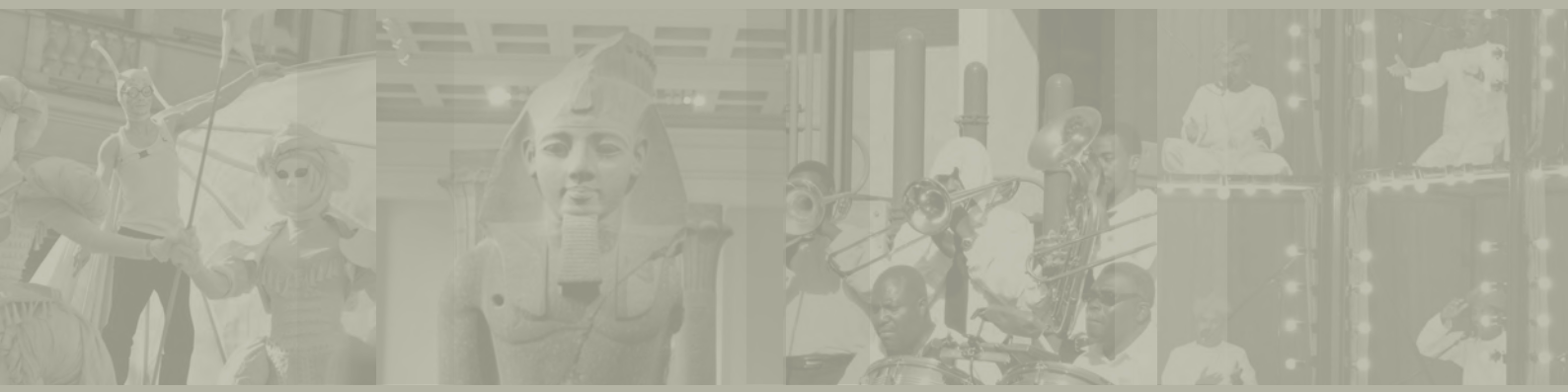
# Understanding the value of arts & culture

## The AHRC Cultural Value Project

Geoffrey Crossick & Patrycja Kaszynska



Arts & Humanities Research Council



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# FOREWORD



This report presents the findings of the Cultural Value Project, one of the most in-depth attempts yet made to understand the value of the arts and culture – the difference that they make to individuals and to society. The three-year project, supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, has been looking into the question of why the arts and culture matter, and how we capture the effects that they have.

From the Prime Minister and the Chancellor down, there is widespread political recognition that the UK is a place where culture meets commerce. There is an acknowledgement that money spent on the creative industries is vital in supporting the cultural life of the nation (as well as creating real growth and jobs), and that the creative industries help to define us, affecting how the rest of the world views us, and encouraging people in other countries to engage with us.

At the same time, it is entirely appropriate that policymakers should be concerned that public money is spent effectively in support of the arts and culture: that it can be shown to make a real difference. Yet despite the big strides made by cultural organisations in the last decade or so, in making their case for investment, there has remained a sense that we are lacking robust methodologies for demonstrating the value of the arts and culture, and for showing exactly how public funding of them contributes to wider social and economic goals.

That is where the Cultural Value Project comes in. Now more than ever, we need rigorous ways of understanding and measuring that elusive thing we call 'cultural value'. In an 'age of austerity,' making convincing arguments for public investment becomes all the more challenging. At the same time, the cultural and creative industries are growing fast in the UK, outpacing much of the rest of the economy. This means that we are looking at a coming decade of growing demand for research that generates historical, linguistic, intercultural and religious insight – the kind of insight that feeds a thriving UK cultural sector.

This affects us closely in the AHRC. The things that we support as a Research Council are expanding, and we need to be clear about how we can contribute to that expansion, by funding outstanding arts and humanities research, to the benefit of everyone in the UK. This is not the same as a blanket advocacy for public funding of the arts and culture, or of arts and humanities research. It's about trying to be clearer about what we mean by cultural value, so that our support for the creative

and cultural industries can be better targeted and more effective. And it's about the AHRC being an engaged presence in an area that is of great importance to us all.

The Cultural Value Project has taken a big step toward a more thorough understanding of cultural value. What's new about its approach? First, it has cast its net far wider than has been the case before. Because of the scope and ambition of the project, it has looked into new areas that have hitherto been neglected, and considered a far wider range of forms of cultural practice than has previously been possible.

And the Cultural Value Project has been able to break down the divide between the intrinsic and the instrumental camps, to transcend the debate about things to be valued 'for their own sake,' or else understood only in terms of the narrow economic or other material benefits that they provide. The project has sought to put the experience of individuals back at the heart of ideas about cultural value, arguing that it is only once we have started with individual experience that we can then work outwards, and understand the kinds of benefit that culture may have for society, for communities, for democracy, for public health and wellbeing, for urban life and regional growth. By working outwards from the individual in this way, we quickly realise that we need a wider and more subtle repertoire of methodologies if we are to talk about the concept of cultural value, and evaluate it meaningfully.

I believe that there is much in this report that policymakers and cultural organisations will find valuable, and there is much for us in the AHRC to consider, too. I would like to thank the report's authors, Professor Geoffrey Crossick and Dr Patrycja Kaszynska who also led the Cultural Value Project, for their excellent work in putting it together.

**Andrew Thompson**
Chief Executive, AHRC

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Why do the arts and culture matter? What difference do they make and how do we know what difference they make? This report presents the outcomes of the AHRC's Cultural Value Project which looked at how we think about the value of the arts and culture to individuals and to society.

The Project had two main objectives. The first was to identify the various components that make up cultural value. And the second was to consider and develop the methodologies and the evidence that might be used to evaluate these components of cultural value.

This report sets out the often striking findings of the Project's work. Some 70 original pieces of work collectively make up the Cultural Value Project – a mixture of new research, critical reviews of the literature and specialist workshops. This work has probed, challenged and advanced our thinking about how better to understand and capture the elusive phenomenon that is called 'cultural value'. The authors of the report have also drawn on a wide range of literature from the UK and internationally. The result is among the most extensive, wide-ranging and challenging of attempts to grasp the difference to individuals, society and the economy that engagement with arts and culture makes.

Our key aim was to cut through the current logjam with its repeated polarisation of the issues: the intrinsic v the instrumental, the elite v the popular, the amateur v the professional, private v public spaces of consumption, qualitative v quantitative evidence, and the publicly-funded v the commercially-oriented. Definitional and boundary difficulties of these kinds have bedevilled debate about what constitutes the value of culture and in what ways it may be evaluated and captured. The Report moves beyond these

**Below:** The New Vic Ages and Stages Company in rehearsal for 'Out of the Box' at the New Vic Theatre, May 2014. Credit: Claire Walker.



binaries to open up a fresh approach to thinking about the value of culture.

Debate about cultural value has further been distorted by the wish to protect public funding and to influence policy. The AHRC undertook this project not to advocate its own cause nor to lobby on behalf of cultural institutions, but to fulfil its fundamental role as a Research Council: through research to further understanding in its domain. As a result, while those making the case for public funding of arts and culture will find much in this document to help them, it is not intended as an advocacy document.

The report identifies a range of components of cultural value, often giving prominence to many whose importance has been too little acknowledged. It also challenges familiar claims about the importance of arts and culture and questions them when it doesn't find them to be sustained by the evidence. If we're to have the grown-up conversations about why arts and culture matter that the report calls for, then we have to accept when arguments are weak, methodologies are unsatisfactory, or evidence is insubstantial. In that sense the report is also a prospectus and signpost for future research.

The starting point for the Cultural Value Project was to broaden the scope of the discussion, to cast the net wider than previous studies of the subject in order to consider as wide a range of cultural practice and forms of cultural value as we were able. It considers not only the subsidised cultural sector but also the commercial, amateur and participatory which, after all, are where most people find their cultural engagement. It is interested not just in publicly-funded concert halls, art galleries, theatres and museums, important as these are; but also commercial film, music and literature; young people getting together in a band, amateur choirs, local art clubs and reading groups, and people crafting at home or in local clubs; as well as those engaging in prisons, hospitals and care homes.

What emerges from the Cultural Value Project is the imperative to reposition first-hand, individual experience of arts and culture at the heart of enquiry into cultural value. Far too often the way people experience culture takes second place to its impact on phenomena such as the economy, cities or health. There are two problems about displacing attention in this way. In the first place it leads to a neglect of such issues as reflectiveness, empathy and imagination that have as their starting point individual experience. And, secondly, it ignores the fact that some of the most important contributions of arts and culture to other areas are embedded in that individual experience: perhaps not economic impact but rather the capacity to be economically innovative and creative; perhaps not urban regeneration driven by large new cultural buildings but rather the way small-scale arts assets and activities might help communities and neighbourhoods; and for health not just clinical arts therapies but also the link between arts engagement and supporting recovery from physical and mental illness. For all these reasons, thinking about cultural value needs to give far more attention to the way people experience their engagement with arts and culture, to be grounded in what it means to produce or consume them or, increasingly as digital technologies advance as part of people's lives, to do both at the same time.

From these starting points, the Cultural Value Project offers new or different perspectives on a wide range of issues, sometimes confirming claims made for the benefits flowing from arts and culture, but often challenging or reconfiguring them:

- Particular attention is given to the ability of arts and cultural engagement to help shape **reflective individuals**, facilitating greater understanding of themselves and their lives, increasing empathy with respect to others, and an appreciation of the diversity of human experience and cultures. Case studies of arts engagement in prisons and amongst professional and informal carers serve as exemplars of this potential for reflectiveness.
- Participation in arts and culture may **produce engaged citizens**, promoting not only civic behaviours such as voting and volunteering, but also helping articulate alternatives to current assumptions and fuel a broader political imagination. All are fundamental to the effectiveness of democratic political and social systems. Arts and cultural engagement help minority groups to find a voice and express their identity. They can engage people in thinking about climate change when used not didactically but as a basis for reflection and debate. Governments also deploy culture internationally to build influence and trust, though the report notes the very limited evidence about the success of such programmes.

- There is a widespread use of arts and cultural interventions to help **peace-building and healing after armed conflict**, helping communities to deal with the sources of trauma and bring about reconciliation. Evaluations of such interventions are, however, rarely of the long-term character that is needed to convince of their sustained effectiveness. It has to be acknowledged, in any case, that culture is not only a positive force in relation to conflict and has often played a part in initiating and perpetuating antagonisms.
- When thinking about the impact of arts and culture on **cities and urban life**, the report questions the impact of major cultural buildings in urban regeneration, and the emergence of vibrant creative and cultural quarters. The regeneration of places is usually accompanied by gentrification, the rise of the 'experience economy', and the disruption and exclusion of communities as those who live there and produce there are forced out by rising property prices. Far more significant might be the effect of small-scale cultural assets – studios, live-music venues, small galleries and so on – in supporting healthier and more balanced communities.
- Although the **economic benefits of arts and culture** have been central to the case that has been made for public funding, the report questions the significance, and at times the quality, of economic impact studies. It calls for more attention to be given to the ways in which arts and culture feeds into the creative industries, supports the innovation system, and attracts talent and investment to places. Here, it is argued, are the distinctive contributions of arts and culture to the economy and they need to be better understood.
- It is an error to see publicly-funded and commercial arts and culture as separate worlds, one dependent on the taxpayer and the other on the market. They operate as part of **a complex ecology of talent, finance, content and ideas**. The non-profit cultural sector contributes research and development for commercial cultural providers, while public funding enables them to take risks with creative content and ideas. The flows between them, and indeed amateur arts and co-production as well, are underlined by the report.
- The contribution of arts and culture to **improving health and wellbeing** has been extensively studied, with activities that include dedicated arts therapies, the use of art and design to produce better healthcare environments, community arts interventions to improve social inclusion and mental health, and the benefits of engagement for older people and also for those suffering with dementia. While noting the powerful evidence in support of many of these, the report stresses that only by gathering qualitative and personal evidence can the more pervasive benefits for health and wellbeing be fully grasped. The absence of consistent quality in research design and methods in this area is highlighted. The standards of the good studies that integrate quantitative and qualitative methods, and use controls where appropriate, should be matched in future work.
- Cohort studies of health in the Nordic countries show an association between **long-term arts engagement and positive health outcomes**, after attempts to control for relevant social, economic and demographic variables. The report calls for long-term questions about arts and cultural engagement to be included in major UK cohort studies in the future and for these questions to be stable over time to enable longitudinal research.
- **Arts in education** has been shown to contribute in important ways to the factors that underpin learning, such as cognitive abilities, confidence, motivation, problem-solving and communication skills. These are more compelling than claims to significant improvement in attainment on standard tests where the evidence is much less convincing. It also questions the hierarchy of subjects that means we're interested in whether studying music improves ability in maths, but not whether studying maths improves ability in music.
- The positive relationship between **arts and cultural engagement and subjective wellbeing** is a major area of current interest, though the report is cautious about how much should be read into this in the absence of more sustained studies over time. It calls for culture to be more effectively incorporated in government approaches to measuring wellbeing.

These are key examples – and there are many more – of the nature and type of challenges facing those seeking to understand the importance of engagement with arts and culture as well as those seeking to make a case for its importance.

Grown-up conversations require openness about why those conversations might prove difficult.

- There is the challenge of inequality of access to arts and culture. While acknowledging the very important ways that social inequalities limit access, the report also notes that much debate about inequalities is built upon a narrow definition of arts and culture, seeing it through hierarchies of taste or public funding and operating with what has been called a 'deficit model'. The report widens the definition to include more informal participation, commercial and amateur activities. Black, Asian and minority ethnic cultural practice and consumption have been particularly marginalised when discussing cultural value and participation.
- This is bound up with the **question of modes of engagement**, and the report stresses that engagement takes place in a variety of settings that include purpose-built cultural buildings, small-scale adapted spaces, institutions such as care institutions and prisons, and most commonly the home and the virtual space of the internet. Indeed, the home is where most engagement with cultural activities takes place and yet it is virtually ignored in discussions about their impact.
- The conversation also requires far more **consideration of the growth of digital technologies**, which not only provide new ways for people to connect with cultural institutions but also new ways to experience commercial culture, for example through downloading and streaming music and film. The distinction between producer and consumer has also become much less clear with the rise of co-production and user-generated content.

A fundamental theme underpinning all discussions about the value of engagement with arts and culture is what we know, what we don't know and the sources of our knowledge. The challenge of **methodologies and evidence** is a major focus of the report, running through all the substantive discussions as well as being the subject of a major dedicated chapter. Identifying what happens in cultural experiences is not an easy task. The Cultural Value Project has played an important role in advancing thinking about how to capture as well as understand cultural value, but methodologies are not applicable abstractions to be followed like a recipe, and this report does not seek to offer a toolkit for cultural value.

- Funders are currently seen as the principal drivers of evaluation: the report calls for **the wider application of evaluation as a tool within the cultural sector** itself, rather than as something carried out just for accountability purposes. **Formative and participatory evaluation, as opposed to summative evaluation at the end, needs more attention** if it is to play a role in helping cultural organisations and practitioners learn from their activities and their audiences.
- The report questions **the hierarchy of evidence** that sees experimental methods and randomised controlled trials as the gold standard, even in areas where these cannot effectively be applied due to the difficulty in isolating variables in complex situations. **Qualitative research (with the depth that it gives) need not be less rigorous than quantitative, experimental studies (with the breadth that they provide)**. It does, however, operate with different criteria of rigour. Qualitative research is far more suited to certain research purposes, and quantitative research is better suited to others. The issue is the character of the knowledge and understanding that is being sought, because each approach will have its own benefits and drawbacks. The report shows that they may fruitfully be combined.
- Rigorous **case studies** are valid and important evidence notwithstanding the difficulties of scaling them up.Using in-depth, case-study evidence is one of the characteristic strengths of the arts and humanities, and of what they bring to society's knowledge and understanding.
- Too much evaluation of the effects of arts and culture does not meet the necessary **standards of rigour** in specification and research design, especially but not only in the use of qualitative methods. **The high research standards visible in many of the studies upon which this report draws needs to become much more the norm across both research and evaluation.**
- A wide range of **methodologies** are being used to research and to evaluate the effects of arts and cultural engagement and they are explored in the report: social science research methods, approaches from economics, the application of ethnography and network analysis, arts-based and hermeneutic methods, and approaches from science and medicine.

- The Cultural Value Project has made a significant contribution to **economic valuation methodologies** that are recognised by the Treasury's Green Book for the evaluation of public expenditure decisions. An award from the Project compared the use of **stated preference and subjective wellbeing valuation methods** to the cultural sector, refined the methods and also developed an innovative hybrid approach that is able to combine the two.
- Accounting for human experiences of art and culture calls for **multi-criteria analyses** and a range of approaches, in order to span the depth and the breadth of research. Such evaluation is often not suited to accountability, which often needs headline results, single measures and weighted aggregates. This is why it is **important that evaluation should not be thought of as being primarily undertaken for the purposes of accountability or advocacy.**

With the Cultural Value Project, the AHRC has imaginatively seized the research initiative and there is now a need to maintain the critical academic research focus. The report concludes by recommending that the AHRC consider establishing an **Observatory for Cultural Value**. This could be located within a university and, with modest resources, be tasked with identifying the research activities, outputs and needs in the areas covered by this report, publishing surveys and overviews, maintaining a database of relevant work, and recommending to the AHRC and other funders promising and relevant areas for further research.



PART 1

# Introduction

# CHAPTER 1

## RETHINKING THE TERMS OF THE CULTURAL VALUE DEBATE





**Above:** Professor Geoffrey Crossick and Dr Patrycja Kaszynska

### The Cultural Value Project

**Project objectives**

The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) established the Cultural Value Project at the end of 2012 with precise objectives. These were:

- to identify the various components of cultural value across a variety of contexts and within a unified approach, and
- to identify and develop methodologies that might be used to assess those dimensions of cultural value.

**Project team**

The project was led by the authors of this report, Professor Geoffrey Crossick as Director and Dr Patrycja Kaszynska as Project Researcher. We were supported by an Advisory Group whose members are listed in Annex 3, and we are extremely grateful for their many contributions to our work.

**Project scope**

A brief explanation of the work of the project and the character of its awards, reports and activities would seem appropriate at the outset. AHRC awards were made for work to support the overall goals of the project, and these were primarily made in response to a first open call, limited only by the scope of the project, and a second targeted call aimed at filling some of the gaps left after the first round. A total of 72 awards were made: 46 Research Development Awards to carry out original research, 19 Critical Review awards to undertake reviews of the literature in a particular area, and 7 Expert Workshop awards to organise intensive discussions amongst specialist academics and practitioners. These are all listed in Annex 2, together with links to their reports, which form the most important single resource on which this overall report rests.

The Cultural Value Project also undertook a wide range of initiatives which are listed in Annex 4. These included: a major international symposium in Washington DC, in collaboration with the National Endowment for the Arts, on the theme of *Measuring Cultural Engagement*; a range of its own thematic and methodological workshops drawing together award-holders and others at different stages of the project, and a number of major workshops with partners. Two workshops were on science and arts

[A] distinctive contribution to the way that we discuss the value to individuals, and to society, of engagement with arts and culture, and to the ways in which we provide evidence in support of those discussions.

Away from the conventional focus on the publicly-funded.

collaborations (both with the AHRC Science in Culture theme: the first was also with CERN, and the second with the Institute of Advanced Studies at the University of Birmingham). There was also a workshop on design and innovation (with Glasgow School of Art) and another on arts engagement as a means of influencing debate and behaviour around climate change (with Julie's Bicycle). There was a symposium on culture, conflict and post-conflict with the AHRC Care for the Future theme. We have also spoken about the Cultural Value Project at many national and international conferences and gatherings, and have developed our thinking in discussion with others, as well as with our own Advisory Group, whose membership is listed in Annex 3.

The Cultural Value Project thus developed through a collaborative process to which many contributed, above all through the 72 awards, but through all these other activities as well. This included a blog, on which award-holders and others posted.[1]

It is in the nature of a Research Council initiative, however, that it can only fund the research that people wish to carry out, and gaps inevitably remained. The breadth of the remit that the AHRC gave us at the outset was one that was unlikely to be met from the awards alone, nor from the awards, workshops and other events together. This report draws very heavily on them but also on the reading of the literature in many areas undertaken by the Director and Project Researcher, with the balance varying across the different chapters. We would not claim that any of this constituted full literature reviews, though we were able to draw on the Critical Review awards in many areas. We have tried to offer a substantial and, we hope, distinctive contribution to the way that we discuss the value to individuals, and to society, of engagement with arts and culture, and to the ways in which we provide evidence in support of those discussions.

### Meaning of cultural value

This project is about the value of art and culture to individuals and society. With the exception of 'project', it would be hard to find a single noun in that sentence whose meaning has not been contested and argued over. We are concerned with the value of art and culture: to be precise, the value associated with people's engaging with and participating in art and culture. These latter are defined through examples, that is to say ostensively, and they include: theatre and dance; film; visual arts; photography; literature; storytelling; music; monuments and murals, as well as museums, archives, tangible and intangible heritage, and more.

Thus, broadly speaking, cultural value is the worth attributed to activities involving these areas, and it embraces not just the classical and the canon, but also the informal, popular and commercial, and digital as well as physical forms of engagement. Enlarging the focus to include not only subsidised arts, but also the commercial, third-sector, amateur and participatory, immediately shifts discussion away from the conventional focus on the publicly-funded. It also allows us to draw attention to the ecology that makes permeability across those notional boundaries so significant. Through this approach we hope to cut across a fraught territory that has been the site of many an unfruitful definitional battle.

## Culture and art: a brief intellectual history

It is hard to find an established discourse of 'cultural value' within academic inquiry, and the term in many ways makes its way into academic discussion from elsewhere.

Nor does it help a great deal if we reconfigure it and ask 'what is culture and what is its significance?', because there are very different traditions of thought. Compare, for instance, the Italian tradition that can be traced to Vico in the early-18th century (Vico, 1993), and which puts the value of culture in a framework about the value of humanistic education, with the German one preoccupied with the relationship between cultural value, *Bildung* and the nation associated with Herder later in the same century (Herder, 2008). Within the UK we find a split with, on the one hand, the Arnold/Leavis tradition of 'the best and brightest' (Arnold, 1993 [1869]; Leavis, 1963 [1948]), often caricatured as reducing the value of culture to the connoisseurship of a set of privileged cultural objects, and on the other the anthropological accounts of culture

[1] *https://culturalvalueproject.wordpress.com*

Not just the *Mona Lisa*, but also a musical performed by the amateurs of the West Bromwich Operatic Society, and a Hollywood film watched on DVD.

as a 'way of life' that can be traced to Tylor writing in 1920 (Tylor, 1974), Eliot after World War II (Eliot, 1973) and Williams in the 1970s (Williams, 1983). These two traditions produce for Williams the tension between anthropologists and culturalists, with the former defining culture as a 'particular way of life, whether of a people, a period, a group, or humanity in general', and the latter being associated with culture as 'the abstract noun which describes the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity' (Williams, 1983, p.87).

Let's focus on Williams's latter definition where 'culture' is used to refer to artistic activities, such as music, literature, painting and sculpture, theatre, film and so on; the kinds of things he suggests would be under the remit of a Ministry of Culture had there been one in the UK at the time he was writing. An institutional definition of this kind might work if we included heritage and museums, returning us to our stipulative definition above. Does this not simply postpone the problem of defining what we mean? While there might be a relatively simple convention for what counts as a museum (see the definition proposed by the International Council of Museums in ICOM, 2007), heritage is much more difficult if we trace the term back to nineteenth-century debates about restoration (Bell 1997) and rightly insist that intangible heritage be included (Jones *CVP Report*[2]). Difficulties are compounded when it comes to art. There is a long-standing debate about whether it is metaphysically possible, pragmatically achievable and even in any way desirable to define the category of art (Weitz, 1956; Dickie, 2001; Lopes, 2008; Carey, 2005). What matters from our point of view is that, while the category of art as we currently understand it did not exist in the pre-Enlightenment world where art production was entangled with religious and ritual purposes along with craftsmanship (Habermas, 1981; Bernstein, 1992), most of us can agree that Greek tragedy should count as art in the same way that we will agree about many other activities. Questions such as 'is it really art?' are, of course, likely to recur, but we can see how the test of a Ministry of Culture allows us to count not just the *Mona Lisa* but also a musical performed by the amateurs of the West Bromwich Operatic Society and a Hollywood film watched on DVD. Such an approach enables us to cast the net wide in terms of both modes and models of engagement.

Discussing the value of the arts is hardly new (Belfiore & Bennett, 2007; 2008). Having examined the work of over 150 philosophers, writers, intellectuals, poets, artists and others, Belfiore & Bennett conclude:

> *'Instrumentalism' is, as a matter of fact, 2500 years old, rather than a degeneration brought about by Britain's New Labour. The arts have been used as a tool to enforce and express power in social relations for as long as the arts themselves have been around. We would argue, in fact, that the first lucid, cogent and systematic theorisation of instrumental cultural policy can be found in Plato's Republic. (Belfiore & Bennett, 2007, p.140).*

The debate over the value and impact of the arts first appears in an exchange between Plato and Aristotle, with Plato stressing the negative effects while Aristotle defended their beneficial aspects. This tension did not disappear. On the one hand are Plato's contention about the corrupting nature of the arts, the Fathers of the Church fretting over their destabilising effects, iconoclasm, the Puritan polemic against theatre, and the claim that the arts are escapist and distract from more important things. Against these stands the Aristotelian positive tradition with Voltaire, Schiller and Shelley all praising the potential role of the arts to educate and improve mankind, a tradition that has largely dominated since the eighteenth century, through de Tocqueville and Dewey to those who established both the Edinburgh International Festival and the Arts Council in Britain in the aftermath of World War II. This is just one of many divisions that have fractured debate. The distinction between the hedonic and eudemonic effects of cultural engagement is related. The hedonic approach is concerned with pleasure and the absence of pain, while the eudemonic reaches beyond what it sees as the momentary and one-dimensional and looks at the relationship between cultural engagement and a sense of purposefulness, meaningfulness and intrinsic goals (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

[2] We shall refer to the reports from Cultural Value Project awards simply by name of the author, followed by *CVP Report*. Readers should refer to Annex 2 for a full list of awards and where they may be found

Academic research on the effects and impacts of the arts is fragmented and fractured.

A more general distinction emerges from a different discourse, inquiring not about the actual effects of the arts but instead about what one might ask of them, whether they should be expected to be useful, or whether the 'art for art's sake' position is right. Although the extreme aestheticism and the kind of formalism defended by Bell, Whistler or Wilde (Lambourne, 2011) might prove hard to sustain, variations on the theme are still current. As we shall see, the intrinsic-instrumental dichotomy has become entrenched in discourses about policy. A more nuanced iteration may be found in Kasser and Ryan's work in psychology, suggesting the ability of the arts and culture to modify value frameworks from one preoccupied with status, income and rewards to one focused on what they present as intrinsic values (Kasser and Ryan, 1996; Kasser 2002; Crompton, 2010). Empirical studies in this area may be relatively recent, but the idea that cultural engagement, as a practice with its own internal rewards rather than external monetary or status compensation, may drive intrinsic value orientation has been advocated since the ancient world by philosophers and theorists (Hesmondhalgh, 2014).

Belfiore and Bennett also note a division in how the value of the arts, as opposed to popular culture, is articulated in anglophone cultural studies:

> *the very idea of "the arts" is often the object of thinly disguised hostility, forever associated with elitism and pretensions of social superiority […]. Instead, popular culture is valorised, and "the arts" become the forms of culture that most people consume – that is to say, the products of the cultural or creative industries (Belfiore & Bennett, 2007, p.136).*

The Birmingham School analysed more popular forms of culture with the seriousness previously reserved for high art, but it has been argued that the separation runs so deep that only recently can we see 'the study of popular and fine arts culture consumption under a single conceptual framework after a long period of theoretical disengagement' (Lizardo & Skiles, 2008, p.1). In the next chapter, we note that there is still only limited academic research on commercial, third-sector, amateur and participatory engagement.

Academic research on the effects and impacts of the arts is fragmented and fractured, something reflected in the dichotomies that underpin the debate and often distort it. We have noted the positive and negative traditions and the hedonic and eudemonic approaches. There is also the dichotomy between defenders of art for art's sake and those who share Tolstoy's position and ascribe a clear social function to the arts, often seen as intrinsic versus instrumental. To this we should add the dichotomy between high and popular culture, which sits alongside but doesn't replicate that between the canon and the margin. Indeed, the emergence of privileged consumers described as 'cultural omnivores', who embrace a variety of art forms across the high and popular divide rather than being locked in an established canon of taste, and whom we shall encounter when considering inequalities in the next chapter, might subvert that particular dichotomy. We shall also see how the formal dichotomy between audiences and participants, always uncertain in the way it treats the former as passive, is breaking down in the interactive digital world. So, dichotomies abound but should be treated not as formal oppositions as much as concepts to be explored and probed.

The distinction between anthropologists and culturalists begins to dissolve if we acknowledge that valuations of art and culture cannot detach themselves from the social context and relations in which they take place (Harrington, 2004; DiMaggio et al, 2004; Wolff, 2008). This will be important when we consider valuation practices, influenced as they are by choices that are shaped by values, social norms and existing discourses. Valuation is an action and an intervention, and is about attributing cultural value to objects and events in the context of prevailing social norms and customs. The dichotomies that shape much debate are thus themselves constructed through such discourses, nowhere more so perhaps than when we consider cultural policy.

## Cultural policy and the many lives of cultural value

### Shifting emphasis

Cultural value is well-established in policy discourse as if it were unproblematic, whether or not the exact words are used. It has in reality meant different things to different

[Cultural value] has in reality meant different things to different people over the last 75 years.

people over the last 75 years. The debate in the UK might be divided into phases distinguished by shifting emphases. There was a period when national pride, education and the civilising effect of the arts were stressed in the aftermath of World War II and the retreat from empire. In due course there was a turn towards what we now call instrumental value. For many there was then a renewed emphasis on intrinsic value and a deliberate embrace of public value, and a brief affirmation of the importance of judgment and quality was finally followed by the current end of our story with a return to emphasising engagement and participation. This chronology is no more than a summary of general trends, not least because points of emphasis overlapped and sometimes coincided with a concern for widening participation and democratisation of access on the one hand, and a preoccupation with excellence and quality on the other. This is a theme that can be found in one form or another throughout the period.

