



Risky business: policy legacy and gender inequality in Australian opera production

Caitlin Vincent, Katya Johanson & Bronwyn Coate

To cite this article: Caitlin Vincent, Katya Johanson & Bronwyn Coate (2023): Risky business: policy legacy and gender inequality in Australian opera production, International Journal of Cultural Policy, DOI: [10.1080/10286632.2023.2239266](https://doi.org/10.1080/10286632.2023.2239266)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10286632.2023.2239266>



© 2023 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.



Published online: 16 Aug 2023.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



View related articles [↗](#)






View Crossmark data [↗](#)

ARTICLE

 OPEN ACCESS



Risky business: policy legacy and gender inequality in Australian opera production

Caitlin Vincent ^a, Katya Johanson ^b and Bronwyn Coate ^c

^aSchool of Culture and Communication, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia; ^bSchool of Arts and Humanities, Edith Cowan University, Perth, Australia; ^cSchool of Economics, Finance and Marketing, RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia

ABSTRACT

The field of cultural policy has seen a shift towards considerations of diversity, with government bodies increasingly leveraging funding to combat inequality within organisations. A barrier to this aim is a lack of quantitative data, which would provide a means to evaluate the impact of specific policies in practice. This article investigates the relationship between gender inequality at an organisational level and cultural policy at a sectoral level through a case study of Australia's state-funded opera companies. Drawing on production data from 2005 to 2020, we consider women's representation as conductors, directors, and designers at the state companies through the lens of Australia's policy legacy. We find that women experience gender-based disadvantage across the key creative roles of opera production and are further negatively impacted by Australia's existing policy landscape, which, reflecting the drivers of cultural and economic value, indirectly enables gender inequality in the field.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 18 March 2023
Accepted 18 July 2023

KEYWORDS

Cultural policy; gender inequality; Australia; opera

Introduction

With the rise of movements like #MeToo and #BlackLivesMatter, the creative industries have come under increased scrutiny around issues of inequality and exclusion (Brook, O'Brien, and Taylor 2019; Conor, Gill, and Taylor 2015; Edmond 2023; Eikhof 2017; Eikhof and Warhurst 2013). The field of cultural policy has seen a simultaneous shift, with both governments and funding bodies advocating for more inclusive cultural sectors (Boise, Edmond, and Strong 2022). In 2019, Australian federal arts funding body the Australia Council for the Arts¹ incorporated an explicit diversity clause into its expectations for arts organisations, noting that funding will prioritise outcomes 'addressing barriers and improving performance across key diversity areas' (Australia Council for the Arts 2019, 9). This echoes recent efforts by Arts Council England and the Swedish Arts Council, among others, to leverage access to funding as a way to combat inequality within cultural organisations (Björck 2021; Boise, Edmond, and Strong 2022; Brown 2020; Calderón-Sandoval 2022).

As Ali and Byrne (2022) observe, cultural policies that promote diversity, including those intended to address gender inequality, are an important expression of intent by governing bodies. However, policies are often more aspirational than practical and can be overshadowed by arguments about cultural and economic value. Jansson (2019) suggests that diversity policies can be particularly

CONTACT Caitlin Vincent  caitlin.vincent@unimelb.edu.au  School of Culture and Communication, University of Melbourne, Grattan Street, Parkville, Victoria 3010, Australia

© 2023 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited. The terms on which this article has been published allow the posting of the Accepted Manuscript in a repository by the author(s) or with their consent.

undermined by existing policy 'legacies.' Citing gender inequality in the Swedish film sector as an example, Jansson notes that when 'reforms designed to change gender relations are incorporated into an already existing governance regime, their impact may be hampered or they may devolve or transform in ways that make them less powerful' (2019, 219). Existing policies that aim to encourage artistic excellence, or to improve the economic outcomes of artistic production, may thus have unintended consequences for efforts to achieve greater equality within the creative workforce.

A reason for this is that such cultural policies are informed by one of the tenets of liberalism, 'the sameness of humanity[,] and disavow embodiment' (Puwar 2001, 656). As a result, unless explicitly designed to address inequality, policies often obscure the existence of a particular 'somatic norm' or 'the corporeal imagination of power as naturalised in the body of white, male, upper/middle class bodies' (Puwar 2001, 652). Government policy is only one amongst a range of factors that, in perpetuating this somatic norm, contribute to intransigent inequality in the creative industries; other factors include cultural workers' 'social closure', or reliance on networks of curtailed diversity to produce creative work, as well as employer misrecognition of the talents of diverse applicants in job selection processes, and a lack of understanding of the education-to-work transitions that privilege social advantage (Brook, O'Brien, and Taylor 2019, 37; Vincent et al. 2023). However, as long as organisations conflate the predeterminants of successful policy outcomes with the somatic norm, there is little incentive for organisations to address these other contributing factors.

A consistent barrier to addressing gender inequality in the creative industries is also a lack of quantitative data (Conor, Gill, and Taylor 2015). This makes it difficult to assess the existing dynamics of work within cultural labour markets or to evaluate the efficacy of initiatives designed to advance equality (Boise, Edmond, and Strong 2022). The field of opera is particularly problematic in this regard because of the absence of data on women's representation in production roles like conductor, stage director, and designer. The result is a troubling blind spot in a sector of the creative industries that has historically benefited from significant state support (Agid and Tarondeau 2007; Boise 2019).

This article uses opera as an entry point to examine gender inequality and the challenges posed by policy legacies that inadvertently impede diversity efforts (Jansson 2019). As a case study, we examine the five state-funded opera companies of Australia, each of which receives financial support from the Australia Council for the Arts and is actively shaped by the funding body's policies: Opera Australia, the State Opera of South Australia, Opera Queensland, West Australian Opera, and Victorian Opera. Despite the state's ongoing investment in these companies, there has been little consideration of women's actual representation within their artistic structures or the role played by policy in either addressing – or enabling – women's exclusion from the field. We therefore highlight an urgent need to better understand the nature of gender inequality at work in the operatic sector by considering women's representation through the lens of the Australia Council's policy 'legacy.'

Drawing on historical production credits from the state companies between 2005 and 2020, we begin by tracking the gender profile of practitioners credited in the five key creative roles of opera production: 1) conductor, 2) stage director, 3) set designer, 4) lighting designer, and 5) costume designer. We identify trends within individual companies as well as across the national cohort, considering gender inequality within occupational categories (who is credited in which roles?) and repertoire (who is credited on which kinds of operas?). We then consider this data in the context of Australia's policy legacy and assess whether the Australia Council's recent attempts to address inequality are, as Jansson (2019) notes, 'hampered' by its existing policy regime. In the course of our analysis, we find that women practitioners experience significant disadvantage across the key creative roles of opera production in Australia, but particularly as conductors and directors. Second, we find that Australia's policy legacy, focused on cultural and economic priorities, is undermining the body's own efforts to address 'barriers and improve performance across key diversity areas' through its emphasis on risk mitigation.

The article proceeds in five sections. The first section outlines common risk management strategies in opera, as well as their gendered implications. The second introduces the case study of the

Australian opera sector and the Australia Council's related policy legacy, which prioritises cultural and economic value over social value perspectives. The third section outlines the methodology used to establish a benchmark of women's representation at the five state companies, while the fourth section presents the findings of our analysis across occupational categories and repertoire. In the fifth section, we analyse these findings through the lens of the Australia Council's policy legacy, identifying the degree to which the body's funding policies may be indirectly enabling the field's pervasive gender inequality.

