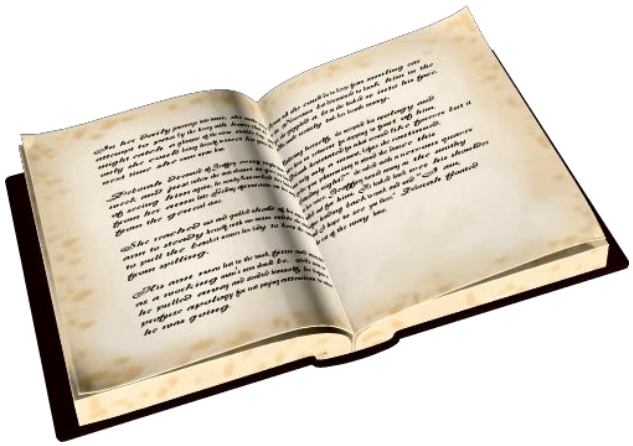
# The Effects of State Patronage on New Zealand Literature



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HIST 480: Research Project

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2005

# Contents

## Introduction

New Zealand literature is now far more satisfactorily established than it was sixty years ago. Before the Second World War, many New Zealanders would have denied the existence of a healthy home-grown writing culture. Since then an infrastructure has developed that supports the writing industry, through the growth of institutions such as publishing, patronage and literary magazines. Writing as an occupation in New Zealand is consigned to an unusual place in New Zealand society, however. While literature is treated as an art form and subsidised by Creative New Zealand in the same way as visual art, there is an assumption that writers earn substantial amounts of money for their writing. This is vastly removed from the truth. The financial situation of authors in New Zealand is a precarious one, with the feeble royalties from book sales meaning any decent level of income is unlikely. Therefore, the New Zealand government has been involved in the patronage of literature since the 1940s. State patronage attempted to fill the gap in the form of publishing subsidies and grants to writers. This was a controversial decision, as even in the eyes of some authors expenditure of public money on direct grants to authors was ill-advised. Regardless of this, the list of awards, scholarships and grants available to struggling writers currently is quite extensive, and the institution of literary patronage entrenched.

### *Historiography*

State patronage of literature in New Zealand has not been exposed to much historical scrutiny. There are a few brief surveys of the history of the institution, such as Dennis McEldowney's chapter in the *Oxford History of New Zealand Literature,*[1] and the entry under "Literary Fund" in the *Oxford Companion to New Zealand Literature*.[2] In 1977 a report was commissioned by the Literary Fund and written by Owen J. St. John Vennel. The result, *Patronage and New Zealand Literature: An Investigation of the New Zealand Literary Fund*, does not include much added

[1] Dennis McEldowney, "Publishing, Patronage and Literary Magazines", *Oxford History of New Zealand Literature*, ed. Terry Sturm (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 545 – 602.
[2] Roger Robinson, "Literary Fund", *The Oxford Companion to New Zealand Literature*, ed. Roger Robinson and Nelson Wattie (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 307 – 308.

assessment, but is useful for information about changes in the nature and scope of patronage.[3] Various criticisms and concerns about patronage have appeared over the years in magazines, especially *Landfall*, which was established in 1947 by Charles Brasch.[4] Articles that go some way towards addressing the subject at hand were written by Rachel Barrowman ("'Culture Organising': Joe Heenan and the Beginning of State Patronage of the Arts") and Stephen Stratford ("The Culture Club").[5] Aside from this, there are two surveys that provide some useful statistics. One is directed at Authors' Fund recipients in 1985 and compiled by Andrea Williamson (*Survey of New Zealand Authors' Fund Recipients 1984/85*).[6] The second survey involves grant recipients from 1993 and is called *Research Report on Literature Programme: Writers' Survey.*[7] In general though, Dennis McEldowney's study is reported by Roger Robinson to be the most comprehensive survey of the New Zealand Literary Fund, but he goes on to say that "the full effect of the Fund on this formative period of New Zealand literature remains to be documented and assessed".[8] This is indeed the case, as no attempt has been made to comprehensively assess the effects of literary patronage on writers' lives and their level of professionalism. Nor has any assessment of the quantity or quality of writing produced under benevolent government assistance been attempted.

### *Aims and Methodology*

The broad aim of this research project is to assess the effect of literary patronage on New Zealand literature. More specifically, the project aims to document the history of literary patronage in New Zealand and its effect on writers' incomes and writing. Concurrently, whether the nature of writing has changed and to what extent patronage is responsible for this is investigated. Secondly, the project aims to gauge

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[3] Owen J. St. John Vennell, *Patronage and New Zealand Literature: An Investigation of the New Zealand Literary Fund* (Wellington: Department of Internal Affairs, 1977).
[4] For example: Charles Brasch, "Notes", *Landfall*, 4, 4, 1950, pp. 275 – 280; John Reece Cole, "The Writers' Conference", *Landfall*, 5, 3, 1951, pp. 222 – 224; Maurice Duggan, "The Burns Fellowship", *Landfall*, 22, 3, 1968, pp. 237 – 248.
[5] Rachel Barrowman, "Culture Organising": Joe Heenan and the Beginning of State Patronage of the Arts", *New Zealand Studies*, 6, 2 , 1996, pp. 3 – 10, and Stephen Stratford, "The Culture Club", *Metro*, 9, 98, 1989, pp. 88 – 94.
[6] Andrea Williamson, *Survey of New Zealand Authors' Fund Recipients 1984/85* (Wellington: Department of Internal Affairs, 1985).
[7] Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand, *Research Report on Literature Programme: Writers' Survey* (Wellington: QEII Arts Council, 1993).
[8] Robinson, p. 308.

the effectiveness of the distribution of literary patronage, mindful of the objective of the New Zealand Literary Fund which was to "assist the development of New Zealand literature".[9]

The definition of 'state patronage' used in this study is any aid given to authors by the state in the form of grants, awards or scholarships. Literary patronage does extend further than the individual author, of course, and grants to publishers and literary magazines are included in the initial historical survey. For the main analysis, as this relates to individual authors, only grants given to individual authors are concentrated on.

To meet these aims the essay is divided into the following parts. First, background information is provided on the history of literary patronage, the nature of authorship in New Zealand over time, and the financial situation of New Zealand authors. The information is collected from biographical information, historical surveys, archival sources and contemporary commentaries. Using this information, two specific avenues of inquiry are pursued, in accordance with the two aims expressed earlier. The first involves an assessment of the effect of patronage on the professionalisation of New Zealand writing. Trends in census data for numbers of professional writers over time are compared with the total amount of government patronage of literature and testimonies of writers and other contemporary assessments. The popular identification of writers as professional varies due to an unclear definition; writers tends to regard themselves as professional even if they rely on lighter writing to earn money, in addition to more serious works. As it is extremely rare to survive as an author without these income supplements, anyone who derives their main source of income from writing of any sort (unless they are employed on a more-than-casual-basis by a newspaper or other publication) is counted as professional.

