics and parameters. Statistics are mathematical summaries of the relationships we observe in the data we have actually been able to collect, often from systematically drawn samples. Parameters are mathematical summaries of the relationships that we would observe if we were able to collect complete and accurate data about the behavior of entire populations. Statistics are estimates of parameters. In the end, we are interested in parameters, but statistics are the best we can do. The publications of official statistical agencies, however, more often than not leave the impression that they are reporting parameters. “This is the condition of the world as seen through numbers.”

I make this point not simply to remind us of our first courses in statistics. Rather, I make this point to issue a challenge. Most statistical organizations, government or otherwise, do not invest nearly enough time in educating the consumers of their data about the quality of the statistics being presented. Here I have in mind two notions of quality— not only the error that comes from sampling responsibly and collecting data well (sampling error), but also the error that comes from sampling and collecting data poorly (non-sampling error).

At the national level there have been many compilations of the data—or, more properly, the statistics—that are currently available on the arts and culture.<sup>1</sup> These compilations have often been the precursor to a more concerted and coordinated effort to collect new and improved cultural statistics. But few if any of these compilations have taken seriously the question of communicating any information about the likely quality of the statistics they are reporting or of the data on which they are based.

### **3. I believe that the work of informing cultural policy does not end with the calculation of statistics.**

Eugene Bardach, a well-know author in the field of public policy, draws an important distinction between “data,” “information,” and “evidence”<sup>2</sup>:

- “Data are facts—or some might say, representations of facts—about the world.”

In this view, data might be qualitative or quantitative, but either way they purport to be raw facts. Statistics are mathematical manipulations of those data that begin to import meaning to them, transforming them into information.

- “Information is data that have meaning, in the sense that they can help you sort the world into different logical or empirical categories.”

Once meaning is attributed to data, one can begin to construct a picture of what is happening in the world. Finally,

- “Evidence is information that affects the existing beliefs of important people (including yourself) about significant features of the problem you are studying and how it might be solved or mitigated.”

Thus, evidence is information in the service of action.

Statistical institutes, even though their actions imbue meaning to data through the choices they make about which statistics to calculate and which ones not to calculate and about which way to present data and which way not to present them, prefer to see themselves as neutral agents, just collecting data and passing them along. Indeed, this may reflect the political necessity of self-protection. No government official wants to be seen as supporting an agency that might in the course of its work bring forward bad news. Thus, statistics institutes work very hard to give the impression that their hands are clean.

But if the ultimate objective of collecting data, calculating statistics, and disseminating results is to affect the world, to shape policy, to inform decisions, then one has to engage the process by which meaning is assigned to data. Is not meaning what we should be most interested in?

So, I open with a challenge. If the UNESCO Statistics Institute cannot help give data meaning through their work in culture and communications, it will not have accomplished much.

## **League Tables—A Case in Point**

---

To make these points a bit more concrete, let me turn to a story, a story that turned out to have a Canadian twist.

As a doctoral student beginning to look at cultural policy for the first time some thirty years ago, my introduction to international comparative studies in the field of cultural policy was a simple league table embedded in a magazine article. That table, reproduced here as it originally appeared, claimed to compare government support for the arts in seven countries:

Support for the Arts, 1971

---

West Germany	\$2.42
Austria	\$2.00
Sweden	\$2.00
Canada	\$1.40
Israel	\$1.34
Great Britain	\$1.23
United States	\$0.15

---

Source: Veronis, "Editorial: Washington Must Do More for the Arts," *Saturday Review—The Arts*, 22 April 1972.

Here we have data, presumably national expenditures on the arts, transformed into statistics—per capital expenditures—and presented in a table to facilitate comparison. But what does this table mean?

The author clearly wants his readers to ask: Why is the figure for the United States so low? But he also does not seem to want us to look too closely. Without much further research, it is easy to establish that the figure of 15¢ included only the 1971 budget of the National Endowment for the Arts. It neglected other federal agencies supporting the arts and culture, and certainly made no attempt to include government support at the other levels of government in what is clearly a federal system.

If the table is actually comparing central government expenditures, why are the figures for West Germany so high? The post-war constitution of West Germany expressly prohibited the German federal government from funding cultural activities. This, in turn, suggests that other levels of government are being included as well—at least in the German figures. But this can not be true for the American numbers.

Are there other reasons besides relative government commitment (or generosity) that could lead to these sorts of differences in the levels of per capita support? To play out just one such scenario: If each of these countries had a policy of funding exactly one national opera company, one national ballet company, one national orchestra, and one national museum, and if those cultural institutions cost more or less the same in one country as in another, then we would expect per capita expenditures on the arts to be higher in smaller countries *as a result of having exactly the same cultural policy but a smaller population across which to spread these costs*. Thus, differences do not necessarily signal difference.

Moreover, is not such a table likely to include only direct state aid while neglecting indirect aid (e.g., taxes foregone through various tax incentives)? And if this is the case, does this comparison not disadvantage those countries such as the United States that rely more heavily on indirect forms of state support than on direct forms?

Finally, why are *these* countries the *right* ones to compare? In what way does the author of this table see these particular countries as comparable?

Anyone with a modicum of training in, and a sensibility to, the nuances of cultural policy would have automatically raised these questions and, undoubtedly, many others besides. But these methodological quibbles are essentially beside the author's point. Is it at all surprising that the title of the article in which this table appeared was "Washington Must do More for the Arts."? Of course not. The author was more interested in making a political point than in fostering an understanding of cross-national difference in arts support. The advocacy intent is perfectly clear, even from the table itself.

In 1984-85, I was asked by the Policy Division of the National Endowment for the Arts to conduct a comparative study of the structure and level of funding for the arts and culture in eight countries in Western Europe and North America.<sup>3</sup> It was to be a "quick and dirty" study, responding to a time-limited request from an arts agency whose primary agenda, quite frankly, was not the accumulation of knowledge through research. Even though I was invited to conceive of the study in any way I deemed appropriate, there was one requirement—it had to include a league table. If I wanted the contract, I would have to include one. My compromise was an agreement that the table would be printed with a full complement of caveats appearing on the same page, so, at the very least, if that page were ever photocopied, the caveats would have some chance of traveling along with the table.