Operatic risk management strategies and their gendered implications

Opera operates within a unique organisational context compared to other performing arts sectors. Companies must simultaneously manage large physical facilities, high production costs, and a mix of permanent and short-term personnel, as well as longstanding tensions between artistic, economic, and public value concerns (Auvinen 2001). Questions of risk are fundamental to operatic organisational structures, including economic risk, or the potential for adverse impacts to a company's financial viability, as well as artistic risk, or the possibility that productions will either be low-quality, leading to poor reviews and reputational damage, or not appeal to audiences. Programming – or which operatic works are staged and by whom – plays a key role in how companies manage both kinds of risk, with programming decisions having direct correlations to audience attendance and box office revenue (Pierce 2000; Sgourev 2013). Programming decisions must therefore be carefully 'calibrated in terms of the incurred risks of hurting the box office, the goodwill of donors, or the company's prestige' (Sgourev 2013, 552).

Canonical operas – a group of popular works written by white European men in the 18th, 19th, and early 20th centuries – are perceived as low risk from both artistic and economic perspectives. These works are recognised as masterpieces of the artform, are consistently popular with audiences, and also have predictable production costs (Auvinen 2001; Sgourev 2013). Accordingly, canonical operas are programmed frequently by companies and typically for a large number of performances in the largest available venues. Productions of canonical operas are also often 'revived,' or restaged in following seasons, a practice which allows companies to recoup their initial investment over subsequent years, while also leading to increased prestige for the directors and designers credited on the original production (Vincent, Coles, and Vincent 2021).

As programming shifts to less popular 'rarities' – non-canonical operas from the 19th century or earlier – artistic and economic risks increase. 'Rarities' appeal to certain audiences, particularly 'critics, opera buffs, and star singers,' but are not as reliably popular or universally acclaimed as canonical works and are thus programmed and revived less frequently (Sgourev 2013, 552). Modern operas from the 20th and 21st centuries are seen to pose the highest risk for opera companies, as they are not thought to appeal to traditionalist operagoers and their artistic quality is more subjective (Sgourev 2013). Consequently, modern operas are rarely programmed and, when they are, typically see few scheduled performances in small venues. Musical theatre productions, a recent arrival to operatic programming, have varying levels of risk depending on their name recognition with audiences. However, musical theatre works also have what Pierce (2000, 52) calls 'low values': they are perceived to be less prestigious and of lower artistic quality than standard repertoire and therefore function as artistic outliers for companies.

Questions of artistic and economic risk also play a role in company hiring practices, or who is hired to conduct, stage, and design productions. Opera employment structures are project-based, with practitioners typically hired on short-term contracts for individual productions (Agid and Tarondeau 2010; Eikhof and Warhurst 2013). Recruitment is driven by personal networks and social capital, as individuals in positions of authority have a vested interest in engaging the most 'reliable' conductors, directors, and designers to ensure a production's success (Grugulis and Stoyanova 2009, 2012).

Companies also prioritise practitioners with established reputations, as they are more likely to attract audiences than lesser-known practitioners and also comprise a lesser organisational risk due to their status in the field (Agid and Tarondeau 2010).

Conductors and directors are particular targets for risk mitigation because both roles exert artistic leadership over individual opera productions. While the conductor oversees the musical interpretation of the work as well as its orchestra, the director is responsible for its stage interpretation and chooses which designers will be hired (Vincent 2022). As a result, the director alone often determines how 'risky' a production will be, depending on their artistic choices and designer selections. This, in turn, can impact whether a production is commercially successful and will be revived in subsequent seasons.

Studies from the wider creative industries have established the gendered implications of these kinds of risk management strategies (Coles and Eikhof 2021). The somatic norm aligns men to the default cultural worker, who serves as the primary financial provider and can be wholly dedicated to employment-based responsibilities (Acker 2006). Meanwhile, societal expectations around motherhood and caregiving mean that women deviate from this ideal model and are perceived as being inherently 'riskier' and lower value than their male peers (Dent 2020; Eikhof 2017). This translates into pervasive occupational segregation within the creative workforce, aligning to broader social conceptions of 'men's' and 'women's' work. While women dominate traditionally feminised occupations, they are largely excluded from key artistic, strategic, and governance roles (Vincent, Coles, and Vincent 2021).

These trends are exacerbated in project-based employment structures, for which career opportunities are often linked to an individual's social capital and reputation (Grugulis and Stoyanova 2012). Women practitioners have been shown to possess less social capital compared to men due to a lack of comparable professional opportunities, decreased visibility in the field, and less prestigious networks (Handy and Rowlands 2017; Hooper 2019). This leads to compounding levels of gender-based disadvantage in project-based work, particularly around positions of artistic leadership (Hooper 2019; Sang, Dainty, and Ison 2014). Accordingly, in their study of gender inequality at the UK's Royal Opera House, Vincent, Coles, and Vincent (2021) found that women stage directors were not only significantly under-represented in the creative workforce but were much less likely to be hired to direct the most popular canonical works.

The Australian opera sector has seen a recent shift toward acknowledging gender inequality in the field (Australia Council for the Arts 2020; Blackwood et al. 2019). However, there has been no quantitative effort to map the scale of exclusion at work within the sector. In addition, there has been limited consideration of the potential relationship between organisational practice and sectoral policy, or the extent to which existing cultural policies may be indirectly enabling gender inequality at company levels. This article therefore establishes a critical benchmark of data on gender inequality and labour dynamics in Australia's state-funded opera companies that can be used to drive equity-based policy development and assess the impact of broader cultural policies intended to advance equity.

The Australian state opera companies and the Australia Council's policy legacy

The section above identifies the pressures within opera's organisational structures that can perpetuate gender inequality. This section examines how the policies of the chief public agency that supports opera in Australia, the Australia Council for the Arts, have indirectly enabled these structural pressures by applying a particular, risk-averse value perspective through their National Performing Arts Partnership Framework.

Federal arts funding has historically been distributed according to two preeminent sets of values: cultural and economic (Throsby 2015). Cultural arguments for arts funding include the need to preserve works, innovate artforms in ways that generate critical attention, and provide access for audiences across the population. These arguments are framed around the belief that public funding

should support so-called ‘artistic excellence.’ Economic arguments for arts funding focus on the financial benefits of creative production, particularly by generating opportunities for cultural tourism, and are applied to assess the financial efficiency of given productions. Funding agencies often require organisations to share resources with others or elect to prioritise productions that promise strong ticket sales, where tickets are valued as both revenue generation and a demonstration of audience appeal.

Cultural and economic values drive the Australia Council’s 2019 National Performing Arts Partnership Framework (hereafter ‘the Framework’), which encompasses and rationalises the funding provided to Australia’s five state opera companies, amongst other organisations. The Framework references ‘developing and rewarding artistic excellence’ and ‘increasing the creation of new Australian work,’ both of which align to cultural arguments aimed at developing a body of artistic excellence. Economic arguments are similarly apparent in the Framework’s stated aims to provide funding to organisations in exchange for delivery of core responsibilities, as well as transparency and financial accountability (Australia Council for the Arts 2019, 4–5).

