

Hollywood parlance — to play itself” (p. 118). He concludes that this kind of ‘representational pattern ... consistently calls into question [the] cultural, political and economic borders that have been imposed historically upon the physical geography of North America’ (p. 134). We are used to such arguments being mounted for diasporic populations, not for the film services industry!

While it is not clear that Gasher resolves the important issues he raises, his work is an important contribution to the growing conversation about international production. The book breaks new ground and is required reading for anyone interested in the international film production industry in Canada and elsewhere.

— Tom O'Regan, *Arts, Media and Culture*, Griffith University

Gray, Clive, *The Politics of the Arts in Britain*, Macmillan, London, 2000, ISBN 0 3337 3413 0, 224 pp., \$???. Distributor: ???.

Clive Gray presents an examination of the politics of the arts in Britain over last 50 years of the twentieth century. His concern is the arts broadly defined, as an area of public policy. This book is concerned with an analysis of policy which forms the relationship between the state and the arts. That is, this book does not consider the wider governance of the arts over this time in terms of the political, social and cultural effects of cultural policies of non-governmental, supranational, charitable or commercial organisations.

Gray's analysis aims to discuss the ways in which state cultural policy changes affect the arts in Britain. The key shift he identifies is to do with the ‘commodification’ of the arts which he defines as the shift from assessing the arts as a category of things which have a use to a category of things which have an exchange value. He argues that the arts are now treated by government ‘in just the same way as any other consumer good’ (p. 7). In presenting this argument, Gray provides a standard history of state arts funding in Britain and in this the book offers little which has not been discussed before (see, for instance, works by Pearson, Minihan, Pick, Lewis, Harris and Hewison). However, for the post-1979 history of British state cultural policy, the book is very useful — particularly as it discusses the changes in the system over the last 20 years, as a result especially of the increasing importance of the regional arts boards, and the influence of European funding.

— Lisanne Gibson ?? University of Melbourne

Griffen-Foley, Bridget, *Party Games: Australian Politicians and the Media from War to Dismissal*, (check title?) Text Publishing, Melbourne, 2003, ISBN 1 8770 0864 8, 292 pp.

There is a growing cynicism about our democratic institutions that is often explained as a response to the spin applied by an increasingly manipulative media-politics nexus. Bridget Griffen-Foley's latest book investigates that nexus in Australia from the end of World War II to the dismissal of the Whitlam government in 1975 and finds that it was ever thus. *Party Games* is an interesting riff on Griffen-Foley's previous work about the foundation of the House of Packer and the career of Kerry's dad, old Sir Frank, who blatantly wielded the political power afforded by his media outlets.

Griffen-Foley expands her field of vision to include other press barons such as Sir Keith and later young Rupert Murdoch and Sir Warwick Fairfax and his doomed crew. The cast includes all the usual suspects: Prime Ministers Chifley, Menzies, Holt, Gorton, McMahon and Whitlam, Labor losers Evatt and Calwell and bare-knuckled journos like Alan Reid who exulted in the Packer-given task of bringing down Gorton in the 1960s. She gives us a detailed insight into how spin was applied in another time and how it adapted to new social formations and new technologies, from the John Henry Austral radio plays pushing the Menzies line in the 1940s through the introduction of television to the exultant ‘it's time’ ads for Whitlam in 1972.