In the latter stages of my research I received a call from a Canadian government researcher. His minister had passed along an emergency request. He needed to know how Canada stacked up against others in arts funding, and he needed to know yesterday. This researcher pleaded with me to release my preliminary figures to him. His job would be so much easier if he could take advantage of work that had already been done. I relented, and we spent considerable time going over the numbers and my lengthy list of methodological caveats and footnotes. Within a day or two said minister was on national television citing new comparative research showing that per capita expenditures for culture in Canada were at a high level, on a par with Sweden, France, Germany, and the Netherlands. I no longer have perfect recall of these ensuing events, but I seem to remember that the Canadian figure had managed to increase, rather substantially, overnight.

In the wake of these events and as a partial apology to me, I was invited by the Canadian Department of Communications to give a seminar at the National Library on comparative studies of cultural expenditure. At that presentation, I put up an overhead of a completely fictitious “updated” per capita comparison. The audience was so caught up in copying down my fictitious numbers that my point, made verbally, was nearly lost. There is a power to numbers that we should not lose sight of. They seem crisp and precise, and they are hard to challenge when they appear by themselves without commentary.<sup>4</sup>

Through the 1970s and the 1980s, the league table became the *sine qua non* of much comparative research on arts funding. In the mid 1980’s I counted sixteen different studies in English that had generated sixteen different such tables and was able to demonstrate that, depending on the methodologies and the biases of each of the studies, countries jumped all over the time series graphs on which I compared the results of these studies.<sup>5</sup> Their popularity continues unabated, though subsequent research has made it more and more difficult for researchers to remain ignorant of the issues raised above. Nonetheless, the literature is full of such tables; they are very hard to resist.

If the flaws of league tables are so apparent, why have I taken the trouble to rake them over the coals one more time? First, I wanted to illustrate my point about giving meaning through the transformation of data into information via statistics and the transformation of information into evidence. But I also wanted to turn our attention to the question of comparative research, which will surely be at the heart of any cultural statistics effort undertaken at the UNESCO Statistics Institute.

## **Cross-National Cultural Statistics**

---

Where should the work of the UNESCO Statistics Institute begin and where should it end when it comes to cultural statistics? What is the role that this effort should play? These are complicated questions fraught with difficulty.

I imagine that the creation of a cultural statistics capability as part of the UNESCO Statistics Institute has two roles. One is to provide a level of comparability in cultural statistics across countries; the other is to gather information that will inform UNESCO’s own programs and initiatives in the area of cultural policy. Logically, the first precedes the second.

The goal of comparability is an admirable one, worthy of pursuit, but there will be pitfalls along the way. Will it be possible to adopt a single framework within which cultural statistics

are to be gathered that will be applicable and relevant to the many different national views as to what “culture” and “cultural policy” entail? The age-old problems of definition and boundary will become familiar once again.

## **Definitions**

How expansive is the definition of culture to be? Will it begin narrowly with the arts and creativity and then perhaps be expanded to questions of heritage and patrimony or even to the profit-seeking media and cultural industries? Or will it begin more broadly? The Web site for this symposium cites two broad definitions: “a set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and affective features which characterize a society or social group [and which] include, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, basic human rights, value systems, traditions and beliefs” or “a set of values providing humans with grounds for being and acting.” While it is easy to see why UNESCO, given its mission, would prefer to frame its actions within a broad definition of culture, it is much harder to see exactly how that ought to be operationalized. Indeed, this is one of the questions with which we will engage.

But definition and boundary are inextricably linked, particularly when they are viewed comparatively. For example, in some societies the question of religion and religious practices is fundamental to the conception of local culture and very much susceptible to public policy, but in other societies religion is seen as a separate sphere outside the realm of state influence and cultural policy. Yet, to have comparability some decision will have to be made as to how to handle religion with respect to the boundary of culture.

## **Boundaries**

Elsewhere, I have discussed three different generic approaches to the boundary question.<sup>6</sup> I call them “inclusive” boundaries, “floating” boundaries, and “anchored” boundaries.

### **Inclusive Boundaries**

One possibility is to expand the boundaries of inquiry enough so that all possible variation can be included within them. This is likely to be UNESCO’s first inclination as to boundaries—choosing boundaries so that all of its member countries will be able to fit their own definition of what constitutes culture comfortably inside. This would require a broad, anthropological definition, of the sort that is featured on the symposium Web site.

But there is some cautionary history here. UNESCO’s long-abandoned project, the *International Statistical Survey of Public Financing of Cultural Activities*, is a case in point. Each country wanted to be able to incorporate its own view of cultural policy into the proposed common data set, and researchers wanted to take advantage of the opportunity to ensure that all possible data would be collected and would, therefore, be available to future researchers. The 1981 pilot survey asked respondent governments to fill out 649 different cells of financial information disaggregated by discipline and by function. Even so, a number of countries reported that the survey did not include categories of direct government expenditure that they considered “cultural,” and no attempt was made to collect information about indirect government expenditure or expenditures by lower levels of government. In

the complexity of this data collection effort were the seeds of its demise. Member countries were both unwilling and unable to fill out tables of this magnitude with good clean data. And note that this happened despite the fact that this effort was narrowly focused on public financing. It made no effort whatsoever to expand its comparative inquiry to questions of participation in various cultural practices or to a census of various types of cultural institutions and organizations.

An inclusive boundary has another problem associated with it. Enlarging the boundary of inquiry to this point almost guarantees that the analytic boundaries will not correspond with any of individual country's views as to what its appropriate boundaries are. Because an inclusive boundary is not grounded in any identifiable reality it can become the boundary of a statistical fairyland.

### **Floating Boundaries**

A number of cross-national studies, realizing that the inclusive approach to boundary setting is too expensive and time-consuming—if not logistically and theoretically impossible—have used other approaches. Some have allowed the boundaries to float so that they can correspond to each country's definition of the limits of its own conceptions and interventions. Once again UNESCO provides a case in point. Its series of booklets, *Studies and Documents on Cultural Policies*, commissioned individual authors to describe the cultural policies of some sixty member countries in the 1970s and 80s. But, while each volume is interesting on its own terms (though now hopelessly outdated), valid comparisons are virtually impossible across the volumes.