The Framework also identifies social arguments that address inequality in its funding rationale, including its priority outcome for organisations to address ‘barriers and improve performance across key diversity areas’ (Australia Council for the Arts 2019, 4). However, cultural and economic arguments take precedence within the policy landscape. While artistic ‘merit, quality and vision’ and ‘organisational capacity to deliver on its strategic plan’ are non-negotiable in assessments of funding eligibility, efforts to improve on key diversity areas are not compulsory and must merely be evident across the collective cohort of organisations funded through the Framework.

The five state opera companies supported by the Framework are Opera Australia, the State Opera of South Australia, Opera Queensland, West Australian Opera, and Victorian Opera (Australia Council for the Arts 2019).² As Australia’s national flagship company, Opera Australia receives the highest amount of government support of any performing arts organisation in the country and 75% of all funding allocated to opera (Commonwealth of Australia 2016a). The company stages an average of 16 productions per year, in both Sydney and Melbourne. The other state companies operate on a smaller scale, on average presenting between three and five productions each season. They also receive significantly less government support, although their subsidies comprise a larger percentage share of their annual income, ranging between 45% and 67% compared to Opera Australia’s 20% (Commonwealth of Australia 2016a).

Risk mitigation, from both economic and artistic perspectives, is embedded within the policy legacy that shapes the five state companies, with the smaller companies most impacted by these policies in practice. The smaller companies, for example, are expected to produce at least three mainstage productions each season in venues that promote a ‘professional image’ (Commonwealth of Australia 2016b, 67). This expectation aligns to the cultural value of ‘artistic excellence,’ with the Australia Council establishing a benchmark to ensure the artistic quality of state-funded productions.

The smaller state companies are also expected to maintain specific financial targets and to consider the financial risk of their programming choices, engaging in ‘ongoing discussions’ with the Australia Council about the ‘value, balance and scale of their repertoire’ prior to finalising any decisions (Commonwealth of Australia 2017, 6). This reinforces the relationship between repertoire and risk perception at an organisational level, with companies encouraged to consider their programming in financial, rather than artistic, terms. In an email, Andrew Donovan, Director of Multi-Year Investment at the Australia Council, notes: ‘We obviously don’t interfere in the programming decisions of companies outside of the guidance that [the Framework] provide[s]. However, we do monitor their financial performance and box office carefully to make sure that the programming [...] is sustainable’ (pers. comm., August 31, 2022). Here the Australia Council’s focus on financial ‘sustainability’ functions as a government-led advocacy for certain repertoire, particularly low-risk canonical operas that are popular with audiences.

A government policy outlined in 1999 places further limits on the smaller state companies by discouraging them from independently commissioning productions. Instead, companies are encouraged to rent existing productions from Opera Australia or international companies, or to co-commission new productions with other Australian companies (Commonwealth of Australia 1999). Companies that choose to commission 'smaller bespoke productions independently,' Donovan notes, must seek 'other funding or funding partners' (pers. comm., August 31, 2022). Like the policy focus on programming, this strategy is designed to ensure that companies balance 'artistic excellence' with financial stability. By prioritising productions that have already been commissioned or productions for which the initial investment is shared across multiple organisations, the Australia Council aims to control the level of financial risk assumed by each company.

The Council also mandates sectoral cooperation, most notably through the Opera Conference, a joint commissioning initiative established in 1994 (Mariani 2009). Drawing on shared funding from compulsory company buy in, the Opera Conference supports the state companies to co-commission a new production each season, as well as a national touring production every two years. Like the Australia Council's other policies, the Opera Conference was conceived to protect the government's financial investment, creating a mechanism 'to bind opera companies [. . .] into a cooperative venture and to encourage them to do co-production' (Mariani 2009). This mechanism further limits companies' artistic independence as programming decisions are not only decided by majority vote but prioritise Opera Australia's preference due to the size of the company's facilities (Mariani 2009).

Across these varying policies, we can trace the complex expectations that shape Australia's opera sector. Risk considerations directly inform the Australia Council's policy legacy, which leverages access to funding as a means for mitigating both artistic and financial risk, particularly amongst the smaller state companies. Yet, these policies also impact the body's diversity efforts by creating organisational conditions that indirectly enable the gender inequality already operating within the sector.

In the following sections, we use historical production data to map women's representation at the five state companies and establish a benchmark of gender-based disadvantage that works in concert with the Australia Council's policy legacy.

Methodology

In order to track women's representation in production roles at the state companies, we drew on archival data from Operabase.com, an online database of production listings dating back to the early 1990s (Operabase.com 2021). With permission to access these online archives, we compiled a record of all productions staged by Opera Australia,³ the State Opera of South Australia, Opera Queensland, West Australian Opera, and Victorian Opera⁴ between 2005 and 2020.⁵ The credits for each production were cross-referenced against official company documentation, including press releases, website archives, and annual reports. Excluding tours, recitals and non-staged concert productions, this provided a data sample of 533 opera productions. Across these 533 productions, 241 were productions of canonical operas, 130 were less popular 'rarities,' 132 were modern operas from the 20th or 21st centuries, and 30 were musical theatre works.⁶ Sixty of the 533 productions were Opera Conference productions, either premieres or revivals, that were commissioned through the Australia Council's policy initiative.

For each production, we tracked the practitioners credited in the key creative roles of opera production: 1) conductor, 2) stage director, 3) set designer, 4) lighting designer, and 5) costume designer.⁷ In productions where a single practitioner held multiple roles (e.g. set and costume designer), we counted each as a separate credit. In productions where more than one practitioner was credited for the same creative role (e.g. Opera Australia's 2011 production of *Carmen* credited two conductors), each credit was counted individually. Overall, we collected a data sample of 2,852 credited roles over the 16 seasons.

Each practitioner's gender was drawn from self-identified pronouns used in professional biographies (e.g. he, she, they), which were sourced from company playbills, media releases, and annual reports, as well as the websites of practitioners or their representing managers. Across the 2,852 credited roles, 2,243 credited a practitioner who identified as male, and 583 credited a practitioner who identified as female. Seven roles credited an organisation (e.g. Opera Australia's 2020 production of *Aida* credited design agency Giò Forma as set designer). A further 19 roles credited an individual for whom we could not locate pronoun information in order to establish a gender profile.

A key limitation in our methodology is that our method to establish gender relied on secondary information, including marketing materials. We recognise that this approach may understate the true gender identities of some practitioners, particularly those who might choose to conceal their gender identity within the workplace. A further limitation is our exclusive focus on the five state companies rather than the wider Australian opera sector, which includes smaller companies that do not receive ongoing government support. Accordingly, the findings of our study cannot be said to be representative of all operatic organisational models, particularly those that operate without government funding and associated cultural policies.

Our analysis of the data sample first considered women's representation within occupational categories: who was credited for which roles? We then considered repertoire: who was credited on which kinds of works? For both dimensions of analysis, we examined trends around women's representation at individual companies and across the national cohort, as well as within the smaller sub-set of Opera Conference productions. With this benchmark established, we then considered women's representation through the lens of the Australia Council's policy legacy as a way of highlighting the factors that may impede policy-driven efforts to address gender inequality in the field.

Findings

Occupational categories

Conductors and directors

Our data shows that women have seen extremely low rates of representation as both conductors and stage directors at the Australian state opera companies. However, the divide between men and women practitioners is starkest in the role of conductor. Across the 533 productions in our study, women held just 34 of 622 conducting credits, or 5%. Of the 145 individual conductors credited, 134 were men and 11 were women.