**CEMA and the Arts Council**

The Committee, later Council, for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA) was in the winter of 1939/40 established by the UK government to foster national morale at a time when established cultural events and entertainment were severely disrupted. National government support for the arts had been largely absent before then, being mostly limited to support for the establishment of museums such as the British Museum, the National Portrait Gallery and the Victoria & Albert Museum, though the setting up of the BBC was a more recent example. The arts for CEMA meant classical music, theatre and the visual arts, and wartime morale and the civilising role of the arts came together in its work.

In 1946 CEMA was transformed by Royal Charter into the Arts Council of Great Britain. Although a somewhat Arnoldian vision of edifying culture and respect for elite cultural forms within the western canon was one driver for CEMA, in the early stages it embraced amateur as well as professional participation and production, while there was a continuing emphasis on provincial cities and the spread of elite culture beyond metropolitan elites (Weingärtner, 2006; Upchurch 2004). This approach was driven more by aspirations than targets, something which characterised the following thirty years during which the Arts Council espoused a less socially inclusive vision than in the early years of CEMA. Lord Goodman, Chairman of the Arts Council in the late 1960s, did not seem preoccupied by participation targets when he observed that 'People have a right not to be cultured […]. Perhaps the last freedom left is the freedom from culture.' (quoted in Weingärtner, 2006, p.3).

**The shift towards measurement and instrumentalism**

A shift of approach emerged in the 1980s with an emphasis on private investment in the arts, and in the public sector as a whole a broader embracing of targets, data management and measurement (O'Brien, 2013). The New Public Management approach sought to modernise public sector managerial techniques through the example of the private sector, including through setting targets, monitoring outputs, and auditing performance (Selwood, 2002; Belfiore, 2004). In this context, as Ellis has observed, 'short shrift' was now given to older and loftier goals of the arts, such as the nurturing of cultural sensibility, the human spirit and moral reasoning (Ellis, 2003).

The need to demonstrate impact led to the cultural sector's objectives and value becoming entwined with other agendas, as governments of whichever party required that cultural funding help deliver their other policy priorities. Cultural value became associated with the delivery of specific economic and social outcomes (Gray, 2002). While agendas for the cultural sector were generally articulated in broad terms, particular emphasis was placed on economic contributions that included tourism, employment and in due course the creative industries (Myerscough,1988; Pratt, 1997; DCMS, 1998).

There was, however, another, in some ways competing, discourse which emphasised human outcomes such as personal development, social cohesion and community empowerment. It was particularly espoused by Comedia, an organisation pioneering social value research in the mid-1990s and the early years of the New Labour government (Matarasso, 1996; 1997), and which favoured participatory and joint-evaluation models. Under the pressure of centralised data management systems, however, the focus moved to standard measures of social impacts. These culminated in frameworks such as the Generic Learning Outcomes developed from 2001, and Generic Social

Outcomes indicators introduced in 2005, both by the Museums, Libraries & Archives Council (Graham, 2013; Museum, Libraries & Archives Council, 2008).

This approach has been called 'defensive instrumentalism', that is to say 'resorting to instrumental arguments to defend the arts and to make a case for their usefulness' (Belfiore, 2012, p.103). It was accompanied by a significant growth in arts funding under the New Labour government, but it came under scrutiny for what were seen as its being openly used for purposes of advocacy (Belfiore 2002; Selwood 2002), and then for reducing arts and culture to just another means of delivering government policies in other areas. What was seen as excessive instrumentalism came under attack from within the cultural sector (Hytner 2003; Tusa 2000; Tusa, 2007), and from outside when Policy Exchange asked 'Is UK arts policy damaging the arts?' (Mirza, 2006). The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Tessa Jowell, herself voiced her concerns about the target-driven approach that had developed since the 1980s, arguing that it had not been successful in setting out the broader and non-material value of culture (Jowell, 2004).

**Excellence and quality**

The language of intrinsic value and artistic quality could be heard elsewhere, for example in the Quality Framework launched by the Scottish Arts Council in 2007 and revised in 2009 (Scottish Arts Council, 2009). The publication of the McMaster report in 2008, commissioned from a former Director of the Edinburgh International Festival by Jowell's successor James Purnell, signalled a deliberate attempt to shift government policy in England. Under the title *Supporting Excellence in the Arts. From Measurement to Judgement*, the report was intended to be provocative, even if the return to judgment and excellence that it called for was more evident in rhetoric than implementation. There were in any case few attempts to operationalise the term 'excellence' itself. A recent review for the Paul Hamlyn Trust reinforced this point in relation to community and participatory arts, commenting that:

> *There is no shortage […] in research-informed resources which are concerned with influencing the quality of the processes for delivering and providing access to participatory arts. There isn't, conversely, a shared understanding of what quality outcomes might be, and definitions for excellence remain elusive. (Cox & Gilmore, 2015, p.9).*

In the chapter on *Methodologies* below we consider recent attempts to capture the elusive and multi-faceted phenomenon that is 'quality', notably through the work of the Manchester Metrics project and its attempt to bridge the dimensions of quality and reach. The change of language about excellence and quality did not, at the time, lead to a big shift in terms of policy or evaluation. Government actions remained embedded in the culture of data-collecting and impact demonstration, something with which the cultural sector complied by generating data evaluation reports (Selwood 2010).

The development of the Culture and Sport Evidence (CASE) programme has been seen as a response by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to the call for more and better evidence which was instigated by O'Donnell's reviews of government departments (Cooper, 2012). When last updated in June 2012, CASE had collected 12,634 studies on engagement in culture and sport. Funded jointly by DCMS and Arts Council England, English Heritage, the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, and Sport England, it was intended to produce evidence relevant to each of them. A common denominator was found in engagement: what drives it, what impact it has and how it can be valued for the purposes of economic appraisal. This was reflected in a number of large-scale reviews of existing evidence, which looked at drivers, impacts and value (CASE 2010a; CASE 2010b). As Cooper puts it: 'doing a systematic review and consistent cross-sector meta-analyses demonstrated the power (and possibly the limitations) of the approach.' (Cooper, 2012, p.287). By bringing together 'high-quality' research previously scattered across different platforms, CASE made it possible to carry out extensive analyses, including at a local and regional level. But its concern to make the business case for Government investment (Walmsley, 2012) meant that it embraced selection criteria, techniques and a hierarchy of evidence which privileged certain types of inquiry over others.[3]

[3] The hierarchy of evidence is addressed in the chapter on *Methodologies* below

### Public value

The conception of 'public value' was one approach taken by cultural organisations in an attempt to bridge the demands of producing the kind of evidence that might convince the Treasury while at the same time recognising their own institutional goals. It has been seen as a reaction to New Public Management techniques (Meynhardt 2009) and a defensive tactic from institutions trying to increase their public legitimacy and funding (O'Brien, 2013). Above all, however, the concept of public value was an attempt to navigate the dichotomies of cultural value by insisting on both the intrinsic and the instrumental. It was an approach which resonated with many major institutions, amongst them the BBC, the National Trust, and Arts Council England (Collins, 2007; National Trust, 2006; Bunting, 2007).

Hewison and Holden's work for the Heritage Lottery Fund was particularly important in putting the public value approach on the map (Hewison & Holden, 2004). This rested on the value triangle and attempts at bridging different types of value articulated by Holden in his Demos pamphlet (Holden, 2004; Holden, 2006). By linking instrumental, intrinsic and institutional value, the triangle presented an answer to the need to reconcile differing interests and expectations, while also acknowledging the dynamic relationship between these three articulations of value. The model enabled the Heritage Lottery Fund to be credited with creating a rich mix of benefits that included stewardship, enhanced trust in public institutions, equity and fairness, resilience in the organisation and systems they were funding, value for money, wellbeing, prosperity, learning and strengthened local communities (Hewison & Holden, 2006).

Heritage value might be seen as a microcosm of the universe of cultural value. As Jones & Leech tell us in their *CVP Critical Review*, 'Valuing the historic environment: a critical review of existing approaches to social value', the Australian Burra Charter, first issued in 1979, 'introduced the concept of social value as an apparently equal category of value, alongside historic, aesthetic and scientific value, and as a group the four categories are seen to constitute the "cultural significance" of an historic place.' (Jones & Leech, *CVP Report*, p.35). As they note, this approach has a clear parallel to that proposed by the influential cultural economist David Throsby, who sought to break down the notion of cultural value into constituent elements, in his case aesthetic value, spiritual value, social value, historical value, symbolic value and authenticity value (Throsby, 2001). These various attempts to break down cultural value into more basic components represent efforts to capture the complexity of cultural value without excluding or prioritising specific aspects of it.

### Engagement and participation

The playwright David Edgar, commenting on Hewison's books on the development of cultural policy since 1945, wrote that 'if his overall story has a headline, it would be "hierarchy of taste" being exchanged for "democracy of access".'[4] This captures the recent growth in policy interest in what are seen as barriers to engagement and participation (CASE, 2010; ACE, 2015). To characterise the last sixty years or so in terms of this trajectory, however, would be to oversimplify. The value triangle was a response to a demand that both intrinsic and instrumental pressures be satisfied. The tension keeps appearing in different forms: intrinsic and instrumental, excellence and access, quality and expansion. The title of Arts Council England's most recent ten-year vision, *Great art and culture for everyone,* captures that continuing tension well, but it is interesting that 'The best for the most' had been the slogan devised by CEMA's publicity manager (ACE, 2013; Weingärtner p.163). Different ways of thinking of cultural value can be called upon as needed by the political and policy demands of time and place: in England a Secretary of State at DCMS appealed to the economic arguments, while national identity was stressed by her counterpart in Scotland, and poverty in turn was the focus of attention in Wales (Miller 2013; Hyslop, 2013; Andrews, 2014).

### The instrumental and the intrinsic

In broad terms, then, there seems to have been limited policy interest in demonstrating the value or impacts of art participation prior to the 1980s. The New Public Management and New Labour's commitment to mobilising public policy behind certain key social and economic objectives subsequently created a climate in

[4] *www.theguardian.com/books/2014/dec/12/cultural-capital-rise-fall-creative-britain-robert-hewison-review*

The Cultural Value Project starts with the experience of arts and culture itself.

which the cultural sector felt obliged to make its case for public funding in terms different from those of the cultural experience itself. Other benefits came to the fore, economic impact above all but also urban regeneration, social inclusion, community cohesion and health. There is actually little evidence that data aligning the arts with New Labour's broader agendas had any material effect on the scale or distribution of funding, but the case continued to be made in these terms. The focus on evidence of instrumental benefits meant that cultural institutions vacated the territory where a case for the distinctive contribution of the arts might have been made. Concern at this trend was often expressed as a defence of the 'intrinsic' in the face of the 'instrumental' benefits of the arts, but a dichotomy set up for rhetorical more than analytical reasons carried with it significant problems of its own. If cultural activity produces no identifiable benefits then why should it be elevated above any other activity, let alone receive public subsidy? The problem was that the instrumental arguments for the arts were mostly about economic or social objectives that could be achieved by other means, and the case for the arts rarely rested on rigorous analysis that included comparison with other ways of achieving the same objectives. The notion of public value and the value triangle model were attempts to get beyond this dichotomy.

## Beyond dichotomies: the view from Cultural Value Project awards

In the face of a situation where the notion of cultural value had been constructed and deployed as part of the process for allocating government resources among competing demands, the Cultural Value Project has sought from the outset to step back from that context and to broaden its focus. It has looked beyond publicly-funded arts and culture to embrace a much broader world that includes commercial, third-sector, amateur and participatory practice and experience. Furthermore, as we explain later in this chapter, we also decided to start not with definitions of cultural value couched in the terms of recent debate but, in the hope of getting beyond the analytically problematic dichotomies, to start with the experience of arts and culture itself.

If cultural value appears in many ways to be a problematic construct often embedded in policy discourse, how might we move out of that framework and take discussion forward? Awards made by the Cultural Value Project offer different ways in which this might be achieved.

### From Chauvet Cave to *Blade Runner*

Lamarque and Currie's *CVP Research Development Award* 'Cognitive and aesthetic values in cultural artefacts' begins by clarifying the character and function of some terms in the debate. It starts with the assumption that cultural value is dependent on both aesthetic value (which they link to pleasure and distinctive kinds of appreciative experience) and cognitive value (which they take to concern knowledge or the advancement of understanding). They examined the relations between the cognitive dimension and the aesthetic value of cultural artefacts by looking at three specific case studies: the Palaeolithic wall paintings at Chauvet Cave, Shakespeare's Sonnets, and Ridley Scott's film *Blade Runner*. These case studies were very different to enable an exploration of whether the relationship between the types of value differs across cultural artefacts.

Through a series of analytical workshops they established both uniformities and differences. One conclusion was that the aesthetic features of a work can in some cases enhance, but in others detract from, its ability to convey information, perspective or ideas. For example, they conclude that 'the energy, vitality and clarity of the Chauvet paintings make the realism of the depictions all the more striking and of course the representational content easier to discern', whereas in the case of *Blade Runner* the relation of the aesthetic to the cognitive is more complex. The film has a striking aesthetic appearance but form and content seem to come apart, 'the visual aesthetic overwhelms, or perhaps compensates for failings in, the cognitive content' (Lamarque & Currie, *CVP Report*, p.21). This relationship is played out differently again for Shakespeare's Sonnets, where the cognitive yield or interest in ideas such as time and mortality can contribute to the perceived aesthetic quality. This kind of analytic approach may help us access the question of how the quality of cultural artefacts translates into cultural value.

### Manchester museums

A different approach is taken by Rees Leahy and McCombe in their *CVP Research Development Award* 'Learning from the past: cultural value, then and now, in principle and in practice'. This traces shifts and continuities in the rhetoric and practice of cultural value by exploring 'the potential of a group of historical case studies of museums to provide a resource for the contextualisation, critique and understanding of contemporary institutional praxis.' (Rees Leahy & McCombe *CVP* Report, p.3). The project applied a historical lens to interrogate cultural production and consumption, and the claims made for the benefits of visiting three cultural institutions in the city of Manchester from the mid-19th century to the early 21st century: the Manchester Museum, Manchester Art Gallery and Whitworth Art Gallery. What was the public good rationale for promoting and supporting these institutions over time? They highlight the interesting case of the Ancoats Art Museum which, 'with its concern for creating social and spiritual resources for local people on the margins of the city, practiced a model of cultural value most consistently, according to an explicit and distinctive ethical code' (p.8). The discourses surrounding the four institutions were not the same, with the Ancoats Art Museum having the most explicitly social purpose, and they conclude that 'these case studies show that notions of cultural value in late-19th century Manchester were fluid and pragmatic.' (p.28). Their comment that there was, with the exception of the Ancoats Arts Museum, a tension between public rhetoric and institutional practice reminds us of continuing fractures within approaches to culture. They also find parallels between mid-Victorian approaches anchored in ideas of 'rational recreation' and 'moral and social refinement', which influenced thinking towards the end of the century, and contemporary notions of 'lifelong learning', 'generic learning outcomes' and 'generic social outcomes'. They find the relationship between aesthetic qualities and moral benefits uncertain in the discourses of those establishing and supporting museums at the end of the nineteenth century: moral uplift was bound up in content rather than in quality for some, while others leaned towards the argument that if good were to be achieved then it was essential to acquire the highest quality of art. These institutional histories thus reveal important differences but also continuities in how cultural value has been thought about. And we find the persistence of high-minded as well as instrumental advocacy. J. Ernest Phythian, a member of the Manchester City Art Gallery Committee, observed in 1898:

> *Art cannot be a luxury except to a poverty stricken, spendthrift or ignorant people; and if we allow it to be luxury in Manchester, we must decide under which or how many of these categories we come. (Rees Leahy & McCombe CVP Report, p.15).*

### The cultural value of heritage

Two projects exploring the cultural value of heritage raise further perspectives: Carman's report from the *CVP Expert Workshop* 'Heritage value: combining culture and economics' and Hoskins's *CVP Research Development Award* 'Locating value: making significance in the historical built environment, a trans-Atlantic review'. They independently suggest that a more productive approach would focus not on value but on the process of valuing. Carman draws on a range of published work to observe how heritage must be understood as a nexus of different interests, and can be approached as a question of policy direction or as a matter of everyday practice. All this makes distilling the 'true' value of heritage a considerable task. The driving theme of the expert workshop was to find a way of approaching value sufficiently broad to contain these different perspectives, yet sufficiently particular to be informative and get beyond generalities. The solution was to focus on the different valuing practices that converge on heritage, above all economic valuation and expert valuation of 'significance', together with how these are affected by the democratisation of heritage and the growing presence of the public value model. The process of valuation emerged as having different stages, such as the initial decision for conservation, followed by decisions relating to the future of a site, a process that could be analysed as a set of distinct practices. In contrast to the formal designations and valuations of significance based on expert knowledge, they suggested that use might be made of economic valuations that drew on the empirical techniques of contingent valuations and revealed preferences.[5] This was seen as

[5] Contingent valuation used in a different setting is part of the *CVP Research Development Award* by Bakhshi et al reported in the chapter on *Methodologies*

Many projects funded by the CVP engage with felt experience and study value as attributed from the first-person perspective.

a way to democratise the heritage valuation process by opening it up to a wider public.

Hoskins's project revealed further the complexities of heritage valuation by examining the agencies involved in listing and landmarking in the United States and United Kingdom. He traces how the conception of heritage value emerges through the practices of designation, landmarking and listing, and how these practices differ between the two countries. By comparing the processes he is able to show the value to be contingent, shaped by assessment protocols and often obfuscated 'through a variety of endorsements of objective measurement' (Hoskins *CVP Report,* p.29). The substance of value is elusive when approached through formal practices of grading, designation, re-designation, and designation removal. Hoskins does, however, find a less reified way of looking at value by examining instead how it is experienced 'on-site by practitioners who gauge significance by calling on emotional forms of attunement' (p.2). Through this prism Hoskins is able to uncover the emotional and phenomenological aspect of valuation which he sees as rendered invisible in the official processes.

**The first-person perspective**

This attempt to see how value may be recognised phenomenologically from the first-person perspective taps into a wider strand of projects funded by the Cultural Value Project. Many engage with felt experience and study value as attributed from the first-person perspective. Gilmore investigates the reception of different types of classical music, and Harwood looks at the value of machinima, that is to say participatory user-generated machine-cinema, while Ashley, on the other hand, interrogates the experiences of a Sikh heritage site near Brighton from the perspective of both onlookers and participants. Winter and Bernard focus on how dance and theatre respectively are experienced by older people, while Rimmer and Manchester in their different projects look at the perceptions of the young. Rumbold and Davis give nuanced accounts of individual experiences, one of poetry and the other of reading aloud. Froggett and Gillespie analyse how individual points of view can be woven together to give a more 'collective' story of cultural value – the former in relation to public art in a coastal town and the latter with respect to the BBC World Service and the British Council.

All of these awards will be encountered, along with others, at the appropriate places in this report. From the perspective of this introductory chapter, however, they represent examples of the variety of approaches taken to researching the experience of cultural engagement and arts participation in the awards made by the Cultural Value Project. Put together in this way they help bring into focus the phenomenon of experience that is a fundamental dimension of cultural value, and a dimension all too often concealed by dichotomies such as intrinsic and instrumental, high and popular, hedonic and eudemonic, canonical and marginal, and audience and participant.

## Prioritising experience and methodological diversity

**Centrality of experience**

In the Introduction to the Cultural Value Project issued when it was launched, we wrote:

> *The starting premise of the Cultural Value Project is that we need to begin by looking at the actual experience of culture and the arts rather than the ancillary effects of this experience. It is the cultural experience itself which will give coherence to the framework as a whole. The value begins there, with something fundamental and irreducible, and all the other components in the framework might be seen, to a greater or lesser extent, to cascade from it.*

As cultural value emerges as a problematic construct, recognising the centrality of experience offers one means to by-pass the definitional contest, and draw together some of the diverse strands. In this way we might bring together our 'components of cultural value', the different ways that the effects of cultural engagement are manifested and articulated. As will become apparent in the individual chapters of this report, we would not wish to imply that each of the components has a symmetrical relationship to the cultural experience itself: whereas economic impact and urban regeneration need have no obvious connection to the experience (other than to its having taken place), mental health and most of the effects captured in the discussion of the *Reflective Individual* and the *Engaged Citizen*, for example, along with others, are shaped much more directly by the character of cultural experiences.

When it comes to cultural value, instead of 'measuring' it is more appropriate to speak of 'evaluation', of which measurement is but one component.

We should make it clear that we are not claiming that the phenomenological approach to exploring cultural value is the only one, nor that it is appropriate for capturing the effect of arts and culture across all the dimensions explored in this report. It has, however, rarely been given priority in such discussions, with the consequence that some benefits have been neglected and some ways of understanding have been missed. Alongside the many other approaches deployed in the Cultural Value Project and in the awards that it has made, a relative privileging of the phenomenological will enable us to redress that imbalance.

The challenge is not to assert the importance of experiences, but to demonstrate empirically the extent to which they may ground cultural value. While theorising about the value of culture has been an integral feature of Western thinking since antiquity, most accounts have failed to engage first-order, empirical data, or take full account of the experiences of those directly involved in cultural activities and practices (White & Hede, 2008; Kaszynska, 2015). This may be partly explained by the history of humanist inquiry, and a romantic tendency which saw empirical inquiry as a quest for technical mastery and instrumentalism, subsequently calling upon cultural theory to counter this by offering a theoretical critique of empirical scientific approaches (Law et al, 2011; Savage, 2013). From social science perspectives, on the other hand, it might have been less a reluctance to engage with empirical data, and more a suspicion of the notion of experience as tainted by notions of subjecthood and idealism. White and Hede argue that a preoccupation with social, instrumental impacts might be responsible for marginalising the significance of individual experience. This is a line reiterated by Vuyk who, arguing that 'the arts should be considered instruments of experience', laments the way that Western governments use other kinds of instrumental arguments to defend their cultural policies, with the effect of squeezing the phenomenology of art and culture out of the picture (Vuyk, 2010, p.173).

In this context we might sympathise with the participants in Murray et al's *CVP Research Development Award* on 'Approaching cultural value as a complex system: experiencing the arts and articulating the city in Leeds', who urged the researchers 'to *feel* and *experience* the arts, rather than constantly trying to *understand* and *rationalize* them', but reply that capturing feeling and experience has been a neglected aspect of that understanding rather than something inimical to it. (Murray *CVP Report*, p.31).

Finally, accounting for actors' first-order constructs and subjective perspectives is methodologically challenging. A growing body of work exists which explores cultural experiences, using a range of interesting empirical methods. These include arts-based methods and ethnographic approaches that extend to interrogating the sensory and somatic dimensions of cultural experiences, approaches where a number of Cultural Value Project awards have made a contribution. These methods nonetheless remain at an early stage of development.

The growth of interest in experience over the last decade in research undertaken by consultants and think-tanks raises intriguing questions. A number of terms qualifying experiences have made their way into their discourses: for example 'quality' (Annabel Jackson Associates, 2012; Knell, 2013); 'captivation' (Foreman-Wernet & Dervin, 2013) and 'absorption' (Bakhshi et al, 2009). One might add from the US the work of Alan Brown and WolfBrown more generally (e.g. Brown, 2006; Brown & Novak-Leonard, 2007). Recent reviews published by Arts Council England (Carnwath & Brown, 2014; ACE, 2014) have also explicitly drawn on the language of 'experiences' and 'values'.

How arts and culture are experienced has been part of attempts to re-evaluate the distinction between intrinsic and instrumental value (McCarthy et al, 2004; Knell & Taylor, 2011). Expertise in quantitative methodologies has been said to be shifting towards commercial agencies, with techniques deployed in market research 'in ways that are more powerful and innovative than anything found within academic sociology' (Gane, 2011, p.156). The rise of trading in intangibles, such as the value of branding or 'value-alignment' techniques in management and marketing, coupled with the availability of new data produced through social media, have fuelled an interest in measuring public expressions of affect (Avidsson, 2012). These are important trends, even if the Cultural Value Project is not primarily concerned with market research approaches. Interesting as their techniques may be, our concern is less with the parameters of experiences, and more with their meaning,

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something fundamental to disciplines within the arts and humanities. A more engaged approach to experience is an important dimension of this report but, as we have already observed, in a context where a variety of appropriate approaches are deployed.

**A variety of forms of value**

Jeremy Bentham wrote in 1825:

> *The value of all these arts and sciences…the value which they possess, is exactly in proportion to the pleasure they yield. Prejudice apart, the game of push-pin is of equal value with the arts and sciences of music and poetry. If the game of push-pin furnished more pleasure, it is more valuable than either. (Bentham, 1830, p.206).*

Bentham saw value as genuinely commensurable by using the simple measure of utility, which would enable comparisons between the value of different activities. Much of the case made for arts and culture in contemporary Britain has rested on a not-dissimilar assumption that measurement of one variable might suffice to identify the value of these multi-faceted areas of activity. This is bound up with the fact that, rather than seeking to understand the meaning of experiences, it has been the ancillary effects of these experiences, or often merely of the activities that produced them, that were measured.

The Cultural Value Project is interested in both the experiences and their effects. It wishes to analyse cultural value without assuming that all registers of value are commensurable, or that they can be reduced to one common denominator. What is needed to achieve this is a framework within which will sit a variety of forms of value, each of them to be evaluated by appropriate and often different methodologies, a mixture of qualitative and quantitative. A starting point for the project is that quantitative evidence should not be seen as necessarily superior to qualitative. The fundamental criteria must be appropriateness to the subject and the argument within which the evidence sits, alongside robustness in how that evidence is gathered and deployed. Evaluations are undertaken in different contexts and to serve different purposes, and the same might be said of research. This should not imply relativism or a lack of robustness insofar as quality of evidence is concerned. This, we will argue in the chapter on *Methodologies*, opens up the proposition that there might be 'more than one version of disciplined, rigorous inquiry' (Denzin, 2009, p.152).

This means that when it comes to cultural value, instead of 'measuring' it is more appropriate to speak of 'evaluation', of which measurement is but one component. We need economics-based approaches and the traditional techniques of social sciences; we also identify the development of approaches from science and medicine as part of a larger package.

In order to understand the meanings attached to experiences, along with the differences that cultural engagement makes, we need also to embrace a range of humanities approaches and qualitative forms of evidence, including ethnographic and arts- and hermeneutics-based methods, and these characterise many of the reports from Cultural Value Project awards. The analysis of meanings and representations, clarification of discursive constructs and terms of analysis, discerning of historical precedents and the close reading of texts, images, language and experience, are amongst the many characteristics that humanities-based approaches can contribute to the mix.

It is here that we find the answer to the question of why the AHRC undertook this project: not primarily to better act as an advocate of its own cause, nor of that of cultural institutions, but rather to fulfil its fundamental role as a Research Council which is, through research, to further understanding in its domain. Why does culture matter, what difference does it make, and how do we know the difference that it makes? Much of the existing research on the impact of the arts does not meet the high standards that a Research Council would expect in any other sphere. It is because of this recognition that the AHRC established this project.

## KEY POINTS FROM CHAPTER

- Ideas of cultural value have a history, though the concept itself may be seen as a construct of policy. From the 1980s onwards, culture has been increasingly 'instrumentalised,' with arguments for supporting the arts being based on their contribution to other policy areas – the economy, social inclusion, health etc. Although significant discussion of cultural value has sought to reconfigure the debate, including introducing the notion of public value, the climate of public policy tended to be one where the public sector felt obliged to make its case in terms of policy objectives largely separate from the objectives and effects of the cultural experience itself.
- Work on cultural value has tended to be driven by the case for public funding, and this has led to a focus on the publicly-funded arts. The Cultural Value Project, as a research project rather than an advocacy initiative, casts its net wider. It considers not only the subsidised arts but also the commercial, amateur and participatory.
- A set of dichotomies have shaped much of the debate about the value of culture but have often served to distort more than clarify discussion: dichotomies such as the positive and negative traditions, arts for art's sake and art for social function, intrinsic and instrumental benefits, hedonic and eudemonic benefits, high and popular culture, audience and participants. The Cultural Value Project has sought to move beyond those dichotomies and embrace the much more complex environment in which the value of culture emerges.
- Discussion of the value of culture has generally taken insufficient account of the experiences of participants and the effects on them, with the result that some major benefits have been neglected. This report sees the experience of culture as fundamental to any discussion of cultural value.
- The Cultural Value Project seeks a framework within which sits a variety of components of value, each of them to be evaluated by appropriate and often different qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Quantitative evidence should not be seen as necessarily superior to qualitative: the fundamental criteria must be appropriateness to the subject and to the analysis, and robustness in how evidence is gathered and deployed.

# CHAPTER TWO

## CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

In a report of this kind there are certain themes which are relevant across much of what is said, but which do not themselves fit readily into the chapter structure that is the most appropriate way to meet the report's main objectives. The report has been built around components and methodologies, but this left a number of themes which need to be highlighted at an early stage because they have implications for all that follows.

Four key themes will be briefly identified in this chapter so that they can be borne in mind when reading the rest of the work. The very different ways in which people access arts and culture, the fact that participation takes place in an unequal and diverse society, and the transformation bound up in the rise of digital participation and production are three major themes that will be addressed. Wellbeing is a current focus for discussion about arts and culture, and in our fourth section we signal the relevance of the multidimensional framework within which some have been thinking about the relationship between culture and wellbeing.

### Modes of cultural engagement

People's engagement with arts and culture takes place in different settings and through different models of provision. The point needs making, because cultural value has largely been discussed in relation to publicly-subsidised activity in formal buildings or other settings as a result of which much gets neglected. There are the different settings, whether these be purpose-built cultural buildings, small-scale adapted and improvised spaces, institutions such as hospitals, care homes and prisons, and both the home and the virtual space provided by the internet, including while mobile. There are also different models of provision: the publicly-funded, commercial, voluntary, amateur or everyday, with the boundaries between

**Below:** Wales Millennium Centre, Cardiff. Credit: Jon Craig.



Cultural value has largely been discussed in relation to publicly-subsidised activity in formal buildings or other settings, as a result of which much gets neglected.

them becoming ever more porous. This gives shape to a complex matrix, and one that we are only beginning to understand, not least because research into cultural value has mostly focused on a precise sub-set of cultural provision and engagement. We have sought to include the full range of these wherever possible, though the absence of research proposals or existing work in many areas means that it has not always been possible to do so as extensively as we might have wished.

