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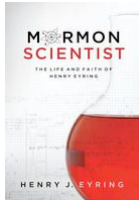
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# Simple Utah Mormon Politics

*Politics in and of itself is never simple. So imagine what you get when you mix in **Utahns** and **Mormonism**.*

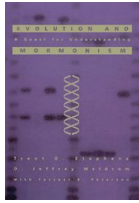
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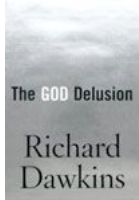
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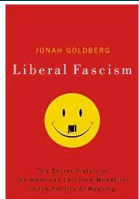
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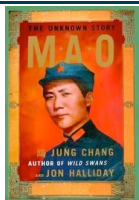
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Mao: The Unknown Story

TUESDAY, MARCH 13, 2007

## Measuring Economic Impact: Movies vs Soccer

*Some economic incentives the state of Utah offers are as perverse as they are difficult to quantify in regards to their effectiveness. Others are clearly good incentives, because they can be measured. Let's compare the Utah Film Commission with the Real Salt Lake soccer deal.*



There are two ways to provide economic incentives. The first way is to offer them at the back end of the deal. This is what the Utah Film Commission is doing, and it is reaping huge dividends. The second way is to give away the farm and then hope that economic dividends will be seen far in the future. It helps to offer platitudes for the duration of your hopefulness.

The first incentive provides a way for measurement of its benefits. The advocates of the second one hope you don't notice that theirs doesn't.

The [Utah Film Commission offers rebates](#) to successful film companies following the filming of their show.

Utah began offering post-production performance incentives three years ago with the Motion Picture Incentive Fund (MPIF). Once a television show, movie or commercial shoot is completed, the production company can apply for a 10 percent rebate on the amount of money it can prove it spent while in Utah.

"For every dollar that goes out from the incentive fund, just under \$15 come into the state of Utah," Schain explains. "That's a return on investment of 15-to-one. That's why 44 states offer an incentives. They offer it because of the enormous economic impact a film brings to their state."

The Utah State legislature and the Real Soccer deal? Well, they just give away \$35 million of someone else's money and then say, "Trust me! It'll reap huge economic rewards!"

Posted by Frank Staheli at 3/13/2007 04:11:00 PM

Labels: [Economics](#), [Utah Legislature](#)

### 4 Comments:

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**Marsz said...**

You make a completely valid point about incentives, and the Film commission is a shining example. This however does not mean the RSL/stadium agreement can be boiled down to simply "Trust me! It'll reap huge economic rewards!"

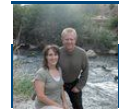
RSL has in fact "proved" its contribution to the Utah economy. During its first two years RSL has brought two international events to Utah with a combined economic impact of \$28m.

Because \$20m of the \$35m was already going to be spent building a parking structure in Sandy, the RSL deal amounts to an additional \$15m. If RSL's economic impact continues at 1/2 its current annual rate, the infrastructure improvements will have paid for themselves after just one year.

There are perfectly justifiable reasons to oppose the stadium, but lack of verifiable economic impact is not one of them.

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Frank Staheli

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