Women were not only excluded from entering the conductor labour pool – making up less than 8% of individual practitioners – but saw far fewer professional opportunities once there. A large share of conductors, irrespective of gender, only saw a single production credit over the 16 seasons: 45% of men conductors and 55% of women conductors were 'one-offs.' Yet, when we examined the conductors who were credited multiple times, the share of opportunities allocated to women significantly decreased. Within the group of conductors credited two or more times, men saw an average number of 7 productions compared to 5.6 for women. Within the group of conductors credited ten or more times, women's representation dropped even further, with only one woman represented out of 20 total conductors.

As seen in [Figure 1](#), within individual companies, women conductors saw their highest representation at Victorian Opera, comprising 17% of credited conductors (14 of 81). Opera Queensland had similar rates of representation for women conductors at 15% (8 of 54). In comparison, the State Opera of South Australia did not credit a single woman conductor over the 16 seasons (0 of 80). Opera Australia and West Australian Opera also saw very low rates of representation, with women comprising less than 3% of conductors at Opera Australia (10 of 346) and just over 3% at West Australian Opera (2 of 61).

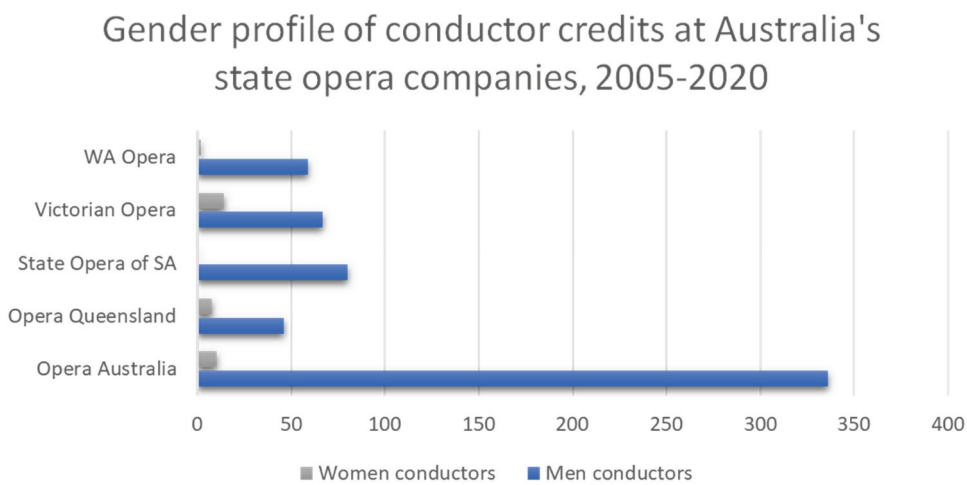


Figure 1. Gender profile of conductor credits at Australia's five state opera companies, 2005–2020.

Women saw higher representation as stage directors but still fell far short of achieving gender balance. Across the 533 productions, 24% of stage director credits were held by women (164 of 689). Of the 167 individual practitioners credited, 120 were men, 46 were women, and one was unknown (gender could not be determined).

As with conductors, we found that a large proportion (45%) of the director labour pool, irrespective of gender, was credited only once. Yet, stark gender differences similarly emerged when we considered the practitioners that were credited multiple times. Of the 21 directors who were credited ten or more times over the 16 seasons, 71% were men and 29% were women. The 15 men practitioners within this smaller cohort each saw an average of 17 production credits, while the six women directors saw 13.

As seen in [Figure 2](#), within individual companies, Victorian Opera again saw the strongest representation for women directors, comprising 40% of credited directors at the company (33 of 82). Both Opera Queensland and West Australian Opera performed similarly, with women comprising approximately 30% of credited directors at both companies (22 of 74 and 26 of 86, respectively). As

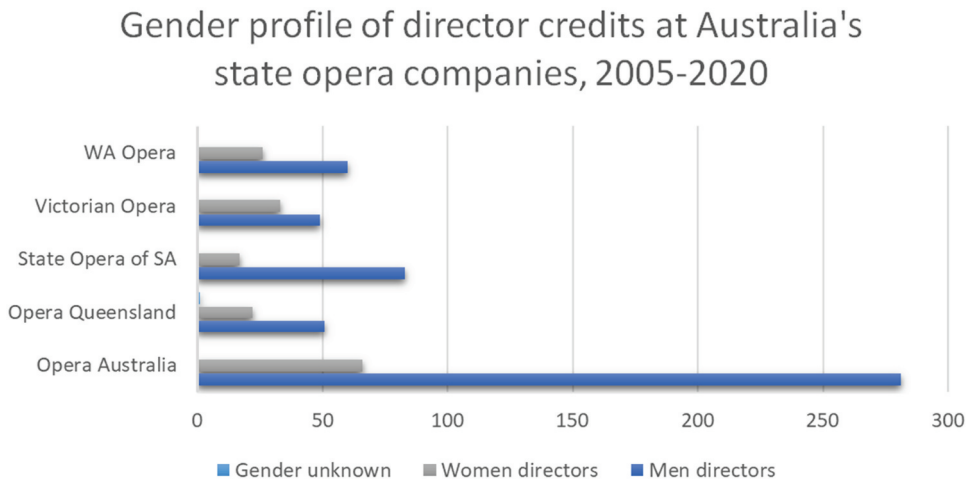


Figure 2. Gender profile of director credits at Australia's five state opera companies, 2005–2020.

with conductors, the State Opera of South Australia and Opera Australia saw the lowest representation for women stage directors: women comprised 19% of credited directors at Opera Australia (66 of 347) and 17% at the State Opera of South Australia (17 of 100).

Here we see an important discrepancy at the organisational level, in which two of the smallest state companies – Victorian Opera and Opera Queensland – saw the highest rates of representation for women as both conductors and directors. Meanwhile, the national flagship company, Opera Australia, saw some of the lowest rates for women in both artistic leadership roles. This is particularly problematic because Opera Australia presents more than four times the number of productions of any other state company and is primarily responsible for commissioning the new productions that will be rented by the smaller companies across the sector.

Our data also shows that women's representation as conductors and directors is equally poor, if not worse, within the subset of productions commissioned through the Opera Conference scheme. Of the 65 conductor roles credited on Opera Conference productions over the 16 seasons, just four were held by women, or 6%. Of the 60 director roles credited on Opera Conference productions, 8 were held by women, or 13%. This represents an 11% drop compared to women's representation as directors overall. Women also saw lower representation within the practitioner labour pool. While women comprised 7% of individual conductors (11 of 145) and 28% of individual directors (47 of 167) across the broader labour pool, they were only 6.6% of conductors and 20% of directors specifically for Opera Conference productions.

The data importantly shows evidence of improvement in both roles over time. When tracked across the 16 seasons, all but one of the state companies demonstrated a clear upward trend for women's representation in each role. However, the extent of improvement varied widely and, in many cases, can be attributed to women's extremely low rates of representation at certain companies at the start of the study timeframe. Opera Australia, for example, showed an increasing trend for women conductors over the 16 seasons. Yet, the scope of actual improvement was slight: women held 3.67% of conductor roles in the 2005–2010 seasons and 4% in the 2016–2020 seasons. Opera Queensland, Victorian Opera, and West Australian Opera also showed improvement over time, but again primarily because the companies did not credit high numbers of women conductors in their earliest seasons.