**Culture in the home**

The limited research attention given to cultural consumption in and through the home is particularly regrettable, because it has always been important and is becoming ever more so. The home frames most of our engagement with film, music, television and radio, literature, video games, and various forms of digital, on-line activities. A study in 2011 revealed that 94 per cent of all watching of film is at home, yet we still talk about film in terms of going to the cinema (BFI, 2011). The great majority of our experience of music of all kinds occurs at home or while travelling, yet we talk about the cultural experience of music in terms of going to concert halls and music venues (on mobile music, see Bull, 2007). As we shall see elsewhere in this chapter, cultural activity that is carried out at home through digital engagement with others is expanding fast.

Cultural engagement at home is certainly not new, but its expansion has consequences for how we think of cultural value. Not only does it reinforce the need to go beyond the categories of amateur, commercial and subsidised, which are always more permeable than was recognised, it also voids some of the old dichotomies underpinning our thinking about cultural value, such as the contrasts between production and consumption, or participation and spectatorship. The ways in which culture is experienced has implications for all that follows in this report, and it is important to highlight the range at the outset. We shall in this section draw on the various reports from Cultural Value Project awards which enable us to reflect a little more on amateur, commercial and home engagement, as well as on the complexity of the relationships between them.

**Amateur arts**

A report in 2008 estimated that there were 49,000 amateur arts groups in England alone, with close to 6 million members (Dodd et al, 2008). These are participant-driven, self-governing, amateur organisations. The figures do not include the many people whose own musical, art or craft leisure activity is carried out without joining any group. The report concluded from its survey that the sector provides 'opportunities for people who would not otherwise participate in the arts to do so within their local community' (Dodd et al, 2008, p.10). The benefits claimed for amateur arts activities will surface in various parts of this report. A scoping study for the Connected Communities programme identified a range of apparent benefits, including in conventional areas such as enhanced health and wellbeing and improved social skills, but others that are less familiar, such as the 'contagion' effect, whereby enjoying one activity will encourage participants and those they know to take on other arts activities, as well as increasing the potential for individuals to discover hitherto concealed, unrecognised aspects of themselves (Ramsden et al, 2011).

In *Where we Dream,* Matarasso explored the amateur West Bromwich Operatic Society, whose musical theatre not only demonstrates members' intensity of experience and determination to achieve very high standards, but also the way it draws together performers, organisers and the community, involves performers of diverse theatrical experience, some of whom could have had professional careers, and helps commercial venues survive by hiring them. The boundaries in this ecology are clearly permeable (Matarasso, 2012). *Where we Dream* echoes Finnegan's older sociological study of amateur grassroots music groups in Milton Keynes, across a range of genres from church choirs to jazz bands by way of chamber ensembles. She showed how individual and collective creativity drove them, for this was not about low-ambition performances, while the groups were at the same time embedded in everyday relationships and sociability that provided quite distinct forms of value to those involved (Finnegan, 1989).

The value of amateur activity, whether through musical or theatrical societies or quilting at home, is too frequently assessed as a leisure activity, and therefore according to criteria that neglect the artistic or aesthetic.

The separation of popular from high culture has itself been coming undone, with forms of mass-produced, popular art increasingly being analysed in terms previously reserved for high art.

The *CVP Expert Workshop* on 'Understanding cultural value: the amateur and voluntary arts', organised by Milling and colleagues, brought together academics and practitioners to explore amateur arts engagement, and raised issues of economic benefits, social capital, expert knowledge and aesthetic judgment. It was felt that asking primarily social questions of amateur arts led to a neglect of distinctive artistic practice, motivation and ambition. The value of amateur activity, whether through musical or theatrical societies or quilting at home, is too frequently assessed as a leisure activity, and therefore according to criteria that neglect the artistic or aesthetic, as if they were not a key part of its purpose for those involved. Some cultural forms survive essentially because of amateur practice, notably folk song and dance, and perhaps also some crafts. Meanwhile, the keenness of television for competitions to find the best amateurs in choral singing, sewing, baking and pottery, and the recent Get Creative initiative led by the BBC, all tap into everyday activities that are often hidden from wider view. As Clarke et al note in the report from their *CVP Research Development Award* on 'Music, empathy and cultural understanding', the many series of *The Choir* on television 'document the powerful 'identity work' and intense emotional experiences that accompany the formation of choirs in schools, workplaces and military establishments out of groups of people who have had little or no previous musical experience.' (Clarke *CVP Report*, p.3). Notwithstanding some important work, amateur arts remain an area that needs more attention if we are to understand its value. Important US studies of amateur and participatory arts may have a good deal to offer (Wali, A. et al, 2002; Novak-Leonard & Brown, 2011).

**Commercial and popular culture**

The commercial production and distribution of cultural goods for public consumption has become the most ubiquitous form of cultural experience. The Frankfurt School's critical assessment of the culture industry was an early attempt to understand the production, dissemination and consumption of commercial and popular culture, while the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham sought to play a progressive role in the rehabilitation of certain forms of commercial culture, although they were primarily concerned with popular, rather than mass-produced, commercial culture. Distinctions of this kind rapidly blur if simply seen as at the other end of the spectrum from fine arts, but the separation of popular from high culture has itself been coming undone, with forms of mass-produced, popular art increasingly being analysed in terms previously reserved for high art (Frith, 1996). The emergence of cultural omnivores, as we shall see elsewhere in this chapter, with cultural elites engaging across a variety of different art forms and without regard to their high or low status, is another dimension of this. Research into the value of engagement with commercial arts is growing (Gray et al, 2009 for television comedy; Crawford, 2012 for video games), but it remains limited.

Although commercial organisations operate in most art forms, for example galleries in relation to fine art, commercial production, distribution and consumption is dominant above all in music, film, games and literature, and also important in theatre. There is much less research here than on value in the publicly-funded sector. It took a publicly-funded agency straddling the commercial and public divide, the British Film Institute, to undertake a significant evaluation of commercially-driven culture with its report *Opening our Eyes. How film contributes to the culture of the UK*, which identified what people saw as the key contributions of film to entertainment, emotions, reflection, insights into others, identity and aesthetic value (BFI, 2011).

We hoped to support research into the value associated with mainstream commercial culture, but received few applications in this area, and the awards made were concerned with what might be seen as more niche areas, notwithstanding their large numbers of participants. Allington's *CVP Research Development Award* on 'Online networks and the production of value in electronic music' and Harwood's *CVP Research Development Award* 'Machinima: an investigation into the contribution of participatory user-generated machine-cinema to cultural values' are concerned with developments in online interactive culture with important commercial dimensions, and are considered elsewhere. Sandvoss's *CVP Research Development*

*Award* on 'Fandom, participatory culture and cultural value', meanwhile, assesses the negotiation and appropriation of popular, mass-produced culture such as film, television and popular music in audience and fan studies. In studying how practices of textual selection by fans constitute genuine acts of productivity and creativity, he shows the erosion of the boundaries between production and consumption in a digital culture of media convergence.

> *The field of convergence culture is also a commercial field in which, on an unprecedented scale in modern cultural production and reception, the work of professional artists and cultural producers intersects, complements, and is challenged by content produced by non-professional enthusiasts and fans. (Sandvoss CVP Report, p.17).*

**Audience experience of amateur and commercial performance**

Established commercial culture appears in research comparing the experiences of audiences for amateur, subsidised and commercial arts, by Edelman et al in their *CVP Research Development Award* 'The value of subsidised, commercial and amateur theatre and dance for Tyneside's audiences'. A survey of the audiences for 26 different dance and theatre productions found significant overlap in what theatre-goers value across the different sectors: impressiveness, skill, inspiration, and encouraging one to talk and think about it afterwards are valued in amateur, commercial and publicly- subsidised performance alike. The differentiation between performances that are considered 'comforting' and more 'challenging', however, roughly corresponds with that between commercial and subsidised productions. Amateur performance, while not quite as highly-rated as its commercial counterparts, was not very different in the experience it provided to audiences. Amateur and local theatre companies command a loyalty that generates more repeat attendance.

This distinction between comforting and challenging experiences interestingly connects with a very different study by Gilmore, albeit one that was about attenders within classical music, rather than across modes of provision. Her *CVP Research Development Award* on 'The enactment of taste making in contemporary music' found that those who were used to attending contemporary classical music concerts relished the dissonance and challenge that it brought, whilst those who were non-attenders at classical concerts in general sought the comfort of music that was familiar.

In the chapter on *The economy: impact, innovation and ecology* we consider how publicly-funded culture, the commercial sector and enthusiasts are interconnected through the development and circulation of talent, ideas and risk-taking. Sites, both physical and virtual, often provide the nexus points where these different categories co-habit and co-mingle. This is evident from Allington's report on the mediating world of SoundCloud, where traditional understandings of expertise, marketing and music recording are increasingly contested through amateur and enthusiast activities. Brennan et al's two *CVP Research Development Awards* on 'Cultural value and cultural policy: some evidence from the world of live music' on Queen's Hall, Edinburgh and 'The cultural value of live music: from the pub to the stadium: getting beyond the numbers' on a wider range of smaller venues in different cities, further explore this ecology and underline how music venues are becoming the sites where genres and modes of provision mix. Queen's Hall attracted various promotional models:

> *[there are] the commercial operators, who put on concerts to make money; the state-subsidized sector (characterized by national orchestras and performing companies) and the 'enthusiasts', for whom concert promotion is more a labour of love than it is their primary source of income. (Brennan et al, CVP Report, Cultural Value of Live Music, p.5)*

Meanwhile a complex ecology of mutual interdependence between small, medium and large venues, alongside different promotional practices, characterised live music venues in Camden, Leeds and Glasgow.

**Experience of culture in the home**

We have implicitly returned to the home when discussing creative digital activity, because that is where most of it is undertaken, yet there is something more extensive about home engagement, which makes its neglect puzzling. As we have already noted, when it comes to film, TV, radio and video games the home is the main setting where engagement takes place, a location shared with travelling when it comes to music and literature. Cultural experience at home was the theme of two *CVP Expert Workshops*. In the first, 'From parlour songs to iPlayers: experiencing culture in the 20th and 21st century

The variety of locations and modes of provision through which arts and culture are experienced complicates consideration of cultural value.

home', Cowman and colleagues consider how culture has been consumed and produced at home over a century by looking at activities that include domestic musical evenings, book groups, and 'appointment to view' television, through to today's 'event' programming and digital fandom. The workshop concluded that technological innovation has driven change in domestic cultural consumption throughout the twentieth century: the pianola, the gramophone and the cine camera, radio and then television, video players, DVD and the internet represent a sequence of innovations that embedded home consumption. Accessing culture in the home has always had a dimension of sociability, experienced with family and friends. Online sharing of experiences in real time ('sofalising'), digital fandom, and the growth of multiplayer online gaming all add further social dimensions.

The second *CVP Expert Workshop*, organised by Boschi et al on 'Culture, value and attention at home', considered how much cultural engagement at home is experienced in a low-attention way. If the home is where much cultural experience takes place, and if that is in an increasingly multi-screen or multi-device environment, does this have implications for the value associated with those experiences? New and significant cultural dimensions were considered in the workshop. For example Songza, the internet radio site, offers expert-curated playlists for non-serious music listeners, and reaches new audiences.

The history of domestic recording and playback technologies has progressively transformed how people listen to music in the home, increasingly offering a portability and mobility that enables private/public spaces to elide, while the act of listening together to music on radio or record has virtually disappeared. Home computers enabled video games to move from their sleazy location in arcades into the domestic space of the home, though the ubiquity of devices meant that they then moved into the private space of (especially) boys' bedrooms, which raised anxieties afresh. The practice of designing the home itself draws on work by professionals, but with an increasing emphasis on amateur bespoke solutions that render householders as authors of their own homes, often mediated by online design blogs and sites. The heritage dimensions of the home came into play through the respect that inhabitants of older houses had for changes made in the distant past, whereas minimal value was attached to changes made by more recent residents. These and other insights from the workshop unpack the notion of the home as a simple space for cultural consumption, presenting it instead as a changing environment in which new kinds of value are generated. So much more is going on than a simple move of cultural experience into the home, and the permeability of private and public space is becoming ever greater.

**Variety of experience and cultural value**

The variety of locations and modes of provision through which arts and culture are experienced complicates consideration of cultural value, and these issues provide a crucial context for this report and recur through its chapters. The fact that publicly-funded and public provision has seemed the priority for research nonetheless presents a problem which the Cultural Value Project has been able only to begin to address. An imbalance in research was inevitable for so long as most understanding of value has come from evaluations for reasons of funding, accountability or policy.

We must take note of the finding from research on the 2008 US arts participation survey that we need a 'multi-modal' understanding of arts participation. Attendance in various places outside the home, personal creation and performance in private and public spaces, and increasing participation through electronic media were the different modes identified in that study, and our discussion here has added others (Novak-Leonard & Brown, 2011). Furthermore, giving greater research visibility to the value of amateur and commercial engagement forces us to reject the hierarchical approach to modes of provision where the subsidised forms are assumed to be superior, with implications for some at least of the discussions of inequalities of access to which we shall now turn.

We have to think of cultural value beyond the artificial hierarchies of modes of provision and regimes. The evolving ecology of commercial, amateur, interactive and subsidised engagement needs to be better understood, and seen as enriching rather than antagonistic.

## Arts and culture in an unequal society

Cultural engagement in the UK and other countries is socially stratified, with involvement in arts and cultural activities differentiated by classic drivers of inequality such as class,

Much debate about inequalities of access is built upon a narrow definition of arts and culture.

status, gender, ethnicity or disability. O'Brien and Oakley's *CVP Critical Review* 'Cultural value and inequality: a critical literature review' was undertaken in recognition of the need to obtain an overview of the extensive work in this area, and it underpins much, but by no means all, of this section.

Inequality has multiple manifestations. It can be seen not just in consumption of culture (Goldthorpe, 2007, Bennett et al, 2009; Savage et al, 2013) but also in relation to its production, that is to say both employment and leadership in the cultural sector (Banks, 2007; Oakley et al, 2013; O'Brien & Oakley, *CVP Report*). Socio-economic differences derived from conditions such as income and employment play an important role in perpetuating cycles of transmission in cultural engagement and disengagement (Miles and Sullivan, 2010). At the same time, there is the impact of inequalities through representation, and the fact that how certain social groups are portrayed in the media or in hierarchies of taste, and how some groups self-identify, can serve to entrench or undermine existing inequalities (Sayer, 2002; Lawler, 2005; Belfiore, *CVP Report*). It has been suggested that cultural differentiation is based more on factors such as social status or education than income and occupational class and, most recently from a study of three waves of Taking Part surveys, that the real driver of arts participation (in contrast to more passive consumption) is not class or status but education (Reeves, 2015). Education is not, of course, divorced from class and status but nor is it simply determined by them.

**Changing debate around inequality**

The fact that much debate about inequalities is built upon a narrow definition of arts and culture, seeing it through hierarchies of taste or public funding and often both, adds a further complication. What happens when one widens the definition to embrace far more informal activities that those hierarchies might describe as leisure rather than arts and culture, and include commercial and amateur activities, and also television and other forms of home consumption? This may capture a reality and decrease the measure of inequality, although at the cost of deflecting attention from the way that inequalities of access to publicly-funded arts and culture may constitute a diversion of public resources to better-off sections of society. It remains nonetheless important not to impose simplistic conceptions such as 'barriers to access', implying that those the wrong side of the barrier are not culturally engaged rather than often being differently culturally engaged.

Discussion often starts from Taking Part, the regular survey of cultural and sports engagement led by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. The data collected in the surveys is susceptible to much richer analysis than appears in their quarterly reports but these provide the basic evidence around which discussion of inequality takes place. The report for 2014/15, for example, tells us that women had higher levels of engagement than men with the arts and visiting libraries, but much less so in areas such as heritage and museums; that black and minority ethnic groups were underrepresented in all cultural activities apart from visiting a library, where they significantly exceeded white respondents;[6] that people with a long-standing illness or disability had a much lower rate of engagement when it came to all forms of culture, and that, in spite of significant increases in engagement among lower socio-economic groups, the gap between them and upper socio-economic groups remained considerable. On this last point, the proportion of adults in the upper socio-economic group who had attended or participated in the arts in the previous year was 82 per cent, compared with 67 per cent for the lower socio-economic group, with similar patterns for heritage (79 per cent and 63 per cent), museums and galleries (60 per cent and 39 per cent) and digital participation (43 per cent and 34 per cent), with libraries showing the smallest difference (36 per cent and 31 per cent) (DCMS, 2015, pp.46-50).

Headlines such as this on inequality of engagement – possibly also inequality of access but we must not ignore the exercise of choice – provide a compelling starting point. Nonetheless, by working with fairly basic categories, defined by the areas that are funded by DCMS and its arms-length bodies, and by organising the data by single variables, the complexity of behaviour and the constraints upon it are not evident. Interesting work using multiple correlation analysis, for example, begins to uncover a clustering of activities that takes us beyond simple elite, publicly-funded culture and barriers

[6] BME groups were less likely to have visited a heritage site in the previous years compared with the white group (56% cf. 75%), less likely to have engaged with the arts (68% cf. 78%), and less likely to have visited a museum or gallery (43% cf. 53%), but more likely to have visited a library (47% cf. 33%)

to accessing it (Miles & Sullivan, 2010). The fact that elite social groups are now being presented as 'cultural omnivores', privileged cultural consumers engaging in many different forms of cultural activities rather than being locked within an established canon of taste or institutions, is a striking change. It might be that what we are seeing is not so much 'distinction', in Bourdieu's term (Bourdieu, 1984), but rather what might be called distinctive inclusiveness. If cultural activity plays a role in reproducing inequalities of status or class, then the appearance of more eclectic omnivores need not disturb such patterns of transmission at all.

**Inequality and disability**

Inequality in the arts can also be seen with respect to people with disabilities. As Wright et al put it in their *CVP Research Development Award* on 'The cultural value of accessible theatre', 'deaf, deafened, hard of hearing, blind and partially sighted people are in danger of being […] disenfranchised'. They point out that 'research undertaken by the European Blind Union into the accessibility of cultural activity […] paints a bleak picture; with scant regard being shown by arts and cultural organisations and their funders to the access requirements of potential customers/visitors/audiences should they deviate from an assumed norm.' (Wright *CVP Report*, pp.5-6.) They argue that STAGETEXT and VocalEye's See a Voice project in 2006 achieved a step-change in the provision of captioned and audio-described theatre in the UK, but that since then many initiatives to make theatre accessible have suffered setbacks. O'Brien and Oakley point out that 'the professional participation of disabled people in the cultural industries both starts from a lower base than for the population as a whole and gets worse the higher status the jobs in question. In England around 13 per cent of the cultural workforce is classified as disabled, but Arts Council figures for example show that only 1.6 per cent of artistic staff, 2.8 per cent of managers and 3.9 per cent of Board members within larger cultural organisations and major museums consider themselves disabled.' (O'Brien & Oakley *CVP Report*, p.30).

**Inequality in cultural employment**

Inequalities in cultural employment might be even more intractable than those in consumption (Warwick Commission, 2015), though O'Brien and Oakley note the absence of good data sets in this area. Success in the increasingly competitive cultural sector labour market is to a large and increasing extent determined by being able to accept unpaid work and to reap the benefits of one's connections. In his *CVP Critical Review* on 'Cultural industries, work and values' Banks points to other factors, such as the way that talent is narrowly defined, and what he calls 'the pathology of individualized modes of work' (Banks *CVP Report*, pp.15-16). O'Brien and Oakley highlight cultural factors of this kind in relation to gender discrimination, and the consequences for women's presence not only in the workforce as a whole (with declines in the proportion in animation and independent TV production particularly evident from data analysis by Creative Skillset), but also at senior levels in arts and media organisations, whether commercial or public.

**Inequality and ethnicity**

Inequalities in employment in the cultural industries are significant for more than social justice alone:

> *We want to understand or at least interrogate how inequalities in labour markets play out in the culture we consume – via TV, films, games, music and so on, and how that culture in turn helps to shape our society. Alongside the question of social justice, inequality in and exclusion from, cultural labour markets is particularly problematic because of the way in which the cultural industries – particularly the mass media – help to construct our understanding of society. (O'Brien & Oakley CVP Report, p.20).*

Belfiore's *CVP Research Development Award* on the Gypsy and Traveller communities in Britain, as seen through the prisms of their own cultural practices and heritage on the one hand, and that of television representations through My Big Fat Gypsy Wedding on the other, highlights this challenge. The proportion of BAME workers in the cultural industries is distorted by the presence of software and services (which represent one-third of cultural industries employment and has an over-representation of BAME employees), but under-representation across most industry sectors is clear, with media showing a marked decline between 2006 and 2012 (O'Brien & Oakley *CVP Report*, pp.21-22). Concern over the paucity of BAME performers in entertainment and performing arts media has received a good deal of publicity, highlighted by Lenny Henry's campaign and confirmed in a recent report (Creative Industries Federation, 2015). Malik's research on ethnicity and employment in the public broadcasting industries points to the damage caused by embedding debate

## We need an expanded understanding of what might constitute cultural participation.

## Diasporic arts and cultural practices are largely absent from discussion of participation and exclusion.

in a discourse of diversity rather than that of inequality (Malik in O'Brien & Oakley *CVP Report*, pp.26-27).

Policy discourse about inequality in arts and culture tends to emphasise consumption rather than production, and is often driven by the distributional issues surrounding public subsidy. As we have observed, focusing on barriers to participation, or the deficit model by which absence from certain kinds of cultural engagement is what matters, can distract attention from the cultural practices to be found in supposedly excluded populations and communities. This expanded approach may not dispose of the question of inequality, but it can help us understand the more complex realities that include what one important research project terms 'everyday participation'. For Miles and his colleagues on that project, we need an expanded understanding of what might constitute cultural participation, one that does not start with the presence or absence of social groups from specific forms of culture.[7] Taking Part surveys would need to be expanded to capture wider everyday practices, but already have more potential for this than appears in their narrowly-structured reports, especially if attention were given to evidence of clustering of activities rather than presence or absence from precise cultural forms (on clustering, Miles & Sullivan, 2012). Watching television, playing video games, informal craft practice, and singing in church choirs are all forms of participation, neglected in debate more than they are in data collection.

These considerations are particularly relevant for Black and Asian minority ethnic (BAME) communities and individuals, where the deficit model can deflect attention not only from informal participation but also from cultural engagement and production that is not recognised within the mainstream. The cultural value of what are often seen as niche cultural activities can be denigrated. O'Brien and Oakley draw attention to Hamilton's argument in relation to black culture in the US, for example, that rap lyrics in criminal trials have often been used literally, because denying their figurativeness was a way of denying their aesthetic and artistic value. Then there is James's research on the UK, showing how 'expressions of youth and black British music have been marginalized by relating them to violence or anti-social behaviour whilst at the same time castigating them for being overly commercialised, inauthentic and thus having "sold out"' (James quoted in O'Brien & Oakley, p.12).

Newman et al reported in relation to the difficulties of getting British Asian participants for a study of older people and museums that:

> *None of the participants was from black and minority ethnic groups. When asked they declined to become involved in the research. When asked why, a group of women of Pakistani origin from Gateshead replied that the exhibitions were of no cultural relevance to them. However, if crafts from their home country were being shown they would have attended. (Newman et al, 2013, p.478).*

This was an older group, and age plays a significant role in patterns of taste and forms of engagement. As Clarke and Hodgson note in their study of South Asian music in north-east England, distinctions based on ethnicity are further complicated by gender and by generation. The Director of GemArts in Newcastle's West End reported:

> *I've tried doing tabla sessions with young people from the West End, but they're not interested because, basically, they see it as, well, 'What's tabla got to do with me really? I'm British born, I come from here, I'm a rapper – hip hop – but I like Indian music as well, and Bollywood music. (Clarke & Hodgson, 2012, p.25).*

Diasporic arts and cultural practices are largely absent from discussion of participation and exclusion. As Singh argued in his *CVP Critical Review* 'An analysis and review of British South Asian engagement in minority ethnic arts':

> *Many of the events organised by 'community facing' organisations are relatively hidden events often advertised within community networks and usually taking place in venues owned or run by members of minority ethnic communities including religious institutions and cultural centres. (Singh CVP Report, p.11).*

[7] The AHRC-funded project Understanding Everyday Participation is noted elsewhere in this report, especially in the chapter on Communities, regeneration and space. *www.everydayparticipation.org/about*

We know the role of culture in entrenching and perpetrating existing inequalities. The other side, the role of arts and culture in contesting social exclusion and inequalities, has received less research attention notwithstanding its popularity with policy makers in the New Labour governments.

Khan's landmark 1976 report on minority ethnic arts brought them to wider attention but has been criticised for characterising them as community art forms, parochial compared with canonical culture (Khan, 1976). Publications by Arts Council England include a report on combating racism in the theatre (Arts Council England, 2001), and a more recent report 'What is the creative case for diversity?' which has been seen to mark a shift from multiculturalism to a downplaying of the categories of ethnicity and diversity, in favour of a more universalist concept of 'creativity' (Arts Council England, 2011). This move, it has been argued, may obscure issues of equality and contested social and political values (O'Brien & Oakley *CVP Report*, p.27).

**The Cultural Value Project and ethnicity**

The Cultural Value Project's awards touch on ethnicity in various ways, and four are centrally focused on it. Belfiore's exploration of media images and identity practice amongst Gypsy and Traveller communities in Lincolnshire is considered more closely in the chapter on *The engaged citizen*, as is Ashley's *CVP Research Development Award* 'Memorialisation as valuation: examining public culture at the Chattri Sikh Memorial, Brighton', which traces the changing ways in which identity and meaning have been shaped in relationship to an important Sikh war memorial. O'Sullivan et al's *CVP Research Development Award* on 'Mapping faith and place: exploring cultural values in the buildings of South Asian Faiths in Leicester', which explores the relationship between buildings, heritage and community in different religious buildings, is considered in the chapter on *Communities, regeneration and space*.

Singh examines the cultural value of South Asian arts in Britain by reviewing literature, engaging with arts organisations and drawing on a small-sample survey. He agrees that they generate important benefits, but 'the findings suggest that although the economic, health, societal and educational values of the arts are important, for members of minority communities the value of minority arts as a means for engaging with heritage is key'. Singh emphasises the role that the arts play as markers and articulators of collective identity, in challenging common perceptions, in affirming cultures and raising their profile with wider audiences, and in dealing with the fact that multicultural policy has left many of the second-generation marginalised and finding it difficult to connect to other groups (Singh *CVP Report*, p.14).

Singh shows how the concept of South Asian arts itself constitutes a diasporic construction, gathering together very different forms and practices from across India, Pakistan and Bangladesh and their various regions. The process was shaped in part by the emergence of spaces and organisations, as he shows for South Asian dance. The distinction between 'public-facing' and 'community-facing' organisations (Clarke & Hodgson, 2012, pp.7-8) influences experiences and the meanings attached to them, including how community arts take place within organisations that would not see themselves as primarily artistic. Activities around Punjabi literature or Sikh poetry are immersed within wider community events rather than arts-based ones. In contrast stand the larger festivals – for example big melas which are held annually in many cities with large populations of South Asian origin, and which attract audiences from across a city's communities. Singh nonetheless finds that the different value associated with these wider social events and inward-looking community-focused arts is an underexplored area (Singh *CVP Report*).

O'Brien and Oakley call for analysis to bring together the ways in which culture is produced and consumed, and the ways this shapes representations and identities (O'Brien & Oakley, *CVP Report*). The intertwining of these dimensions has been neglected by a fragmented literature. From the perspective of the Cultural Value Project, inequalities of participation and access have clear implications for the benefits that engagement with arts and culture bring to individuals and to society, but the way in which policy discourse about barriers to participation define arts and culture also has implications for how engagement and exclusion are analysed. Finally, we know the role of culture in entrenching and perpetrating existing inequalities. The other side, the role of arts and culture in contesting social exclusion and inequalities, has received less attention from academics notwithstanding its popularity with policy makers in the New Labour governments (Belfiore, 2002; Long, 2002; Bennett & Silva, 2006). The role of culture in promoting engaged citizenship is considered in later chapters, and the relationship between cultural value and emancipation would merit more sustained empirical investigation.

Cultural experience and cultural value have been significantly affected by the growth of digital engagement. Digital technologies provide new ways of connecting with both cultural institutions and commercial culture, and have also challenged the distinction between audience and participant, enabling more people to be involved in the acts of creative making and sharing through co-production of content.

## Digital transformations

Cultural experience and cultural value have been significantly affected by the growth of digital engagement. Digital technologies provide new ways of connecting with both cultural institutions and commercial culture, and have also challenged the distinction between audience and participant, enabling more people to be involved in the acts of creative making and sharing through co-production of content. It led Cooke et al to observe in their *CVP Critical Review* on 'Experiencing the digital world: the cultural value of digital engagement with heritage' that there is a need to 'consider digital spaces not as a pathway to physical interaction, but as a new opportunity for a different kind of experience.' (Cooke et al *CVP Report*, p.5). Changes in the way art and culture is produced and consumed are taking place that are cultural processes in themselves, rather than solely technological changes, with implication for the character of cultural value.

### How digital technologies are affecting the cultural sector

The rise of the digital has, of course, elicited its own reactions. The return to the ephemeral consumption of live music, the fashionable nature of craft with its emphasis on materials and the tactile experience, and painting becoming more surfaced and less polished arguably in response to how paintings appear on a screen, might all be responses to the inexorable growth of digital experience. For audiences at live performances of plays transmitted to a cinema rather than to a screen at home, such as with NT Live, the social experience matters in a way that belies claims about 'any place, any time' digital access (Bakhshi & Throsby, 2010).

The most straightforward way in which digital technologies are affecting the cultural sector lies in how organisations are connecting with their visitors. The 2014 *Digital Culture* survey reported that 51 per cent of arts and cultural organisations responding said that digital technologies were important or essential to their business models, and these organisations were far more likely to be involved in revenue-generating online activities such as donations and crowdfunding. Content was published on free platforms such as YouTube and Facebook by 88 per cent of organisations, while 32 per cent were using social media for direct conversations between audiences and artists (Nesta et al, 2015). Culture24 helps its participating organisations make use of the data they collect from their online activities (Finnis et al, 2011), though this might be seen as organisational more than cultural development.