The second method analyses the recipients of patronage. It intends to ascertain how far the financial assistance achieved the New Zealand Literary Fund's objective to foster the development of New Zealand literature. Recipients are grouped according to their level of significance within New Zealand literature. This allows patterns and problems with recipients to be seen and discussed, and the success of the Literary Fund to be assessed in terms of possible biases. The analysis of

[9] Vennell, p. 3.

recipients of patronage and professional writers is limited to the duration of the New Zealand Literary Fund, which began in 1947 and disappeared in 1988 when it became the Literature Programme of the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council.

## Historical Background

### *Financial Situation of New Zealand Authors*

Ever since written literature first appeared in New Zealand, writers have been very rarely able to earn a decent living from writing alone. In the first half of the twentieth century, when literature was an expanding field, the market for serious literature was very small. In 1943, although a native literature was flourishing and had been for some time,[10] Alan Mulgan wrote that the "New Zealand market for books is relatively very limited", and blamed this on the small population, which numbered only 1,600,000.[11] This meant, according to him, that an author could not expect to sell more than 500 copies of a book. The rank of published author was a difficult one to attain, and mostly publishing happened overseas.[12] Authors were forced to supplement their income with less serious writing, such as for newspapers, and even this was a very arduous way to earn a living. Writing for the magazine *Landfall* yielded small results. In 1952 it was recorded that writers received two guineas for stories, articles and poems accepted for this magazine and one guinea for reviews and commentaries.[13] This serves as a good illustration, as *Landfall* is often praised for playing a large part in fostering the development of New Zealand literature, but obviously not in a monetary way. Evidence from primary sources, such as letters of application for assistance, and biographical information further demonstrates the dire financial state of authors. Frank Sargeson, indisputably one of New Zealand's greatest writers, lived a very impoverished existence. He was one of

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[10] Though for a long time the dominant view was that worthwhile New Zealand literature effectively began in the 1930s, many more recent critics have disavowed this as the exaggeration of the writers of that time. See Patrick Evans (*The Penguin History of New Zealand Literature,* Auckland: Penguin , 1991) and Stuart Murray (*Never A Soul at Home: New Zealand Literary Nationalism and the 1930s*, Wellington: Victoria University Press, 1998).

[11] Alan Mulgan, *Literature and Authorship in New Zealand* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1943), p. 41.

[12] McEldowney, "Publishing, Patronage and Literary Magazines", p. 567.

[13] 'Landfall', "Letter to the Secretary of the NZ Literary Fund Advisory Committee (NZLFAC)", in *Alexander Turnbull Library*, Wellington (MS Papers 314), 27 Feb 1952. This has not improved much, as currently writers for *Landfall* are paid at a rate of "$15 per printed page" (Esme Gibbins, "Landfall", *The New Zealand Book Council*, last updated 24 Nov 2004, available from http://www.bookcouncil.org.nz/community/media/landfall.html.

the first professional writers, and relied on his sickness benefit to survive. When, after the war, he threatened to get better, an emergency benefit had to be organised for him by Joseph Heenan (the undersecretary for Internal Affairs), and a fund to improve his rather ramshackle dwelling was started.[14] This was all during the time he was writing and publishing many of his most famous short-stories, as forty of these were completed and published between 1936 and 1954.[15]

Another reason for New Zealand writers' lack of financial success was the indifference of most of the population to literature. 'Serious' writers, at this time, were often not seen as a valuable asset to the community. Eric McCormick relates that many a frustrated artist lamented living amongst people who cared only about the price of lamb and butter.[16] Katherine Mansfield left New Zealand for Europe, as the colony did not fulfil her artistic needs, and complained about the "fat framework of colonial brains".[17] This was still the case in some writers' eyes in 1966, as David Hall complained: "even uncritical acceptance would benefit writers more than the indifference of many New Zealanders to the merits of a literature whose variety and vigour they have never attempted to explore".[18] A problem many writers faced was that general opinion saw art as something that was produced in Europe and Britain, the continent that set the cultural standards. This lack of interest in autochthonous New Zealand literature contributed to the small size of the market.

The late 1940s proved to be an emergent time for the writing industry, but this had little effect on the financial returns authors received for writing. There was a so-called "renaissance" of publishing lead by the success of the Caxton Press.[19] This was set up by Denis Glover before the Second World War but languished while he was away in the navy. On his return it regained strength and became a leading publisher in New Zealand.[20] Several other less well-known presses contributed as well, such as Blackwood and Janet Paul's enterprise, Paul's Book Arcade. Magazines

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[14] Dennis McEldowney, *Frank Sargeson In His Time* (Dunedin: J. McIndoe, 1976), p. 39.
[15] William Broughton, "Sargeson, Frank", *Oxford Companion to New Zealand Literature*, p. 475.
[16] Eric McCormick, *Letters and Art in New Zealand* (Wellington: Department of Internal Affairs, 1940), p. 62.
[17] Peter Gibbons, "The Climate of Opinion", *The Oxford History of New Zealand*, edited by Geoffrey Rice (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 318.
[18] David Oswald William Hall, "Literature", *An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand*, (ed) A. H. McLintock, originally published 1966, available from http://www.teara.govt.nz/1966/L/Literature/StatePatronage/en (last updated 11 July 2005).
[19] Rachel Barrowman, *A Popular Vision: The Arts and the Left in New Zealand 1930 – 195O* (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 1991), p.1.
[20] McEldowney, "Publishing, Patronage and Literary Magazines", p. 579.

like *Landfall* (and earlier less successful but more controversial ones such as *Tomorrow*, established in 1934 and *Phoenix*, established in 1932) also played a large part, providing at least a possible avenue for publication and wider exposure. The result of all these things was to establish a writing industry, also including a large contribution from the state patronage of literature. According to W. H. Oliver, by the 1960s New Zealand's writing "infrastructure" was in place.[21] Interest in New Zealand writing gradually increased with its higher profile, and it was generally agreed that a 'New Zealand literature' did exist.