The role of stage director also saw inconsistent improvement. While Opera Australia again showed an increasing trend for women directors over the 16 seasons, women's representation actually dropped by two percent between the 2011–2015 and 2016–2020 seasons. Opera Queensland and the State Opera of South Australia similarly saw drops in women's representation in their most recent seasons (decreases of 25% and 10%, respectively, between the 2011–2015 and 2016–2020 seasons) but still overall improvement across the 16 seasons. Here Victorian Opera was an important outlier, with a downward trend for women's representation as directors over the 16 seasons. However, in comparison to the other companies, this can be attributed to the extremely high rates of representation for women at the company, in which women held as much as 80% of director credits in individual seasons.

Designers

Women's representation in the roles of set designer, lighting designer, and costume designer at the state opera companies mirrors the gender-based occupational segregation seen in other sectors of the performing arts, in which women are more likely to assume traditionally feminised roles while men are more likely to hold technical ones (Conor, Gill, and Taylor 2015). Of the 387 practitioners credited as designers, 238 were men and 137 were women. Ten were individuals whose gender profile could not be determined, and two were organisations rather than individuals. Clear differences emerged in terms of women's representation across the three design fields, with the starkest distinctions emerging in lighting and costume design, fields which align with gendered stereotypes of work.

Men dominated in the fields of both set design and lighting design, holding 79% (415 of 527) and 91% (477 of 522) of respective production credits. Men also made up the majority in both labour pools, comprising 65% of individual set designers (94 of 144) and 88% of individual lighting

designers (86 of 98). Women saw significantly higher representation as costume designers, comprising 57% of individuals in the labour pool (83 of 145) and holding approximately 50% (244 of 492) of all costuming credits across the state companies.

As with conductors and directors, Victorian Opera had the highest representation for women set designers, with women credited on 44% of set design roles (35 of 80). Women held just under a third of set designer credits (16 of 52) at Opera Queensland and 27% at the State Opera of South Australia (20 of 76). At the low extreme, Opera Australia and West Australian Opera saw the lowest representation for women set designers, with women holding 10% of set design credits at the national flagship (28 of 267) and 8% at West Australian Opera (4 of 52).

All five state companies saw the lowest rates of representation for women in the technical role of lighting designer. The best performing company was the State Opera of South Australia, for which women held 12% of lighting design credits (9 of 74) over the 16 seasons. The remaining four companies credited women lighting designers between 2% and 8% of the time. In comparison, women saw their highest representation at individual companies when credited as costume designers. Women made up 70% of costume designers credited by Victorian Opera (52 of 74), while both the State Opera of South Australia and Opera Australia credited women costume designers approximately 50% of the time. Women saw their lowest representation as at Opera Queensland, carrying 29% of costume design credits (17 of 44).

The smaller subset of Opera Conference productions shows a more extreme range of representation for women across these design roles while continuing to reflect gender-based occupational segregation. Of the 61 set designer credits on Opera Conference productions, none credited a woman practitioner. Of the 60 lighting designer credits on Opera Conference productions, only six credited women, or 10%. Meanwhile, women again saw their strongest representation in the field of costume design, comprising 46% of credits (27 of 58).

The state companies also showed widely inconsistent trends of improvement across the three design roles. Women's representation in the role of set designer steadily increased at all five companies over the 16 seasons. Victorian Opera and Opera Queensland began with the highest rates of initial representation compared to the other companies (40% and 19% in the 2005–2010 seasons, respectively) and continued to improve over time. Both companies subsequently saw women's representation in the role reach rates of nearly 50% or higher in the five most recent seasons. In comparison, Opera Australia and West Australian Opera started with much lower rates of representation, with West Australian Opera not crediting a single woman set designer from 2005 to 2011. Accordingly, while both companies show evidence of improvement over time, women's representation as set designers did not exceed 13% at either company in the five most recent seasons.

Women saw worse performance in the role of lighting designer over time, with four of the five companies showing a downward trend for women's representation in the role. West Australian Opera was the only exception, showing a steep upward trend after not crediting a single woman lighting designer between 2005 and 2014. In contrast, four of the five companies showed a strong upward trend for women costume designers over the 16 seasons, despite all of the companies already seeing high rates of representation for women in the feminised role. Here Victorian Opera was the exception with a downward trend, again reflecting high rates of initial representation in the role: women comprised more than 70% of costume designers in nine of the 15 seasons under review.

Repertoire

Our findings around women's representation in occupational categories assume further complexity when considered in terms of repertoire. As discussed earlier, programming is a key risk management strategy for both individual companies and the Australia Council, with low-risk canonical operas and, to a lesser extent, opera 'rarities,' used to bolster box office revenue and ensure artistic quality. Accordingly, canonical operas and 'rarities' comprised the majority of programming at nearly all of the state companies: 84% at West Australian Opera, 79% at Opera Australia, 73% at Opera

Queensland, and 64% at the State Opera of South Australia.⁸ In comparison, high-risk modern operas were programmed far less frequently, making up just 13% of programming at West Australian Opera, 14% at Opera Australia, 18% at Opera Queensland, and 33% at the State Opera of South Australia. Importantly, it is within the production teams for canonical works and ‘rarities’ – the most-programmed categories of low-risk repertoire – that we find evidence of further disadvantage for women practitioners.

Recall that 5% of credited conductors across our data set were women. When we restricted our analysis to canonical operas, women’s representation as conductors dropped to less than 1%. Only two women were credited out of 316 conductors for canonical repertoire at *any* of the five state companies over 16 seasons: one at Opera Queensland and one at Opera Australia. Not a single woman conductor was credited on any canonical operas presented by Victorian Opera, West Australian Opera, or the State Opera of South Australia over the 16 seasons. Women conductors also saw lower representation on opera ‘rarities,’ comprising 4% of the 148 credited roles. West Australian Opera and the State Opera of South Australia again did not credit a single woman conductor in this category of repertoire. Just 3% (3 of 88) of conductor credits for ‘rarities’ at Opera Australia were held by women.

Instead, as shown in Figure 3, women conductors were much more likely to be credited on modern operas and musical theatre works, categories of repertoire that are respectively high risk and ‘low value’ and are thus programmed and revived less frequently (Pierce 2000). Women conductors were credited on almost 11% of modern operas across the company cohort and reached rates as high as 20% at Opera Queensland. Women conductors saw even stronger representation in musical theatre works, conducting roughly a third (11 of 30) of all musical theatre productions over the 16 seasons. However, women’s representation as conductors still varied widely within individual companies. While the State Opera of South Australia did not credit a woman conductor on any of their musical theatre productions, for example, Opera Australia credited women conductors on 28% of theirs.

We see similar trends in how women directors are represented across different repertoire categories. As shown in Figure 4, women directors saw lower representation on canonical operas compared to their overall average, comprising 23% of canonical director credits (84 of 358). They also saw lower representation on ‘rarities,’ making up 19% (31 of 159) of credited directors within this category of repertoire. In comparison, women comprised 30% of directors for modern operas (43 out of 143 credits) – their highest representation in any category of repertoire.