In their *CVP Critical Review* on 'Measuring cultural value and cultural impact using technology-enhanced methods', Jensen et al commented that 'the evidence is fairly clear that where arts and cultural sector organisations are using new digital technologies (particularly social media), they are using them primarily for audience engagement purposes (e.g. marketing, communications, education), enhancing the audience experience (e.g. content distribution) and revenue generation (e.g. ticket sales, fundraising).' (Jensen, *CVP Report*, pp.26-27) rather than for significant creative or evaluative purposes. This is confirmed by Walsh et al in their *CVP Research Development Award* on 'Modelling cultural value in new media cultures of networked participation', which explored the challenges to large cultural institutions posed by the spread of digital networked cultures. They conclude that 'a false binary opposition persists between the concept of culture and the concept of the digital which is rooted in the historical separation of art from technology; a separation that continues to underpin the traditional distinction between high and low culture', and in a changed digital world 'museums […] continue to adopt the analogue broadcast model of one-to-many transmission based on traditional models of institutional cultural authority and disciplinary expertise.' (Walsh et al *CVP Report,* p.2).

### Digital technologies and cultural experience

We must in fact turn to commercial culture for the most significant changes in the way that arts and culture are experienced. Three of the most important products – music, film and books – can now all be downloaded and streamed from online sites. The sales of print books are not yet suffering as significantly from the ability to download digital versions as are physical sales of recorded music, perhaps because the physical object has different cultural and emotional resonances in the two cases. For film, it is difficult to obtain robust data on people's accessing it through online services, but it is clear that this is growing very fast, whether through rental video-on-demand, retail or download-to-own, subscription, or free

If digital access to commercial cultural works is the most extensive change of recent years, the potential for co-production of cultural content to blur the distinction between producer and consumer is one of the most striking.

services. The BFI expects 2015 to see on-demand services for film to exceed physical video for the first time. Cinema has, as we have seen, been a minor location for film watching for some time (BFI, 2014).

The sale of digital downloaded music exceeded that of CDs in 2011, and the transition has speeded up with the purchase of music downloads and now streaming through sites such as Spotify, or specialised services such as Pandora and Plug.dj. By 2014 a report concluded that music streaming was cannibalising download sales. This move from ownership of music to having access to it might alter how people experience music and what they experience, with an estimated 250m people worldwide in 2014 listening on streaming services, mostly free sites supported by advertising (Mulligan & Simpson, 2014). Add to this You Tube's emergence as 'a free global jukebox' (Foster & Ocejo, 2015, p.412). In music, artists increasingly make direct contact with their fan base, and there have been significant shifts in the power of traditional gatekeepers and tastemakers in a process described as disintermediation, with more direct connections between producers and consumers (Foster & Ocejo, 2015).

An equivalent process is found by Cooke et al with regard to heritage, and the potential of the digital 'not only to open up heritage culture to new groups, but also to enable a restructuring of authority and the possibility for a more democratic engagement with history', by inviting more perspectives to challenge received ideas about what constitutes value (Cooke et al *CVP Report*, p.6). The internet as a democratising tool (as Cooke et al acknowledge) needs to be treated with caution. New digital platforms can concentrate power as much as emancipate people from it. One key shift has been from corporates which control the production and distribution system to those that control the technology platforms. Meanwhile, the financial return to artists is often a great deal less. A report funded by the European Commission stressed that the cultural, entertainment and communication industries sought to control the tools and distribution channels for content, and explored how genuinely democratic cultural engagement might emerge in the digital sphere, with case studies of where this was happening in access and distribution, production of new work, digital fabrication, crowdfunding and access to collections (Conservas/ Xnet et al, 2014).

**The rise of co-production**

If digital access to commercial cultural works is the most extensive change of recent years, the potential for co-production of cultural content to blur the distinction between producer and consumer is one of the most striking. The convergence of digital platforms, social networks, online niche communities, and consumer-created creative content are at the heart of the development that the Italian economist Pier Luigi Sacco has called 'Culture 3.0'. Standard digital suites now provide semi-professional packages that are cheap and easy to use, while content can be distributed without mediators to highly segmented audiences through specialised social media such as the music composition and sharing site, SoundCloud.[8] Participation increasingly means not merely sampling existing content but adding new or remixed content, which has been described as an exchange-orientated more than an object-oriented culture (Valtysson, 2010).

In an expression that links it to the interest in 'everyday participation', these developments have been called 'vernacular creativity' (Edensor et al, 2010). This describes:

> *a range of intensely social forms and practices; from scrapbooking to family photography and the storytelling that forms part of casual chat. These are forms of creativity that predate digital culture, but that are shaping and being reshaped by the publicness of online social networks (like You Tube and Flickr) built around user-generated content. (Burgess, 2010, p.116).*

In a case study of Flickr, Burgess shows how the photo-sharing website's architecture allowed it to go beyond publishing and viewing images, to social and aesthetic engagement. Through social networking and communities of practice, users can share comments and advice, negotiating aesthetics and techniques. 'Participation that begins with casually storing and sharing family photos with an existing personal network can and does evolve into a more ambitious engagement with photography as a craft and a form of creative practice.' (Burgess, 2010, p.123).

[8] Pier Luigi Sacco, Plenary Lecture to 13th ELIA Biennial Conference, Glasgow, 13 November 2014

[The digital space] has considerable implications for how people experience culture and derive value from it.

**New dimensions of cultural value**

This case study of Flickr may be repeated in more demanding and often professionally-engaged environments such as SoundCloud and Machinima. Allington et al's *CVP Research Development Award* 'Online networks and the production of value in electronic music' explored the way that value is created in the electronic dance music environment of SoundCloud, where high-quality music production software for home production, alongside social networking and new media websites, provides new ways of making, sharing, commenting on and using music. With it, they argue, go different ways of creating value:

> *Digital downloads and streaming have changed the relationship between cultural value and economic value in music, both by drastically reducing the economic value of recorded music and by providing new ways to produce cultural value for music and the people who make it. (Allington et al, CVP Report, p.64).*

This doesn't prevent economic value being generated, notably through use by DJs, but much of the cultural value emerges from the international online social networks, as people share, comment, engage.

Harwood & Uwin's *CVP Research Development Award* 'Machinima: an investigation into the contribution of participatory and user-generated machine-cinema to cultural values', examined Machinima (machine-animation-cinema) that enables users to make original films from content derived from 3D video games engines and gameplay recorded in real time. Its impact has included the creative industries and the cultural sector – digital arts, film production, games developers, new media platforms and a broad audience. It involves 'a range of creative and cultural industries stakeholders, including user-generators, formal and informal networks of professional and amateur, institutional, commercial and not-for-profit participants.' (Harwood & Uwin, *CVP Report*, p.8). For those involved, machinima is above all a serious creative activity whose influence reaches well beyond the worlds of machinima or, indeed, of gamers. It is the crossing of boundaries in these new online communities that is striking. As one curator observed:

> *What was most interesting to me was how people created tools that didn't exist for utilising, and misuse things that did exist, to create something of their own based on material from popular culture. At the same time, we are following the world of mash-ups, cut-up media and appropriation within the moving arts. (p.56).*

Machinimators, games developers and art curators are the key triad here, creating links that are unlikely to have existed other than in the digital world.

In his *CVP Critical Review* on 'Fandom, participatory culture and cultural value', Sandvoss looks at a form of participatory digital culture where fan or user activity consists in creating, selecting and sharing texts, and sees the cultural value arising through processes of reception and production (Sandvoss *CVP Report*, p.21). In the same way that Flickr can be linked back into pre-digital worlds of vernacular creativity, so Cooke et al in their Critical Review on digital heritage see value being enhanced by non-professional participation, capitalising on 'much older ideas within public history literature about sharing authority and ownership of the past with all sorts of individuals and groups, not just academic historians and heritage professionals.' (Cooke *CVP Report*, p.6).

The digital space and its potential for new types of creativity and community does not, therefore, represent a wholly new impulse, and is still in its early stages. It nonetheless has considerable implications for how people experience culture and derive value from it. There are significant implications for the future. A Nesta report on young people (aged between 8 and 18) and digital making found that 83 per cent of respondents to their survey had made some kind of digital objects already: using creative skills in making pictures and music, technical skills in animation and websites, and complex learning about the underlying technology such as apps, robots and software. 53 per cent had made their own music using digital technology, 62 per cent had edited videos or visual effects, 76 per cent had made and manipulated digital pictures. Some activities took place at school, and many in the home and social environment outside, but the single biggest reason for digital making was because 'it's fun' (Quinlan, 2015). The ability of digital activity to shape people's engagement with

There have been attempts to show how the impact of art and culture on subjective wellbeing can be measured.

culture, and the way that they attach value to it, is at an early stage, but some of its dimensions are becoming clear.

## Wellbeing and capabilities

The last decade has seen wellbeing move onto the agenda of governments, agencies and cultural organisations, though the debates around it have been framed in different ways. The focus in the UK has been primarily, and perhaps disproportionally, on subjective wellbeing (Oakley et al, 2013). In contrast, multidimensional frameworks and the interrelation of different manifestations of wellbeing have gained traction in France and elsewhere (Stiglitz et al, 2009; OECD, 2011; UNDP, 2014). Although there have been attempts to show how the impact of art and culture on subjective wellbeing can be measured (e.g., CASE, 2010; Fujiawara, 2014), attempts to do something similar for the broader capabilities framework are rare. As the relationship between arts and culture and subjective wellbeing will be addressed in the chapter on *Health, ageing and wellbeing*, the main focus here is on the capabilities approach.

The last decade has seen attempts to reach beyond GDP measures and to 'shift emphasis from measuring economic production to measuring people's well-being.' (Stiglitz et al, 2009, p.12). The most influential initiative was the report of the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress (Stiglitz et al, 2009). There were other initiatives around the same time: the European Commission proposed a scoreboard approach to Quality of Life, complementing GDP with environmental and social indicators (Eurostat, 2014); the OECD's *Better Life Initiative* offered a statistical framework to capture data on material conditions and quality of life (OECD, 2011), and the United Nation's Human Development Index was 'created to emphasize that people and their capabilities should be the ultimate criteria for assessing the development of a country, not economic growth alone'.[9]

### The capabilities framework

Both the Human Development Index and the Stiglitz report were inspired by the capabilities framework, which conceptualises and operationalises an approach to wellbeing developed by Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum. This conceives of wellbeing in terms of freedom to choose a range of opportunities to be and to act. Examples of capabilities include 'being able to have good health' and 'being able to use the senses, to imagine, think, and reason' (Nussbaum, 2000). The key figures behind the approach are divided on whether a list of capabilities can and should be specified independently of the context of implementation (e.g. Nussbaum & Sen, 1993). The capabilities approach operationalises the question of social progress in a way that neither reduces it to objective economic measures nor makes the quality of life a wholly subjective matter. People's wealth and income and their perceptions of how happy they are may be part of a larger framework, but they are problematic as a measure of wellbeing in isolation.

The recognition that wellbeing has irreducible dimensions which can be measured, with separate indicators, presented an opportunity for the contribution that arts and culture make to human flourishing to be acknowledged, as suggested by Nussbaum's including freedom to use imagination as an important capability. This opportunity has largely been missed. With the exception of the UNESCO Culture for Development Indicator Suite, references to culture and the arts are absent from the indicators of wellbeing that have been developed in recent years. Nonetheless, UNESCO has worked with the Spanish Agency of International Cooperation for Development (AECID) to develop empirical indicators on the relationship between the value of culture and development across a number of dimensions: economic, social, governance, communication, heritage, education and gender equality. This was driven by the recognition that 'in an environment where indicators are used to set standards for development policies to be followed, the absence of indicators and tools to measure the role of culture represents a serious disadvantage, particularly at a time when the international community prepares to define the new post-2015 development agenda.' (UNESCO, 2012, p.4).

Work on the UK has been driven by the subjective wellbeing agenda (e.g. Dolan and White, 2007). The Office for National Statistics (ONS) responded to criticism over its having omitted cultural engagement by subsequently introducing it as one of 41 measures on its Well-being Wheel (ONS, 2013), but the programme has made no significant attempt to understand the relationship between cultural engagement and its other

[9] *http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-index-hdi*

We do not know whether those who participate in the arts simply fit the demographic profile of contented people: does participation improve wellbeing or is it that those who have good levels of wellbeing participate?

'contributors' to wellbeing. The government's more recent What Works Centre for Wellbeing is yet to report its findings. Notwithstanding rare attempts to place wellbeing in a wider framework (British Academy, 2014), the relationship between culture and wellbeing has been largely pursued through the prism of self-reported subjective assessments. This research is increasingly nuanced, recognising differences between affective and evaluative approaches and using the experience sampling method and a large ESM dataset called Mappiness (Fujiwara & MacKerron, 2015), but such approaches have been criticised for their emphasis on the hedonic aspect of wellbeing and on positive psychology (Kasser & Ryan, 1996; Kasser, 2002; Crompton, 2010; Lee et al, 2011).

**Cultural value and wellbeing: other measures**

Statistical modelling and data mining provide another way to explore the relationship between cultural value and wellbeing. Epidemiological, correlational studies in the Nordic countries have demonstrated an association between cultural activities and health, longevity and wellbeing (Gordon-Nesbitt, *CVP Report*). In the UK, the DCMS commissioned an analysis of Understanding Society data to develop the evidence base on the wellbeing impacts of cultural engagement and sport participation (Fujiwara et al, 2014). The 2010 CASE technical report uses data from Taking Part and the British Household Panel Survey (CASE 2010). Similar work has been undertaken in other countries, for instance in Canada and Italy, and we shall see further examples in the chapter on *Health, ageing and wellbeing*. A study in the US has established positive if modest linkage between participating in the arts and wellbeing for both consumers and producers; although the profiles of consumers of the arts fitted the profile of those likely to be happier than the average, the producers of some art forms (jazz, classical music and plays) were more likely to be satisfied with their standard of living, even though they were not wealthier than the average (Graham et al, 2014). This should be interpreted in light of Graham's previous findings from quantile regression techniques, which showed that 'the least happy respondents care most about income and are made most unhappy by unemployment. In contrast, the happiest respondents care the least about income and full-time employment, but care a lot about learning and creativity.' (Graham et al, 2014, p.3).

These statistical demonstrations are compelling but for many of them the challenges of disentangling confounding variables and establishing directions of causality remain. We do not know whether those who participate in the arts simply fit the demographic profile of contented people: does participation improve wellbeing or is it that those who have good levels of wellbeing participate? The work of Graham and colleagues uncovered interesting correlations, but statistical models tell us little about how arts and culture may make the differences revealed by the data. The Social Impact of the Arts Project (SIAP) at the University of Pennsylvania, by combining statistical analyses of neighbourhood cultural ecology with fieldwork and qualitative study, and most crucially by adopting a conceptual framework derived from the capabilities approach, seeks to address precisely this challenge for those trying to understand wellbeing.

We draw on SIAP's work, which centres on how arts and culture affect urban neighbourhoods and community life, in the chapters on *Communities, regeneration and space* and *The engaged citizen*. SIAP have in recent years started to use the capabilities approach as a conceptual framework for analysing the relationship between cultural engagement and other factors, formalising their approach with a multi-dimensional index that integrates arts and culture as a dimension of wellbeing. This index enables analysis of culture as both a response variable (looking at how cultural indicators differ in different neighbourhoods) and an explanatory variable (looking at how cultural indicators influence other dimensions of wellbeing such as social stress, personal health, school effectiveness, and security). This work has consistently shown that economic wellbeing (income, education and labour force participation) and social diversity have an impact on the distribution and concentration of cultural assets, while cultural engagement in turn influences other dimensions of wellbeing. Their early work showed that, in certain areas, indicators of revitalisation (reductions in poverty without social displacement, lower levels of social stress, improved child welfare outcomes, fewer incidents of ethnic and racial harassment) were correlated with measures of cultural engagement in a way that exceeded what economic wellbeing would have led one to expect. As they go on to explain in the same paper, their more recent work, however,

Focusing exclusively on how art and culture affect individual people might [...] be a mistake [...]. The effects of cultural engagement may originate in individual experience but certainly do not end there: they acquire different manifestations and acquire new properties that are not simply those associated with the individuals themselves.

suggests that the correlation between economic wellbeing and cultural assets has increased 'dramatically' over the last decade, diminishing the hope that cultural engagement might ameliorate some of the effects of economic deprivation (Stern & Seifert, 2013a). Their extension of this work to other cities will allow these relationships to be explored further.

SIAP's approach offers a fresh way of looking at cultural value by building an empirical investigation on the conceptual framework of the capabilities approach. Their cultural assets mapping techniques, which integrate demographic and cultural data, enable them to study the relationships between cultural engagement and other dimensions of social welfare, as well as to acknowledge the value of cultural engagement as an independent dimension. This brings into one framework two perspectives: the idea that art is to be recognised for its intrinsic worth as an independent dimension of the capabilities framework, and the importance of the effects of cultural engagement in relation to other dimensions of welfare.

> *On the one hand, we can document that a community with a rich cultural life is in some ways "richer" than one without it. On the other hand, we can go on to ask how the presence of cultural assets in a particular place may be associated with other types of social "goods", such as, better health or higher levels of social connection. (Stern & Seifert, 2013a, p.3).*

**Looking beyond the individual**

SIAP also offer a tentative diagnosis as to why it has proved difficult to advance some debates about cultural value, which is that by focusing on the individual we have been working with the wrong unit of analysis. We are continually trying to analyse the effects of individual organisations and programmes on individual people: SIAP argue that many claims, such as that arts participation reduces social alienation or increases voting rates, cannot be credibly and empirically demonstrated for specific art programmes, but require a sector-level analysis (Stern & Seifert, 2008). Focusing exclusively on how art and culture affect individual people might similarly be a mistake. While we have growing evidence that individuals are changed through encounters with the arts, it could be that the full effect of arts cultural engagement can be captured only if one accounts for the relational and collective changes, 'the ways in which the arts contribute to building community and linking different communities to one another' (Stern and Seifert, 2013b, p.196). We will return to the question of whether cultural value can be fully captured through an aggregation of individual values in the chapter on *Methodologies*. The effects of cultural engagement may originate in individual experience but certainly do not end there: they acquire different manifestations and acquire new properties that are not simply those associated with the individuals themselves. Multidimensional frameworks such as the capabilities approach may help shift the debate on cultural value into interesting new territory.

## KEY POINTS FROM CHAPTER

- Research into cultural value has often focused on publicly-funded activity in formal settings, whereas engagement takes place in a variety of settings that include purpose-built cultural buildings, small-scale adapted spaces, institutions such as care homes and prisons, and most commonly the home and the virtual space of the internet. Indeed, the home is where most engagement with cultural activities takes place.
- Amateur activity has too frequently been treated as a leisure pursuit, leading to neglect of its artistic or aesthetic dimensions and cultural value. The commercial production and distribution of cultural goods in the most widespread form of cultural experience, dominant in music, film games and literature, while also important in theatre. One consequence is that the separation between popular and high culture is increasingly becoming blurred, while the variety of locations and modes in which culture is experienced complicates consideration of cultural value.
- Much debate about inequalities is built upon a narrow definition of arts and culture, seeing it through hierarchies of taste or public funding and operating with what has been called a 'deficit model'. This report widens the definition to include more informal participation, commercial and amateur activities etc. Black, Asian and minority ethnic cultural forms and consumption have been particularly marginalised in discussions of cultural value and participation.
- Cultural experience has been significantly affected by the growth of digital technologies, which not only provide new ways for people to connect with cultural institutions but also new ways to experience commercial culture, for example through downloading and streaming music and film. The distinction between producer and consumer has become less clear with the rise of co-production and user-generated content.
- Recent years have seen wellbeing move onto the agenda of governments, agencies and cultural organisations. This is mostly understood to mean subjective wellbeing, how individuals describe their own feelings in terms of happiness or wellbeing. The broader capabilities approach, however, has captured significant international attention and offers the possibility of situating cultural participation within a wider range of contributions to wellbeing. We highlight the potential of a number of new initiatives, including the use of empirical research to explore the capabilities approach.



PART 2

# Components of cultural value



# CHAPTER 3

## THE REFLECTIVE INDIVIDUAL

Geese Theatre Company works with offenders in prison and after their release. In one particular prison performance, men convicted of domestic abuse watched a piece of theatre devised for abuse perpetrator treatment programmes. The audience of some ten men sat half on one side of the stage and half on the other. This meant that they could see each other as well as the performance. They saw versions of themselves as perpetrator, victim or child portrayed on the stage, and experienced through the prism provided by aesthetic distance. The art itself had a powerful impact, but so did watching their fellow prisoners watching the art, seeing their emotional responses and feeling that they legitimised their own (Gamman, *CVP Report*, p.15).

This is a graphic example of how art can provide the distance and the engagement that together provoke reflection. It opens up what for this report is a key component of cultural value, the ability of arts and cultural experience to help shape reflective individuals. The enlarged experiences associated with cultural engagement can be unpacked in various ways: an improved understanding of oneself, an ability to reflect on different aspects of one's own life, an enhanced sense of empathy which need not mean sympathy for others, but an empathetic appreciation of their difference, and a sense of the diversity of human experience and cultures. Beyond these personal yet socially important questions are those to which we turn in the next chapter: whether they are connected to a reinvigorated sense of civic and civil engagement, and perhaps to a more acute sense of the public realm and of social justice. This chapter will examine the claims that experiences of culture can change how we perceive ourselves, relate to others, and make sense of our place in the world. It might be seen as a response to Brecht's observation that 'every art contributes to the greatest art of all, the art of living' (Brecht, 1964).

Qualitative research is often the most effective way to capture what are often complex and nuanced experiences. Case studies, on art in the criminal justice system and on support for carers in healthcare, provide concrete examples of processes that can seem rather broad. They reinforce the argument that the distinction between the intrinsic and instrumental, in relation to cultural value, is analytically unhelpful, because the two so

**Below:** A performance of A Lifetime's Guarantee, depicting the history of the Raleigh Bicycle Factory and its workers



A key component of cultural value [is] the ability of arts and cultural experience to help shape reflective individuals.

Arts and culture as providing [young people] with an opportunity to reflect on their lives and identities.

clearly intertwine. Focusing on how individuals are affected is not the whole issue, of course, and might not be enough, while 'the ways in which the arts contribute to building community and linking different communities to one another' (Stern & Seifert 2013, p.196) is a further critical dimension. We start, nonetheless, with the individual.

## Cultural engagement and the self

The ways in which cultural engagement can lead to enhanced reflectiveness and understanding of oneself as both a cognitive and affective agent is central to its importance. This can operate for all types of cultural experience – a play or a film, a live concert or an art exhibition, a video game or a novel. It can influence the way we think about issues such as growing up, illness and ageing; it can provoke reflection and challenge for those working in disciplined modes of thinking, such as doctors and scientists; and, as in the case study in this section, it can provide a means by which offenders in prison can reflect on themselves. This inevitably shades into how we think about others, which is the theme of the next section. Underlying this all is an additional point, made by Rumbold and colleagues arising from their *CVP Research Development Award* on 'The uses of poetry.' Having noted that poetry is experienced in many everyday contexts – at school, at a wedding, on the radio, in a line once learned by heart and later recalled, as well as through reading – they observe that sense-making is intrinsically social and cultural, and that we make personal meaning through the social and cultural resources available to us. They see a poem as a mediating artefact between individual and community, and they ask in what way it is different from other artefacts. They invite us to consider something that is rarely tested; whether different art and cultural forms may work differently in terms of their impact on individuals.

A number of Cultural Value Project awards engage with the theme of growing up, illness and ageing, and with how people respond to these at a personal level. Manchester and Pett's *CVP Research Development Award* on 'Teenage Kicks: exploring cultural value from a youth perspective', in collaboration with cultural and arts organisations in different parts of Bristol, asked young people about their cultural lives and everyday participation. They concluded from focus group data that 'young people across our age range, gender and class divides clearly see practices around traditional arts and culture as providing them with an opportunity to reflect on their lives and identities.' Young people talked in particular about listening to and making music and watching films. 'Films,' one observed, 'can change and alter your mood, help you discover things.' Music was a favourite cultural form for another, 'because it allows me to say the things I can't say out loud, it allows me to express myself.' In whatever setting, they concluded, making and consuming art were valued by young people from very different backgrounds as outlets for self-expression. Research on adolescents' engagement with literature shows it leading to reflection on characters' motives and feelings, which they compared to their own, concluding that it is this hybrid process of identification and evaluation that helps shape self-understanding (Hancock, 1993).

Lambert's *CVP Research Development Award* on 'The value of Live Art: experience, politics and affect' used ethnographic and live methods to shed light on how creative engagement provokes reflection on issues facing young cancer sufferers and their carers, and on those who saw a resulting exhibition. In Fun with Cancer Patients, an artist and photographer worked with teenagers undergoing cancer treatment to explore how art might be a resource through which 'everyone can engage in un/making the scripts through which they live and make sense of their own lives.' One result was a 'bingbong ringtone' devised by the young patients as an amusing take on the warning noise that drove them all mad whenever the infusion machine that delivered their medication experienced problems. For both the patients themselves and the visitors to the exhibition, the ringtone memorably showed how an arts intervention could subvert expectations and allow a more complex story to be thought about.

### Challenging subjects

This ability of the arts to help engagement with challenging subjects also emerged from the *CVP Research Development Award* undertaken by Reinelt and colleagues on 'Critical mass: theatre spectatorship and value attribution'. Audiences were surveyed before, immediately after and then two months subsequent to performances of plays they attended at the Young Vic, Royal Shakespeare Company or the Plymouth Drum. What people said about the value of the experience changed over time, reminding us how rarely the longitudinal

Audiences saw having their value system challenged by a play, and reflecting on their own world view in a live and shared social setting, as something they appreciated.

dimension of cultural engagement is given the attention it deserves. The contrast was between 'affect' immediately after the performance, sensory aspects such as the production and performance themselves, and a greater focus on the 'cognitive' two months later, by which time respondents were primarily reflecting on the themes and ideas in the play. The researchers conclude that audience members associate the ideas and feelings generated by the performance with other aspects of their lives and times, they process their thoughts and feelings about the experience, and over time change the inflection if not the elements of their judgments, not least as they share their experiences with family and friends. In Walmsley's research interviewing theatre-goers in Melbourne and Leeds, audiences saw having their value system challenged by a play, and reflecting on their own world view in a live and shared social setting, as something they appreciated (Walmsley, 2013). Reinelt et al have less to say about the content of the reflection beyond the connections with the individual's own experience and the wider world, including issues such as illness and mortality. Another dimension of performance as a route to reflection can be seen in the work of Roger Kneebone, Professor of Surgical Education at Imperial, who enabled what goes on in an operating theatre to be captured artistically and interpreted in terms of performativity and choreography, with a view to helping those working in those settings think differently about what they do and why they do it.[10]

The ways in which cultural engagement provides the space in which disruption to established ways of thinking might safely take place is increasingly recognised in medicine and science. We consider later the use of arts and culture to develop empathy during the training of medical care professionals, but they are also deployed to help doctors reflect upon their own assumptions and practices. Kirklin tells how an extract from Louis de Berniere's *Captain Corelli's Mandolin*, about a doctor's response to a little girl who had found a pine marten trapped in barbed wire, led to a group of doctors discussing their own practice and expectations, and how they think about patients' expectations of them. 'Stepping outside their own role for an hour,' she writes 'allowed these doctors room to begin to explore the richness as well as the frustrations of the doctors' calling.' She also used Oscar Wilde's parable 'The doer of good', in which a figure walks through a beautiful city encountering the ambivalent results of his earlier good deeds, to stimulate GP registrars to discuss their attitudes to consent, duty of care and autonomy in a way that would not have been as thoughtful nor as open had they been addressed directly. Their understanding that wishing to do good isn't always the same as doing it opened up a discussion of Alder Hey and the retention of children's organs (Kirklin, 2001).

**Bringing artists and scientists together**

Arts and science programmes are now commonplace, enabling scientific processes and findings to inspire artists to develop new work and new ideas, or using the arts to communicate scientific work as part of a public engagement agenda. Art can construct a space where the expertise of science can engage a lay public on ethical, political and environmental issues. There is a further dimension in which bringing artists and scientists together can open up creative spaces for each and, of particular interest to us, how it might impact on ways of thinking that are embedded in specific fields of scientific practice. As Michael Doser, an experimental physicist on CERN's cultural board for the arts, observed: 'what I find wonderful about working with artists is that they are just as fascinated by side routes and diversions as they are by the direction in which they are going. This is what makes artistic work really different from scientific work' (Koek, 2011).

Two workshops organised by the Cultural Value Project with partners[11] addressed this by exploring collaborations between artists and scientists. Might such encounters challenge the scientist as much as the artist, compelling each to reflect upon their established practice and assumptions? Two collaborations presented at the workshops were examples of how this might happen. Josef Parvizzi, a neurologist specialising in epilepsy, was mesmerised at a concert when he heard a Terry Reilly composition that used the sonification of data from NASA's Voyager mission played by the Kronos Quartet. He wondered whether it might be possible to sonify what is going on in the brain at the time of an epileptic event when the only visible

[10] *www.theguardian.com/science/blog/2013/nov/06/secret-language-surgery*

[11] The AHRC Science in Culture Theme was a partner in both workshops, with Arts@CERN for the first and the University of Birmingham Institute of Advanced Studies for the second; the discussion that follows draws on the presentations and debate at 'In conversation: arts and science' at the University of London, 9 October 2014, and 'In collaboration: arts and science', at the University of Birmingham, 15 September 2015

Cultural engagement provides the space in which disruption to established ways of thinking might safely take place.

symptom is unresponsiveness. Might one listen to the music of the brain and avoid the four-hour wait for EEG results to be available? Working with Chris Chafe, a composer and colleague at Stanford, they developed a 'brain stethoscope' to enable one to listen to the sonification of brain activity and within seconds recognise from the pattern of the music whether the activity was abnormal. The conceptual breakthrough for the neurologist came from an arts experience, which suggested entirely different modes of diagnosis to those within the EEG paradigm.

Data turned into sound appears very differently in the collaboration between astrophysicist Bill Chaplin and composer Caroline Devine, which involved the sonification of helioseismological data from the BiSON network and NASA's Kepler data gathered over the past four years.[12] Devine's music, as well as having its own aesthetic qualities, served as a springboard for understanding more about the natural resonances that convey information about the structure and evolution of stars. Furthermore, Chaplin notes that working with Devine might have changed the nature and range of the scientific questions he asks, including new questions around bio-markers. And when Devine suggested that the patterns might be thought of in terms of an arpeggio, Chaplin wondered whether this might push him and his colleagues away from the conventional approach to their science, finding different ways of extracting from the data an understanding of how stars rotate. If theoretical science in particular transforms the maths and equations within which it works into metaphors for the purpose of articulation ('quarks', 'dark matter' and so on), the type of critical thinking that the arts bring can probe and disturb those metaphors.