Floating boundaries are by far the most common way that the collection of data for comparative studies has been organized, particularly studies with limited time and limited budgets. But floating boundaries may also be the result of a more formal political decision. UNESCO could decide, for example, to allow each country participating in a comparative study to exercise its own sovereignty over its own affairs by determining its own boundaries on the information it will provide. It is certainly the easiest way to collect data across countries, and it may be the only way that one can feasibly imagine getting any results at all.

### **Anchored Boundaries**

A third choice is for the researcher to impose a boundary that is tailored to the research purpose at hand by providing a fixed frame through which to view selected aspects of a country's cultural policies. With an anchored boundary no attempt is made to be inclusive; rather, an informed research choice is made to view one's cases through a particular research lens that will bring certain aspects of those cases into high relief and push others back into low relief.

Such was the case with my own cross-national funding study. I chose to use the concept of "U.S. Equivalents" as my anchored boundary. Beginning with the relatively narrow realm of government arts funding in the United States as a reference point, I superimposed this definition, as much as was possible, on funding figures for the other countries in my study. In other words, I was asking, "How much were these countries spending on the things on which the United States was spending money?" Thus, my figures were an artifact of

restricting the boundary of analysis in this way, including all three levels of government, and attempting to estimate the amount of indirect aid attributable to the support of arts and culture.

Choosing such a boundary, of course, has political implications. Per capita comparisons, are particularly sensitive to the setting of analytical boundaries. Choosing a narrower anchored boundary may improve the standing in the league tables of a country whose policy envelope is smaller, while a broader boundary may improve the standing of a country whose policy envelope is greater. Kurt Hentschel, has recognized a version of this dynamic in his discussion of support in the former Federal Republic of Germany:

“When seeking to delimit state intervention, one should adopt a somewhat broader definition of ‘culture and art;’ when the object is to pay for them one should take a much narrower one...”<sup>7</sup>

The choice of boundaries can have an important impact on what one sees. This is an important issue with which UNESCO will have to grapple, all the more so as its definition of “culture” expands and changes.

## **The Research and Information Infrastructure**

---

Any foray that UNESCO’s Statistics Institute might make into the field of cultural statistics will not happen in a vacuum. In any policy arena the crafting of appropriate and effective policy depends on the quality of the information infrastructure that is available to the participants in that arena. Such an information infrastructure does not arise of its own accord. Rather, it is designed, developed, and managed as a critical element in policy formulation and implementation. This is no less true in cultural policy than in other policy arenas, and, although there is considerable variation, a rather substantial national research and information infrastructure already exists in a number of countries and a nascent infrastructure is in evidence in many others. UNESCO will have to take account of this infrastructure in determining its appropriate role.

About two years ago, The Pew Charitable Trusts, a private American foundation, asked me to take a look at the research and information infrastructure in a number of countries where that infrastructure was rather well developed in order to inform the evolution of such an infrastructure in the United States. Last month the fruits of that research were published as *Informing Cultural Policy: The Research and information Infrastructure* (New Brunswick, NJ: Center for Urban Policy Research, 2002). In the remainder of this presentation I will summarize some of the main findings that emerged from that research.

### **Organizational Models**

Who are the players? In order to map the research and information infrastructure I attempted to identify the generic organizational models currently in use.

## **Research Division of a Government Cultural Funding Agency**

The central government agency charged with cultural policy might choose to run its own research and information function. The archetypal model here is the *Département des Études et de la Prospective* of the French Ministry of Culture and Communication. This office administers what is probably the most extensive national level information and research capability in cultural policy. It commissions research on a regular basis, administers ongoing work in the development of cultural indicators, maintains an extensive documentation service, and provides policy-based research on a one-off basis.

The Strategic Research and Analysis Directorate of Canadian Heritage; the Cultural Policy Directorate of the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science; the Planning and Research Section of the Public Affairs, Research and Communications Office of the Canada Council; and the Statistics and Social Policy Unit of the British Department for Culture, Media and Sport are other examples that are similar in intent and structure, if not in scope.

## **National or International Statistics Agency**

In some countries, the national statistics agency has a specific mandate to collect, maintain, and disseminate government statistics on the cultural sector. This is true for Statistics Canada and is also now true at the provincial level in Québec with the creation of a cultural statistics observatory. The Social and Culture Planning Office in the Netherlands provides an interesting variation on this theme, and the National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics in the Australian Bureau of Statistics is another example of this type.

We now are witnessing a new interest among international statistics agencies in the cultural field. Eurostat has been exploring a foray into cultural statistics, and the current symposium is evidence of UNESCO's interest in bringing cultural statistics within its Statistics Institute.

## **Independent Nonprofit Research Institute**

In some countries, the research function is delegated to an independent nonprofit institute. The Boekmanstichting in the Netherlands is perhaps the best-known example. This model offers the possibility of insulating research and information from the political pressures that might be brought to bear within a governmental agency.

## **Government-Designated University-Based Research Center**

The model of creating government-funded research centers based in universities is used extensively in France by the *Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique* (a rough equivalent to the National Science Foundation in the United States). Another example is the Australian Key Centre for Cultural and Media Policy located at Griffith University in Brisbane. This center is part of the Australian Research Council's Research Centres Program, through which research centers are established in a particular policy field and a specific university with expertise in that area is designated to host the center.

This model has two particularly interesting properties: it, too, allows the research function to be insulated from day-to-day political concerns and machinations, perhaps fostering research of a more social-scientific nature than would occur in centers that are linked more closely to policy-making institutions; and it makes it possible for the cultural policy information infrastructure to be more closely linked to university training and teaching programs than would customarily happen under other models.

### **Private Consulting Firm**

In some cases, the cultural policy information infrastructure has become primarily the province of a private, profit-making (or at least profit-seeking) consulting firm that specializes in the field. Many private consulting firms have conducted cultural policy related research on a one-off basis and have moved into and out of the field as projects have become available, but there are some that have made a longer term commitment to building up expertise in this field. International Intelligence on Culture (formerly the International Arts Bureau) in London, is a case in point. EUCLID International is a more recent example, but there are many other examples in the increasingly complex cultural policy research and information environment.