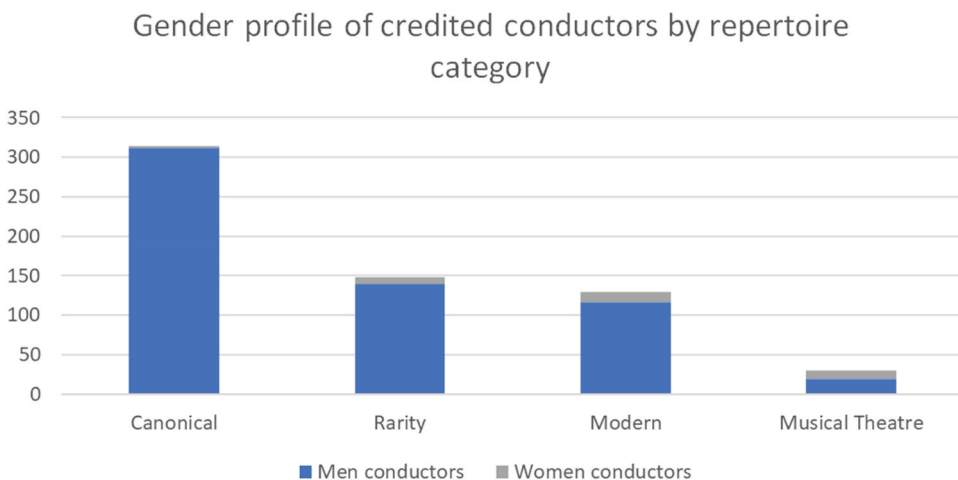


Figure 3. Gender profile of credited conductors by repertoire category at Australia’s five state opera companies, 2005–2020.

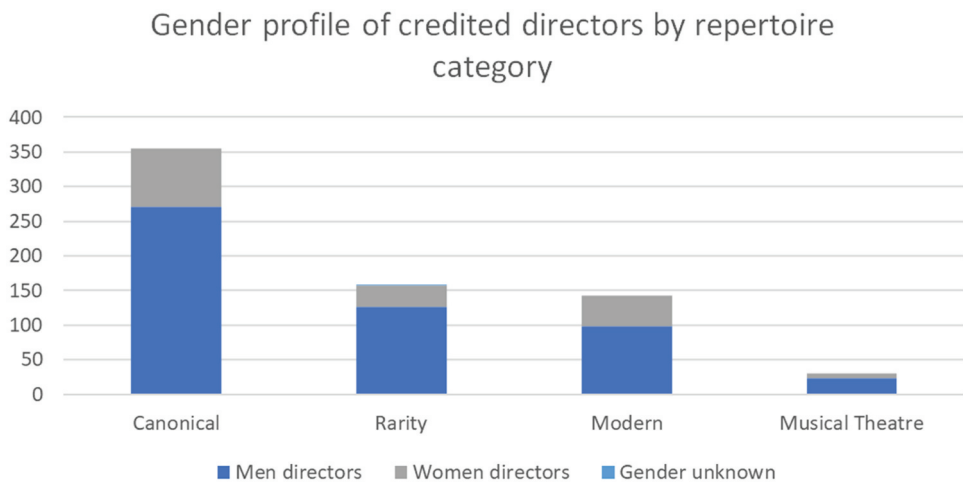


Figure 4. Gender profile of credited directors by repertoire category at Australia’s five state opera companies, 2005–2020.

With designers, we see another marked divide between canonical operas and other categories of repertoire. Women saw a universal drop in representation across all three design roles when only canonical works were examined. Women made up 18% of set designers overall but fell to 11% (27 out of 242 credits) on canonical operas. Women lighting designers were credited on 7% of total productions but just 5% (13 out of 251 credits) of canonical works. Women even saw decreased representation in the feminised role of costume designer, comprising 45% overall but only 33% on canonical works.

Instead, women designers saw their strongest representation in either modern operas or musical theatre works. Women set designers were credited on 36% (47 of 132) of modern operas, double their representation overall. Interestingly, women set designers saw lower representation on musical theatre, credited on only 1 out of 30 productions in this repertoire category. Meanwhile, women lighting designers saw their highest representation across both modern and musical theatre categories, comprising 7% of lighting designer credits on modern works (9 of 126) and 17% on musical theatre works (5 of 30). Women costume designers also saw their highest representation on modern works and musical theatre works, holding 62% (72 of 117) and 47% (14 of 29) of respective credits.

Discussion

Our analysis shows that women experience pervasive gender-based disadvantage across the key creative roles of opera production at Australia’s state-funded companies. Aligning to trends of occupational segregation, women see particularly low representation in the artistic leadership roles of conductor and director, while also being largely excluded from the more technical roles of set designer and lighting designer in favour of the feminised costume designer role. We also find evidence of segregation across different categories of repertoire. Women conductors, directors, and designers see increasing disadvantage in the most popular canonical works, operas that are staged – and revived – most frequently by state companies and which provide extended prestige and visibility to their attached directors and designers. This mirrors the findings from Vincent, Coles, and Vincent’s (2021) analysis of women’s representation in repertoire at the UK’s Royal Opera House, suggesting these dynamics are not exclusive to Australia but reflect international operatic trends.

Women’s disadvantage in the Australian opera sector assumes greater intensity when considered in the context of the Australia Council’s policy legacy. Programming low-risk repertoire is a key focus of the Australia Council’s policies as a way of both ensuring the financial viability and artistic

excellence of the state companies and protecting the funding body's investment. However, this policy focus also enables and indirectly exacerbates the existing inequality in the field because of the gendered nature of risk perceptions and hiring practices operating at organisational levels.

The data show that women practitioners are consistently excluded from the most popular repertoire categories. Instead, women practitioners are funnelled toward high-risk modern operas – works which see fewer performances, have limited audience appeal, and are less likely to be revived in subsequent seasons – or to musical theatre works, which have limited artistic prestige in the sector. Because women are seen as being inherently 'riskier' than men (Eikhof 2017), they are relegated away from 'tried and proven' repertoire in favour of works that are similarly perceived as high-risk (Cuyler 2021, 6). Without the same levels of reputational prestige as male practitioners, women further struggle to break into these more prestigious categories of repertoire through opera's networked hiring practices. As a result, women practitioners experience negatively compounding effects on their career trajectories and professional visibility in the sector. In this way, we can see the compounding impacts of artistic and economic risk perception in not only driving company programming choices but perpetuating women's exclusion from the sector. With its focus on low-risk programming as a means for ensuring financial stability and artistic excellence, the Australia Council's policy legacy both upholds and reinforces the organisational structures that enable gender inequality.

Our findings show that the Australia Council's efforts to promote sectoral cooperation, both through co-commissioning and through the Opera Conference scheme, enable similarly problematic conditions for women's representation. This enforced cooperation restricts each company's individual opportunity to diversify their artistic production staff, under conditions in which a male norm continues to dominate. Women practitioners also notably see comparably poor or worse rates of representation within Opera Conference productions compared to the wider sample, while also making up a smaller percentage of conductors and directors in the Opera Conference labour pool. While the Opera Conference was conceived as a strategy to promote collaboration and shared risk across the state companies, it inadvertently functions as yet another level of exclusion for women practitioners.