The workshops raised significant issues about the capacity of art to provoke reflection, and also about how disciplinary structures of practice and discourse can come together not to reinforce existing differences, but to construct third spaces in which new knowledge and ways of thinking might emerge. The evaluation of the Wellcome Trust's Sciart programme reported some of the scientists involved as saying that they were more risk-taking and speculative as a result of working with artists, though the processes by which collaborations change ways of thinking remains underexplored. Participants tend to fall back on conventional narratives both about the separate disciplines and what happens when they come together. The visual matrix methodology, which we will encounter in Froggett et al's Cultural Value Project award on public art later in this report, has been interestingly used to elicit what goes on in the intermediary space (Muller et al, 2015). The workshops saw the bridging process as a challenge, with the need for common points of reference and a common language rather than a cautious use of existing disciplinary languages, if interaction were to be disruptive and also understood. Our attempts to focus on the process rather than the outcome of collaboration turned out to be a productive way forward.

**The affective dimension**

The focus of this chapter on reflection might seem to privilege the cognitive over the affective dimensions of the arts and cultural experience but a real understanding has to grasp the interaction between the two. Garrod's *CVP Research Development Award* on 'Investigating the role of Eisteddfodau in creating and transmitting cultural value in Wales and beyond', for example, established the importance of the emotional dimension of people's participation in Eisteddfodau in enhancing their sense of self, their understanding of themselves and where they fit culturally: these were affective as well as cognitive processes.

Winter's *CVP Research Development Award* 'A Somatic Ethnography of Grand Gestures Elders Dance Group', meanwhile, explores these issues through an ethnographic study of the Grand Gestures Elders Dance Group based in Gateshead. The group comprises some 14 dancers aged between 60 and 90 who develop improvisatory dance that they take into residential homes for the elderly, and into public spaces. Winter concludes that the affective experience of dancing has a formative and re-configurative impact on the participants' self-identity. Dancing, she argues, can be characterised as a 'state of intensified somatic sensory awareness' which can be understood as 'a mode of reflection on the self […]. It can be linked to the idea of 'presence', a reflective and potentially empowering sense of inhabiting the here and now […]. It can also lead to ponderings on identity.' The dance provokes participants to think about the performance of daily life. A recurrent theme in their descriptions of the sessions is the difference between the self that they daily perform for others and the more authentic self they say they experience in the absorption of the

[12] *http://poeticsofouterspace.wordpress.com/2014/06/23/leverhulme-residency*

How might arts engagement generate not only reflections on one's own life but also an ability in some sense to see the world differently?

improvisatory dance sessions. As one observed of her own identity 'there's more to me than putting that coat on and going to Fenwicks.'

Winter's research reminds us how little research has been done to explain, rather than just establish, connections such as these across the arts. How might arts engagement generate not only reflections on one's own life but also an ability in some sense to see the world differently? Kasser has drawn on extensive empirical research in psychology to argue that the arts can reinforce more altruistic values and behaviours than those founded on personal success, moving beyond rhetoric or theory and towards the empirical testing of his propositions (Kasser, 2013). The arts may serve to provoke reflection and reinforce certain values, but whether these point necessarily in one direction as Kasser proposes is more doubtful. As we note elsewhere, arts and culture have at times served to engender values other than the altruistic, to serve repressive regimes and to sharpen tensions between communities.

**New knowledge, new understanding?**

What is it that research of this kind needs to explain – is it that cultural engagement provides new knowledge? Trooby and Cosmides argue that the contribution of cultural engagement to human development 'consists mostly of what might, for want of a better word, be called skills: skills of understanding and skills of valuing, skills of feeling and skills of perceiving, skills of knowing and skills of moving.' (Trooby & Cosmides, 2001). This is consonant with John's argument that cultural engagement can provide us with 'rehearsal-type' situations where we can practice our moral responses (John 2001). If cultural engagement provides a setting in which to reflect on one's moral attitudes, might this apply to other emotional responses relevant to self-understanding, for example by creating a safe environment to explore difficult or challenging subjects? It is an issue that we shall meet again, for example in the way in which the arts and culture are used in prisons or in post-conflict situations.

Davis's *CVP Research Development Award* on 'Assessing the intrinsic value of The Reader Organisation's Shared Reading Scheme' examines the way that cultural engagement provides the basis for different kinds of understanding, thus connecting to Rumbold's *CVP Report* which underlines the way that the cognitive process is enhanced by the emotional experience.

The Shared Reading scheme rests on an extensive organisation with over 360 groups in health and care settings across the UK, including community centres, homeless shelters, hospitals, prisons, drug rehab units and care homes. Small participatory groups read aloud and discuss together short stories, novels and poetry. An interdisciplinary team of linguists, psychologists and literary specialists analysed group sessions and individual interviews that had been audio-recorded and transcribed. Their analysis provides a rich entry into the way that literature experienced through group reading generates lessons and understandings that differ from those learned in a linear fashion. Rather, 'thinking backwards (or backwards and forwards) rather than straightforwardly re-enacts something of the density of the literature's meaning'. They conclude:

> *The literature widens and enriches the human norm, accepting and allowing for traumas, troubles, inadequacies, and other experiences usually classed as negative or even pathological. It is a process of recovery – in a deeper sense of spontaneously retrieving for use experiences and qualities that were lost, regretted, or made redundant. (Davis CVP Report, p.48).*

Those at the launch of the project's report saw video-recordings of sessions in which individuals, often damaged or insecure in their lives and with little prior experience of reading creative literature, shared thoughts about themselves that emerged from discussion of specific literary texts and their language. The ways in which precise points in a text sent individuals in different directions, both within the text and within their own personal experiences, emerge graphically. A participant who suffers from a neurological disability talked about her difficulty in explaining how she felt to doctors:

> *Sometimes I don't, you know […]. Because unless you find the right words, they don't understand what you're talking about. And sometimes when you read a poem or a story or whatever, you read it and you're thinking that writer has just hit the nail on the head, and you know, I know exactly what he's talking about. (Davis CVP Report, p.19)*

Davis concludes:

> *In the transcripts a much-repeated locution unconsciously adopted by participants of different social background and educational experience is the phrase 'it is as though' or 'it's*

## Is it that cultural engagement provides new knowledge?

*almost as if' or 'it is almost like' or 'I feel as though'. It is commonly the prelude or bridge to a bold and interesting breakthrough in thought (as opposed to the tonal opinionatedness of, say, 'I just/still think'). Arising out of an uncertainty or hesitation that is nonetheless far from disabling, it is a tool that allows time, space and permission for tentative, imaginative thinking, close to the intrinsic spirit of literary thinking itself.' (Davis CVP Report, p.20)*

The experience of the Shared Reading groups, working with participants for whom reflection, articulacy and self-understanding have often been problematic, makes a case study of arts in the criminal justice system particularly pertinent.

## Case study: arts, culture and the criminal justice system

There are many initiatives that use arts and culture with prisoners, ex-offenders, and those on probation and parole. The Clean Break theatre company works with women who have offended or are at risk of offending; Fine Cell Work trains prisoners and then commissions from them needlework to be done when locked in their cells; Dance United, in West Yorkshire, organises an intensive dance-led programme, The Academy, for young people who had offended or were at risk of offending; Safe Ground use drama to help offenders re-evaluate their relationships with their families; Pimlico Opera stages performances of operas with prisoners; the Koestler Trust provides an opportunity for prisoners involved in art and creative writing practice to submit their work for exhibitions and awards, and Geese Theatre Company in Birmingham brings drama into prisons.

In spite of the plethora of initiatives, debate continues over whether and in what ways they make a difference. It is not just the quality of evaluations that is at issue, but also the question of what difference it is that is under investigation. Gamman and Plant's *CVP Expert Workshop* on 'Exploring and evaluating the cultural value of arts and creativity in the criminal justice system' enabled practitioners and researchers to explore these issues, and the resulting report, alongside some of the key research literature, informs this case study.

Consideration of arts and culture in the criminal justice system highlights the distinction between instrumental and personal benefits, and the way they are often too simplistically separated. If we look for a straightforward impact on re-offending rates, it is neither as consistent nor as convincing as some claim, yet many in the criminal justice system are supportive of arts initiatives because they know that arts activity benefits each participant, changing them in ways that reflect their individual contexts, even if the evidence for the effects on reoffending is genuinely unclear. This is hardly surprising given the complexity of forces determining the likelihood of an individual reoffending. It is relevant to ask whether personal change delivers the instrumental benefits sought, but it should not deflect attention from the significance of that personal change itself. That is why the criminal justice system is a good case study of the relationship between cultural engagement and personal reflectiveness.

### The journey towards desistance

Analysis of how offenders move away from criminal activity now focuses on the concept of 'desistance' (Maruna, 2001) which helps explain why personal offender change has become more prominent than reoffending rates in the analysis of arts in prisons. Desistance is 'the process of personal growth through which offenders become non-offenders' (Arts Alliance, 2013, p.2). If desistance is not an event but a process, then it is unlikely to be adequately tested by knowing whether an offender has reoffended in a given timeframe, as opposed to by evaluation of a journey of change that can be effectively tracked only through the intermediary steps that may lead to desistance from crime. Girodana et al propose a four-stage process: openness to change, exposure to 'hooks' for change, imagining and believing in a replacement self, and change in the way in which offending is viewed. Although the first can be helped by taking part in an arts project, they argue that it has most impact in relation to the third, imagining a different self (Girodana et al, 2002). Indicators of the process of desistance include improved confidence, motivation and self-esteem, an ability to accept ambiguity, to form more open and positive relationships, and developing an identity as someone who sees options and is willing to go through the learning process to achieve an alternative future.

Few would claim that arts projects can lead to desistance by themselves. As Cheliotis & Jordanoska have insisted, it is difficult to isolate the effects of activities in prison on developments in prisoners' lives after release. In the face

The arts typically leave ambiguities and silences, allowing individuals to create their own responses and understanding, helped by the arts practitioners' open, collaborative style. In a criminal justice world where there is little room for uncertainty, this can be very powerful.

of major challenges such as those around housing and employment, it is doubtful whether the effects of programmes in prison could be sustained without subsequent support and programmes in the community (Cheliotis & Jordanoska, forthcoming 2016). Social capital in particular – the bonds provided by home, family, workplace and community – are important, alongside the human capital of skills and thinking developed in prison. A systematic evaluation of the Koestler Trust's mentoring scheme for former prisoners by the same team reinforced this conclusion. They used a mixed-methods approach that included interviews, observation, reports and a survey-based quasi-experimental design with control groups. Their conclusion was that the scheme should be judged by what it might reasonably be expected to achieve, and that arts-based programmes in custodial and post-custodial settings cannot alone lead to desistance from crime, though post-custodial mentoring and continuing practice made a significant difference in comparison with the control groups even six to nine months after the scheme had ended, in spite of the challenges of post-release life (Cheliotis, 2014).

At the heart of desistance is an ability to think about oneself and others, to see genuine choices and options, to imagine other life circumstances and other possible futures. Arts engagement makes a serious contribution to this process. The literature surveyed in *Inspiring Change*, an evaluation of an extensive Scottish programme involving seven national cultural organisations working in five prisons, points to better relationships with prison staff and families as well as with fellow prisoners, improved self-esteem, communication and social skills, the ability to work in a group, and prisoners developing an identity as a competent learner (Anderson et al 2011). The *Re-Imagining Futures* report on England offered overlapping findings from the projects it researched: the projects enabled individuals to begin to redefine themselves, produced a positive effect on their ability to work with others which correlated with increased self-control, and provided safe spaces for offenders to take risks and begin to make individual choices (Arts Alliance, 2013). Safe Ground was given that name by the prisoners with whom the organisation worked, who said they felt 'safe' in the drama workshops in which they took part (Conroy, 2011). Many prisoners interviewed for *Re-Imagining Futures* spoke of how they grew in such an environment, moving from wanting to be told what to do in the arts practice, to thinking about the art they saw, and then pushing themselves to achieve more in techniques, expression and so on (Arts Alliance, 2013).

Any intensive intervention in which prisoners work together and receive individual attention might be capable of delivering beneficial outcomes, but it has been argued that many of these projects show the distinctive effects of the arts. The arts typically leave ambiguities and silences, allowing individuals to create their own responses and understanding, helped by the arts practitioners' open, collaborative style. In a criminal justice world where there is little room for uncertainty, this can be very powerful. The imaginative frame provided by these arts interventions 'help prisoners to "imagine" different possible futures, different social networks, different identities and lifestyles' (Anderson et al 2011, p.10).

**Art forms and contexts**

Is there something distinctive about the art form itself? Drama depends on assuming another identity, and Geese Theatre's use of masks in performances might intensify prisoners sense of being allowed to hold multiple perspectives. An ethnographic study of dance showed its character to be critical to the outcomes with young offenders: focus, embodied confidence, co-operative and non-verbal learning interactions, teamwork and group identification, an emotionally-charged field, inspiration and aspiration. For those with low verbal competency, intensity of physical and expressive behaviour through the non-verbal medium of dance provided an important route to confidence (Miles & Strauss, 2008).

In the case of literature, Colvin asked why prisoners in Berlin's Tegel prison engaged in such a committed way with theatre developed from a classic canonical text by the prison theatre company Theater auf Bruch. She concluded that the multi-perspectival category of literary narratives provided an important space of 'complex, paradoxical or plural meanings', contrasting not only with the monolithic structures of authority in prison life but also with simple 'redemption narratives' in which offenders saw themselves become good when once they were bad. Literature, for Colvin, plunges the offender back into the complexity of their own experience and narratives; emerging from the simplicity of existing identities and stories is essential for personal change (Colvin, 2015). This might help explain the strikingly lower recidivism rates for US probationers who attended a seminar programme in modern

Arguing that absence of *demonstrable* impact did not mean that the projects were ineffective, the review recommended establishing a range of intermediate outcomes that could be linked to reductions in re-offending.

The relationship between empathy and cultural activity, as well as on the use of international cultural interaction to further dialogue and trust.

American literature as an alternative to prison in a very large-scale comparison with those who followed a regular probation programme (Schutt et al, 2004).[13]

Is there a difference between group and individual activities? Prisoners who engage with Fine Cell Work overwhelmingly do their sewing and textile crafts in their cells, and speak of the benefits of calm and distraction from other aspects of their lives. Evaluations show benefits to do with resilience and well-being, and using earnings to reconnect with family responsibilities, but the aspects of thinking about themselves, their identity and their engagement with others, which are prevalent in the group art forms, did not emerge as prominent (Browne & Rhodes, 2011).

Many projects culminate in a public performance or exhibition that presents the personal journey and achievement to family and others as a fundamental part of the desistance process (Cheliotis & Jordanowska, forthcoming 2016; also Anderson et al, 2013), providing a way for participants to re-engage other than as a prisoner. Safe Ground's 'Fathers Inside' programme used drama to improve the ways in which prisoners relate to their partners and children (Boswell et al, 2011).

**Evidence of impact**

A distinction was drawn earlier between defining impact in terms of reoffending rates and looking at the process of personal change on the desistance journey towards becoming non-offenders. The uneven quality of the evaluations of the personal change dimensions must, however, be acknowledged. Too many evaluations provide insufficient explanation of the methodological issues, work with overly-small samples, and suffer from selection bias. They also find it hard to capture longer-term effects: once offenders have left prison it is difficult to maintain research contact, and the multitude of challenges they face make it hard to isolate a previous arts intervention as a variable. The effects of arts programmes outside prison, targeted at offenders and ex-offenders, are for these reasons easier to assess. An attempt to estimate the economic benefit of arts in the criminal justice system concluded that, for charities working within prisons and at several steps removed from directly influencing re-offending, economic analysis was unlikely to be appropriate (Johnson et al, 2014).

[13] There were 673 in the Changing Lives through Literature initiative and 1,574 in the control group

The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) recently commissioned a rapid evidence assessment of the intermediate outcomes of arts projects in England and Wales, which confirmed earlier evaluations in finding no solid evidence that arts projects were able to have a direct impact on re-offending (Burrowes et al 2013; also Hughes, 2005). Arguing that absence of *demonstrable* impact did not mean that the projects were ineffective, the review recommended establishing a range of intermediate outcomes that could be linked to reductions in re-offending, and NOMS commissioned the authors to develop a toolkit that would allow these to be evaluated. This focus on intermediate outcomes builds a bridge between desistance and re-offending rates approaches, especially as intermediate outcomes such as personal agency, inclusivity, motivation, interpersonal trust, hope and resilience map well onto those identified by desistance studies (Burrowes et al, 2013).

This work for NOMS moves away from seeing the impact required of arts interventions as being a measurable causal link between them and re-offending in a real-world situation where it is difficult to separate out the different variables, above all after an offender leaves prison. If desistance theory privileges personal change and individual reflectiveness in the journey towards becoming a non-offender, then this case study, notwithstanding the unevenness of some of the evidence, suggests that intermediate outcomes provide a basis for further research, especially where ethnographic work is to be part of a mixed-methods approach.

## Cultural engagement and the other

Reflection about oneself and about others is necessarily intertwined, but it is helpful to focus separately on the research that has explored how cultural engagement may engender understanding of others. This section draws together work on the relationship between empathy and cultural activity, as well as on the use of international cultural interaction to further dialogue and trust. It includes an exploration of empathy in more depth through a case study of those with professional and family caring responsibilities.

In their *CVP Research Development Award* on 'Music, empathy and cultural understanding', Clarke and his colleagues observe that 'empathy has recently seemed to gain

considerable attention/ currency in musicology, psychology of music, sociology of music and ethnomusicology as a way to conceptualize a whole range of affiliative, identity-forming, and 'self-fashioning' capacities in relation to music.' They identify two distinct views of how it should be understood, distinguishing between 'empathy as a skill or social achievement – acquired, educable, and in some sense fundamentally collective; and empathy as a trait – relatively fixed, individual, and with a genetic component.' (Clarke et al *CVP Report,* p.4 & p.6; see pp.5-15 for a helpful examination of different disciplinary approaches to empathy).

Clarke et al draw on work by Laurence (2008) , who finds in Adam Smith's *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759) a fundamental distinction between identifying with how someone feels on the one hand, and imagining how we would feel in that situation, on the other. While the first might be achieved by no more than contagion, the second locates what Smith calls 'sympathy' in the domain of imaginative reason. It is because this response can be evoked and learned through imaginative reason that cultural engagement has been seen as one route to achieving it. Laurence describes empathising as a process by which we retain our firm sense of ourselves as a distinct consciousness which is nonetheless able to 'enter […] actively and imaginatively into others' inner states to understand how they experience their world and how they are feeling, reaching out to what we perceive as similar while accepting difference.' (Laurence, 2008, p.24).

**Literature, music and empathy**

Theory of Mind offers another dimension of this, describing our capacity to comprehend that people other than ourselves have mental states, that they hold beliefs, responses and emotions that may not be identical to our own. It has recently been much deployed in the study of literature, seeking to explain the experience of reading in terms of perspective-taking, through which people try to understand what another person is going through not by feeling their experiences as if they were their own but, rather, doing so without losing sight of their own identity (Zunshine, 2006; Keen, 2010; Pagan, 2014).

Kidd and Castano's experimental psychology study of the relationship between literary fiction and Theory of Mind tested such claims through a series of five experiments, from which they concluded that reading literary fiction led to better performance on tests of both affective and cognitive Theory of Mind, compared with reading nonfiction, popular fiction or nothing at all (Kidd & Castano, 2013). They ask what it is about literary fiction that develops Theory of Mind, and suggest that it is because the feelings, thoughts and experiences of the characters have to be inferred and interrogated by the reader rather than being discovered through explicit narrative. 'Just as in real life,' they observe, 'the worlds of literary fiction are replete with complicated individuals whose inner lives are rarely easily discerned but warrant exploration.' (p.378). This, they say, may account for the success of literature in programmes to promote empathy among doctors and life skills among prisoners.

Similar findings are reported by Mar et al, with good correlation between exposure to fiction and performance on empathy/ social-acumen measures (Mar et al, 2006). In a further study led by Mar, different forms of narrative media, such as storybooks and movies, have been shown to influence children's development of Theory of Mind (Mar et al, 2010). Kidd and Castano acknowledge that their experiments do no more than demonstrate the short-term effects of reading literary fiction: the standard tests for affective and cognitive Theory of Mind were undertaken very soon after the reading. We know little about how well they persist without regular topping up, although the initiative with staff of US Veterans Administration hospitals, reported below, captures longer-term benefits of literature for carers' levels of empathy.

Clarke et al summarise the ways in which music has been shown by research in many disciplines to contribute not only to individual identity, but also to identification with the feelings, experiences and communities of others. The well-known neuroscience case of mirror neurons, has been directly linked to empathy. Others are more broadly related to the building of affiliation or community through the psychological or sociological experience of music.

A good example is evidence that the synchronicity of music induces more co-operative and empathetic behaviour on the part of those who have shared the experiences. A small experiment by Clarke et al tested the proposition that if music listening were able to evoke empathy and affiliation, then 'listening to music from a particular culture might also reduce prejudice and increase affiliation towards

The proposition that if music listening were able to evoke empathy and affiliation, then 'listening to music from a particular culture might also reduce prejudice and increase affiliation towards members of that culture more generally.'

members of that culture more generally.' They wanted to test previous research findings in an individual rather than a participatory setting, and used a quasi-experimental design to test whether listening to music from a particular culture, in the experiment Indian and West African cultures, would influence how individuals saw members of that cultural group more generally. The results revealed that individuals with pre-existing higher dispositional empathy scores show an unconscious preference for people from a given cultural group after listening to music belonging to that cultural group. The researchers are nonetheless cautious about this positive result: the experiment tells us nothing about the duration of the effects, and must be read alongside clear evidence that music can also be divisive, reinforcing conflictual identities.

**Empathy and other cultural forms**

Art forms such as drama, literature, film and photography, where the other is represented in the work itself, might be more obvious candidates than music for facilitating empathy. Apart from literature, however, we know far less about this than we do for music. Many initiatives have sought to re-humanise the other in the face of cultural and political stereotypes. The British Council's striking exhibition and book of Nick Danziger's photographs of everyday life in North Korea is one example. Photos, such as those of women in a hairdressing salon or young women sharing their excitement at a ring that one of them is wearing, reach out across the stereotype of North Korea's inhabitants as one-dimensional victims of repression (British Council, 2014a). Yet without an evaluation of responses to these photos we have only anecdotal responses. The British Museum's exhibitions on Iraq and Afghanistan, meanwhile, were an explicit attempt to move beyond the narrow stereotypes created by recent wars, and show the richness of the history, culture and people of each.[14] The Horniman Museum's linked exhibitions, of photographs of Romanians living in London and the history of Romanian clothing, sought a similar re-humanisation of people who had been represented narrowly in recent British political discourse.[15] The ambitions are clear, but without formal evaluations of visitor responses we cannot know how far those ambitions were achieved.

Such evaluations were part of a project on Disability Representation in Museums and Galleries, which saw nine partner museums develop new approaches to the presentation and interpretation of disabled people's lives. The approaches involved exhibitions, displays and educational programmes which all prioritised the voices of people with disabilities. Some involved rethinking a display that had always been about disability, such as that of Joseph Merrick (also known as the Elephant Man) at the Royal London Hospital Archives & Museum, and of Daniel Lambert, hitherto known only for his unusually large size, in Stamford Museum. The programme's mixed-methods evaluation, which included interviews, focus groups and ethnographic observation, concluded that the displays had shifted both understanding and attitudes in relation to people with disabilities. The diversity and complexity of visitor responses were nonetheless striking, on the one hand engaging with the social model of disability and the language of rights and equality, but on the other often talking a language of personal tragedy and heroic survival that troubled the project's Think Tank of disabled activists and artists. The power of the museum to influence perceptions of the other had challenged stereotypes, but by repositioning rather than entirely removing them (Dodd et al, 2008).

## Case study: professional and informal carers

The ability to reflect about oneself and others is an important basis for empathy. This has been widely recognised in relation to healthcare, where reflective capacity is integral to the competencies defined by the General Medical Council (General Medical Council, 2009). In the medical and care environments, medicalisation in the former and daily routine in the latter can create distance between the cared-for and those who are responsible for their care. The Francis Report identified 'compassion deficit' as one of the greatest problems facing the National Health Service (Francis, 2013).

Arts engagement has emerged not as an alternative to formal systems of training, but as being able to play a significant role within that training and in the more fluid care environment. The evidence derives from different kinds of study, especially where family carers are included, as well as professionals in medical practice and care homes, and it makes an illuminating case study to help understand the broader theme of this chapter.

[14] *Babylon, Myth & Reality* (2008-09) and *Afghanistan. Crossroads of the Ancient World* (2011)

[15] *Revisiting Romania: Portraits from London* (2014-15) and *Revisiting Romania: Dress and Identity* (2014-15)

Cultural engagement in care settings can test the relationship between carers and those cared for, as well as having the potential to improve it.

**Bringing together the carers and those cared-for**

Arts initiatives explicitly devised to bring together professional carers and those for whom they care, or initiatives where the depth of carers' engagement makes it a collaborative activity, are the most relevant here. As Bungay et al observe in their *CVP Critical Review* on 'The value of the arts in therapeutic and clinical interventions', 'caregivers and their cultural values are frequently the lynchpin in the relationship between the artists organising the activities and the "patients" or "service users".' (Bungay *CVP Report*, p.8). The challenge brought by this lynchpin status is particularly visible in Pajaczkowska's *CVP Research Development Award* on 'Empathy by Design'. Residents of a care home for people living with dementia collaborated in weekly workshops to devise tiles from textile materials, which were then used to decorate the home. While the positive outcomes for residents and some staff were considerable, the project reported that many staff appeared to feel threatened by 'the depth of the experience of personal individuation' which the workshop participants experienced. Staff were committed and sought to make residents happy, but nonetheless felt most secure when the residents were seen as patients, and recipients of care and activities, rather than partners in them. What Pajaczkowska described as 'emotional dysfunction in the relationship between residents and staff' became visible through the arts workshops and the responses of residents: the creative engagement, the laughter and banter, and the focus for conversations with family visitors. Cultural engagement in care settings can test the relationship between carers and those cared for, as well as having the potential to improve it.

Crawford's notion of 'mutual recovery' in mental health sees recovery as a process uniting carers, practitioners and sufferers, irrespective of their levels of specialisation and whether care is provided professionally or informally. Crawford et al argue that cultural engagement can provide the platform needed to build communities of care, developing reciprocity and resilience through collaborative practice. They draw on a considerable body of existing work to argue:

> *Research demonstrates the importance of arts for 'recovery orientated mental health services', how they provide ways of breaking down social barriers, of expressing and understanding experiences and emotions, and of helping to rebuild identities and communities. (Crawford et al, 2013, p.55)*
>
> *They can help to create the kind of 'compassionate' spaces […] characterised by mutuality, trust, shared understanding and recognition […] so needed for mental health recovery.' (p.59).*

While this is important for those with mental health needs themselves, the practice also addresses the overlooked needs of health professionals and informal carers.[16]

Arts initiatives that bring together carers and those for whom they care underline how the recognition of the individuality of the person cared-for constitutes a critical step to empathy. The Storybox Project in Manchester involved theatrical interventions in residential, clinical and day-case settings, in which artists, people with dementia and professional carers worked together. In the evaluation, professional carers reported that the participatory activities affected how they saw the dementia sufferers, explaining that through shared creative activity they re-emerged as real, distinct people (Harries, 2013). In a *CVP Critical Review* 'Mark Making: a critical review of the value of arts and culture for people with a dementia', Zeilig et al cite a range of research showing how reflective narratives have been used to help dementia nursing staff think about the patient as a whole person, while fiction has been used in the education of health care professionals to help understand the lived experiences of people with dementia, and develop imaginative empathy.

**Empathy and understanding in clinical practice**

Many medical and care education programmes that use arts to enhance clinical skills address the reflectiveness through which the patient emerges as an individual. In a recent editorial about doctors reading literature, *The Lancet* insisted that they needed to be able to embrace ambiguity and uncertainty, and argued that:

> *books offer the opportunity to see the world from a different perspective, through the vicarious experiences of other people, places and times […]thoughtful reading helps develop the observation, analysis, and reflection that are fundamental to delivering good care. (The Lancet, 2015).*

[16] A significant AHRC-funded research programme led by Crawford is now underway to test these claims

## How reflective writing might enhance the empathy of practising physicians.

## Taking the imaginative leap of entering the world of the person with dementia.

Supportive evidence comes from a case study of the use of an intensive two-week drama module for medical students at the University of Dundee, which took as its core text Pinter's *The Caretaker*. The play was seen to illustrate themes central to end-of-life care: silence, power, care, uncertainty and communication. The evaluation of the programme concluded that the play enabled discussion of clinical and care issues, with students more imaginative and reflective than they would have been had these issues been addressed head-on (Jeffrey et al, 2012).

In an Australian study, workshops for final-year medical students around the theme 'physician know thyself', used art, poetry, contemporary and classical literature to evoke issues relevant to clinical encounters. The evaluation through student feedback stressed the importance of sharing one's stories in a safe setting as 'the basis of reclaiming empathy' in a curriculum where that was felt to have been marginalised. The researchers noted, however, the need for longitudinal follow-up to assess the impact on subsequent clinical practice (Kearsley & Lobb, 2014).

A more systematic study at Cleveland Clinic in the US of how reflective writing might enhance the empathy of practising physicians showed significant increases in scores on the Jefferson Scale of Empathy for the intervention group in comparison with two control groups. The researchers argued that empathy was a higher-level skill that required processing of physician-patient interactions, that physicians' understanding of patients' reactions at both the cognitive and affective levels was essential, and that what was needed was the ability to channel this understanding into behaviours with patients without undermining physician objectivity. Reflection and narrative skills, they concluded, developed the emotional resonance and self-awareness needed (Misra-Hebert et al, 2012).

**Training carers**

Museums and arts engagements are increasingly used to train professional staff in care homes. The House of Memories project, based at the National Museums Liverpool and then spread more widely, demonstrates this potential, as does the Creative Carers initiative in Suffolk, but we need more sustained and systematic evidence before clear conclusions can be drawn. The House of Memories provides one-day training events for professional carers of people with dementia. A drama group presented information and developed understanding about living with dementia, while museum collections helped care workers integrate prompts to memory in their work. These were just one-day training workshops for care workers, and the evaluation focused on 'the subjective experience of the training'. Participants describe taking the imaginative leap of entering the world of the person with dementia, and making the starting point for communication the individual's understanding of the world, rather than their own perception as a carer (National Museums Liverpool, 2012). This was confirmed by surveys after the programme had been rolled out in the Midlands that were undertaken after a period of time had elapsed (National Museums Liverpool, 2014). Without longer-term follow-up the outcomes, as opposed to the potential, nonetheless remain less clear.