Two factors seem to be fueling this growth: (1) privatization as an element in cultural policy, which has led to increasing reliance on consulting services provided by the private sector, and (2) the widespread availability of new information technologies, which facilitates the low-cost communication of information. As a result, private entrepreneurs have made their presence felt in the cultural policy information infrastructure in two ways: (1) through responding to requests for proposal for research services (indeed, the increased presence of for-profit consulting firms, in and of itself, puts pressure on governmental agencies to open up their bidding processes to these firms), and (2) through the packaging and redistribution of information.

The *Zentrum für Kulturforschung* in Germany might also be placed in this category, but its structure and intent perhaps distinguish it from more traditional consulting firms. Although it is set up as a private company, it functions more as a research institute than as a consultancy, though it is funded primarily on the basis of contractual research relationships with the federal government, with joint federal/*Länder* bodies, and with various European and international agencies.

### **Cultural Observatories**

When I began my research I was aware of several institutions that called themselves “cultural observatories,” though I was not yet aware of the then proposed *Observatoire de la Culture et des Communications* du Québec. What I had not realized was how much the field of cultural observatories had expanded. In a strictly taxonomic sense, these observatories do not constitute a pure type. Instead, they combine a variety of hybrids of the different models under a common rubric. Nevertheless, because of their recent popularity, it is worth considering cultural observatories as a separate phenomenon and in a bit more detail than the other models.

Generally speaking, cultural observatories have come into being to serve as mediators in the process of bringing policy-relevant data and information to the attention of the field. My research identified some twenty cultural observatories with the word “observatory” in their names.<sup>8</sup> If one were to add similarly functioning institutions that do not use that word, the list would increase substantially. Conversely, it may also be the case that organizations that use the word “observatory” are not actually functioning as an observatory in the sense that that term seems to imply in the cultural policy field. Nearly all of these observatories have come into existence in the last five to ten years.

The use of the word “observatory/*observatoire*” to describe a data gathering, monitoring, and information disseminating organization in any field appears to be a French innovation. Augustin Girard, former head of the *Département des Études et de la Prospective* of the French Ministry of Culture and Communication, describes the deliberate choice of the word “*observatoire*” as a “shy” choice. The intended message was quite clear: This new institution was not being created to rule or control; rather, it would observe, monitor, and provide information passively. In his words, “We cannot agree on a center, but we can have an observatory. It is a pleasant name. An observatory is a place of negotiation, of interactivity. It does not deliver judgments.”

There is little doubt that the metaphor of an observatory is a powerful one, even if that metaphor does not actually suggest what the content and operation of such an entity should be. And one has to be careful not to conclude that the creation of a cultural policy observatory solves the problem of designing the cultural policy information infrastructure simply by virtue of its existence. An “observatory” can become an ill-defined grab bag into which all types of expectations can be stuffed. The senior observatory in the field, the *Observatoire des Politiques Culturelles* in Grenoble, pays rather little attention to data collection and monitoring, which one might have expected to be at the center of its *raison d’être*. Rather, it focuses on continuing education programs and other venues through which it can communicate research results to the field—a worthy goal, to be sure, but one that most would think ancillary to an observatory’s main tasks.

UNESCO, itself, has been tempted to join in the institutional proliferation of observatories. In Stockholm in 1998 the Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development adopted an Action Plan that included the recommendation that the Director-General of UNESCO “encourage the establishment of networks for research and information on cultural policies for development, including study of the establishment of an observatory of cultural policies.” But at a meeting in Hannover, Germany,<sup>9</sup> the notion of creating an international observatory of cultural policies was dropped in favor of recognizing the prior existence of many such institutions by attempting to pull them together into an International Network of Observatories in Cultural Policies facilitated, if not supported, by UNESCO.<sup>10</sup>

## **Networks**

Just as observatories have proliferated in the cultural policy field, so too have networks, but the driving forces in this instance are a bit different. Some networks have been created because of the natural desire to share with and learn from one another; others have been created because of a specific desire to engage in comparative documentation and research. CIRCLE is the clearest example of the latter point; UNESCO’s International Network of Observatories in Cultural Policies, if it were ever realized, might become another. But the

formation of networks in the cultural field has also been driven by the new realities of transnational funding, particularly at the European level. Many of the funding programs of the European Union require multiple partners in multiple countries in order for a project to be funded, and this requirement has fueled the creation of networks in anticipation of the need for demonstrating the existence of such partnerships quickly. To some degree, the funding agencies see networks as a way to more efficiently manage demands on their limited resources; they can always insist that you operate through the network, letting the network do some of the sifting and sorting prior to the presentation of a request for funding.

From time to time cultural networks commission research relevant to the needs of their members and, thus, have become important, though occasional, components of the information and research infrastructure. Cultural policy research networks such as CIRCLE make this their primary business.

The proliferation of networks has become so strong that the field has recently witnessed a new phenomenon: the creation of networks of networks. To take but two examples, UNESCO has funded the Network of Networks for Research and Cooperation in Cultural Development, which operates out of Zagreb, Croatia, under the name Culturelink; and the Council of Europe has formed the Forum of European Cultural Networks (*Forum des Reseaux Culturels Europeens*), which it convenes in Strasbourg on an occasional basis.

ERICArts, the European Research Institute for Comparative Cultural Policy and the Arts, originally established as an association to be a provider of comparative cultural policy research, is another type of network. It pulls together interdisciplinary teams of researchers from throughout Europe (and elsewhere) involving them in projects of common interest. The eventual goal of ERICArts is to create a permanent European-level cultural policy research institute, at which point it would function as a “managed consortium” with nonprofit or foundation status run by major cultural observatories and research bodies.

## **Program Models**

Some of the most interesting research work in the field has been organized around research *programs* rather than research *institutions*. The most interesting and most visible of these has been the Council of Europe’s Program for the Evaluation of National Cultural Policies. The Council has been offering its member states the opportunity to participate in this program for the last 17 years. Each state that participates commissions a study of its own national cultural policy, the so-called “National Report.” The Council of Europe then commissions a panel of outside experts who evaluate and react to the National Report, eventually filing an “Examiners Report.” The result has been a fascinating and valuable series of reports documenting and debating national cultural policies in Europe. Relevant to our current discussions are the attempts that have been made within this program to move toward the collection of truly comparable data.