We can also use these findings to interrogate the policy framework that has established and reinforced Opera Australia's status as the artistic leader of the sector. Not only are the smaller state companies actively encouraged to rent or co-commission productions directly from Opera Australia, but the company receives the bulk of state funding while enjoying far fewer policy limitations. Given these factors, the scale of historical gender inequality evident at Opera Australia is particularly jarring, with the flagship seeing some of the lowest representation for women conductors and directors out of all the state companies. Because Opera Australia is the only company with the freedom to commission its own productions – and ultimately sees its productions rented by the smaller state companies – the company's decisions about which practitioners to hire (and when) can be seen as actively contributing to gender inequality in the sector.

In comparison, the two smallest state companies – Victorian Opera and Opera Queensland – saw the highest representation for women practitioners of the entire cohort. Notably, both companies had women in key executive leadership positions during the timeframe of our study: stage director Lindy Hume was Artistic Director of Opera Queensland from 2012 to 2017, while director Elizabeth Hill-Cooper was appointed Victorian Opera's Chief Executive Officer in 2019. Both companies have also had women practitioners as Head of Music, a position responsible for conducting productions under company auspices. This speaks to the degree to which gender parity appears to be a strategic priority for Victorian Opera and Opera Queensland compared to the national flagship, despite both companies receiving significantly less government support.

From a policy level, these outcomes highlight the role of the Australia Council's policy legacy in establishing risk-averse organisational conditions that, while not directly causing, support and enable ongoing gender inequality in the field. This points to the need for a rigorous analysis of the Australia Council's policy legacy across the Australian creative industries as a potential factor in gender inequality. More detailed attention is clearly required to examine the dynamics of

gender inequality operating within specific companies, sectors, and levels of the workforce, as well as the indirect effect of cultural policies that are designed to mitigate risk. This speaks to the importance of collecting quantitative data, such as this paper's benchmark of women's representation in Australian opera production, in order to enable a critical evaluation of the relationship between policy and inequality in the field.

Conclusion

Cultural policies that focus on increasing audiences and achieving economic efficiencies would, at face value, seem to be conducive to greater equity and diversity. However, policies often have unintended consequences. Using the example of the Australian state opera companies, the findings in this article highlight the problematic nature of policy legacies in potentially undermining social value outcomes. The Australia Council's efforts to achieve sustainable programming and company cooperation as a means for mitigating financial precarity and ensuring artistic excellence have indirectly enabled women's continued exclusion from the field, contradicting its own attempts to increase diversity through its 2019 Framework. Here we see Jansson's (2019, 219) argument manifesting, in which the Australia Council's proposed 'reforms' to address inequality are being undermined by its 'already existing government regime.'

These findings have important implications for international funding bodies that aim to leverage policy initiatives to address persistent inequalities in the creative industries. Individual policies that emphasise diversity are unlikely to be effective unless they are conceived with a clear understanding of the existing policy legacy and its impacts on the sector. This requires an extensive policy audit that is customised for the unique organisational characteristics of each sector and also considers the unintended consequences of policies driven by cultural or economic arguments.

Notes

1. At the time of writing, the Australia Council for the Arts was in the process of transitioning to Creative Australia.
2. Victorian Opera was invited to join the Framework by the Australia Council in 2019 (Watts 2021).
3. Opera Australia's programming was compiled across both Melbourne and Sydney seasons.
4. Because Victorian Opera was founded in 2006, the company's data sample spans from 2006 to 2020.
5. There is inconsistent online material related to productions staged prior to 2005, which posed an obstacle for cross-referencing the data from Operabase.com against official company material (e.g., press releases and annual reports). To ensure the accuracy of our data sample, we therefore restricted our analysis to productions staged between 2005 and 2020.
6. In order to categorise the 533 productions by repertoire, we drew on a combination of methods. Canonical works were benchmarked against Agid and Tarondeau (2010)'s canonical classification, while musical theatre works were benchmarked against Knapp's (2020) list of the musical theatre core canon. Operatic 'rarities' included any non-canonical works premiered in the 19th century or earlier, while modern operas included any works premiered in the 20th or 21st centuries that were not already categorised.
7. We restricted our data collection to practitioners credited as 'primary' directors and designers (rather than 'revival' directors and designers) in order to map women's representation in the highest-status creative roles.
8. The only exception was Victorian Opera, a company whose artistic mission is explicitly linked to performing modern works. Canonical operas and 'rarities' therefore comprised 32% of the company's programming while modern operas comprised 66%.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

The work was supported by the University of Melbourne [ECR 2021].

Notes on contributors

Caitlin Vincent is a Lecturer in Creative Industries at the University of Melbourne, where she researches the future of work in the arts. Key areas of expertise include cultural labour, digital performance, and diversity, equity and inclusion. An award-winning opera librettist, Dr Vincent has been commissioned by Washington National Opera, the University of Connecticut, and the State University of New York at Potsdam.

Katya Johanson is Professor of Creative Humanities in the School of Arts and Humanities at Edith Cowan University, Perth, Australia. Katya's areas of expertise include cultural policy analysis from an audience perspective, cultural diversity, and arts and cultural production for young people.

Bronwyn Coate is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Economics, Finance and Marketing at RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia. She is a cultural economist who specialises in empirical analysis of the arts and culture. Some of the topics covered in her research include: the role of gender and race/ethnicity in influencing the both the production and demand for arts and culture, cultural entrepreneurship, and artists' careers and creative labour.

ORCID

Caitlin Vincent  <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-2697-7306>
 Katya Johanson  <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-7332-4645>
 Bronwyn Coate  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-9148-3751>

References

- Acker, J. 2006. "Inequality Regimes: Gender, Class and Race in Organizations." *Gender & Society* 20 (4): 441–464. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243206289499>.
- Agid, P., and J.-C. Tarondeau. 2007. "Governance of Major Cultural Institutions: The Case of the Paris Opera." *International Journal of Arts Management* 10 (3): 4–18.
- Agid, P., and J.-C. Tarondeau. 2010. *The Management of Opera: An International Comparative Study*. Basingstoke, England: Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230299276>.
- Ali, R., and B. Byrne. 2022. "The Trouble with Diversity: The Cultural Sector and Ethnic Inequality." *Cultural Sociology* 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17499755221114550>.
- Australia Council for the Arts. 2019. "National Performing Arts Framework." <https://australiacouncil.gov.au/investment-and-development/multi-year-investment/national-performing-arts-partnership-framework/>.
- Australia Council for the Arts. 2020. "Gender Equity and Diversity in Opera Summit." Accessed September 1, 2020. <https://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/programs-and-resources/Gender-Equity-and-Diversity-in-Opera-Summit/>.
- Auvinen, T. 2001. "Why is It Difficult to Manage an Opera House? The Artistic-Economic Dichotomy and Its Manifestations in the Organizational Structures of Five Opera Organizations." *The Journal of Arts Management, Law, and Society* 30 (4): 268–282. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10632920109597317>.
- Björck, C. 2021. "Music, Gender and Social Change: Contemporary Debates, Directions and Challenges." In *Gender Issues in Scandinavian Music Education: From Stereotypes to Multiple Possibilities*, edited by S. V. Onsrud, H. S. Blix, and I. L. Vestad, 28–50. New York: Routledge.
- Blackwood, S., L. Lim, P. Polias, and B. van Reyk. 2019. "Opera and the Doing of Women." *ArtsHub Australia*, May 13. <https://www.artshub.com.au/news/opinions-analysis/opera-and-the-doing-of-women-257968-2363191/>.
- Boise, S. D. 2019. "Tackling Gender Inequalities in Music: A Comparative Study of Policy Responses in the UK and Sweden." *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 25 (4): 486–499. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10286632.2017.1341497>.
- Boise, S. D., M. Edmond, and C. Strong. 2022. "Gender and Popular Music Policy." In *The Bloomsbury Handbook of Popular Music Policy*, edited by S. Homan, 271–288. New York: Bloomsbury Academic. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781501345357.ch-17>.
- Brook, O., D. O'Brien, and M. Taylor. 2019. "The Creative Economy, the Creative Class and Cultural Intermediation." In *Cultural Intermediaries Connecting Communities*, edited by P. Jones, B. Perry, and P. Long, 27–41. Basingstoke, England: Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1332/policypress/9781447344995.003.0002>.
- Brown, M. 2020. "Arts Bodies Threatened with Funding Cuts Over Lack of Diversity." *The Guardian*, February 18. <https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2020/feb/18/arts-bodies-threatened-with-funding-cuts-over-lack-of-diversity>.
- Calderón-Sandoval, O. 2022. "Implementing Gender Equality Policies in the Spanish Film Industry: Persistent Prejudices and a Feminist Will to 'Exploit the Centre into Concentric circles.'" *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 28 (4): 446–460. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10286632.2021.1978439>.
- Coles, A., and D. R. Eikhof. 2021. "On the Basis of Risk: How Screen Executives Risk Perceptions and Practices Drive Gender Inequality in Directing." *Gender, Work and Organization* 28 (6): 2040–2057. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12701>.
- Commonwealth of Australia. 1999. *Securing the Future: Final Report of the Major Performing Arts Inquiry (Nugent Inquiry)*. Commonwealth of Australia. <https://apo.gov.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/1999-06/apo-nid17634.pdf>.