The Creative Carers Programme in Suffolk was a more sustained project to develop the creative skills of carers of elderly people in residential care. Evaluations concluded that the relationship between carer and cared-for was changed and humanised by working together on artistic activities, and that carers felt empowered and grew in confidence. The training had placed at its heart the goal of helping carers, through developing their own creative practice, to 'imagine themselves in residents' shoes' (Wright, 2008; Barnett, 2013).

The most systematically structured study tested the impact of TimeSlips, which uses photo and word prompts to encourage people with dementia to join in storytelling (Fritsch, 2009). The study compared ten nursing homes involved in the intervention with ten homes with similar characteristics that were not. Although the main focus was the residents, close observation of the homes two weeks after the interventions had finished showed that staff who had participated in the TimeSlips programme not only reported more positive views of residents with dementia, and devalued them less than did those in the control group homes, they also showed much higher levels of social (as opposed to care) interactions with residents based on respect rather than just responsibility. Collaborating with residents on arts programmes, and seeing them more actively engaged, was the key to this change.

A project devised by Maine Council for the Humanities demonstrates the potential for reading to provide not just stress-relieving support for professional carers but also

The potential of the arts to act as a 'catalyst' for empathy and understanding across national divides.

increased empathy. The programme involved nursing, social and medical care staff in hospitals across 14 states, as well as one for Veterans Administration (VA) hospitals whose staff worked with often traumatised younger patients from the Iraq and Afghan wars. Staff met regularly for facilitated reading and discussion of fiction, poetry, drama and non-fiction. The programmes were formally evaluated across five outcome domains (empathy, cultural awareness, interpersonal relations, communication and job satisfaction), with each domain measured by between five and eight questions. All domains showed a significant increase as a result of participating in the programme, but the most substantial was for empathy, where the responses from 79 per cent (in the national 2008 survey) and 82 per cent (in the 2011 VA survey) of participants showed great or medium increase: 'the impact that the program has had on empathy towards patients and other caregivers is noteworthy'. This was confirmed by the open-ended responses of staff, which were dominated by observations about empathy (Clary, 2008 & 2012).

**Arts initiatives and informal carers**

Informal, mostly family, carers present major challenges for many western societies, with an estimated 5.4 million unpaid informal carers in England in 2011 (Comptroller & Auditor General, 2014). In contrast to professionals, the relationship between carer and cared-for here generally pre-exists the need for care. The exigencies of this new relationship can, however, undermine the benefits provided by a shared past, while caring outside a structured professional environment can significantly increase stress. Empathy can come under strain as the role of spouse or child is reconfigured as that of caregiver. The way arts initiatives can help in this setting is now beginning to be explored.

As with professional carers, benefits for informal carers often emerge as a by-product of programmes for those for whom they care. 'Meet me at MOMA' provides structured visits, involving time spent seeing and discussing individual art works, for persons with early-stage dementia. An evaluation by the NYU Center of Excellence for Brain Aging and Dementia found a significant improvement in measures of caregivers' own personal wellbeing as a result of accompanying their family member. They also found a change in that relationship from sharing the art experience with their family member, as well as from seeing them treated with respect as they responded to the art (Mittelman & Epstein, 2009).

Arts provision has also been explicitly targeted at carers in order to maintain their mental health wellbeing. Organisers of arts therapy days, for people who care for those with mental health problems in Avon and Wiltshire, were surprised that it was the days where carers and cared-for attended together that were the most successful – family carers sought not respite but shared activities (Brandling et al, 2011). More sustained was a Plymouth-based, two-month intensive training course in arts curation for girls aged 9-14 who were carers for parents or siblings, which ended with their curating an exhibition of artists' work on themes of fear and the unknown. In the words of one 14-year-old carer, 'I hope [the exhibition] gives you a feeling of fear. As a young carer you have a lot of emotions, and one of the big ones is fear.'[17] In spite of striking reports such as this, the evaluation of arts initiatives for informal and family carers is at too early a stage for conclusions to be drawn. There is more substance in evaluations of programmes for those in medical and care professions, and here the role of arts engagement provides a valuable case study of the development of reflectiveness and empathy.

## Culture and international influence

In their *CVP Research Development Award* on 'The story of Lidice and Stoke-on-Trent: towards deeper understandings of the role of arts and culture', Reynolds and colleagues established how artists and cultural practitioners see engendering 'empathy' in their audiences and participants as a core objective. In 1942, people in Stoke responded to the Nazi destruction of the Czech mining village of Lidice by pledging resources for its rebuilding, and the relationship has been revived in recent years through cultural events. The research was concerned with the potential of the arts to act as a 'catalyst' for empathy and understanding across national divides. It stressed the value of storytelling in 'making connections and enabling people to relate to the individual person, thus challenging their view of the stereotypical "other"'.[18]

[17] *www.artscouncil.org.uk/news/arts-council-news/south-west-art-exhibition-curated-young-carers-nam*

[18] Three short films are part of the outcome of the project *https://blogs.staffs.ac.uk/culturalvalue*

The use of intercultural dialogue by governments, since the 1930s, to build political and economic influence.

**Culture and political and economic influence**

Cultural engagement might in these ways serve as a platform for what Hannah Arendt called 'going visiting', training one's imagination to see the world from the perspective of others (Arendt, 1982). One manifestation of this is the use of intercultural dialogue by governments, since the 1930s, to build political and economic influence. The British Council, the Goethe Institute, the Russky Mir Foundation and the Confucius Institutes are amongst many national organisations seeking to secure international influence by directly reaching people through educational and cultural activities. The term 'cultural diplomacy' gave way to 'soft power', introduced by the political scientist Joseph S. Nye to describe the ways in which culture, values and ideas might be used to persuade, as an alternative to 'hard power' which operates by military threats or coercion (Nye, 2004). Cultural diplomacy and soft power are both now seen as problematic concepts, whether as an inadequate description of how international relations actually work, or as a poor articulation of the nature of cultural engagement by reducing it to 'direct messaging'.

Gillespie et al's *CVP Research Development Award* 'Understanding the cultural value of the BBC World Service and the British Council' explores these issues. The organisations trace their origin to the early 1930s, and the British government's efforts to secure political influence or commercial benefits on the one hand, and on the other to counter the threat of fascism to British values.

'Moreover,' Gillespie et al insist, 'the ability of the arts, sciences, training, education, and broadcasting to cross cultural, psychological and geographical borders has underwritten government funding of BC and WS. For their part, representing the British 'national interest' has been the implicit (and at times, uncomfortably explicit) *quid pro quo* of their fiscal support.'

They nonetheless conclude of the British Council and BBC World Service that:

> *it is their relative autonomy from government direction, especially in the conduct of day-to-day activities, which is so critical to their cultural credibility and, as a consequence, ability to act as a mediating force on the international stage. (Gillespie et al, CVP Report p.9).*

The President's Emergency Fund for International Affairs was set up by President Eisenhower in the US in 1954 on a similar understanding, with the presentation of US artistic products abroad decided by peer review panels insulated from overt political pressure. Arts innovations which were under political attack at home, such as Abstract Expressionism or Martha Graham's choreography, were shown to audiences round the world as a reflection of the vitality of American culture (Prevots, 1998).

**From cultural diplomacy to cultural exchange**

Classic cultural diplomacy, whose one-direction approach seemed less relevant in a changing geopolitical and communications environment, has in recent years given way, in discourse at least, to an emphasis on cultural exchange which is characterised by partnerships and reciprocity (Schneider & Nelson, 2008). Holden's recent report for the British Council argues that cultural relations of a state-directed kind are ever-harder to maintain, with far more states involved, and peer-to-peer cultural contact enabling a plethora of interactions. These emerge from forces such as global tourism, increasing activity by NGOs and the third sector, new cultural networks linking different territorial units such as cities, the internet as a source of information, and niche interactive online communities (Holden, 2014). The conference on cultural diplomacy organised by the Ditchley Foundation in 2012 struggled to define the terrain in the face of this massive growth of personal and non-governmental cultural interaction, and found it equally difficult to propose methods for evaluating the impact of these, or even more precise governmental, activities (Ditchley Foundation, 2012). The new approach shaped the Brookings Institute report on the role of arts and culture in reconfiguring relationships between the US and the 'Muslim world', which insisted that art allows contacts between peoples rather than between governments, and can influence an understanding in the US of what the Muslim world is and a retreat from stereotypes. The report's case studies of such engagement are, however, brief and anecdotal, without little attention to the differences that the example initiatives have made (Schneider & Nelson, 2008).

The British Council has acknowledged this changing environment, and prioritised engagement based on partnerships and linking artists and organisations in different

Many countries now firmly believe international cultural relations to be essential for their political and economic success.

countries.[19] Examples include Behind the Scenes, an initiative in dance and theatre, working with local partners in 13 countries through workshops addressing audience development, producing, programming, and lighting design. Its evaluation concluded that bringing together practitioners from Britain and those in the other countries was very successful, with collaboration, informal learning and the absence of didacticism particularly appreciated. In societies where these elements are less common, the style of engagement may have been as influential as the content.

Building local capacity is the focus of many programmes, such as the pilot for Camara Chica in 2013, which trained educators across Cuba to teach digital film-making skills to children. The British Council's programme to support Syrian artists in the refugee population outside Syria, was part of long-term support for transition to early recovery in crisis situations. The aim was to facilitate 'refuges or havens for free expression, creativity and culture making', with UK cultural practitioners engaging with Syrian artists across many art forms. The British Council is building its evaluation capabilities, but the outcomes of such initiatives will necessarily be long-term and difficult to capture, especially those that are about broader attitudes to the UK. The 2012 Annual Impact Survey of its arts programmes nonetheless showed that 76 per cent of those surveyed worldwide said that their engagement had had an impact on their professional practice, while 66 per cent said that they had developed new or existing relationships with contacts in the UK.[20]

**Evidence of benefits**

A stress on reciprocity and engagement is not unexpected, given the context in which international cultural relations now take place, but knowing whether the new approach achieves the goal of improving perceptions of a country any better than past practices embedded in 'soft power' is more difficult. The British Council's *Influence and Attraction* report sets out how many countries now firmly believe international cultural relations to be essential for their political and economic success, but also shows how limited is the evidence on which that belief is based. The British Council sought to address this in *Trust Pays*, which concluded from attitudinal surveys that participating in cultural relations activities had a positive effect on trust in the UK and with it increased interest in doing business with, visiting or being a student here. The evidence is, however, purely attitudinal, and follows primarily educational or exchange connections. Only one of the 17 types of activity is about art and culture (British Council 2013; also 2013a & 2014a).

Copenhagen Economics sought a more systematic approach to the economic benefits that a country obtains from trust of this kind, relating the public diplomacy activities of the Swedish Institute and the British Council to economic growth through 'a logical chain'. They concluded that 'public diplomacy activities can have a positive and measurable impact on economic growth in the home country' if of 'a sufficient scale and quality such that it can be argued to have a measurable impact on mutual trust between the two countries.' They identify the consequences for exports and investments, the inflow of talent, better image and increased mutual trust. This attempt to quantify for public diplomacy (of which cultural engagement is itself only one part) the economic impact (which is only one of the benefits claimed to flow) is a valuable attempt to pin down at least some of the impact. As the report itself acknowledges, however, a number of assumptions underpin the logical chain, above all the way public diplomacy activities can be shown to increase trust, and the way this can be scaled-up and shown to link to economic benefits. An increase in mutual trust is translated into increased trade and investment using a formula based on Eurobarometer findings on trust between countries. This claimed that 1 per cent uplift in mutual trust accounts for a 0.61 per cent increase in exports, a multiplier derived from the EU-level mean rather than country-by-country. The fact that this is based on correlation rather than a causal link is not necessarily a problem, but it becomes one in what is presented as a clear logical chain (Thelle & Bergman, 2012, quote p.4).

Gillespie et al's *CVP Research Development Award* explored the history, reception and changing balance of activities carried out by both the British Council and the BBC World Service, as the background to developing 'a new model of assessment that

[19] This drives the new strategy proposed in an unpublished report for the British Council, Jenkinson, P.& Wright, S. *Mind the Gap. A Story of Step Change in Culture and Development for the British Council*, 2014

[20] Ward, V., et al, *Behind the Scenes. Evaluation Report*, British Council 2014; Digital Developments in Cuba: Highlights from the 2013 'Camara Chica' Pilot', unpublished note, British Council, n.d.; *Mind the Gap* pp.18-19; *British Council Annual Impact Survey 2012*.

would shift the focus from key performance indicators […] and impact assessments, to a richer understanding of value and its components.' (Gillespie *CVP Report*, p.3). Through an iterative process with three groups – funders, staff and users – the team sought agreement on what components of value were articulated through specific World Service and British Council initiatives, and presented them in a constellation diagram that allowed quantitative as well as qualitative results to be captured, integrated, and presented in a visually compelling way. We shall return to this in the chapter on *Methodologies*. The two organisations' ability to use social media effectively, in both achieving and evaluating the cultural value of their work, is important given the character of international cultural interactions today. The report (which looked at case studies such as the World Service's 100 Women Season and the South Asia Season of the British Council) found the World Service more risk-averse than the British Council, struggling to embrace user-generated content and to relinquish control over the message on its media platforms. Those seeking to advance trust and other benefits internationally through cultural interaction are moving into a very different environment, one where it could be even more difficult to track the overall outcomes of interventions.

## KEY POINTS FROM CHAPTER

- A key component of cultural value is the ability of arts and cultural experience to help shape reflective individuals. This may include giving one an improved understanding of oneself and one's own life, an enhanced sense of empathy with respect to others, and an appreciation of the diversity of human experience and cultures.
- This chapter examines examples of how cultural engagement can influence the way we think about a wide range of personal and social issues such as growing up, illness and ageing, and how it can provoke reflection and challenge for those working within disciplined modes of thinking, including doctors and scientists. The interaction between the cognitive and the affective dimensions of arts and cultural experience may be a fundamental aspect of how they may achieve these effects.
- At the heart of desistance from offending is an ability to think about oneself and others, to see genuine choices and options, and to imagine other life circumstances and other possible futures. Arts engagement in prisons has been shown to make a serious contribution to these processes even if it will always be hard to isolate the effects of cultural engagement from all the other factors involved in re-offending.
- We also look at ways in which the arts have been used to develop reflectiveness and empathy amongst those with care responsibilities. This includes projects with medical practitioners during their education and subsequent practice, and arts initiatives for carers in residential homes and family settings, helping them to reflect on their responses and recognise the individuality of the people they care for.
- Cultural engagement has been used by governments and their agencies with a view to building political and economic influence. Commonly referred to as cultural diplomacy and soft power, greater emphasis is now put on ideas of reciprocity and exchange. It has, however, proved difficult to demonstrate its effectiveness, and the complexities of evaluating perceptions and practices must be overcome if we are fully to appreciate the effects of cultural engagement in this domain.

# CHAPTER 4

## THE ENGAGED CITIZEN: CIVIC AGENCY & CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

The claim that participation in art and culture is conducive to fostering civic dialogue and commitment has a long history. From the ramifications of Aristotle's *Poetics* regarding the behaviour of the 'zoon politikon', to Kant's arguments about the impact of the exercise of aesthetic judgement on the faculty of public judgment, from Tolstoy's contention that the purpose of the arts is to further moral sentiments to Adorno's conviction that modernist art was the last enclave capable of mobilising the critical and oppositional imagination, through to the political significance attributed to the arts by Bourriaud or Rancière, we find an impressive lineage for the claim that art and culture have far-reaching consequences for civic and political behaviours (Bourriaud, 1998; Rancière, 2006).

Martha Nussbaum has argued that there is a crucial link between cultural engagement and an ability to act as a global citizen in a democratic system. The arts and humanities generate 'vital spaces for sympathetic and reasoned debate, helping to build democracies that are able to overcome fear and suspicion and, ultimately, creating a world that is worth living in.' (Nussbaum, 2007). That vision may not be universally shared and the arguments are rarely tested empirically, but such claims remain very much alive.

The relationship between cultural engagement and engaged citizenship is a difficult area to evidence, although there are some impressive studies of the correlation between cultural engagement and voting patterns, volunteering, and pro-social behaviour. We must acknowledge that arts and culture work at many levels, which can complicate empirical analysis: they can convey political ideas and arguments and create spaces where these ideas can be challenged, but it is rarely a question of their effecting direct changes, so much as creating conditions for change through a myriad of spillover effects.

A concrete example will illustrate this. Ladkin, in his *CVP Critical Review* 'Against value in the arts', draws on Claire Bishop's discussion of what she sees as an exemplary instance of participatory art confronting political issues:

> *[It] is called Please Love Austria by Christoph Schlingensief. It consists of a cargo container adapted to house a number of asylum seekers in some luxury in a style (an aesthetics) of*

**Below:** Performing stories at the Connected Communities Showcase in Edinburgh as part of Dr Elizabeth Curtis's (University of Aberdeen) Sharing All Our Stories Scotland project



The relationship between cultural engagement and engaged citizenship is a difficult area to evidence.

*"Big Brother" reality TV. The public are encouraged to vote two asylum seekers out of the cargo hold and back to the detention centre per day (and essentially off-stage, back into the invisibility of the institution). A film, Ausländer Raus! Schlingensief's Container (2002), by Paul Poet, documents the piece. (Quoted by Ladkin, CVP Report, pp.58-59).*

The audience is challenged to face up to issues of empathy and complacency, and its own relationship with media-mediated reality. Was the decision to vote someone out of a celebrity house more agonising than choosing whom to select from the cargo container to be deported? Equally fundamentally the report raises the question of whether art should be reduced to a sense of social or political mission, and whether it can be reduced to selling ideological positions, increasing voter turnout or triggering opposition in any straightforward sense.

Stern and Seifert identify three theories of action – didactic, discursive and ecological – which help to categorise how the arts influence patterns of civic engagement:

*Didactic theories of action focus on the ability of the arts to instruct or persuade the populace, for example, in political campaigns or social movements. Discursive theories of action focus on use of the arts to provide settings in which people can discuss issues, form connections, and take action. Much intentional arts-based civic work falls into this category, as does the use of civic ritual to define membership in a particular public. Ecological theories of action view all cultural participation as a form of civic engagement and assert that the arts generate a variety of spillover effects – or unintended consequences – that increase social capital and community capacity. (Stern & Seifert, 2009, p.6).*

The three levels may not be easily separated in practice, but it is analytically helpful to recognise the distinctions. Another reason why the relationship between cultural engagement and civic agency has proven hard to research is that complex individual changes interact with arguably even more complicated collective processes. As Stern and Seifert point out, 'civic engagement is an individual-level variable – only individuals can act upon or believe something – but the causes and effects of those actions are linked to higher levels of aggregation (groups, locales).' (Stern & Seifert, 2009, p.5). This chapter and the last are therefore closely related: engaged citizens may well be grounded in reflective individuals. Personal reflectiveness, empathy and international understanding are all clearly relevant to civic identity and citizenship, while in the chapter on *Communities, regeneration and space* we find further connections when discussing public art and community activism and empowerment. Finally, evidence is sought in a context where research questions are often entwined with political agendas and cultural policy objectives. The disentangling of political values from discussion of cultural value has been identified as a particular challenge in the rapidly growing field of cultural policy (Holden, 2004; O'Brien & Lockley, 2015).

## Preconditions for political engagement

The relationship between cultural engagement, civic action and what has been called 'social capital' underpins consideration of these issues. When Putnam argued that the responsiveness to regional needs of the new Italian regional governments after 1970 could be predicted from the number of choral societies per capita in a region, he was signalling the way such societies generate civic connections and social capital (Puttnam, 1994). 'Civic virtue', he subsequently argued, 'is most powerful when embedded in dense networks of reciprocal social relations' (Putnam 2000, p.19), and he distinguishes between two types of social capital. While 'bonding' social capital happens in small groups of family and friends where strong ties of reciprocity emerge, 'bridging' links individuals to wider networks and can enhance civic engagement. For Putnam these connections can come through sporting or cultural engagement, but he enumerates a range of projects that show that 'art is especially useful in transcending conventional social barriers', while also stressing that 'social capital is often a valuable by-product of cultural activities whose main purpose is purely artistic.' (Putnam, 2000, pp.411-412).

Matarasso's 1997 overview sought evidence of the social impacts of cultural engagement, drawing on themes consonant with Putnam's approach (Matarasso, 1997). Subsequent studies have represented the core issues in different guises, such as mutual trust and co-operation within communities for the benefit of all (Kay, 2000; Kay & Watt, 2000), community cohesion and 'enhanced, collectively felt sentiments of solidarity' (Lowe, 2000), and the ability of cultural

## The link between cultural participation and formal political and civic engagement.

infrastructure to 'anchor local identities' and engender 'a sense of belonging to a community'. (Holden, 2006). In her *CVP Research Development Award*, Gordon-Nesbitt questions, in relation to health cohort studies, the use of 'social capital' as an umbrella term for very diverse phenomena that make a reliable unitary measure elusive, necessitating a composite approach, made up of 'social support, social participation and networks, and trust and reciprocity' (Gordon-Nesbitt *CVP Report*, p.17).

If these different dimensions of what is called 'social capital' are a dimension of civic engagement, the 60,000 self-governed amateur arts groups in the UK must be a part of this nexus. A major report concluded that they have an impact on people's social and civic attitudes, and that 'arts based practice does indeed make a very significant and positive contribution to the development of the attributes of Civil Society.' (Ramsden et al, 2011). Some go further, and view cultural citizenship as an alternative form of civic engagement. Working on 'electronic' democracy and the networked public sphere, a case study on digital creativity in Australia illustrated how new media and social networks can support the formation of interest groups and communities of practice with genuine civic impact (Burgess et al, 2006). The Creative Citizens projects, funded through the AHRC's Connected Communities programme, further explore this approach.

**Cultural participation and 'pro-social behaviour'**

The link between cultural participation and formal political and civic engagement has been more systematically studied for the US, with important research on large-scale data sets carried out for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). Their *2008 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts* found a 'sizeable overlap in populations that attend arts events and do other kinds of civic and social activities – a link that is largely independent of socio-economic factors.' (National Endowment for the Arts 2009, p.28). The 2008 dataset has been used to examine the relationship between music engagement (classical, opera and jazz for the NEA) and civic behaviours defined as voting in presidential elections, charity giving or volunteering, and participation in community activities. The authors conclude that 'taken together, these results demonstrate that traditional music attendance is strongly predictive of certain pro-social behaviors, even when the contribution of other known predictors is controlled for.' (Polzella & Forbis, 2014).[21]

The most sustained NEA analysis is *Art-Goers in their Communities: Patterns of Civic and Social Engagement*, which showed that arts participants were involved in civic activities at a much higher rate than those who did not participate. 'According to the model, the odds that performing arts attendees will volunteer are 3.8 times greater than for non-attendees, regardless of their educational attainment, gender, and other selected demographic traits', and similar results applied to the relationship between arts participation and community meetings. The difference in levels of civic engagement was even greater for those who themselves created or performed art, as opposed to simply attending (National Endowment for the Arts, 2009b, pp.6 & 11).

These correlational studies using regression techniques provide empirical data for the relationship between cultural participation and civic engagement, though they demonstrate associational rather than causal relations. This has been further examined in two major studies. Catteral et al examined, across four longitudinal studies, the implications of engagement with the arts for at-risk youth in the US. While just 1 per cent of young people with low socio-economic status alongside low artistic engagement voted in the 2004 US presidential election, 45 per cent of those with the same socio-economic status but with a high level of artistic engagement did so (Catteral, 2012). Bowler et al concluded from Eurobarometer data for 1990 for 11 European countries that participation in arts groups and charities (much more than in sports and church groups) had a strong association with political engagement, even after controlling for variables such as educational attainment, income, class, gender and religion. Arguing that voluntary association of itself is not the key issue, they conclude that 'bowling together may not matter as much as singing together' (Bowler et al 2003, p.1,126).

There is therefore a growing body of evidence, mostly from the US, to support the claim that arts and cultural participation is associated with civic engagement, even if the mechanism

[21] The regression model included seven control variables, which are known to predict civic engagement: age, race, sex, income, education, marital status and occupation class

A growing body of evidence, mostly from the US, to support the claim that arts and cultural participation is associated with civic engagement, even if the mechanism is not well understood.

is not well understood. Controlling for socio-economic variables can strengthen the evidence that an association is more than the result of shared characteristics among those who participate in both cultural and civic spheres. Embedding the survey in larger research using qualitative methods may also strengthen the meaning that can be attached to these statistical associations.[22] The analysis by Crociata and colleagues of data in the Italian Multipurpose Survey on Households Daily Life Aspects 2007 provides a very specific but intriguing example. They asked about the relationship between cultural participation and recycling behaviour, seeking links between pro-environmental behaviour and cultural, social and human capital, and found a positive though differentiated association, even when controlling for a range of socio-demographic characteristics (Crociata et al, 2015).

Insights into these relationships can be secured by breaking down terms such as 'social capital' or 'civic engagement' into smaller units of analysis, as was done by Flinders in his *CVP Research Development Award* on 'Participatory arts and political engagement'. With a long-term decline in civic and political engagement in Britain, the project investigated '*if* and *how* participatory arts contributes to a propensity to political engagement on three levels: reconnection with the formal political level, reconnection through informal forms of political engagement and then personal reconnection in terms of knowledge and confidence'. The formal political level means activities such as voting, attending public meetings and engaging with political institutions; informal engagement refers to political actions outside traditional political channels to achieve social change; finally, personal connection and confidence derives from seeing political literacy 'not only in terms of knowledge of *how* to engage, but the confidence and interest to engage with politics.' The distinction is heuristically valuable when analysing empirical data, notwithstanding the interactions between the three levels. Flinders draws on studies showing how participatory arts can engender political engagement among young people, although the intensive arts workshops which form the empirical dimension of the project were less helpful than had been hoped.[23]

Creative Partnerships, a large-scale government programme in England between 2002 and 2011, saw creative practitioners work with schools to generate change across the school as a whole through arts interventions. Thomson and colleagues reviewed the archive of reports left by the programme in their *CVP Critical Review* 'A critical review of the Creative Partnerships archive: how was cultural value understood, researched and evidenced?' One goal of Creative Partnerships was to engage the 'youth voice', through involvement in the schools themselves and beyond. Thomson et al conclude from the many research reports that the programme 'contributed to empowerment, understanding of one's own identity, the ability to collaborate and the development of skills and personal attributes', as well as facilitating 'taking action, having an awareness and understanding of global issues, understanding one's own beliefs and accepting and using broad democratic social norms.' (Thomson *CVP Report* Creative Partnerships, p.15). Arts interventions developed a capacity and confidence for wider citizenship. Creative Partnerships projects saw young people connecting with regeneration plans in their own communities, for example producing high-quality media and videos, and undertaking image projection onto buildings, and other art and design work, to generate debate about the plans (Thomson et al, 2009). A study of three Nottingham schools with high numbers of socially disadvantaged students showed that arts-based work played a positive role in what was identified as a key precondition of their civic engagement, 'learning to be present in the public space' and having the increasing autonomy needed to do so (Griffiths et al, 2006).

## Civic space and civic engagement: three case studies

A more exploratory approach was taken by several Cultural Value Project awards, using methodologies that included ethnographic methods, participatory and action research,

[22] An example, again from the USA, combining statistical and ethnographic approaches is Wali et al (2004)

[23] The impact of the arts activities confirmed their potential for enhancing political interest, but those attending the three workshop groups, drawn from very different social backgrounds, turned out to have high levels of prior political participation; continuity of membership was also difficult to sustain

and experimental techniques such as use of a visual matrix. Their reports take us into the relationship between cultural participation and civic engagement in a more fine-grained way. Froggett and colleagues' *CVP Research Development Award* on 'Public art and local civic engagement' compared the legacy of two public artworks which in 2012 evoked controversial responses in the Devon coastal town of Ilfracombe. Damien Hirst's *Verity* is a 66ft-high bronze of a naked pregnant woman, conceived as a modern allegory of Truth and Justice, towering over the waterfront on long-term loan. Alex Hartley's *Nowhereisland* is very different; a piece of land revealed by a retreating glacier in the Norwegian High Arctic and mounted on a raft by the artist. It was pulled into international waters, proclaimed a new nation, and towed around the south-west coast of England as part of the Cultural Olympiad. Its visit to a town was preceded by a public programme promoted through its mobile, land-based embassy, and discussion of its evolving constitution.

The research explored how these two artworks contributed to debate and the shaping of citizenship. The local population responded to the artworks differently, partly because a durational work offered multiple opportunities for public participation compared with an iconic single-sited statue.

> *Verity has offered the population of the town an object around which local identity can be re-constructed as we have described – both imaginatively and instrumentally. Because her presence in the landscape is assured, there is potential for the town's relationship with her to evolve, but for the time being the economic benefit overwhelms the artistic […]. Where Nowhereisland succeeded it was not because of its transitory presence but insofar as it managed to make a provocation, sustain an illusion, offer a locus of projection, and set in motion an open-ended process in which people began to imagine a different relation to one another, to their environment, to their past and to the public realm. (Froggett CVP Report, p.59).*

The research used focus groups, semi-structured interviews and rapid-capture street interviews, but it was the visual matrix method, which will be discussed in the *Methodologies* chapter, which revealed some of the most striking responses. A visual matrix, a method for sensing the working of imagination and the formation of subjective associations, allows for a different type of reflection. Froggett et al established that the young and old inhabitants of Ilfracombe responded differently to the artworks, in particular to *Nowhereisland*. Older people projected onto it 25 years of Ilfracombe's decline and saw it as symbolising bareness and lack of opportunity. This was in contrast to *Verity*, which they saw as a symptom of economic renewal. In contrast, school students' interpretation of *Nowhereisland* was understandably forward-looking, and centred on climate change and digital culture. Froggett et al uncovered the way that cultural engagement could influence civic attitudes and citizenship by activating public imagination and triggering collective responses.