## **Journals and Periodicals**

While there are a number of academic journals that operate in the field of cultural policy—the *Journal of Cultural Economics*, the *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, the *International Journal of Arts Management*, the *Journal of Arts Management, Law and*

*Society, Media International Australia (incorporating Cultural Policy)*, *Nordisk Kulturpolitisk Tidskrift* (the *Nordic Journal of Cultural Policy*), *Economia della Cultura* (the journal of the Italian Association for Cultural Economics), and *Boekmancahier*, among others—several journals have been developed to serve more specific data, information, and research dissemination needs. *Cultural Trends* published by the Policy Studies Institute, University of Westminster, London is the premier example.

While I have used the names of various organizations and institutions to illustrate the archetypal models above, as is often the case in public policy one does not observe pure types in the field. Rather, most of these examples combine elements from several models. Research divisions of ministries of culture commission research from private consulting firms, participate in research networks, and publish newsletters and, occasionally, journals of their own; nonprofit research institutes team up with university-based research centers to conduct research and conferences on behalf of public agencies.

What is important is the ecology: The Research Division of the French Ministry of Culture and Communication works in the context of the wide variety of social science research units supported by the *Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique*; one cannot appreciate the work of the *Observatoire des Politiques Culturelles* of Grenoble without understanding its relationship to the *Centre de Recherche sur le Politique, l'Administration, la Ville et le Territoire*; the Australian Key Centre works in collaboration with the research office of the Australia Council; the Boekmanstichting works alongside the Dutch Social and Cultural Planning Office; and so on. Often the national ecology of the cultural policy information infrastructure involves four or five main organizations and many other smaller ones.

Given this complexity, it is inevitable that the information infrastructure has evolved differently in different places, not only with respect to the sharing of research responsibilities across public agencies but also with respect to the balance between public provision and private provision of the research infrastructure. The division of research labor differs from place to place depending on how the information infrastructure has evolved. So how ought this infrastructure evolve at the international level? That, too, is an important question for our deliberations.

## Themes and Findings

---

In my book I document the research and information infrastructure in France, the Netherlands, England, and Canada with some attention to particularly interesting initiatives in a number of other countries. While it is impossible to summarize all of the results of that research in the current presentation, a brief discussion of eight of the most important findings will be useful to our discussions.

### **1. There has been a dramatic resurgence of investment in policy-relevant information and research in the field of cultural policy.**

Government agencies in many countries are rebuilding their research capabilities after periods in which that research capability lay fallow; in other countries research capabilities are being built for the first time, often under the rubric of “cultural observatories”; and the rise of transnational governmental organizations (e.g., the Council of Europe, the European

Union, and the reentry of UNESCO into the field of cultural policy through the window of “cultural development”<sup>11</sup>) has created a demand for comparative research and information sharing as a prerequisite for collaborative, cross-national projects.

The mantra of “value for money” and the call for “policy-relevant advice” have permeated cultural funding agencies, making them much more conscious of the effectiveness of the programs they oversee. The call has gone out for “hard data.”<sup>12</sup> The reorientation of some of the major arts funding bodies toward strategic action rather than grant making has also contributed to this trend. And the creation of new cabinet-level umbrella agencies (Canadian Heritage in Canada and the Department for Media, Culture and Sport in the United Kingdom), while raising the profile of the field, may well impart a new importance to coordinated policy initiatives informed by applied comparative research. Here the clearest example is the International Comparative Research Group of the Strategic Research and Analysis Directorate of Canadian Heritage.

It is useful and informative to contrast the development of cultural policy research within ministries of culture to its development within arts councils, whose relationship to government is typically at arm’s length. When a coherent research policy has evolved, most often it has been within ministries of culture, which are less reticent to be seen as exercising central control and monitoring over the field. Arm’s length arts councils have traditionally been less subject to central government’s expectations for explicit policy and planning, so it is perhaps not surprising that arts councils’ commitments to research have fluctuated considerably over time. Recently, however, as central governments have applied increased pressure on arm’s length arts councils in an attempt to assure that they are operating within the general direction of government policy, there has been a marked rise in the call for *evidence-based* policy and planning, a call that arts councils are finding difficult to resist.

Not surprisingly, this resurgence of research has once again brought to the forefront the debate between basic research and applied research. Much of the new investment in cultural policy research has been targeted at very applied projects with a direct relevance to (short-term) policy decision making. It is less clear that the new investment in research has benefited basic research, the one exception being in France where the parallel system of university-based research centers funded and staffed through the *Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique* continues to conduct basic research.

What is the contribution that the UNESCO Statistics Institute will make to this resurgence?

**2. While all countries pay attention to information gathering, analysis and interpretation, and dissemination, the division of labor with respect to these tasks varies widely.**

Each country divides the research labor in its own signature way. The clearest division of labor is in evidence in the Netherlands: The Dutch Central Bureau for Statistics (Statistics Netherlands) provides the main source of data collection for the state; the Social and Cultural Planning Office uses these data and others to write a series of interpretative reports depicting various aspects of the cultural life of the country; the *Boekmanstichting* provides the library and documentation function while facilitating conferences and seminars and conducting some limited desk (secondary) research; and the Cultural Policy Directorate of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science supports these ongoing efforts financially and

commissions research projects from time to time depending on the policy needs of the Ministry.

In France, the *Département des Études et de la Prospective* of the Ministry of Culture and Communication combines several of the elements under one roof: it provides substantial library and documentation services to the field; it commissions and oversees a wide variety of research projects; and it serves as the primary collector of statistical data through its function as the Ministerial Statistical Office of the national statistics office. Basic social science research in the arts and culture is separate, located primarily in university-based research centers.

In other countries, the division of labor in cultural policy research is still being worked out. How will the UNESCO Statistics Institute contribute to this division of labor?