However, after the establishment of the writing industry, New Zealand writers still found it very hard to derive incomes from writing. Monte Holcroft observed in 1972 that writers were "outside of the economy".[22] This is a fairly accurate picture of the position of writers, as Maurice Gee's argument attests. He points out that no other profession ( with the exception of other kinds of artist) would be expected to work for years and years on a project that does not guarantee any financial returns at all. He said in an interview with Brian Boyd: "I don't like being paid a tiny amount for a couple of years' hard work".[23] A *Metro* article from 1989 states that to sell 3000 copies of a book in New Zealand is to do well. The maximum return from this was calculated as $7,500, for at least a year's work.[24] This is a paltry sum when compared to the median income for 1991, which was $22, 385.[25] Even as Frank Sargeson's reputation grew, he was no closer to making a living. In a letter from 1973 he stated that "financial returns from my major literary works of the sixties have been negligible"[26] and that he lives on the Age Benefit and Universal Super. In a later letter he said: "I lately mentioned my application to a friend, and he astonished me by saying there is a view generally held that I am in these latter years a very successful author financially speaking….there is no truth in it".[27] He says his book, *Man of England Now*, published in England and New Zealand, in nearly two years earned him "less than $500". C. K. Stead has voiced some disagreement about the validity of

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[21] W. H. Oliver, "The Awakening Imagination, 1940 – 1980", *The Oxford History of New Zealand*, ed. Geoffrey Rice (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 555.
[22] Monte Holcroft, "An Umbrella for Writers", *Listener*, 71, 1712, 1972, p. 1.
[23] Brian Boyd, "Maurice Gee", *In the Same Room: Conversations With New Zealand Writers,* ed. Elizabeth Alley and Mark Williams (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1992), p. 169.
[24] Stephen Stratford, "The Culture Club." *Metro*, 9, 98, 1989, p. 91.
[25] New Zealand Department of Statistics, "Incomes", *Census of Populations and Dwellings,* 1991.
[26] Frank Sargeson, "Letter to the Secretary of the NZLFAC", in *National Archives,* Wellington (AAAC 1536 Acc. W5084 113 CUL/11/5/43), 29 Sep 1973.
[27] Frank Sargeson, "Letter to Miss Hill, Secretary NZLFAC", in *National Archives,* Wellington (AAAC 1536 Acc. W5084 113 CUL/11/5/43), 21 Oct 1973.

Sargeson's claims of abject poverty, saying that his biographer, Michael King, took this "on trust", that his lack of earnings were "exaggerations" and that he gave money away by the "bucketful" in the 70s.[28] It is hard to see where he would have got these "bucketfuls" from, however, as although he did receive £200 a year from Charles Brasch, his trifling earnings from writing cannot easily be fabricated. Nearly sixty-five years after Mulgan lamented the unhelpful size of the market for literature, the population is still too small to have made much of a difference. This is despite New Zealanders being enthusiastic readers, as is noted in *Book and Print in New Zealand*. In a 2002 survey, "44% of the adult population surveyed had purchased books in the last four weeks."[29]

There are, of course, notable exceptions to the unprofitable nature of writing in New Zealand. Publishing books overseas can be immensely successful, as Margaret Mahy found when her books were discovered by an American publishing firm and broke on to the international market. In an interview from 1992 she said she "made quite a lot of money in the last few years".[30] A recent article estimated her earnings for one year at as much as $300,000 in royalties.[31] Her children's books benefited from being easily translatable into other languages. Also, a select group of authors managed to write unusually popular books that earned huge amounts of money. Examples of this are Barry Crump, author of the bestseller *A Good Keen Man*, and Keri Hulme of *The Bone People*. *A Good Keen Man* is described by Terry Sturm as "one of the most popular books ever published in New Zealand".[32] Crump's success was subject to the usual vicissitudes and by 1970 "diminishing returns" had him applying for grants again,[33] but a recovery in later years led to a total sales estimate of "more than a million copies".[34] The success of Hulme was helped by her high profile win of the Booker Prize in 1984, but *The Bone People* enjoyed unprecedented popularity, not equalled in New Zealand since. Other writers, like Charles Brasch,

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[28] C. K. Stead, *The Writer at Work*, (Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2000), p. 58.
[29] Penny Griffith, Ross Harvey, Keith Maslen, eds, *Book and Print in New Zealand: a Guide to Print Culture in Aotearoa* (Wellington, Victoria University Press, 1997), p. 203.
[30] Murray Edmond, "Margaret Mahy", *In the Same Room: Conversations With New Zealand Writers*, ed. Elizabeth Alley and Mark Williams (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1992), p. 260.
[31] Tessa Duder, "Review of *Margaret Mahy: A Writer's Life*", *North and South*, 231, 2004, p. 114.
[32] Terry Sturm, "Crump, Barry", *Oxford Companion to New Zealand Literature*, p. 120.
[33] Barry Crump, "Letter to M. Jarman", in *National Archives*, Wellington (IA 1 Acc. W2633 41 86/1/5 pt. 21), 9 June 1971.
[34] Sturm, p. 121.

were able to be of "independent means"[35] due to family wealth. Brasch even served as an anonymous benefactor for other writers such as Frank Sargeson and James K. Baxter. Katherine Mansfield was supported by her father while she wrote and travelled to England. These instances are very rare, however, and in general the financial situation of authors in New Zealand was fairly precarious.

So, in the main, it was difficult to survive as a writer in New Zealand. Even today, in order to earn a decent living from writing without extraordinary success or good fortune, it is necessary to be versatile. Most choose the more secure option of full or part time employment. Elizabeth Smither is currently employed as a librarian, a dull yet stable source of income. Otherwise, the piece-meal writing jobs that are available are irregular and often very poorly paid. Smither says she prefers a part-time job to the alternative of "chasing book reviewing and journalism work" to supplement her writing.[36] Fiona Kidman estimates the writing of book reviews earns the reviewer about three to five dollars an hour.[37] She also describes the life of a writer as one where versatility is imperative, and Margaret Mahy advises that to prosper as a writer one must "chase after opportunities".[38]

***Professional Writing***

Nevertheless, there are writers in New Zealand who profess to being full-time, despite the difficulties. The definition of a professional writer is quite fluid as virtually no-one solely writes serious literature. This is because of the necessity of more lucrative writing. Estimates of the number of people writing professionally vary as well, due to differences in the definitions of a "professional writer". Such sources include a survey of New Zealand Authors' Fund recipients from 1984. This concludes that 21.1 percent of Authors' Fund recipients identify themselves as full-time, a total of 141 people. Also, "a much greater proportion of fiction writers (39 percent), than non-fiction writers (12 percent), worked full-time".[39] A report on the Literary Fund from 1977 stated that there were four professional writers in New

[35] Peter Simpson, "Brasch, Charles", *Oxford Companion to New Zealand Literature,* p. 68.
[36] Kimberley Rothwell, "Don't Give Up the Day Job", *Dominion Post,* 25 Sept 2004.
[37] Fiona Kidman, "Reviewing the Reviewers", *Palm Prints* (Auckland: Vintage, 1994), p. 123.
[38] Edmond, p. 260.
[39] Williamson, p. 5.