Identity and citizenship in minority ethnic and migrant communities were examined through two awards. Ashley's *CVP Research Development Award* looked at 'Memorialisation as valuation: examining public culture at the Chattri Indian Memorial, Brighton'. The marble World War I memorial was constructed in 1921 to honour the 53 Sikh soldiers from undivided India who had been cremated on this spot in 1914-15. Since 1951 it has been the site of an annual commemoration ceremony, organised by the Royal British Legion, whose withdrawal in 1999 led to an outcry and was followed by a process of 're-colonization by Indian organizers'. The event moved from white British organisers to Sikhs not born in this country, and layers were added to its meanings. The research explored the memorial as a spiritual place, as a heritage object persisting through time, and as a space for cultural practices. Ashley argues that through public ceremony, 'community development happened and citizenship was expressed', with culture and knowledge being 'made' to pass on to new generations of Indian descendants. For many white participants the service represented multicultural integration in action, confirming the official interpretation of the Memorial as a heritage object. It was seen differently by the Indian participants. 'Motivations for attending the ceremony, recognising its historical importance, seeking to pass on a heritage to younger generations, and organising community activities were all expressed within an unspoken and spoken framing of otherness.' (Ashley *CVP Report*, p.14).

The challenges in understanding the relationship between cultural engagement and civic agency, and the multifaceted ways these effects take place.

Ashley distinguishes three forms of value being expressed, each emphasising cultural experiences as meaning-making. 'The monument itself and people's embodied actions at the memorial site were symbolic statements of value made in public for others to read.' The first form of value, 'an embodied presence', was about solidarity, a sense of occasion and purposeful meaning-making. The second, 'a mutual recognition', is bound-up in recognising the 'other' as different but equal, and those involved felt pride in the ethnic diversity represented in the ceremony, alongside anxieties about the relative absence of Muslims and whether the diversity could be sustained. Finally, 'a higher good' places the greatest value on the intangible realm of morality and spirituality, through the Sikh concept of *sewa*, an embodied act of selflessness resulting in a gain for others (Ashley *CVP Report*, p.26). Indian participants also valued independent cultural organising and grassroots knowledge-generation. Ashley's study demonstrates the potential of cultural practices to transform the conception of the public constituency, and to activate forms of grassroots knowledge and local activism that might be obscured in more formal perceptions of social and civic relations.

These two case studies show how cultural engagement shapes both practice and reflection about civic identity. Belfiore's *CVP Research Development Award* on 'The politics of cultural value: towards an emancipatory framework' pursues this theme in relation to the way that Gypsies and Travellers are represented. First, through Channel 4's *My Big Fat Gypsy Wedding*, and then the attempt to counteract its impact through 'Our Big Real Gypsy Lives', an HLF-funded participatory arts project in Lincolnshire. Artists worked with young people from Gypsy and Traveller communities to create tangible records of the practices, objects and places they valued, as reflections of their cultural identity and heritage. Belfiore points to the way that issues of recognition and self-definition underpin inequality, including unequal access to the civic public sphere. Recognition arises in the context of how Gypsies and Travellers are represented in the media, and Belfiore shows how misrecognition intersects with class and material disadvantage. Following Nancy Fraser (Fraser, 2000) in positioning recognition at the same level as redistribution, Belfiore underlines the damage that can be caused by the symbolic order and by the politics of cultural value. Yet the project also shows that in the hands of marginalised groups, cultural expression can redress misrecognition and secure greater parity of participation. In this sense, cultural engagement, exercised through the right to cultural expression, becomes a fundamental condition for entering the public realm and a precondition for genuine civic engagement.

## Creative challenge: cultural industries, digging and climate change

The distinctive conclusions reached by these case studies underline the challenges in understanding the relationship between cultural engagement and civic agency, and the multifaceted ways these effects take place. Other research from Cultural Value Project awards points to the open-ended potential of cultural engagement and practice.

### Envisioning alternatives

Three critical reviews, in particular, stress how the arts can provide spaces within which alternative ways of thinking, imagining and acting may take shape: Ladkin's *CVP Critical Review* 'Against value in the arts', Taylor's *CVP Critical Review* 'Cultural value: a perspective from cultural economy' and Banks's *CVP Critical Review* 'Cultural industries, work and values'. One of the great contributions of the arts for each is to allow the envisioning of alternatives, which is a necessary element in a vibrant civic discourse and an innovative creative economy. They point to the tensions that arise from too close a focus on outcomes or too narrow a perception of how work and economies might function in the cultural world.

For Ladkin the danger of classifying or even ascribing cultural value is the risk of 'instrumentalizing its potentiality'. He sees the danger as rooted in 'a focus on demonstrable outcomes' (Ladkin *CVP Report*, p.56), which means that interesting effects are not seen, and may also corrode the integrity of artistic practice by encouraging artists and organisers to predict in advance what effects their work will have, when applying for funding. Ladkin raises a significant issue of which artists, cultural organisers and funders are all aware, but one that produces a continuing tension, similar to that facing researchers

in all disciplines for whom the most interesting results are often those which cannot be predicted in advance. It has been claimed in various ways that the new cultural economy has the potential to 'enlarge the critical resources available to us in evaluating contemporary society' (Sayer, 2001, p.703; also O'Connor, 2011; Turner, 2012). In his critical review on cultural value and the creative industries, Taylor looks at the historical emergence of the discourse of autonomy with respect to the arts and culture. He argues that the tension between the cultural domain as articulated through that discourse of autonomy and economics and ethics is unavoidable, and also constructive in providing a vantage point for the critique of current conditions and structures.

In his critical review on work and values in the cultural industries, Banks points to a similar critical potential within creative labour. For Banks creative labour contains within it a productive tension, located as it is in an 'indeterminate space' between 'the economic values of instrumentality, measure and calculation and the cultural values of aesthetics, ethics and politics.' (Banks *CVP Report*, p.41). He sees this as an intermediate space, similar to 'those counter-hegemonic zones of cultural and political potential that others have identified as inherent to the structures of capitalism', citing the work of Raymond Williams, Stuart Hall and David Harvey. For Taylor and Banks alike, this tension can produce new forms of collaboration and cooperation beyond economistic utilitarianism on the one side, and an uncritical aestheticism on the other. Both would claim that the value of art and culture in relation to politics rests in the fact that they can give rise to new forms of imaginaries – sets of beliefs, customs and institutions which could present an alternative to a current system, and fuel political imagination more broadly. Banks illustrates his arguments with case studies of working and organisational practices, such as at the Amber Collective in Newcastle, with its 40-year-old tradition of co-operative film production, and London's Hackney Crack House, a hacking space with creative potential where alternative values and resources are developed.

**Digging**

In their wide-ranging *CVP Research Development Award* on 'Cultural values of digging', Vis and colleagues examine digging as a point around which various cultural practices converge. The project explores four case studies: print media representations of digging since 2000; the recreation and re-visioning of a wartime garden; a community garden attached to the government-sponsored *The Big Dig*, which promotes giving through community food growing, and the Wigan Diggers' Festival. In each case, Vis and her team find practices where different agendas coalesce and clash, and they examine the processes of resistance and compliance with respect to how digging is framed both by mainstream media and government policy.

The Wigan Diggers' Festival is an annual free event celebrating the locally-born Gerrard Winstanley (1609-76), founder of the Diggers' movement during the English Civil War. In its first year in 2011 the festival saw a march of 200 'heritage diggers' through the town centre, and a symbolic re-enactment of the 17th-century Diggers' occupation of the commons. The festival then grew to include a music parade, local choirs, performances, talks and arts activities, with some 40 stallholders. The 2013 festival attracted 3,000 visitors and received sponsorship and local authority support.

The festival represents many things and embodies a range of values. 'Whilst the festival organisers promote the festival as a free, fun day out for all the family and Wiganers, at the same time they see the Wigan Digger identity – as both a collective and individual identity – as a "banner under which we can all march together" for an alternative political and social future.'(Vis et al *CVP Report*, p.21). It is a fun day out, and an act of remembering and taking pride in a local heritage of digging. It is also an opportunity to express working-class 'sentimental capital', for example through poetry performances lamenting the loss of the mining industry in the North West. Many who go to the festival are taking a political stance against what they see as contemporary developments paralleling the historic enclosure of land, which was opposed by Winstanley. But while on the one hand, the Festival can be seen as a radical protest, it also represents a revival of interest in communitarianism, voluntarism and the practices of digging which, as Vis et al show, can be traced through the 'Dig for Victory' campaign, the BBC television sit-com series *The Good Life*, and ideas of self-sufficiency and activism captured under the tag of the *Big Society*. The Wigan Diggers' Festival is a good example of how art and culture can ambiguously house conflicting values in the way Banks and Taylor consider in their critical reviews.

There has been considerable interest in the role of art and culture in shaping attitudes to climate change.

**Climate change**

It is hardly surprising, given the issues of citizenship and civic responsibility raised in this chapter, that there has been considerable interest in the role of art and culture in shaping attitudes to climate change, the biggest challenge of our time, yet one where it is proving difficult to get engaged public attention. There is no agreed explanation for this difficulty, but an influential collection of essays on the topic concludes that the solution lies not in communicating more, but communicating differently (Moser & Dilling, 2007). Dunaway outlines the challenge:

> *Climate change seems too vast and overwhelming: the apocalyptic imagery associated with it, paradoxically, may foster complacency and pessimism. The sheer scale of the problem may consign us to inaction, convince us that there is nothing that we can do to ward off the terrible times ahead. The problem, moreover, still feels so remote, so far away (in both time and space) as to make it seem too abstract, a compelling scientific theory but not a concrete, experiential statement of our everyday encounters with the environment. (Dunaway, 2009, p.10).*

This is why some argue that information alone is not enough, and that engaging art and culture might be one way forward. Arts and environment initiatives can be found in projects supported by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (Ede, 2000), Lucy Lippard's curated exhibitions in Boulder, Colorado (Lippard, 2007), the personal reflections on art and climate change curated for the British Council by Julie's Bicycle (British Council, 2010), or the exhibitions in Copenhagen and London to coincide with the UN climate change summit in 2009. Yet the CASE database yields little evidence of serious research into arts and climate change initiatives, confirming Bunting's judgment in 2010 that 'arts may be well-placed to engage with and shape this debate and there are opportunities for artists to lead and influence society on environmental issues. However, this review found little evidence of the impact of such activity to date.' (Bunting, 2010, Section 2.5). We found some modest attention in reports on other themes from Cultural Value Project awards by Jones & Leech, Vis and Froggett. It is interesting that the response of school students to *Nowhereisland*, in the last of these reports, was to link it firmly to climate change. The one substantial project in this area is Hawkins' *CVP Research Development Award* on 'Experimental methods for exploring environmental encounters', and from that award and a workshop organised by the Cultural Value Project with Julie's Bicycle, the potential significance of the arts for climate change debate and behaviour became clear, as did the difficulties in achieving change.[24]

The workshop was organised to consider the current role and future potential of arts and cultural activity in helping achieve attitudinal change and, even more challenging, bringing about behavioural change with respect to dealing with climate change. It also sought evidence of the effects of such engagement. Some of the many initiatives currently underway were presented: examples included Steve Waters on the role of theatre, not least his double-bill of climate change plays at the Bush Theatre in 2009; Tom Corby's climate-related projects such as *Cyclone.soc* (2006) and *Southern Ocean Studies* (2009), and his current collaboration with the British Antarctic Survey, and Andy Whittaker's documentaries and feature films from Dogwoof Films, such as *Blackfish* and *At the end of the line*. The workshop learned that didacticism was rarely effective, and that the potential of the arts lay in the open-ended and disruptive character of the experiences they trigger. Art, in other words, may best achieve its aims obliquely, and indeed without control over the ways in which people respond.

An issue that came up repeatedly was allowing people, through their cultural engagement, to believe that there were genuine options and choices – something that authoritative pronouncements can all too often shut down, and a conclusion that echoes the responses of prisoners to arts projects, as we saw in the last chapter. As Joe Smith told the workshop, going by his experience of a range of such projects, it is a mistake to ask how culture 'does things' for science and climate change. The impact of cultural engagement is most potent and pertinent when it supports a more plural and dynamic public sphere, and helps us make sense of things for ourselves. The workshop was less successful in evidencing the effectiveness of engagements in helping thinking or behaviour to change. Systematic evaluation appears to be rare.

[24] 'The value of culture and environmental sustainability', AHRC Cultural Value Project and Julie's Bicycle, 7 October 2015, Free Word Centre, London

Art might be effective in helping us think and act on climate change.

Hawkins spoke at the workshop about her *CVP Research Development Award*, and reported on both process and outcomes. The award involved the interrogation of projects supported by Arts Catalyst, London and Swiss Artists in Labs, Zurich, including a sound installation and participatory work, *You are variations*, by artist Christina Della Guistina, which was the focus of her workshop presentation. Hawkins asked 'how do the environmental encounters configured by art contribute to ecological imaginaries and futures, and foster practices of environmental citizenship?', as well as what methods and types of evidence would be appropriate to capture this. Through a rich ethnographic analysis, Hawkins showed that four types of environmental encounters arise from arts projects. The first two, 'imagining' and 'storying', reflect how creative practices can create imaginaries of environmental futures, and narratives which facilitate reflections, critical or otherwise. The third aspect of the encounters, which she called 'inspiring', stimulates other forms of enquiry, while the fourth, 'sensing', allows for alternative sensory accounts of nature and our place in the world. Hawkins' project demonstrates that arts practices provide a range of alternative ways to engage with the environment. What difference does this make for our thinking about climate change? These encounters, Hawkins concluded, do not suggest that there are easy answers, but they are important in the shaping of a more reflective relationship with the environment, with the prospect of significant effects on how people think and what we do about climate change.

A number of conclusions emerge about why art might be effective in helping us think and act on climate change: because it works obliquely it can bypass mental defences; because it calls for a suspension of automatic responses it forces us to re-imagine; it can translate abstract notions into narratives on a human scale and thus offer bridging metaphors, and by showing the familiar in an unfamiliar light, it can shock and upset complacency. Lastly, art might be effective in this area precisely because it provides a space where experimentation and risk-taking can happen. In this it returns us to the more general relationship between arts and cultural engagement and engaged citizenship.

## Culture, conflict and post-conflict: a double-edged sword?

The widespread use of arts and cultural interventions to help healing and peacebuilding after armed conflict mostly happens after civil wars and the break-up of states, but it has a distinguished heritage in relation to international conflict. The Edinburgh International Festival owes its 1947 foundation to a desire to bring together through culture people who had been divided and traumatised by war, and 'to provide a platform for the flowering of the human spirit'.[25] The fact that it was founded by Rudolf Bing, an Austrian-born impresario who had fled Nazi Germany and was then running Glyndebourne, underscored its significance. This claim that culture might bring together people divided by animosity, misunderstanding and violence, remains powerful and can be seen in initiatives as diverse as Daniel Barenboim's West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, arts interventions through the European Union's PEACE III programme, and university-based programmes such as Brandeis University's 'Peacebuilding and the Arts' or 'In Place of War' at the University of Manchester.

An increasing proportion of armed conflict now takes place within states, and civilians are less the unfortunate victims of collateral damage and more the deliberate targets of the warring parties. In that context, dealing with individual and collective trauma, and bringing together people whose traumatic experiences are often at the hands of fellow citizens, has come to the fore. Art and culture have a prominent position in this process of recovery, with projects variously aimed at confronting rather than papering over the sources of trauma, reconciliation between those on different sides of a conflict, and public memorialisation. In this we encounter two often contradictory roles for culture: the first recognises culture's power to reinforce existing discourses about a conflict, while the second opens up spaces for imagining alternative ways forward, and different ways of working with memory in a post-conflict world.[26]

The Cultural Value Project organised, with the AHRC's Care for the Future: Thinking Forward through the Past theme,

[25] *https://edinburghfestival.list.co.uk/festival/edinburgh-international-festival*

[26] We are grateful to Dr Stefanie Lehner of Queen's University Belfast for helping us to formulate the issues in this way

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an international symposium on 'Culture, conflict and post-conflict', which contributed significantly to our thinking. The role of arts and culture in positive post-conflict transformation might take the form of bridge-building on the one hand, in which communities divided by conflict might come to understand each other better through common activities and dialogue. And on the other, it might enable members of a community to reflect upon their own role and experiences. This latter rests on the view that until a community has begun to understand what happened, it is difficult for it to look to a less conflictual future. Each approach seeks not to ignore the past but to use cultural experience and practice to move forward from it, and to do so with the greater reflectiveness that such experience can bring.

**Bridge-building or work within communities**

Cultural projects to build bridges between communities are more common, perhaps because they offer a higher profile for funders. Communities might work together on a cultural project whose content was not fundamental to the sources of conflict. The Kontea Cultural Heritage Circle Project, in a formerly Greek village now in the Turkish part of Cyprus, saw Turkish-Cypriots come together with Greek-Cypriot former residents to restore the village's church. While acknowledging the difficulties involved in this, which were more bureaucratic than personal, the evaluation pointed to the trust that was built through joint activity, from which it was possible to explore issues of separation and interdependence between the communities (INTRAC, 2011).

Another approach builds bridges through common experiences, such as the high-profile public art activities in Derry-Londonderry undertaken by Artichoke. These included 17 massive light installations towards the end of Derry-Londonderry's time as City of Culture in 2013, and two years later the Temple, a wooden structure that was filled with handwritten messages left by thousands of visitors and burned to the ground, in a huge public spectacle that crossed community boundaries, with a new take on Northern Ireland's bonfire tradition.[27]

The most demanding form of bridge-building uses cultural engagement to explore together divisions, conflict and trauma. Theater of Witness, at the Playhouse Theatre in Derry-Londonderry, saw Teya Sepinuck use her technique of 'testimonial performance', where life stories were presented by the storytellers themselves, before audiences who would bear witness to the power of the issues being confronted. In *Release*, a former RUC detective, a former prison governor, a former British soldier, two ex-prisoners and a man caught up in a bomb attack as a child told their stories, with points of convergence emerging from their shared past.[28]

An alternative approach works primarily within communities, rather than building bridges between them. Kabosh is an independent theatre company in Belfast whose plays focus on personal experiences of the Troubles. These are performed within separate communities and then discussed by audiences. Their powerful *Those You Pass on the Street*[29] was performed and discussed at the Culture, Conflict and Post-Conflict symposium. By taking this play about murder, sectarian loyalties and family relations into single-community Belfast settings, Kabosh provoked difficult and often painful discussions that might only take place in the safety of one's own community.

Local museums have similarly been used in Northern Ireland to enable people to explore identities and reconfigure their sense of the past within the security of their own community. Mid-Antrim Museums Service used EU PEACE III funding to offer a vision of reconciliation as being about something different from bringing two separate communities together, which it saw as reinforcing a particular sense of division. Instead, museum projects engaged local people in exploring multiple traditions that included religion, locality, associations, occupations, languages and so on. The aim was to allow plural voices and histories to take shape, so that particular identities and painful pasts might be set in a far more complex sense of the identities that people had (Bouchard, 2009).

The ability of arts and culture to play this role in reconciliation and understanding derives partly from the notions of aesthetic

[27] *www.artichoke.uk.com/events/temple; www.nytimes.com/2015/03/28/world/europe/using-flames-to-soothe-a-northern-ireland-city-scarred-by-fire.html?_r=0*

[28] A documentary about Release can be seen at: *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=36RUHJGRYSA*

[29] For more information see: *www.kabosh.net/article.php?show=those-you-pass-on-the-street*

Long-term evaluations of arts and cultural initiatives in post-conflict transformation have rarely if ever been attempted.

distance and metaphor explored in the previous chapter. Art can create alternative, perhaps safe, spaces to recover memories, articulate narratives and imagine new forms of relationships and understanding. Storytelling, and the neutral positioning of stories alongside each other, can be an important part of this.[30] For David Grant, the Theater of Witness enabled contradictory and unreconciled accounts to sit side-by-side; the theatre setting allowed 'holding the story in a vastness that is bigger than either/or'.[31]

**Post-conflict and the benefits of culture**

The reports on post-conflict projects carried out across the world may be generally couched in terms of success, but the longer-term benefits are less well specified. Although projects set themselves significant objectives, the outcomes are often reported in terms of a project's delivery, and illustrated by comments of participants at the end of events. There are many reasons for the relative absence of systematic or long-term evaluation, not least because continued funding of projects needs reports of positive outcomes. In their survey of music interventions after conflict, Bergh and Sloboda identify a number of weaknesses in evaluations, including simplistic assumptions about individual cultures in a multicultural setting, which can lead to boundaries being reified rather than blurred (Bergh & Sloboda 2010). Arild Bergh told the symposium that his case studies of music and cohesion projects in Sudan and Norway showed wide discrepancies between official reports and what participants told him.[32] There is a more fundamental problem in identifying the contribution of the arts over a longer period when so much else is going on to confound the impact of any precise intervention. In any case, long-term evaluations of arts and cultural initiatives in post-conflict transformation have rarely if ever been attempted.

Studies tend to focus on ephemeral arts forms, notably theatre and music (Urbain 2008). More durable cultural forms, such as museums and public memorialisation, get less attention yet are often more politically prominent, whether as inheritances from a pre-conflict past or post-conflict constructions articulating the narratives of the victors. Durable cultural forms might, by their very nature, reinforce dominant narratives, whereas more ephemeral cultural forms could have greater capacity to disrupt those narratives.

The dominant narrative can most durably be presented through museums, memorials and heritage sites. The new states that emerged from conflict after the breakup of Yugoslavia used monuments as a strategic tool to shape national and ethnic memories. Memory is a key issue in traumatised societies, and memorialisation rarely went uncontested. Representing discordant voices, often but not always those from minority ethnic groups, artists challenged official memorialisation by creating their own permanent or ephemeral monument projects (Dragičević Šešić, 2011). Museums had an important role in this, and Kristin Kuutma reported to the symposium about this process of national museum building, where cultural heritage was shaped by the power play of inclusion and exclusion in states born in violent conflict. Most museums told conservative and essentialist histories, illustrated by iconic objects and with religion, language and history presented as inherited and immutable. Cultural activity reinforced rather than moved beyond the sources of the conflict. Slovenia, the country whose independence involved the shortest and least bloody conflict, alone offered an alternative. Its ethnographic museum was more ambiguous and open, presenting symbols of different as well as shared identities.[33]

The benefits of arts and culture in post-conflict transformation must therefore be understood through their ambiguous place in inter-communal relations. If they have played a role in reconciling communities after conflict, they have also helped to generate those conflicts and to prolong them into a post-conflict period. As Clarke wrote, 'rather than considering how music might help to make a bridge between apparently pre-existent cultural ghettos, should we not be asking in what ways music is already implicated in the establishment and maintenance of those very ghettos in the first place?' (Clarke *CVP Report*, p.21; also Bergh & Sloboda, 2010). Northern Ireland's experience since the Good Friday Agreement provides

[30] On neutral assemblage of stories, see the Prison Memory Archive *http://prisonsmemoryarchive.com*

[31] David Grant, Queen's University Belfast, oral contribution to symposium *Culture, Conflict and Post-Conflict*, September 2014

[32] Arild Bergh, Norwegian Defence Research Institute, oral contribution to symposium *Culture, Conflict and Post-Conflict*, September 2014

[33] Kristin Kuutma, University of Tartu, oral contribution to symposium *Culture, Conflict and Post-Conflict*, September 2014

The benefits of arts and culture in post-conflict transformation must therefore be understood through their ambiguous place in inter-communal relations. If they have played a role in reconciling communities after conflict, they have also often helped to generate those conflicts and to prolong them into a post-conflict period.

examples not only of cultural projects which tried to imagine a new future, but also of long-standing cultural activities that articulated continuing community tensions through practices inherited from the past and reconfigured in the new context; nowhere more so than in the power of murals and marching bands in the cultural and political imagination. The murals in the Catholic Bogside district of Derry-Londonderry are the best known, but they are widely present. The Protestant loyalist Antiville in Mid-Antrim, where museum initiatives with young people had considerable success, contained prominent murals depicting, for example, Oliver Cromwell and Spike, the loyalist paramilitary mascot (Bouchard 2009). Painted murals formalise and fix history, limiting rather than expanding imagination. Marching bands, overwhelmingly Protestant in membership, are a major form of amateur musical practice which grew rapidly with the Troubles, but have barely declined since 1998. Their place in Orange parades, notably the dominant flute bands, has a key place in proclaiming community identity and pride (Marr & Witherow, 2011).

Arts and culture have been much deployed in post-conflict transformation, with apparent short-term benefits, even if longer-term impact remains untested. It is an example of how art and culture can enlarge people's experiences and enable them to think about other peoples, in a setting potentially more neutral and more engaged than would be produced by conventional political dialogue. It might serve to disarm by being subversive, not so much of power as of preconceptions. As Paul Gready argued at the symposium from the experience of South Africa, it is through cultural production, including popular culture, that the silences of both apartheid and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission could be challenged, emphasising shades of grey and linking rather than separating past and future.[34] The argument that arts and culture fuel and often perpetuate conflict has nonetheless to be acknowledged. But do we run the risk of privileging arts and culture in this analysis? Art is not the same as politics, and enjoys a degree of autonomy from it, which may allow it to disrupt the certainties of power and conflict, but which may also signal a degree of relative impotence. For all these reasons, the role of arts and culture in relation to conflict and post-conflict must, surely, be seen as a doubled-edged sword.

[34] Paul Gready, University of York, oral contribution to symposium *Culture, Conflict and Post-Conflict*, September 2014

## KEY POINTS FROM CHAPTER

- We look at the claim that participation in art and culture is conducive to fostering civil engagement. We cite US research distinguishing between three theories of action in this area: the didactic, in which the arts can instruct or persuade people in campaigns or movements; the discursive, in which the arts provide settings for people to discuss issues and share thinking as a basis for civic action; and the ecological which emphasises the spillover effects of cultural participation in increasing the social capital and community capacity fundamental to civic and political engagement.
- The relationship between cultural participation and engaged citizenship has proved a difficult area to evidence, but there is a growing body of work, especially from the US, showing a correlation between cultural engagement and civic behaviours such as voting and volunteering, and this seems to be more than the result of shared characteristics among those who participate in both cultural and civic spheres.
- A variety of studies highlight the processes by which cultural engagement helps young people build the confidence for political engagement, how public arts generates reflection about communities and their future and how minority groups find a collective voice, identity and recognition.
- There is particular interest in arts and cultural activities being used to engage people in thinking about climate change. A particular value of cultural engagement here lies in translating abstract notions into narratives on a human scale, and in doing so in the non-didactic fashion which the arts allow. Another is that it works obliquely, forcing us to reimagine and disturbing complacency. In this respect it underlines the continuing capacity of arts and culture to generate and articulate alternatives to current assumptions and fuel a broader political imagination that is essential in democratic societies.
- We consider the widespread use of arts and cultural interventions to help peace-building and healing after armed conflict. The arts can help to deal with the sources of trauma, bring about reconciliation and help people to move on. The role of the arts in enlarging experiences and thinking about others in a more neutral setting than would emerge from conventional political dialogue is fundamental here. Their role can both be through building bridges between once hostile communities, which is particularly favoured by funders, and through allowing reflection within communities still suffering from trauma which may be just as important. We note, however, that evaluations of such interventions are rarely of the long-term character that is needed to convince of their sustained effectiveness It has to be recognised, however, that culture is not only a positive force in relation to conflict, often playing a part in its initiation and subsequently perpetuating as well as healing antagonisms.

# CHAPTER 5

## COMMUNITIES, REGENERATION AND SPACE

The cultural force of the city and its built environment plays a significant role in shaping people's sense of identity. The relative permanence of buildings and land, and the fact that people and communities configure themselves within the framework these provide, ensures that they become sources not only of memory and identity but also of contest over the control and meanings of space itself.

This underlines the importance of this chapter's themes: art and culture in the regeneration of cities; creative placemaking as a force revitalising urban space and communities, and the clustering of creative industries within that process; and the more subtle influence of smaller-scale arts assets on neighbourhoods and community arts interventions. Since Britain became predominantly urban in the late-19th century, the countryside has itself become a dimension of the urban cultural imagination, so much so that the place of art and culture within rural communities themselves rarely receives research or policy attention, as we shall note at the end.

### Place, identity and public art

Research for the Cultural Value Project reminds us of the complex ways that the urban fabric of the city helps shape identities. The built environment in which people lead their daily lives is now recognised as a dimension of heritage. In their *CVP Critical Review* 'Valuing the Historic Environment: a critical review of existing approaches to social value', Jones and Leech observe the importance of the historic, inherited environment to communities today with its social value manifesting itself in a sense of identity, belonging and place, in addition to forms of memory and spiritual association (see also Hewison & Holden, 2004). People live these places in a fluid

**Below:** The Baltic Centre, Gateshead



Only in recent decades have identity and belonging, memory and symbol, spiritual meanings and cultural practices, come to be seen as a significant part of what we mean by heritage.

way, often quite different from the official ways of valuing the historic environment, and only in recent decades have identity and belonging, memory and symbol, spiritual meanings and cultural practices, come to be seen as a significant part of what we mean by heritage. Jones and Leech track the broadening of heritage to these intangible aspects through to the 2005 Faro Convention's emphasis on 'ascribed values rather than on the material or immaterial elements which combine to constitute heritages.' (quoted in Jones & Leech, *CVP Report* p.11).

**The built environment, community and belonging**

One might expect the sense of belonging associated with the built environment, historic or otherwise. In their *CVP Research Development Award* on 'Producing historical Abergavenny: the cultural value and role of social media in promoting historical awareness in one town', Studdert and Hargreaves show how the Forgotten Abergavenny Facebook site gathered 3,000 friends for a user-driven site where postings of photos of historic town buildings, events in the past, and so on were linked to storytelling and exchanges that 'linked into an existing communal sense of belonging and ownership' which emerged from the town's tangible and intangible heritage for its people (Studdert & Hargreaves, *CVP Report*, p.8). The users of the site were often from groups that are hard-to-reach in terms of cultural activity, including people who had felt excluded from the town's more formal historical groups.

O'Sullivan and Young's *CVP Research Development Award* on 'Mapping Faith and Place: exploring cultural values in the buildings of South Asian faiths in Leicester' explores place and identity through a study of faith buildings in Leicester that uncovers their ambiguities. The three buildings selected as case studies were of very different provenance – a converted shoe warehouse (Sikh gurdwara), a transformed nonconformist church (Jain temple) and a newly-constructed building (Hindu temple), but all were given their meanings by the personal relationships, communal services and acts of devotion that were centred around them, rather than by the fabric of the buildings themselves. Each was nonetheless endowed with religious and cultural artefacts acquired from India, though the Jain temple's British context was marked by the use of contemporary stained glass alongside Indian shrine fittings. The precise survey questions about the heritage merits of the buildings might, however, have deflected attention from more subtle ways in which buildings, symbols and lived experiences interacted for these communities.