- Commonwealth of Australia. 2016a. "National Opera Review: Discussion Paper." Australian Government – Office of the Arts. https://www.arts.gov.au/sites/default/files/NOR-Discussion-Paper-8-October-2015.pdf?acsf_files_redirect.
- Commonwealth of Australia. 2016b. *National Opera Review: Final Report*. Australian Government — Office of the Arts. https://www.arts.gov.au/sites/default/files/national_opera_review_final_report.pdf.
- Commonwealth of Australia. 2017. *Australian Government Response to the National Opera Review Final Report*. Australian Government — Office of the Arts. <https://www.arts.gov.au/documents/response-national-opera-review-final-report>.
- Conor, B., R. Gill, and S. Taylor. 2015. "Gender and Creative Labour." *The Sociological Review* 63 (S1): 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-954X.12237>.
- Cuyler, A. C. 2021. *Access, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Cultural Organizations: Insights from the Careers of Executive Opera Managers of Color in the US*. New York: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429504174>.
- Dent, T. 2020. "Devalued Women, Valued Men: Motherhood, Class and Neoliberal Feminism in the Creative Media Industries." *Media, Culture & Society* 42 (4): 537–553. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443719876537>.
- Edmond, M. 2023. "Enduring Inequalities: Fifty Years of Gender Inequality Talk in the Media and Cultural Industries." *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 26 (3): 428–445. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13675494221145307>.
- Eikhof, D. R. 2017. "Analysing Decisions on Diversity and Opportunity in the Cultural and Creative Industries: A New Framework." *Organization* 24 (3): 289–307. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508416687768>.
- Eikhof, D. R., and C. Warhurst. 2013. "The Promised Land? Why Social Inequalities are Systemic in the Creative Industries." *Employee Relations* 35 (5): 495–508. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ER-08-2012-0061>.
- Grugulis, I., and D. Stoyanova. 2009. "'I Don't Know Where You Learn them': Skills in Film and TV." In *Creative Labour: Working in the Creative Industries*, edited by A. McKinlay and C. Smith, 1–33. Basingstoke, England: Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-12173-8_7.
- Grugulis, I., and D. Stoyanova. 2012. "Social Capital and Networks in Film and TV: Jobs for the Boys." *Organization Studies* 22 (10): 1311–1331. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840612453525>.
- Handy, J., and L. Rowlands. 2017. "The Systems Psychodynamics of Gendered Hiring: Personal Anxieties and Defensive Organizational Practices within the New Zealand Film Industry." *Human Relations* 70 (3): 312–228. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726716651690>.
- Hooper, E. 2019. "The Gatekeeper Gap: Searching for Solutions to the UK's Ongoing Gender Imbalance in Music Creation." In *Towards Gender Equality in the Music Industry: Education, Practice and Strategies for Change*, edited by C. Strong and S. Raine, 131–144. New York: Bloomsbury Academic. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781501345531.ch-010>.
- Jansson, M. 2019. "The Quality of Gender Equality: Gender Quotas and Swedish Film Governance." *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 25 (2): 218–231. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10286632.2016.1248952>.
- Knapp, R. 2020. "Canons of the American Musical." In *The Oxford Handbook of the Operatic Canon*, edited by C. Newark and W. Weber, 475–492. Oxford: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190224202.013.16>.
- Mariani, M. 2009. "Emergent Coopetitive and Cooperative Strategies in Interorganizational Relationships: Empirical Evidence from Australian and Italian Operas." In *Coopetition Strategy: Theory, Experiments and Cases*, edited by G. B. Dagnino and E. Rocco, 166–190. Abingdon, England: Routledge.
- Operabase.com. 2021. "Home." Accessed 2021. <https://www.operabase.com/en>.
- Pierce, J. L. 2000. "Risk-Taking by American Opera Companies." *Journal of Cultural Economics* 24 (1): 45–63. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1007588802339>.
- Puwar, N. 2001. "The Racialised Somatic Norm and the Senior Civil Service." *Sociology* 35 (3): 651–670. <https://doi.org/10.1177/S0038038501000335>.
- Sang, K. J., A. R. Dainty, and S. G. Ison. 2014. "Gender in the UK Architectural Profession: (Re)producing and Challenging Hegemonic Masculinity." *Work, Employment & Society* 28 (2): 247–264. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017013491306>.
- Sgourev, S. V. 2013. "The Dynamics of Risk in Innovation: A Premiere or an Encore?" *Industrial and Corporate Change* 22 (2): 549–575. <https://doi.org/10.1093/icc/dts021>.
- Throsby, D. 2015. *Economics and Culture*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Vincent, C. 2022. *Digital Scenography in Opera in the Twenty-First Century*. Abingdon, England: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003093305>.
- Vincent, C., A. Coles, and J. B. Vincent. 2021. "Opera-ting on Inequality: Gender Representation in Creative Roles at the Royal Opera." *Cultural Trends* 31 (3): 205–221. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09548963.2021.1966295>.
- Vincent, C., H. Glow, K. Johanson, and B. Coate. 2023. "Who Did You Meet at the Venice Biennale? Education-To-Work Transition Enhancers for Aspiring Arts Professionals in Australia." *Work, Employment & Society* 37 (2): 315–332. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09500170211004239>.
- Watts, R. 2021. "Eight New Orgs Join National Performing Arts Partnership Framework." *ArtsHub*, June 11. <https://www.artshub.com.au/news/news/eight-new-orgs-join-national-performing-arts-partnership-framework-262798-2371279/>.