Zealand.[40] Three years earlier, an article in the *Dominion Post* complained that "no full-time writers can be supported from the New Zealand fund, which makes its effectiveness a doubtful proposition".[41] Therefore is it important to provide a standard measure of the number of professional writers that has continuity over time.

The standard chosen in this study was census data on occupations, where people would classify themselves as "writer" if this was their main source of income. The number of professional writers and how it has changed over time can be gleaned from the following table: effect

**Table 1: Number of Professional Writers from Census Data 1945 – 1991**.

| | **1945** | **1951** | **1956** | **1961** | **1966** | **1971** | **1976** | **1981** | **1986** | **1991** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **No.** | 16 | 15 | 13 | 19 | 42 | 44 | 120 | 189 | 252 | 312 |

Source: NZ Department of Statistics, "Industries and Occupations", *New Zealand Population Census 1945* to *New Zealand Population Census* 1991 (Wellington, 1945 - 91).

From the table, it can be seen that the number of professional writers in New Zealand was fairly static up till the early to mid seventies when it increased rapidly, nearly tripling between the 1971 and 1976 censuses. It has continued to increase since then. The question to be addressed later in this research paper is the extent to which government assistance was responsible for these trends.

## History of Patronage

### *Beginnings*

The extreme difficulties of earning a living as a writer prompted Stephen Stratford to exclaim in 1989: "Thank heavens for the State Literary Fund".[42] The awareness of a need for assistance for writers coincided with the term of the First Labour Government, traditionally more interested in cultural affairs than their right-

[40] Vennell, p. 9.
[41] Sarah Bethel, "The Life of a Writer", *Dominion Post,* 4 Sep 1974, p. 6.
[42] Stratford, p. 91.

wing counterparts. Unofficially, government officials like Joseph Heenan saw a need for monetary aid amongst New Zealand writers and arranged for several civil list pensions for elderly writers, such as Jessie McKay and William Satchell.[43] Before the 1940s, "the only regular acknowledgement of success for writers" were competitions run by newspapers and magazines.[44] The Centenary festivities were another impetus for state-sponsored literary works. For the 1940 celebrations, a series of books on various aspects of New Zealand were commissioned, and a literary competition was held. Seven years later, in 1947, after extensive lobbying by the authors' group PEN (PEN NZ is the name for the New Zealand Society of Authors), the New Zealand Literary Fund was established. It was charged with fostering New Zealand literature through grants to assist with publication (of historical works, contemporary creative literature, reprints of New Zealand classics and Maori literature), to writers working on "approved projects" and production of critical books.[45] The first meeting of the Literary Fund Advisory Committee was held on July 10, 1947, and was chaired by Sir James Elliot. This committee met four times a year and was responsible for reviewing the applications for assistance and distributing grants to those deemed most deserving. The positions were filled by a selection of established writers or associated people, including two PEN representatives.

The Literary Fund began with a government allocation of £2000 and was presided over by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. For twenty-five years the funding level rose very slowly. By 1972 it had only increased to $6000, failing to keep pace with inflation. By comparison, the median income of New Zealanders had risen from £240 ($480) in the 1945 census to nearly five times that in 1971: $2285.[46] Dora Somerville, the secretary of PEN, wrote in 1971 that it was widely felt that the funding of literature was vastly inadequate. She criticised the level of increase, saying that in contrast, New Zealand's population had "nearly doubled in the quarter century", and that the currency was a quarter of the value it had been twenty-five years before. Nevertheless, the Literary Fund vote had taken "little account of this

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[43] Rachel Barrowman, "'Culture Organising': Joe Heenan and the Beginnings of State Patronage of the Arts", *New Zealand Studies*, 6, 2, 1996, p. 3.
[44] Penny Griffith, Ross Harvey, Keith Maslen, eds, *Book and Print in New Zealand: a Guide to Print Culture in Aotearoa* (Wellington, Victoria University Press, 1997), p. 207.
[45] Vennell, p. 3.
[46]NZ Department of Statistics, "Incomes", *New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings 1971*, (Wellington,: Department of Statistics, 1972-1977), p. 7.

depreciation".[47] In a letter to the Minister of Internal Affairs, Henry May, MP Gregory O'Brian said that the "fund has been grossly under-endowed for a long time and is ineffectual in achieving any useful objectives for the advancement of literary work in New Zealand in the manner that it is currently handled."[48]

The response to this was the rapid augmentation of literary funding. The level was raised to $15,000 in 1973, then to $75,000 in 1978 and $300,000 by 1986.[49] In later years, commercial sponsorship joined in to add to the amount of funding available. An example of this is Montana's sponsorship of the New Zealand Book Awards. Also, indirect government patronage, such as university writers' fellowships existed. In 1973 the Authors' Fund was set up, which compensated authors for use of their books in libraries. After the huge expansions of the seventies, the growth in the Fund slowed down. In 1988 the Literary Fund became the Literature Programme of the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand, which in 1995 became Creative New Zealand. In 2001 Stevan Eldred-Grigg complained that Helen Clark's promises of increased funding to the Authors' Fund had not eventuated. Eldred-Grigg says that writers were at this time being paid "as little as a tenth" of the original allocations.[50] The Fifth Labour Government continued in the benevolent tradition towards cultural projects, however, and in 2003 an extra million dollars was given to literature. This was part of, according to Michael Reid of the Maxim Institute, "support for the arts on a scale previously unknown in New Zealand".[51]

The nature of the recipients of literary patronage also changed over time; the ratio of authors' grants to publishers' grants reversed. Vennell's report from 1977 asserts that in the early years of literary patronage the majority of funding was given to publishers as subsidies to enable them to publish books that might otherwise not get published. In the years between 1947 and 1956, 60 percent of the total fund was given to publishers, while only 28.7 percent went directly to authors.[52] A letter from 1971 explains that normal procedure is not to give grants to writers for books that

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[47] Dora Somerville, "Letter to the Secretary of the NZ Literary Fund Advisory Committee", in *National Archives,* Wellington (IA 1 W2042 86/1/5 22), 10 Sep 1971.
[48] Gerald O'Brian, "Letter to Henry May", in *National Archives,* Wellington (IA 1 W2633 26 CUL/11/4/1 3), 1973.
[49] Stratford, p. 93.
[50] Stevan Eldred-Grigg, "Yes, Prime Minister, But What About Poor Kiwi Authors", *The Press,* 3 Dec 2001, p. 5.
[51] Michael Reid, "Clark Had No Mandate to Spend Our Taxes on Arts", *New Zealand Herald,* 14 Feb 2002.
[52] Vennell, p. 4.