### **3. Much of the cultural policy research that is being undertaken around the world today might be better thought of as the development of a statistical base of data rather than the conduct of policy-relevant research.**

Many of the agencies that I interviewed see the development of basic statistics on the cultural sector as their highest priority. All of these seem to be operating with the conviction that if such numbers were available, they would prove useful. Yet, over the years, many of the research organizations in the cultural field, UNESCO included, have been criticized because they have appeared to be more interested in generating numbers than analysis. Hundreds if not thousands of statistical reports documenting one or another subsector of the cultural sphere have been published.

But let us not forget that this emphasis on numbers over analysis may, in part, be politically rational. Research divisions in arts funding agencies have had a hard time justifying their existence in the face of demands for more support directly to cultural programs, and they have protected themselves by retreating to the perceived safety of neutral statistical presentations, though, as more than a few anecdotes demonstrate, even “neutral” statistics can prove threatening.<sup>13</sup>

It would be a mistake to suggest that it is possible to separate completely statistics gathering from statistics interpretation. It is clear from the criticisms that one hears of even those statistics collected by the indisputably reputable national statistics agencies that interpretation begins at the data gathering stage when categorization schemes are designed and used to collect data. What one sees is shaped by the framework through one chooses to view the world.

How will the UNESCO Statistics Institute strike the balance between basic research and policy-relevant data?

**4. It is not so much the shortage of data that should command one's attention; rather, it is the lack of use of those data that needs to be addressed.**

In most countries, a considerable quantity of data on the arts and culture *is* being collected, often on a regular basis as part of the submission requirements of the grant-making process, though little of this mass of data is ever used in any organized fashion by the cultural funding agency that requires it. Collection and assumed availability substitute for research and inquiry. Alan Peacock has raised this issue in his own inimitable way in a recent critique of arts funding in Scotland:

“...The major museums and galleries and the major companies supported by the Scottish Arts Council do produce accounting data as legally required, but this is not analysed, or at least for the public's benefit. Detailed examination of them reveals striking differences in the grants per attendance at arts events which require explanation. One can hardly blame Scottish Executive officials who are hard-pressed as it is to churn out a succession of policy documents, for not offering evidence of statistical literacy, if their masters have no wish to be confused by the facts.”<sup>14</sup>

Moreover, the data collection that does exist is often uncoordinated, involving many different government agencies, service organizations, research centers, and industry groups. Terry Cheney, in his review of available data for the Publishing Policy Group of Canadian Heritage<sup>15</sup>, found that each sector had its own constellation of data sources, a constellation that included Statistics Canada, the program office within Canadian Heritage that deals with the sector, and service organizations and associations operating within the sector. In other words, a considerable volume of data was already available, but the institutional capability for mining those data was limited. Cheney's first and most important conclusion was to pay attention to using the data sources that already exist—even though he also recognized that these sources are incomplete, inconsistent, and of varying quality.

As research organizations, cultural observatories, networks, and private profit-making entrepreneurs proliferate, the sheer volume of data that will be available will only increase—though much of it may simply be repackaged, distributed, and marketed via the new information technologies. Consequently, there will be a need for data mediators who can make informed judgments about the quality and applicability of data and who can analyze their meaning. Much of the impetus behind cultural observatories, indeed behind the culture and communication program of the UNESCO Statistics Institute, seems to be inspired by this need for data mediation.

Instances in which the available statistics have been fully explored, interpreted, and debated are rather rare. Here the model of the Dutch Social and Cultural Planning Office is instructive. The mandate given to this office by the Ministry is to mine and interpret the available data on the arts and culture according to several main themes of interest in the cultural sphere, themes that change from year to year, and to publish regular reports. The authors of these reports are encouraged to give their own interpretation and spin to the data in order to provoke comment, reflection, and debate.

All of the countries that I considered rely on a basic repertoire of studies to develop the statistical base of information. Typically, the first studies are descriptive, documenting the

supply of art and culture. How many arts and cultural organizations of what type are located where? How many heritage sites have been officially designated, and where are they located? How much money are local, regional, or national governments spending on each type of cultural organization? How many artists and cultural workers of various types are there? Where do they live? What are the economics of their lives? More recently, these studies have been expanded to include the demographics of the cultural industries.

But, increasingly, attention is turning toward studies of the demand for the arts and culture as another element in the basic statistical repertoire. Most countries now conduct participation studies of their adult population to gauge what percentage of various demographic groups attends or participates in various cultural activities. Many countries also conduct time-use surveys to ascertain the relative amounts of time that their population spends engaged in various types of activities. Some conduct expenditure surveys.

For each of these studies the methodology has become sufficiently refined over time and sufficiently similar across countries that, for the first time, it has become possible to envision truly cross-national comparative studies. Indeed, the hope of many of the individuals involved in the Council of Europe's Program for the Evaluation of National Cultural Policies was that it would gradually result in the adoption of a standardized set of methodologies for gathering information that would then be able to be compared across countries. The data now exist; the work remains.

In the last several years, the issue of cross-European data comparability in the field of culture has been taken up by Eurostat, the statistical agency of the European Union. Several leadership groups on cultural statistics have been formed with representatives of the various interested countries in the European Union as members: a Task Force on Methodology, a Task Force on Employment, a Task Force on Cultural Spending and Cultural Funding, and a Task Force on Participation in Cultural Activities, and the initial report of the leadership groups has been published.<sup>16</sup>

And UNESCO is now taking up once again the cause of even greater comparability in cultural statistics across an even wider range of countries. What will its unique contribution be?

##### **5. With the proliferation of data from a wide variety of sources, the issue of how to assure the quality of the data has become even more important.**

Historically, the field of cultural policy research has been plagued with the widespread distribution of data collected and manipulated with the self-interest of the collecting agency in mind. This issue has only been exacerbated by the quick and easy sharing of information electronically. It is now quite common to find many different Web sites making reference to the same data or information, but without attribution or explanation. As more and more sites are linked to other sites, it will become more and more difficult to verify the quality, the applicability, and the timeliness of the data. Thus, evaluation of and commentary upon existing data is another role that might be played by some form of intermediary institution or data mediator.

