

Re: Who makes up the 1%? In the arts, it's the bureaucrats

RM Vaughan, May 30th: <http://www.cbc.ca/beta/arts/who-makes-up-the-1-in-the-arts-it-s-the-bureaucrats-1.3607715>

There are a number of journalistic standard issues with the May 30th article posted on CBC Arts online by RM Vaughan: “Who makes up the 1%? In the arts, it's the bureaucrats.” There needs to be a discussion about the percent of total revenue that goes to living artists within our projects, organizations and institutions. However, in its current form, the article is a misleading distraction and contrary to CBC’s values and long-term interests. Issues with the piece have been outlined for quick comprehension and suggested fixes below.

ISSUE	ITEM / EXAMPLE	SUGGESTIONS	FIT WITH W. <u>CBC VALUES</u>
<p>1) Sensationalism Use of sensational / clickbait headline to unfairly group and demonize.</p> <p>(Clickbait = use of a shocking headline to raise online advert revenue.)</p>	<p>Headline “Who makes up the 1%? In the arts, it's the bureaucrats”</p>	<p>Consider change of title to reflect complexity of issue.</p> <p>Title includes a % statistic but has zero statistics to back it. If use of ‘the 1%’ is to summarize / denote <i>the concept</i> of a parasitic financial elite rather than statistic, then the article is even more misleading.</p>	<p>Associating an income category that is 14% below the average earnings in the labour force with 'the 1% ,' then backing it with sensational anecdotes is misleading, contrary to CBC’s values of fairness, accuracy, balance [<u>CBC Values Statement</u>]</p>
<p>2) Eliciting Outrage Use of bullet anecdotes at top to incorrectly generalize and elicit outrage from reader rather than summarize content.</p>	<p>Key point bullets: “Four true stories (...) Line 1-17”</p>	<p>For balance, consider incorporating bullet or top line: “culture workers have 14% lower than average earnings in the overall labour force” Source: [<u>Hill Strategies, 2010</u>]</p>	<p>Please see above, misleading, contrary to CBCs values of fairness, accuracy, balance. [<u>CBC Values Statement</u>]</p>

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<p>3) Unfair Generalization Use of limited information to unfairly group all arts administrators together.</p> <p>Insulting and cruel to the majority of arts workers. Most are on the edge of burnout, underpaid and have made sacrifices, bit much to add public demonization to that job description.</p>	<p>Overall original tone and format reminiscent of gravy train / anti-elite divisive politics applied to the cultural sector: heavy on the personal anecdotes, nothing resembling reliable research, tapping into our worst fears / base instincts -- sewn together to generalize / tar large numbers of people. Also this approach is satisfying to reader as it helps to simplify and explain their lack of 'success.'</p> <p>E.g. Author invites people to witch-hunt through the sunshine list, similar to an article from the Toronto Sun.</p>	<p>Tag at top as 'Opinion' piece rather than a position that the CBC Arts promotes / endorses.</p> <p>Move counterpoints closer to top where general readership will read and get better understanding of complexity of issue.</p> <p>Separate nonprofit arts workers into distinct categories of assessment.</p>	<p>Fairness, balance.</p> <p>Public interest: position is divisive and encourages people to fight with each-other over scraps rather than address larger structural issues.</p> <p>Treatment may reduce reputability of arts workers externally and ability to pull resources into sector. May also encourage dysfunctional norms.</p> <p>Media piece may be used in the future to advocate for reduced overall arts spending, incl. the CBC.</p>
<p>4) Flawed methodology Informal survey question is leading and double barreled / confusing.</p>	<p><i>"I canvassed a number of artists and arts administrators for this article, some of them friends of mine, some of them strangers. I put the question to them in a neutral fashion: does the discrepancy between what artists are paid and what arts administrators are paid create a disconnect that has an impact on what work receives support?"</i></p>	<p>Incorporate stats and figures from reputable research to make points.</p> <p>Separate into two questions and re-do research prefaced with non-leading data.</p>	<p>Accuracy</p>

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<p>5) Wildly Inaccurate Most arts workers do not get benefits, bonuses, indexed to inflation salaries etc.</p>	<p><i>“Meanwhile, salaries for executive directors, information officers, program co-ordinators – all the next-to-the-creative class people who fill the offices of arts boards, funding agencies, festivals and spectacles – continue to rise. Arts administrators, as civil servants or workers paid by public funds, are, like all such governmental workers, granted regular bonuses, benefits and indexed-to-inflation salary increases – workers' rights and expectations that are never allotted to the people who actually make the art the administrators exist to manage.”</i></p>	<p>Cite data or remove.</p> <p>For example we know that the TAC has very low operations overhead (9-12%) compared to massive growth (over 80%) to the granting pool going to artists over the past few years.</p> <p>At TAC, operations costs have not grown in relation to budget size, causing staff strain. [Stats on req.]</p>	<p>Accuracy</p>
<p>6) Prejudice Article relies on survey of personal relations and social media to reach generalized / prejudicial conclusions about nation-wide job category.</p>	<p><i>“most every artist I follow on social media responded with the same resigned comment: most of that budget increase will go into the arts bureaucracy, not to working artists.”</i></p>	<p>Incorporate stats and figures from reputable research to back points.</p>	<p>Accuracy</p>

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<p>7) Comprehension of Issue Complexity and Scope A large number of arts workers who are also artists.</p>		<p>Expand on interview with Peter at TAC.</p> <p>Explore how both arts workers and artists are a part of the Precarious Economy.</p>	<p>Fairness</p>
<p>8) Lack of Productive Call to Action Article does not provide any possible solutions or ways forward.</p> <p>(Rather, encourages low income people to 'renegotiate' to get a larger slice from people with already below average income. Good example of encouraging 'race to the bottom' / crab bucket politics.)</p>	<p>Overall: No / little mention of work being done to improve quality of life for artists.</p>	<p>Consider including discussion / promotion of CARFAC Minimum Fee schedules: [link]</p> <p>Consider proposing minimum benchmark for percent of revenue in projects, festivals, orgs and institutions that needs to go to living artists to qualify for public support.</p> <p>Consider assessment of national and regional funding opportunities and stagnation or growth.</p> <p>Consider examples of the relationship working properly.</p>	<p>Public interest: position is divisive and encourages people to fight with each-other over scraps rather than address larger structural issues.</p>
<p><u>VIEW / UPDATE / ADD YOUR CRITIQUES HERE</u></p>			