have not been written.[53] However, this changed radically, and ten years later 53 percent of funding was going to individual authors, while 31.7 percent went to publishers.[54] Vennell points out that publishers' grants benefited individual authors as well, both indirectly and directly. There was a specific condition that a portion of the grant went to authors as a fee.[55] The increase in individual writers' grants was largely explained by the introduction of the Scholarship in Letters in 1956 and the Award for Achievement in 1957. Ian Gordon elucidates this in the Vennell report; he says that once the publishers had been convinced of the market for literature, and the infrastructure set up, then more attention could be paid to individual writers. Others disliked this turn of events, however. A publisher complained in a *Listener* article in 1983 that "writers are now reasonably well provided for", whereas "Literary Fund grants [for publishers] have fallen away".[56] The author of the article disagrees that authors are "well-provided for", but nevertheless the change was noticed. This trend continued with more writer awards, such as the Writers' Bursary in 1977, and the Authors' Fund in 1973. By 1993, a QEII Arts Council Research Report reported that 60 percent of funding went straight to writers.[57]

### *Issues With Patronage*

Ever since the idea of government patronage was first introduced, various concerns were raised about its possible effects on New Zealand literature. From critics like Rex Fairburn, unease was expressed about government funding of supposedly free and experimental works of art, and the stultifying effect this might have. Monte Holcroft believed that in an attempt to please state benefactors, "writers would grow soft, putting aside militancy, and be drawn imperceptibly into the establishment."[58] Along with this was the issue of control and censorship which might result in the state having too much control over expression. Fairburn described

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[53] S. J. Miller (Secretary NZLFAC), "Letter to Mrs. C. McLeod" in *National Archives*, Wellington (IA 1 W2042 86/1/5 22), 9 Sep 1971.
[54] Vennell, p. 4.
[55] Vennell, p. 4.
[56] Unknown, "Listener article", in *National Archives*, Wellington, (AAAC 7536 Acc W5084 105 CUL/11/3/4), 22 Oct 1983.
[57] Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand, *Research Report on Literature Programme: Writers' Survey* (Wellington: QEII Arts Council, 1993), p.1.
[58] Vennell, p. 3.

it as "history [being] written to order".[59] Also, critics like James K. Baxter worried that professionalism would have a bad effect on writers. He said in a speech to the Writers' Conference in 1951 that the often necessary "real job" that writers must have to supplement their income is a vital part of writing valuable literature. Isolation, on the other hand, promoted "sentimentality" or "nihilism".[60] This notion of the necessity of being part of society has recently been echoed by Bernard Beckett, a writer of young adult novels and a teacher. He says: "Writing's quite solitary, and I like to get out and about and have contact with people".[61] Other writers valued patronage for the chance it gave them to concentrate on their work.

Another ground on which critics like Fairburn disapproved of state patronage was that it produced too much financial security. He worried that writers would become soft, as "struggle" was needed for good writing,[62] and said that "to support writers while they produce novels, poems or autobiographies is to create a climate of unreality in which good literature is unlikely to thrive, while weeds flourish".[63] Many writers, however, felt it was important to be financially secure. Frank Sargeson, applying for the Scholarship in Letters in 1973 said: "financial and other constrictions may create in me too much anxiety about my chances of rounding off my work".[64] Janet Frame disagreed that material deprivation was necessary for her work. In an interview in 1992 she said that writing was inevitable, regardless of poverty.[65] These debates are age-old and possibly endless, but need to be taken into account when assessing the effect of patronage.

## Professionalisation of Writing

It is clear that, except in very rare circumstances, it is very difficult for writers to write professionally without patronage. Also, from Table 1, it can be seen that numbers of professional writers has been increasing over time, as has patronage. However, in order to assess the effect of patronage on the professionalisation of writing, it is necessary to correlate the two more convincingly. Their correlation can

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[59] A. R. D. Fairburn, "The Culture Industry", *Landfall*, 10, 3, 1956, p. 201.
[60] James K. Baxter, "1951 Writers' Conference", *The Press*, 12 May, 1951.
[61] Kimberley Rothwell, "Don't Give Up the Day Job", *Dominion Post*, 25 Sep 2004.
[62] Dennis McEldowney, "Publishing, Patronage and Literary Magazines", p. 575.
[63] A .R. D. Fairburn, "This Quarter", *Landfall*, .5, 3, 1951, p. 216.
[64] Frank Sargeson, "Letter to the Secretary of the NZLFAC", in *National Archives*, Wellington (AAAC 7536 W5084 CUL 11/5/43 Box 113) 29 Sep 1973.
[65] Elizabeth Alley, "Janet Frame", *In the Same Room: Conversations With New Zealand Writers*, ed. Elizabeth Alley and Mark Williams (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1992), p. 41.

be measured when the total Fund for each year is tabulated with the data on the number of professional writers for each census year. This is done in Table 2, and includes median incomes for each year as a representation of inflation rates for the purpose of comparison.

**Table 2: Literary Patronage, Incomes and Professional Authors: 1945 - 1991**

| | Median income | Total Fund | Professional authors |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1945 | £240 | - | 16 |
| 1951 | £397 | £2,000 | 15 |
| 1956 | £589 | £2,000 | 13 |
| 1961 | £726 | £2,000 | 19 |
| 1966 | £888 | £3,000 | 42 |
| 1971 | $2,285 | $6,000 | 44 |
| 1976 | $4,223 | $25,000 | 120 |
| 1981 | $7,586 | $75,000 | 189 |
| 1986 | $10,663 | $125,000 | 252 |
| 1991 | $22, 385 | $300,000 | 312 |

Sources: Median incomes: New Zealand Department of Statistics, "Incomes" *New Zealand Population Census*, 1945 – 1991 (Wellington: NZ Department of Statistics, 1945 – 1991).
Total fund: *Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives* (Wellington: 1945 – 1991), G11.
Professional authors: New Zealand Department of Statistics, "Industries and Occupations", *New Zealand Population Census*, 1945 – 1991(Wellington: NZ Department of Statistics., 1945 – 1991).

As can be seen in the table, there is a strong correlation between the rise of patronage and the rise of the number of professional authors. While the total Fund finally rises significantly in 1973 (as discussed earlier) the number of professional authors nearly triples between the censuses of 1971 and 1976. This represents a surge in the number of full-time writers which appears to be linked with the large increase in the amount of patronage.