A second version of the problem of quality assurance arose during my interviews. Research positions in cultural policy research divisions are not systematically occupied by trained

social scientists. Many people in these jobs recognize that they are not trained as researchers, yet they are being asked to contract for, supervise, summarize, and occasionally conduct research. This has been exacerbated with the spread of research budgets throughout the departments of ministries of culture and arts councils as the various sub-components of the ministerial system have realized the usefulness of data to their operations and the desirableness of having more direct control over the collection and dissemination of those data. (This has been an important byproduct of decentralization of cultural policy.)

What choices will the UNESCO Statistics Institute make in order to assure data quality?

**6. With the shift toward the inclusion of the cultural industries within the realm of public sector cultural policy, the field is moving toward the bread and butter of the mainline governmental statistical agencies, whose relative expertise resides in counting firms and measuring trade, employment, and labor markets. Thus, their importance in cultural statistics is on the rise.**

The field of cultural policy has shifted from areas that have traditionally been rather closely allied with the state and state intervention toward more of a relationship with, and dependence upon, industry. This shift is revealed in a change in vocabulary; government cultural agencies have begun to present themselves as responsible, for example, for “Creative Britain” or even to restructure themselves as “Creative New Zealand.” One result of this shift is that the center of gravity in research is moving away from research offices with a general mandate to more specialized research groups and centers that are familiar with the terrain of various segments of the cultural industries. Some of these centers are clearly linked to the industries that they observe, raising issues of confidentiality and reliability and encouraging rivalry among competing centers of expertise.

The statistical methodologies for studying these entities are much more highly developed than the statistical methodologies for studying artistic and cultural activities in the nonprofit and governmental sectors. The difference in quality between these two sets of statistics may well provide the pressure finally needed to improve statistics gathering on the nonprofit and governmental sides.

Another way to frame this shift is to notice that in the years since many of the research organizations and institutions studied here were created, the boundaries of the field of cultural policy have expanded beyond the boundaries of the traditional ministries of culture and arts councils. Multiple governmental agencies have always been involved in cultural policy—the early work of the *Département des Études et de la Prospective* (DEP) demonstrated this clearly in France—but that multiple involvement is now much more explicit. Culture is no longer the sole domain of national ministries and arts councils, and the research portfolio has changed to reflect this shift.

This poses a challenge to the UNESCO Statistics Institute or to any other cross-national data gathering agencies because it complicates the task. How will it respond?

## **7. Combining research and evaluation functions has often proven to be difficult if not impossible.**

To combine the research function and the evaluation function into the same cultural policy research apparatus seems to be eminently logical. After all, they require many of the same methodological skills. But they do not involve the same political skills.

It has not been uncommon for research divisions within ministries of culture and arts councils to be asked to take on the evaluation function. Reasonable and responsible public policy implementation requires an informed look at which programs and projects are succeeding, which are failing, and why. But when research divisions have taken on this function, they have often found themselves in jeopardy. Ministers begin to wonder, why are we spending money so that someone within our agency can criticize us? Wouldn't it be better to spend that money on the arts? Why should we be spending money on research at all? It is not easy to find evaluation capabilities built into government cultural agencies today.

Will the UNESCO Statistics Institute see itself as facilitating evaluation at the macro-level? If so, how?

## **8. The boundary between advocacy and research is often hard to detect; it can also be hard to enforce.**

Introducing the question of advocacy into a discussion of cultural policy research is every bit as problematic as introducing the question of evaluation. Yet, the use of research results for advocacy purposes is often on the minds of those who are calling for (or funding) research. To take but one example, the original design of the Center for Arts and Culture in Washington, D.C. envisioned an organization with two functions: research and advocacy. In no small part, this was a response by the foundations that funded it to the attacks that had been waged against public funding of the arts and culture in the United States. They felt that the arts needed help to fight back.

In my interviews, Pierre-Michel Menger, the director of a CNRS-supported research center in France and, therefore, somewhat of an outside observer, made an interesting point. He argued that at this point in time in France there is a strain of research that is intertwined with advocacy. He described this research as "defensive," intended to protect the state funding system that has evolved. He characterized the cultural field as having two parts, a growing private part (e.g. audiovisual, media, and the cultural industries in general) and the part that, in his words, has been "conserved for cultural policy." The argument that there should be more state involvement is essentially spent, in his view. Rather, the state now finds itself playing a more impartial role, albeit somewhat on the left, maintaining equilibrium between the various components of the newly expanded boundary of cultural policy.

In several cases, arts councils have embraced advocacy as they have restructured their arts support infrastructure, and they are quite happy to say so. Both the Canada Council and the Arts Council of England are cases in point. But some of my interviewees had a very different reaction, however. They did not understand the underlying premise of the question at all. Those who entered the field of cultural policy research as believers in cultural policy see *all* of what they do as advocacy. They believe that their work is in service to that field

and do not understand why it would be desirable to articulate any boundary between research and advocacy.

To what extent will advocacy play a role in a renewed UNESCO capability with respect to cultural statistics, and to what extent will it act to conserve state-driven cultural policy?

## **In Conclusion**

---

My goals for this paper have proven far too ambitious, and fear that I have given us grist for many weeks of conversation, rather than for two days. So, let me end a bit more simply.

In describing his career-long commitment to applied research to me, Augustin Girard pointed out that “coming from the field and going back to the field” was more interesting to him than “coming from concepts and going back to research.” The trick, of course, was to figure out ways to value that commitment. The role that the cultural policy information infrastructure can play is critical, but that role has to go well beyond generating research results and creating information. It has to extend to the informed communication and use of that information.

There is no more important lesson than this one for the culture and communication office of the UNESCO Statistics Institute.