In order to assess the importance of patronage as a cause of this surge in professional authors, other support for this must be found and other explanations ruled out. As it has already been shown that New Zealand authors in the main cannot write professionally without some sort of outside assistance, the connection would appear to be very straightforward. Indeed, many authors attest that the acceptance of a grant allowed them to become professional or convinced them that it was possible to become professional. When the previous data is combined with examples of authors becoming professional because of grants, it seems likely that state patronage is a significant cause of the rise in professional writing. Maurice Gee, when asked why he waited until the age of forty-five to write professionally, answered: "financial uncertainty". Then, a $3000 grant convinced him full-time writing was possible, as he decided he and his family could "get by" on this.[66] According to Stephen Stratford, the establishment of the Authors' Fund in 1972 helped convince Michael King that "it was going to be possible to make a living from writing".[67] From a survey by the Literature Programme of the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council in 1991 on "Sources of Support for New Zealand Writing", 66 percent of grant recipients said that grants helped their professional development by allowing them to "concentrate full-time on their writing without worrying about how to pay bills". Janet Frame agreed, saying: "When I had the Sargeson Fellowship, not having to housekeep and so-on, I was able to write out what had been in my mind for some time but hadn't been able to be plucked out because of the obstacles".[68] These grants were intended to allow full-time writing, or at least this is what is said in a report on *Sources of Support for New Zealand Writing*, also written by the Literature Programme of the QEII Arts Council.[69]

Though complaints that the grants were inadequate for full-time writing are mostly absent from the literature, it is useful to question the capacity of the grants to allow professional writing. To measure this, comparison is made between the yearly median income (from census data) and grant size. The particular grant chosen is the

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[66] Boyd, p. 161.
[67] Stratford, p. 93.
[68] Alley, p. 53.
[69] Literature Programme of the QEII Arts Council, *1991 Sources of Support for New Zealand Writing* (Wellington: QEII Arts Council, 1991), p. 2.

Scholarship in Letters (beginning in 1956) which, although only given to one person a year, was supposed to allow a year's full-time writing.

**Table 3: Median Income and Average Grant Size 1945 – 1991**

| | Median income | Average grant size |
|---|---|---|
| 1945 | £240 | - |
| 1951 | £397 | - |
| 1956 | £589 | £500 |
| 1961 | £726 | £500 |
| 1966 | £888 | £1,000 |
| 1971 | $2,285 | $3,000 |
| 1976 | $4,223 | $6,000 |
| 1981 | $7,586 | $9,000 |
| 1986 | $10,663 | $10,000 |
| 1991 | $22, 385 | $20,000 |

Sources: Median incomes: New Zealand Department of Statistics, "Incomes" *New Zealand Population Census*, 1945 – 1991 (Wellington: NZ Department of Statistics, 1945 – 1991).
Average grant size: NZ Department of Internal Affairs. *The New Zealand Literary Fund 1946 – 70* (Wellington: Government Printer, 1970), and *Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives*, 1945 – 1991), G11.

The Scholarship in Letters compares favourably to the median incomes of New Zealanders. Other grants are often smaller than this, and a commentary from 1966 complains that "the scale of this assistance is too meagre to inhibit self-reliance".[70] It is criticised in 1970 for being "out of the question" for a writer with "family, property and professional responsibility,[71] but acceptable for a "single man of spartan habits". Writers do not seem to expect to live well from writing, and have to be proactive about finding sources of income. There was certainly a perception that the patronage available was quite limited. The value of the Scholarship in Letters

[70] Hall.
[71] Dora Somerville, "Pig Island Publishing in the Seventies" in *Alexander Turnbull Library*, Wellington, (73-161-7/10), 1970.

did rise in accordance with the overall economical changes over time, so has proved adequate for full-time writing.

There are, of course, more possible explanations for the sudden rise in professional authorship than simply the introduction of patronage. Perhaps the establishment of the publishing industry and other such writing infrastructure was a more important cause. There is no similar correlation with the rise of publishing as there is with Fund money, however. If this was the cause, then the sudden influx of professional writers would have happened much earlier. Because the publishing "renaissance" occurred in the 30s and 40s, organisations such as the Caxton Press were more than established by this time. As Oliver says, the infrastructure was in place by the 60s,[72] not leaving any room for a sudden rise in the 70s. In previous sections it has been shown that authors could very rarely survive on their earnings from writing. Therefore, the increasing professionalisation of writers cannot be solely accounted for by the writing industry itself. Besides this, a large factor in the establishment of the publishing industry was the New Zealand Literary Fund, as, especially in its early years, it gave grants to publishers to encourage them to widen their publishing scope[73].

## Analysis of Recipients

### *Methodology*

In order to assess the effectiveness of literary patronage, it was necessary to evaluate it in terms of whether it is going to the 'right' people. Obviously with a group to be counted like writers of 'high' literature, assessing the quality of their work is very subjective, and thus numbers are not easily measured. As a mediating standard, the *Oxford Companion to New Zealand Literature* was taken as a measure of literary achievement.[74] This is a compendium of biographies of New Zealand authors or anyone associated with New Zealand writing, published in 1998. It is arranged in the style of an encyclopedia, with entries in alphabetical order.

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[72] Oliver, p. 555.
[73] Vennell, p. 4.
[74] Roger Robinson and Nelson Wattie, eds, *The Oxford Companion to New Zealand Literature* (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1998).

Entries range in size from a few lines to two or three pages, depending on the importance of the author being discussed. The *Companion* was written by 97 experts on New Zealand literature, and then edited by Roger Robinson and Nelson Wattie, therefore providing enough of a combined range of literary expertise to come as near to objectivity as possible. Using the *Companion*, writers were deemed to be 'significant' if they were awarded more than twenty lines of text in this book. It was necessary to find a consistent measure of literary significance with the intention of analysing the recipients of literary patronage on these terms. This method, though it might appear arbitrary, allowed a list of significant authors to be constructed for the purpose of analysis. The authors counted were restricted to those who flourished between 1947 and 1988 to coincide with data restrictions on recipients of patronage.

Combined with this was information from various sources about the recipients of government patronage. The most complete set of data was available for the period between the establishment of the Literary Fund in 1947 and its absorption into the QEII Arts Council in 1988. This was found in the *Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives* and the Department of Internal Affairs report from 1970 called *The New Zealand Literary Fund 1946 - 70*.[75] After 1970 a *Literary Fund Newsletter* was produced at least once a year, but supposedly when the committee met four times a year, detailing the beneficiaries of patronage. The following table plots literary 'significance' against patronage received; only patronage to individual writers is considered.

**Table 4: Recipients of Government Literary Patronage 1947 – 1988**

| | Multiple recipients | | Single recipients | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Significant | Not sig. | Significant | Not sig. | Total |
| Male | 39 | - | 34 | 26 | 99 |
| Female | 16 | 1 | 28 | 28 | 73 |
| Total | 55 | 1 | 62 | 54 | 172 |

[75] NZ Department of Internal Affairs, *The New Zealand Literary Fund 1946 - 70* (Wellington: Government Printer, 1970).

Sources for Table 4: Information on recipients: NZ Department of Internal Affairs, *The New Zealand Literary Fund 1946 - 70* (Wellington: Government Printer, 1970); New Zealand Literary Fund, *New Zealand Literary Fund Newsletter*, 1970 – 1988.
Measure of 'significance': *Oxford Companion to New Zealand Literature*, ed Roger Robinson and Nelson Wattie, (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1998).

From a total of 172 recipients (multiple recipients being just counted once), 117 turned out to be significant while 55 never achieved prominence as writers. This means that 32 percent of recipients were apparently never heard of again. Of those receiving only one grant, 46 percent disappeared without trace.

A second table was also constructed, this time focussing on significant writers who did not appear on the list of recipients. They are sorted into categories depending on the genre of writing they are responsible for.

**Table 5: Number of 'Significant' Authors Who Received No Government Patronage (1947 – 1988)**

| | Poetry | Prose | Plays | Popular fiction | Non-fiction | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Male | 47 | 21 | 11 | 5 | 5 | 89 |
| Female | 17 | 15 | 3 | 7 | 2 | 44 |
| Total | 62 | 36 | 14 | 12 | 7 | 133 |

Source: Roger Robinson and Nelson Wattie, eds, *The Oxford Companion to New Zealand Literature* (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1998). Measure of 'significance' can be found earlier in the text.

***Analysis***

The total number of significant authors during this time period is 250 (133 from Table 5 and 117 from Table 4). That means that only 47 percent of significant authors received government patronage, and only 22 percent of them received two or more grants.

The fact that so many grants given out have failed to achieve their end, which is to encourage the development of significant writing, is not as disturbing as it might seem when analysed in terms of the reservations about patronage earlier discussed. After all, the nature of literary patronage means that risks need to be taken, and the

books often have not yet been written when the grant is awarded. This is necessary to avoid the damning criticism that only works assured of success get published. A report in the Turnbull Library from the late 1960s describes the list of recipients as a "Who's Who of New Zealand writing", implying that only already well-known writers received grants. The writer expresses regret that there have not been more failures, as this would prove that risks were being taken.[76] Her wish was to come true in later years, but perhaps to a greater extent than she intended, as a nearly fifty percent failure rate (if it can be called this) is rather high.

What is more concerning is the number of significant writers that have not received any sort of patronage from the government. There are some very famous names on this list. This may just mean that they did not apply, as we know is the case with Rex Fairburn, but this still means the Literary Fund has failed to achieve its objectives of fostering New Zealand literature as much as it can. Many very important poets, including Alan Brunton and Robert Sullivan, do not appear on the list. The novelist Ronald Hugh Morrieson is quite famous for only being recognised for his writing after his death and living in fairly dire circumstances when he was alive. After his works consistently got rejected by publishers he lived with his elderly aunt Doris "in a state of increasing poverty and physical decrepitude".[77] A lengthy appreciation of his work by Frank Sargeson and C. K. Stead published in *Landfall* in 1971 came too late, as his ill health and alcoholism killed him the next year. Other well-known writers not on the list include Denis Glover, Kevin Ireland, Elsie Locke, Ngaio Marsh and Rewi Alley.

Some of the mystery surrounding the important writers not included in the list can be explained by the reservations of writers about literary patronage. Rex Fairburn was widely known to be outspokenly opposed to literary patronage, so it is hardly surprising he does not appear amongst the recipients. James K. Baxter was another poet who was somewhat anti-establishment and lived for a long time in the Jerusalem commune. Though he received assistance from Charles Brasch, as mentioned earlier, he only appears on the list of patronage recipients once. It is likely that this is because of his views about the isolating effects of funding writers. Denis Glover writes of being approached by Joseph Heenan about a "handout" from the government and

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[76] Dora Somerville, "Opinion", *New Zealand Bookseller and Publisher,* 18, in *Alexander Turnbull Library*, Wellington. (PEN Records, 73-161-7/10), 1970.
[77] Julia Millen, "Morrieson, James Ronald Hugh 1922 – 1972", *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, updated 7 July 2005, available from: http://www.dnzb.govt.nz.

telling him firmly he was not interested.[78] It seems to have been a certain source of pride among groups of writers not to be supported by the state. Though this was a matter of personal choice, it is a result of the nature of government patronage. In this sense patronage was not as beneficial as it intended, as it was not achieving the Literary Fund's objective. Also, there are many writers, like Morrieson and Brunton, who would have been grateful for patronage. A series of letters from Witi Ihimaera illustrate the frustration of applying for Literary Fund grants. In the final one, dated January 8, 1973, he says: I have had enough of hassling for financial assistance" and "as always will rely on my own energy to see me through".[79] In 1981 D. A. Highet, the Minister for the Arts made a speech at the opening of the German Book Exhibition, 'Books on the Move', in the Wellington Town Hall. In his speech notes he states that "there are few important contemporary writers whose work has not been assisted by the Fund".[80] From the evidence, it would seem that this statement was something of an exaggeration.

In terms of bias, the one the Fund is most commonly criticised for is against young writers, in favour of the established literary elite, as was a major source of discussion at the 1951 writers' conference. According to Peter Gibbons, the literary establishment at this time was seen as conservative and conformist.[81] This is a likely outcome of the nature of the Fund, where a committee of already established authors controlled, to some extent, the future of others. These tended not to be the new, subversive, innovative writers that advanced the field of literature, and were often at odds with the new, dynamic forces of literature. Exactly this was being complained about at the 1951 writers' conference; in *Landfall* in 1951 Robert Chapman complained of the older writers' refusal to recognise the innovations of the 30s (presumably that of Allen Curnow and his generation), while continuing to control the funds.[82] Louis Johnson, part of the next generation of iconoclastic young writers along with James K. Baxter, was involved in a controversial argument with the

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[78] Denis Glover, *Hot Water Sailor 1912-1962 and Landlubber Ho! 1963-1980* (Auckland: Collins, 1981), p. 222.
[79] Witi Ihimaera, "Letter to the Secretary of the NZLF", in *National Archives,* Wellington (IA W2633 CUL 1/4/1 pt 3), 8 Jan 1973.
[80] D. A. Highet, "Speech at the German Book Exhibition, 'Books on the Move', in the Wellington Town Hall", in *National Archives*, Wellington (AAAC 7536 Acc. W5084 105 CUL/11/314), 19 June 1981.
[81] Peter Gibbons, "The Climate of Opinion", *The Oxford History of New Zealand*, ed. Geoffrey Rice. Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1992, p. 304.
[82] Robert Chapman, "The Writers' Conference", *Landfall* 5, 3, 1951, p. 224.