## Notes

---

- <sup>1</sup> Two contrasting examples are offered in Westat, Inc. *A Sourcebook of Arts Statistics: 1997* (Washington, D.C.: Research Division, National Endowment for the Arts, April 1988); and Sara Selwood, ed., *The U.K. Cultural Sector: Profile and Policy Issues* (London: Policy Studies Institute, 2001). The first presents data from various sources for the arts and culture in the United States with no discussion of the attributes of any of the data sources; the second presents available data for the United Kingdom through the device of commissioned papers interpreting the data on each of the sectors.
- <sup>2</sup> Eugene Bardach, *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis: The Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving* (New York: Seven Bridges Press, 2000), p. 98. Note that my characterization of Bardach's point differs slightly from the original—he includes statistics in the category of data—but my intent is similar: to highlight the process whereby data are imbued with meaning and then used.
- <sup>3</sup> J. Mark Schuster, *Supporting the Arts: An International Comparative Study* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1985).
- <sup>4</sup> This point is made quite dramatically in Max Singer, "The Vitality of Mythical Numbers," *Public Interest*, No. 23, Spring 1971; and Peter Reuter, "The (Continued) Vitality of Mythical Numbers," *Public Interest*, No. 75, Spring 1984.
- <sup>5</sup> J. Mark Schuster, "Making Compromises to Make Comparisons in Cross-National Arts Policy Research," *Journal of Cultural Economics*, Vol. 11, No. 2, December 1987.
- <sup>6</sup> For further discussion of this point see J. Mark Schuster, "Thoughts on the Art and Practice of Comparative Cultural Research," in Ineke van Hamersveld and Niki van der Wielen (eds.), *Cultural Research in Europe*, Boekmanstichting, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 1996; or J. Mark Schuster, "Making Compromises to Make Comparisons in Cross-National Arts Policy Research," *Journal of Cultural Economics*, Vol. 11, No. 2, December 1987.
- <sup>7</sup> Kurt Hentschel, "Financing the Arts in the Federal Republic of Germany from the Viewpoint of a Land," in Myerscough, *Funding the Arts in Europe*, p. 21.
- <sup>8</sup> A (partial) list would include the following: The *Observatoire des Politiques Culturelles* in Grenoble, France; the European Audiovisual Observatory in Strasbourg, France; the *Observatoire du Disque et de l'Industrie Musicale* in Paris, France; the *Collectif Observatoire Culturel* in St Etienne, France; the *Observatoire de l'Économie Culturelle de Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur* in Aix en Provence, France; the *Observatoire de l'Emploi Culturel* within the research division of the French Ministry of Culture and Communication in Paris, France; the *Osservatorio Europeo sul Turismo Culturale* at the *Centro Universitario Europeo per i Beni Culturali* in Ravello, Italy; the *Osservatorio Culturale del Piemonte* under the auspices of the Fitzcarraldo Foundation in Turin, Italy; the *Osservatorio Culturale e Reti Informative* in Milan, Italy; INTERARTS: The European Observatory for Cultural Research and International Cultural Co-operation in Barcelona, Spain; the *Observatório das Atividades Culturais* in Lisbon, Portugal; the Regional Observatory on Financing Culture in East-Central Europe in Budapest, Hungary (The

“Budapest Observatory”); the *Observatorio Cultural* in the Faculty of Economic Sciences, University of Buenos Aires, Argentina; the *Observatório de Políticas Culturais* at the University of São Paulo, Brazil; the *Observatorio de Políticas Culturales Municipales* in Montevideo, Uruguay; the Canadian Cultural Observatory, in Hull, Canada, currently under development; *Observatoire de la Culture et des Communications* at the provincial level in Québec, Canada; a proposed *Observatoire du Développement Culturel* in Belgium; a proposed *Observatoire Culturel* in Corsica; and the African Observatory of Cultural Policies being developed under the auspices of UNESCO.

- <sup>9</sup> UNESCO, “Workshop: Towards an International Network of Observatories on Cultural Policies,” Hanover, Germany, 19-20 September 2000.
- <sup>10</sup> This initiative now appears to be dormant as UNESCO has restructured and restaffed its Division of Cultural Policies, focusing its attention on other initiatives.
- <sup>11</sup> This new interest on the part of UNESCO has been described variously as “cultural development,” “culture *for* development,” “culture *in* development,” and “culture *and* development.” The differences among these descriptions are not merely semantic. It remains to see which of these directions, if any, UNESCO will pursue and what the implications will be for its programmatic initiatives.
- <sup>12</sup> For one interesting example of this, see the discussion of “evidence” on the Web site of the Council for Museums, Archives, and Libraries in London: <http://www.resource.gov.uk/information/evidence/00ev.asp>.
- <sup>13</sup> Consider the following story: In 1989 Jack Lang returned for his second term as minister of culture. He was hoping that the results of *Pratiques Culturelles des Français 1988* would validate the success of the cultural policies he had implemented during his prior term as minister (1981-1986) and was not happy that it contained some bad news. While the participation rates in many domains had increased, some had decreased. He focused particularly on the reading statistics for respondents who indicated that they were “strong readers,” reading at least 25 books in the previous year. The percentage of strong readers had declined from 22% in 1973 to 19% in 1981 to 17% in 1988. Lang saw this result, among others, as an indictment of his democratization policies, and, to make things worse, an indictment that was coming *from within his own ministry*. Lang’s inclination was to kill the messenger that had been the bearer of the bad news, in this case the research division itself. Claude Seibel, the vice-chairman of the *Conseil des Études* and an individual with a considerable research reputation throughout the French government, fought successfully to save the office.
- <sup>14</sup> Professor Sir Alan Peacock, “Introduction: Calling the Tune,” in Professor Sir Alan Peacock, et al., *Calling the Tune: A Critique of Arts Funding in Scotland* (Edinburgh: The Policy Institute, February 2001), p. 15.
- <sup>15</sup> Terry Cheney, “Summing Up...Better data in an e-culture age: DGCI Needs for Better Data—A Review and Recommendations,” report prepared for Research, Analysis and Compliance; Publishing Policy and Programs; Canadian Heritage, February 2000.

<sup>16</sup> For further discussion of cultural statistics in the European Union, see “Cultural Statistics in the European Union,” *Circular: Research and Documentation on Cultural Policies*, No. 1, 1995, pp. 8-10; “European Cultural Statistics: In Search of a Common Language,” *Circular: Research and Documentation on Cultural Policies*, No. 9, 1998, pp. 12-14; and *Cultural Statistics in the E.U.: Final report of the LEG*, Eurostat Working Papers, Population and social conditions 3/2000/E/N° 1 (Luxembourg: Eurostat, 2000).