Literary Fund Advisory Council when it refused to help publish his 1964 *New Zealand Poetry Yearbook* unless six poems deemed to be offensive were removed.[83] This tendency towards more 'safe' publications is a worrying aspect of literary patronage.

Indeed, this can be seen upon analysis of the list of non-recipients, as almost all the members of the group of young poets known as the 'Freed' generation are missing. They were associated with the fairly subversive and experimental poetry of the magazine 'Freed' in the early 70s. Alan Brunton is one of these, as are Bob Orr and Peter Olds, none of whom are on the list of recipients. Though the cycle of dominance and then rejection of the dominant voice in favour of the next one is a recurrent theme in New Zealand literature, this opposition seems to have never been resolved. Stephen Chan writes that in Brunton's case, "despite incessant creative activity, Brunton was, though much admired in New Zealand, never fully admitted to the new pantheon that solidified around the ruins of the old one he had helped overthrow".[84] Though in 1989 Rosemary Wildblood insisted that the Literature Board "aims to provide a balance between new and established writers", it would seem this was not always the case.[85]

The predominance in the thirties, forties, fifties and sixties of male writers suggests a certain bias against women. Women's writing was rarely taken seriously, forcing very capable writers like Ngaio Marsh to write in more lucrative but less intellectually stimulating genres such as crime fiction. This would seem to be the case in Fiona Kidman's opinion; it is only by the time she is writing *Palm Prints* in 1994 is she confident enough to say that "the QEII Arts Council now supports women in fair ratio to men".[86] This is in accordance with a general trend in New Zealand history of diversification that began in the late 1960s in opposition to the supposed homogeneity of previous decades, called the "puritan monoculture" by Lawrence Jones.[87] Previously marginalised groups such as women, Maori and gay and lesbian people began to make their presence known at this time. The break-up of this

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[83] W. S. Broughton, "Johnson, Louis Albert 1924 – 1988", *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, (last updated 7 July 2005), available from: http://www.dnzb.govt.nz/.
[84] Stephen Chan, "Obituary: Alan Brunton", *The Independent*, (last updated 9 July, 2002), available from: http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qn4158/is_20020709/ai_n12629189 .
[85] Rosemary Wildblood, "So What Happens to My Application?", *PEN Gazette*, 152, 1989, p.7.
[86] Fiona Kidman, "A New Breed of Women", *Palm Prints* (Auckland: Vintage, 1994), p. 87.
[87] Lawrence Jones, "The Novel", *The Oxford Dictionary of New Zealand Literature in English*, ed. Terry Sturm (Auckland, Oxford University Press. 1991), p. 170.

perceived monoculture was the result of the clamouring of the 'other' voices, meaning not European or male, finally being heard. Literary patronage, to some extent, encouraged this diversification, and certainly responded to the increasing number of female and Maori authors requiring assistance from the 1970s.

None of the other possible biases of gender or race are obvious from the data. There are, perhaps, indications of a wider bias in society, as although there are not significantly more male recipients than female, there are nearly twice as many significant male authors, and it is not a feasible proposition to say that men are inherently better at writing than women. There is a certain inherent inequality to any kind of patronage that means that the best of egalitarian intentions can never be entirely realised. The system rewarded talent, but as Oliver says this depends to some extent on "prior social and economic advantages".[88] The literary establishment would appear to be one quite reliant on cliques; Jane Westaway complains in the PEN Gazette that Literary Board grants tend to go to the "overtly literary" types, already known to the establishment.[89]

The division of significant grant recipients into categories according to their genre of writing shows a large number of poets being deprived of patronage. This could just be because poets are more common. A bias is hard to identify without a similar analysis of the recipients. This result is surprising, however, considering McEldowney has it that the influence of the Fund's assistance was "strongest in poetry",[90] and that novels tended to be published individually. Logically, as novels take longer to write, one would expect that novelists would be more in need of grants. McEldowney says that the area the Literary Fund was least helpful in was non-fiction,[91] and although there are few non-fiction writers in the non-recipient section of Table 5, there is not a large number deemed significant enough to appear in the *Oxford Companion*, either.

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[88] Oliver, p. 561.
[89] Jane Westaway, "You're Always Going to Get Scabs, God Bless 'Em"*The New Zealand Author* (Journal of PEN NZ), June 1990, No. 155, p. 3.
[90] McEldowney, "Publishing, Patronage and Literary Magazines", p. 599.
[91] Ibid.

## Conclusion

The presence of government literary patronage in New Zealand has had a mainly positive effect on New Zealand literature, though due to certain limitations perhaps not quite to the extent it could have. The availability of state patronage within the writing industry has made it possible for writers to write full-time. It is clear that without patronage an adequate income is very difficult to derive from writers' royalties. The rise of professional writing in the seventies coincided with a diversification of viewpoints in New Zealand, replacing the non-inclusive façade of homogeneity that supposedly prevailed previous to this. The increased availability of literary grants at this time encouraged this diversity, allowing the newly recognised voices to express themselves in increasingly varied ways.

State patronage has been successful in terms of cultivating New Zealand literature. It is inevitable that it has been a hit and miss process, to some extent, if it was to succeed in encouraging new and interesting works to be written. It is in danger, however, as being seen as type of lottery, and somewhat irrelevant to real literature, as so many significant authors have entirely missed out. This is partly due to the personal choice of the writers, but perhaps this could have been circumvented if more obvious care had been taken to avoid the issues these writers took exception to. There are, also, many instances of writers being neglected. This adds credibility to the claims that certain groups of people had more access to patronage than other. A useful study that would more fully illuminate any bias in the distribution of patronage would be an analysis of all the applicants, and an assessment of those that missed out versus those that did not. The minutes of the Literary Fund are mostly available from the National Archives, in which each applicant is mentioned and then either accepted or rejected. The vastness of this material, however, rendered it out of the scope of this study. Even without doing this, it is obvious that the group controlling the distribution of patronage is likely to be the older, more established writers. This means there is a constant danger of challenging new voices not getting the encouragement needed. Writing is still an occupation on the fringes of the New Zealand economy. However, with the implementation of the New Zealand Literary Fund, and the myriad of awards and scholarships that accompanied it, writers are now considerably better provided for.

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