The built environment is thus about communities and the lived space rather than buildings alone or even primarily, but in their *CVP Critical Review* on 'The cultural value of architecture in homes and neighbourhoods', Samuel and colleagues analyse the limited way in which architects are viewed, as the producers of buildings rather than as designers and shapers of environments. The concern of the architect is not the building but the end users, they argue, with the capacity to influence mental and physical states, shape the development of networks and communities, co-produce identities and make some things possible and others not through the design process itself. Their observation that co-design is fundamental to community outcomes underlines a recurrent theme of this report. Samuel et al are concerned that discussions of place identities are still dominated by the historic built environment rather than by homes and neighbourhoods, one consequence being the marginalisation of new architecture and new designed places.

The cultural importance of the built environment has tended to focus on its tangible historic heritage. Even then, the meanings of the buildings and streetscapes for the inhabitants of a town or district are neglected in the evaluation of projects, where wellbeing, aesthetic considerations and economic benefits are the focus (Reeve & Shipley, 2013). Cultural practitioners nonetheless play an increasing role in new developments, as with the embedding of artists in private and public development projects. The aim of PROJECT from 2004 to 2006 was to embed artists so as to impact on working practices in multi-professional teams, and also influence the design of the new urban spaces. Its evaluation found a widespread belief amongst developers, professionals, local authority officers and others in the teams that their 'mindset' had been significantly altered by the presence of an artist. Their involvement introduced creativity and challenge, which either made the teams work differently or led to different design possibilities: often it did both. Notwithstanding some tensions, most projects benefited considerably, whether they were using arts-driven activities to involve communities in

consultation and co-design on the one hand, or re-imagining a site and how the public and private realms might be reconfigured, on the other (Comedia, 2006; CABE, 2008).

**Public art and the urban environment**

The creation of public art is a different way in which artists can intervene in the urban environment. We should note the easily overlooked importance of art and music in animating and aestheticising the public space, whether through the live music organised for London's St Pancras Station, buskers and performers in town centres, or the plans for an arts presence at smaller railway stations through Community Rail Partnerships. Visual arts interventions are historically most evident through the statues and monuments that convey a narrative about past and present, but recent decades have seen greater diversity in public art's role in shaping the urban environment and engaging in dialogue with it.

Tornaghi categorises public art into five approaches: iconic works by major artists located in key public spaces; art installations in profit-oriented developments; critical, provocative works deployed to animate the public sphere; participatory public art in which the process is prominent, and public art to support the goals of a regeneration project (Tornaghi, 2007). As she observes, hierarchies of art and taste weigh heavily in debates about what is appropriate public art. We were introduced to the theme in an earlier chapter by Froggett's *CVP Research Development Award* on 'Public art and local civic engagement' in Ilfracombe. *Nowhereisland's* ephemeral presence, which helped to provoke discussion of how the town and society might evolve, was contrasted with the installation of Damian Hirst's *Verity* statue overlooking the harbour, seen as bringing visitors and confidence to the town. A more explicit version of using public art to draw tourists is Antony Gormley's *Another Place*, 100 life-size cast-iron figures staring out to sea and imagining other places, which were installed on Crosby Beach, Merseyside in 2005. Intended to be temporary, they were made permanent after a campaign that included initially sceptical local people who had become attached to them. Gormley's *Angel of the North* helped shift the image of Gateshead and how it saw itself, and it was able to do so because it was the figurehead of a much more extensive public art programme through the town, often in areas of considerable social deprivation (Sharp et al, 2005).

Public art is also employed to give cohesion to new places. When the Citadel housing development was conceived in a run-down former port district in Ayr in the early years of this century, the sculptures in the private housing and commercial areas, buoys and anchors evoking the area's maritime past, were felt to be innocuous and uninteresting. The artist Stephen Hurrel's work with those moving to new social housing, on the other hand, engaged the new residents through the objects and memories they brought with them, in order to bring people into contact, culminating in an installation of tall painted poles round the district, with peepholes through which to see model landscapes with ships. Here was an ambitious use of public art to create interaction and ownership in a new district. The evaluation did not find the installation to be widely liked, however, and after the early stages of genuine engagement it became just another familiar, accepted part of the townscape. It did mark the place out, though, as much public art does (Pollock & Sharp, 2007).

The purpose of these different forms of organised public art is not only to aestheticise public space but also to enhance the social cohesion of a city or a district, especially one undergoing a process of redevelopment, though the limited evaluations means their effectiveness remains unclear. Unofficial and informal public art interventions, on the other hand, can deliver alternative commentaries on the urban and civic space. Dissident commentaries may be a necessary part of urban cohesion when the absence of consensus is part of making cities energetic and productive. It might offer a counter-monumentalism, as when Power of Place sought to introduce to the Los Angeles urban landscape memorials and evocations of those who were excluded from the main narratives of public art, drawing for example from the city's African-American and Latino history (Hayden, 1997). In their *CVP Critical Review* Jones and Leech highlight the role of graffiti and guerilla art in providing different meanings and alternative senses of place. They also raise the question of who has access to the public space for the display of their art, which is a recurrent theme in approaches to public art.[35] Murals are a prominent form of unofficial art, some of them a powerful reinforcement of past conflicts as we saw in Northern Ireland; others are reminders of resistance to urban change, as in the 1976 *Floyd Road Mural* in the Charlton district of SE London,

[35] For this issue on Tyneside, Tornaghi, 2007 pp.20-23

The purpose of these different forms of organised public art is not only to aestheticise public space but also to enhance the social cohesion of a city or a district.

A narrative emerged in which culture would drive both economic and urban regeneration.

showing a diverse local population resisting the bulldozers that would demolish the area for commercial redevelopment (Matarasso, 2013). Graffiti and guerilla art might be seen as the successor to murals, offering an alternative sense of place and often of the forces shaping it.

## Urban regeneration

Powerful discourses and practices have emerged in recent decades which link cultural investment and activity not simply to understanding the city but to changing it. This has been seen as one of the most powerful arguments for the instrumental benefits of the arts, pointing to the impact of major cultural buildings and the emergence of vibrant creative and cultural quarters. It was observed in 2005 that 'within the space of little more than two decades, the initiation of culture-driven urban (re)generation has come to occupy a pivotal position in the new urban entrepreneurialism.' (Miles & Paddison, 2005 p.833). The year before had seen DCMS signal this in a report called *Culture at the heart of regeneration* (DCMS, 2004). Two complementary overviews of the research on these issues were carried out for the Cultural Value Project: the *CVP Critical Review* by Campbell on '"Evidence of Things That Appear Not"? A critical review of the role of arts and culture in the regeneration of urban places and urban communities', and that by Oakley on 'Creating Space: a re-evaluation of the role of culture in regeneration'. The discussion that follows in this and the next section draws on these two reviews, alongside a wider literature.

### Culture-led regeneration

The argument for culture-led regeneration originated as a European and US response to the 'de-industrialisation' of the city, and culture was given a prominent role in 'the post-industrial city', with knowledge and consumption at its core. A narrative emerged in which culture would drive both economic and urban regeneration. The concept of the post-industrial city required not only that it find new economic motors, but that it also address declines in social cohesion, inner-city property values and urban infrastructure. Culture came to be seen as a key driver, as a sub-set of both the knowledge economy and its need for continuing innovation on the one hand, and the consumer, experience economy on the other. As Oakley concluded, however, 'the spectacular, the newly built and high art have been seen as the drivers of regeneration', while how everyday cultural practices fit into the narrative is far less clear (Oakley *CVP Report*, p.12).

Campbell gathered into three areas what he saw as the core propositions in the literature linking cultural activity to economic and urban regeneration: regeneration via sector development of cultural and creative industries; regeneration via interventions which raise public profile and levels of engagement, and regeneration via improved social circumstances. Each was unpacked in a set of propositions that were identified as shaping the regeneration narrative, many of which are picked-up elsewhere in this and other chapters, before Campbell summarised the types of evidence used for each (Campbell *CVP Report;* for tabular summaries pp.36-40). He found that many of the propositions lacked the clarity of definition needed to test them effectively against evidence. His overall conclusion was not that the various and diverse benefits of culture for urban regeneration do not exist, but rather that little progress has been made in demonstrating them. Campbell attributes this to a combination of short-termism that characterises most reports on effects, limited resources precluding longitudinal evaluation, a lack of clarity about what is being claimed and how it might be tested, an over-emphasis on economic benefits, and, finally, serious difficulty over the appropriate methods. A brief overview for the Greater London Authority similarly concluded that without longer-term monitoring of the impact on both places and people, and better ways of integrating qualitative evidence, it was impossible properly to evaluate the impact of culture in urban regeneration (Ennis & Douglas, 2011).

A case study of such culture-led urban transformation in Milan concluded, in terms that can be applied to many other cases, that a balance needed to be struck between the investment in facilities, which might be seen as 'hardware', and that in activities, seen as 'software' (Sacco & Blessi, 2009). Publicly-led cultural regeneration projects have tended to be hardware-driven, symbolised for many by what is seen to be the flagship success of Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Museum in regenerating Bilbao through a combination of tourism and confidence, and also by many other initiatives, such as the revival of London's south bank of the Thames, which was associated with the transformation of a disused power station into Tate Modern.

The European discourse influenced parallel developments in the Far East, such as the West Kowloon project in Hong Kong. The European Capital of Culture programme, which had begun with Athens and then Florence a few years earlier, was in 1990 developed by Glasgow into a vehicle for urban regeneration in the face of the city's industrial and economic decline. Glasgow's success in refashioning its image, along with its infrastructure, changed the character of the European programme as a whole, and urban regeneration through cultural investment and activity became central both to why city governments wanted the Capital of Culture title, and to the criteria for its award.

By the time that Liverpool was chosen in 2008, this had long since become the established narrative and purpose – cultural investment would be used to reshape a city, its economy and its communities. Newcastle and Gateshead, which lost out to Liverpool in that competition, were already engaged in a major programme of new cultural infrastructure to refashion both city centres, of which the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art and the Sage live music venue were Gateshead's iconic new buildings. Smaller towns followed with new cultural infrastructure initiatives to provide a stimulus for their economy, image and community. Declining seaside towns (such as those that are the subject of Clift's *CVP Research Development Award*) have found an alternative future within the leisure economy, and have built large new facilities, such as Turner Contemporary in Margate and the transformed De La Warr Pavilion in Bexhill, although Folkestone interestingly chose to focus on software more than hardware with a Triennial Festival and public art works displayed around the town, which were linked into a programme to establish smaller spaces for creative and cultural industries (Oakley *CVP Report*; Clift et al *CVP Report*; Walton & Browne, 2010). MASS MoCA's construction in 1999 as a purpose-built museum of contemporary art, in the run-down small industrial town of North Adams in Massachusetts, enabled a case study of its economic effects. This demonstrated its input to the local economy, and through the use of hedonic pricing (in this case, showing the effect it had on housing values) also on amenities (Sheppard et al, 2006). The impact was significant, but still leaves the counterfactual question that applies far more widely: 'if $50 million dollars had been spent on, say, converting the Sprague Electric Company site into a biotechnology office park instead, would we have seen the same results?' (Moss, 2009).

**Evaluating culture-led regeneration**

Building a tourist and consumer economy is one goal of projects for culture-led urban regeneration. Evans called this 'hard-branding the cultural city', and noted what he saw as its conscious separation in policy terms from the local cultural base (Evans, 2003). This was not, of course, the first time that city centres had been reconfigured by a mixture of consumerism, architecture, commerce and culture, because the same elements had been extravagantly interwoven in the department stores that spread in Europe from the later-19th century (Crossick & Jaumain, 1999; Rappaport, 2001; Miller, 1981). The combination reappeared, albeit in a new configuration that ostensibly gave priority to arts and culture, and which was at the heart of city government policy. The narratives of success that surround most of these initiatives are not unfounded, though the evidence about image and confidence is the most convincing. An early evaluation of the redevelopment of the Gateshead waterfront was not oblivious to the degree of exclusivity and gentrification that ensued, but showed how, by linking the development to people's strong sense of place, the new waterfront was able to engage with and rearticulate a sense of local identity (Miles, 2005). It is significant that the flagship buildings were the culmination of a long commitment of the city council to grassroots cultural activity.

An evaluation of the cultural legacy of Glasgow's year as European Capital of Culture was clear that the city's image and sense of identity had significantly changed, though smaller local organisations felt that they had been neglected after the year was over, while creative entrepreneurs and venues complained of a retreat from innovation and risk-taking. Glasgow's film, TV, music and design entrepreneurs reported that the emphasis on consumption at the expense of production was explained by what they saw as the lack of sustainability of the gains of 1990 (Garcia, 2005). Garcia's study is unusual in specifically asking about the cultural effects of culture-led regeneration. The effects of the Guggenheim on Bilbao are conventionally expressed in terms of urban development, tourism and economic return, but when the question was widened to the impact on the city's

Evidence of regeneration using major cultural projects and the sustained impact arising – including the longer-term measurement required to test these out – does appear to be limited.

art landscape, the museum was found to have helped the development of the local arts scene, as well as public support of the arts (Plaza et al, 2009).

A thorough report for the European Parliament on the European Capital (previously City) of Culture programme (ECoC), and covering all 48 host cities between 1985 and 2011, is the most comprehensive evaluation of culture-led urban regeneration (Garcia & Cox, 2013). The evaluation team struggled with inconsistent reporting methods and, above all, with the absence of longer-term studies to establish the sustainability of impacts claimed for the ECoC year itself, and at most for the following year or two. The short-term effects seemed clear: vibrancy and capacity in the cultural sector, an image renaissance for cities with a low profile, a local sense of pride, a wider diversity of arts audiences during the ECoC year, and increased tourism with associated economic benefits. Nonetheless, if the dominant regeneration narrative was about the economic benefits associated with being European Capital of Culture, then 'an assessment of the available literature provides very few examples of actual evidence of long-term economic effects directly related to the ECoC year.' (Garcia & Cox, 2013 p.131). Claims about the sustainability of the new physical infrastructure were hard to substantiate, and the longer-term social effects too diverse to be easily evaluated. Similarly, claims for the positive effects on the creative industries were bedevilled by the absence of any common definition of what was meant by the term, or coherent plans to link ECoC to a strategy for their development (see also Campbell, 2011).

O'Brien's analysis of the narrative of success that followed Liverpool 2008 pinpoints the ways in which a rich cultural tradition and infrastructure, combined with very significant government and European funding to deal with high-levels of deprivation, make it hard to unravel what distinctive contribution being ECoC made. The year might simply have acted as a catalyst, but the narrative of success, along with the crude headline figure that for every £1 invested in ECoC an economic benefit of £7.50 accrued, was one element leading the UK government to set up a purely national scheme, called UK City of Culture. Its aim was to secure similar benefits by following the 'Liverpool model', but which really rested on a set of relationships that were poorly conceptualised and rarely understood through sound evidence (O'Brien, 2014; Campbell *CVP Report* pp.54-55).

The absence of long-term studies of impacts is the greatest problem identified in Garcia & Cox's report. As they conclude, 'the programme has proven capable of generating noticeable impacts in respective host cities; however, with the broadening of objectives and expectations, the breadth and ambition of related claims has [sic] also grown and these are not always matched by evidence.' (p.195). In this the report echoes the conclusion of a survey of regeneration initiatives a few years earlier, which said that 'evidence of regeneration using major cultural projects and the sustained impact arising – including the longer-term measurement required to test these out – does appear to be limited.' (Evans, 2005 p.975). The two critical reviews for the Cultural Value Project do not find the situation to have changed.

The case study of Milan's old industrial district of Bicocca drew its conclusion about the relative importance of hardware and software after describing the very top-down approach of the regeneration programme, where Sacco et al found little community engagement in the cultural activities that followed the new development. Attempts to involve local residents were always secondary to large new infrastructure, and their subsequent detachment was not unexpected. If the objective is to regenerate communities as well as places, Sacoo and Blessi's conclusion is that 'intangible assets such as social and human capital can accumulate efficiently only if they are supported by non-instrumental motivations.' (Sacco & Blessi, 2009 p.1,132).

Art and culture have been seen as a basis for urban regeneration but have also, not least because of the uneven community ownership of such projects, been used to respond to and at times resist them; a further example of the role of the arts as a source of challenge that is a necessary part of civic engagement. The Demos project, imagining the future of Glasgow through storytelling and arts, is one example (Hassan et al, 2007). Many urban areas where the schools Creative Partnerships programme was involved were scheduled for regeneration and projects used arts to engage young people and other residents in debates about their area and how it might be improved (Thomson et al, 2009; Bragg et al, 2009). Oakley's Critical Review observed not only the ways in which the arts have created genuinely

participatory input into ideas for regeneration, but have also been part of resistance, citing examples from Hamburg, Toronto and Stockholm where artists and local activists worked with city authorities to reshape regeneration plans (Oakley *CVP Report*, p.19). Arts organisations have also shown the capacity for imagining alternative ways of thinking about urban change. The Liverpool Biennial 2012 project 2Up2Down/Homebaked saw artists working with the community in an area that was subject to a renewal programme, re-establishing a community bakery and supporting the community's capacity to determine the future of its own neighbourhood (Campbell *CVP Report*, p.35), an approach echoed in the work of Assemble, an architectural and design team working with communities to reimagine and refashion their built environment, and winners of the 2015 Turner Prize.

## Creative places, creative quarters

The development of creative places and creative quarters is a distinctive dimension of the wider regeneration narrative, privileging smaller-scale initiatives in contrast to the dominant focus on big infrastructure projects. Creative placemaking as a term emerged from the US (Markusen & Gadwa, 2009), where it was argued that developing the cultural and creative presence in a city or district would be followed by growth in the economy, vibrancy and community resilience. Although its most concrete formulations and testing have been applied to the US context, the ideas are recapitulated in urban cultural discourses and policies elsewhere. Its most ambitious formulation is in a White Paper on *Creative Placemaking* produced for the Mayors' Institute on City Design at the instigation of the National Endowment for the Arts. It is worth quoting at length because so many elements are bound up in it.

> *In creative placemaking, partners from public, private, non-profit, and community sectors strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighborhood, town, city, or region around arts and cultural activities. Creative placemaking animates public and private spaces, rejuvenates structures and streetscapes, improves local business viability and public safety, and brings diverse people together to celebrate, inspire, and be inspired. In turn, these creative locales foster entrepreneurs and cultural industries that generate jobs and income, spin off new products and services, and attract and retain unrelated businesses and skilled workers. Together, creative placemaking's livability and economic development outcomes have the potential to radically change the future of American towns and cities […]. Instead of a single arts center or a cluster of large arts and cultural institutions, contemporary creative placemaking envisions a more decentralized portfolio of spaces acting as creative crucibles. In each, arts and culture exist cheek-by-jowl with private sector export and retail businesses and mixed-income housing, often occupying buildings and lots that had been vacant and under-used. (Markusen & Gadwa, 2010 p.3).*

A series of overlapping themes thus come together. The first is that creative places attract tourists and visitors to a district, because it is a culturally vibrant part of 'the experience economy'. In their manifesto for the experience economy, Pine and Gilmore insist that 'the staging of experiences must be pursued as a distinct form of economic output' (Pine & Gilmore, 2011, p.ix). The second theme is that creative quarters or clusters where creative industries coalesce benefit the industries while also reinforcing these creative places. The third is that creative places are environments where something that Florida named 'the creative class' wants to live, with the first two themes being part of what makes a place attract them. Florida's formulation sees creative people rather than corporations as now being the drivers of economic growth, which means that cities should concentrate on the amenities and atmosphere that will attract them (Florida, 2004; Florida et al, 2015). The core criticism is that it lumps together under a single term about one-third of the workforce, from managers and lawyers to artists and technicians, from accountants and dancers to designers and social workers, occupations whose lifestyles, mobility, tastes and politics are far more diverse than the theory allows, while it proposes causal relationships that may actually work in other directions. An assessment with respect to UK cities concluded that, although some individual points were valid, there was little evidence of a single creative class in the UK, nor of its potential impact in the way that Florida proposes. 'What's true we already knew. What's new is probably not true.' (Nathan, 2005).

Culture and the creative industries thus often find themselves within a vision of the new economy that combines science,

knowledge, creativity and culture, but in a mix that leaves the actual role of arts and culture unclear. As Evans has asked, are they part of the economy, are they a necessary context for the creative industries, or are they there primarily to attract the knowledge workers (Evans, 2009)?

The concept of 'creative placemaking' has in recent years come to focus in the US more precisely on a fourth theme, emphasising community and participation. This is the result of the separate and joint initiatives of the National Endowment for the Arts and ArtsPlace, which works with various agencies, foundations, city government bodies and non-profit organisations to use the arts actively to strengthen communities. It nonetheless remains linked to the broader foundations set out in the quotation from the White Paper. The vagueness of that formulation is now recognised by its authors (Nicodemus, 2013), and has led others to point out how difficult it is to evaluate its success (Moss, 2012). A problem with the creative places and creative placemaking discourse is the breadth of activities that it embraces, and the possible tensions between creative industries, cultural consumption, creative classes and communities. Although the discourse itself has not been adopted in the UK, many of its component features have been, leading to similar difficulties, as the Critical Reviews by Campbell and Oakley reveal.

The creative industries are firmly located within a discourse about place. A varied terminology of 'creative clusters', 'quarters', 'districts' and 'hubs' is employed in often overlapping ways. The networked economy is a helpful way of thinking about these creative industry districts as we will see in the chapter on *Economy: impact, innovation and ecology*. In these networks, that characterise much but by no means all of the creative industries, freelancers and micro-businesses interconnect for specialisation, production and projects in an environment where other arts spaces enlarge the locations for risk and experiment. These networked clusters and districts are rooted in the ways in which knowledge is formed and shared in the creative industries (Crossick, 2006), and have been characterised as having high levels of human input, clusters of small companies operating on a project basis, dense transactional flows of information, goods and services, and complex divisions of labour tying people to places (Scott in O'Connor, 2004; also Fleming, 2004).

Comunian uses complexity theory similarly to underline the importance of the micro-interactions and networks between creative practitioners, the publicly-supported cultural sector and the cultural infrastructure of the city (Comunian, 2011). A study of electronic music production and cultures in London and Berlin has, however, argued that personal networks that are not dependent on a specific urban district are as important as clusters in the overall ecology (van Heur, 2010). Allington's *CVP Research Development Award* on 'Online networks and the production of value in electronic music' nuances this further. Although it may not be important for the individual music maker to be in a specific location, they all orient towards London, New York and the San Francisco Bay Area. He argues that digital media work not by eroding the importance of place, but by connecting people to places in which they do not live.

The term 'industry' in creative industries and cultural industries belies a reality where production is often squeezed out of such districts, over time, by consumption. A survey of designated 'creative clusters' finds them unlike conventionally defined business clusters, in that they include features such as conservation and heritage, regeneration initiatives, cultural tourism and visitor economies alongside creative businesses (Evans, 2009). In the creative quarters where studios, workshops, cafés, bars and live music provide a dynamic cultural and spatial ecology for small creative businesses and non-profits alike, the ideal mix rarely survives for long. Successful creative quarters become places where the artists' and designers' studios and workshops, the launch pad for the new ecology in once run-down parts of the inner city, move out as rising property prices and rent levels make it impossible for them to stay.

In this analysis, the relationship between the arts and urban space comes to be about consumption rather than production, as part of a local or metropolitan visitor and experience economy. A distinction in theory and planning practice between production-led quarters and consumption-led quarters (McCarthy, 2005) is hard to maintain, and consumption and leisure come to prevail. Although creative and cultural quarters have been a feature of urban policy over the last couple of decades, research points to the often negative dimensions of their development: the marginalisation of production, social gentrification and increasing inequality

Although creative and cultural quarters have been a feature of urban policy over the last couple of decades, research points to the often negative dimensions of their development: the marginalisation of production, social gentrification and increasing inequality within the urban space.

within the urban space. Property prices and rent levels are the key driver. In the words of Kunzman, 'Each story of regeneration begins with poetry and ends with real estate.'[36]

**The variety of cultural quarters**

The discourse surrounding cultural quarters has exaggerated their homogeneity, however. A study of five cultural clusters in the Netherlands showed them to be more differentiated in reality, not least in allowing a stronger role for the cultural infrastructure and artistic values than is commonly articulated (Mommaas, 2004). Smaller post-industrial towns often adopted the idea more simplistically, and their designation became a core part of urban planning in the first decade of this century. Nottingham's Lace Quarter was an example of largely organic growth from a run-down industrial district (Shorthouse, 2004), whereas a case study of Wolverhampton shows how the town council's policy involved building a cultural quarter on an existing entertainment district, with a view to broadening the social and age mix of those coming into the area, and designated both artist and cultural industries districts alongside entertainment. The city had existing strengths in creative industries such as animation, new media, general media, music and crafts and design, but entertainment was emphasised as well. The Wolverhampton case has been seen as reflecting 'a reductive and derivative approach, exacerbated by serial replication of policy 'models'.' (McCarthy, 2005 p.309). Local cultural quarters cannot simply be constructed. Creative presence and skills need to be augmented by the strengthening of local networks and their linking into national and international circuits of trading and expert knowledge (O'Connor, 2004; Evans, 2004; for an unsuccessful attempt in Stoke-on-Trent, Jayne, 2004).

Pratt's case study of Hoxton charts the shift from production to consumption that is common amongst creative and cultural quarters (Pratt, 2009). Hoxton, in the 19th century a textile and furniture-making workshop district on the edge of the City of London, became celebrated as a centre for young artists in the late 1980s and 1990s. They set up studios and living space, joined by musicians working in new music genres and the innovative and edgy Lux Cinema, the district's social and artistic hub which, with the help of public money, attracted cultural enterprises into the locality. By the time that Hoxton had been adopted by New Labour as a symbol of creative Britain it had probably peaked and, with rents rising as property developers leveraged the arts assets, artists moved on and their flats were converted into residential lofts. Pratt describes how new-build lofts, restaurants, and galleries were by the early 2000s transforming Hoxton into a destination for visitors and tourists, and a place of residence for those able to afford it. Gentrification, he argues, should not be seen solely as happening within residential markets, but also where places of production were turned into residential property (see also Zukin, 1982). Creative production left even more rapidly than it had arrived, with only new media and some advertising firms present through the mid-2000s. Hoxton exemplifies, for Pratt, ambiguities in the relationship between culture and urban regeneration, with the production dimension pushed aside by the ability of consumption and gentrification to generate higher property values (for similar processes in Manchester, O'Connor 2004; for Nottingham, Shorthouse, 2004).

It is not that the urban benefits of the arts and culture are illusory, nor those of the very diverse creative industries, but rather that they are positioned within a process of continuing displacement as districts change their character. If both regeneration and creative quarters generate economic and cultural benefits but also disrupt communities and exacerbate existing urban inequalities, might different kinds of cultural presence impact more positively on neighbourhoods? Campbell asks what it is that is deemed to be regenerative about culture in the policy discourse, and his review of the literature concludes that the economic benefits are presented as the basis for regeneration, with social, cultural and community benefits essentially derivative of the economic benefits to individuals (Campbell *CVP Report*, p.29ff). Oakley's review confirms this, and concludes that more research is needed on the beneficial and regenerative potential of smaller-scale cultural initiatives. Apart from community arts initiatives, there has been little research in the UK on the ways arts and cultural assets in neighbourhoods might influence their wellbeing. Do neighbourhoods that are similar in other ways but with a different arts and cultural presence also differ on selected social indicators? Markusen has argued that one can have regeneration without gentrification, what she has called

[36] K. Kunzman, keynote speech to Intereg III Mid-term Conference, Lille, in: Regeneration and Renewal, 19 November, p.2. Quoted in Evans, 2005, p.959

It is the strengthening of the connections between people, and increasing social capital, which matters, rather than the direct economic impact often associated with culture-led regeneration.

'the artistic dividend' (Markusen, 2003). Oakley suggests that one reason for any benefits that flow from lower-profile arts and cultural assets may be because they are likely to be associated with more balanced economic development than that of the main regeneration narrative.

**Neighbourhood change and gentrification**

If the question has been neglected in this country, detailed neighbourhood-level sources in the USA, together with a different policy environment and the importance of charitable foundations, have led to innovative research whose questions need to be considered in the UK. Grodach et al use large national data sources to test the relationship of the arts to different facets of urban neighbourhood change in 100 large US metropolitan areas. They find that different arts activities are associated with different types and levels of neighbourhood change, though they make it clear that their work cannot identify the causal mechanisms at play. Whereas commercial arts industries (e.g. film, music and design-based industries) emerge as strongly associated with gentrification in urban areas undergoing rapid change, those that they label fine arts, and which are a blend of for-profit and non-profit (visual and performing arts companies, museums, fine art schools) are associated with stable, slow-growth neighbourhoods (Grodach et al, 2014).

The Social Impact of the Arts Project at the University of Pennsylvania[37] has been working for some years on the relationship between arts and cultural assets on the one hand and neighbourhood character and sustainability on the other. They are particularly interested in the ecology of different cultural resources (non-profits, commercial firms, artists, participants) within social neighbourhoods, and whether these are associated with social characteristics such as welfare outcomes, neighbourhood crime and conflict, population stability and so on. They argue that their analysis of US data enables them to show the ability of the arts to mitigate the impact of economic inequality on low-wealth communities. In less affluent blocks a high level of cultural assets is associated with lower social stress levels than in similar blocks with low cultural assets. In more affluent blocks, on the other hand, the intensity of cultural assets made no noticeable difference. They also distinguish between 'market' districts of a city where a better-off, educated population means that cultural provision can find a consumer market, and what they call 'civic' districts where smaller-scale commercial, community-based and non-profit cultural facilities may be found. These smaller cultural assets will not, they argue, turn these poorer areas into cultural centres let alone destinations, but they deliver other benefits (Stern, 2014; Stern & Seifert, 2010; Stern & Seifert, 2013). It is the strengthening of the connections between people, and increasing social capital, which matters, rather than the direct economic impact often associated with culture-led regeneration.

**The lasting value of small-scale, participatory activities**

Parallel research in the UK could be very productive, especially in the context of policy interest in the liveability of places, although the relative absence of rich and granular standard data, of the kind available in the US, will present a challenge. Although UK policy interest in cultural mapping has grown, the difficulty of accessing quality data, along with the way that spatial planning, funding and regional promotion have driven initiatives, has limited what has been done (Lee & Gilmore, 2012)[38]. On small-scale assets, Evans has concluded, in the context of what he calls 'the shock of the new' and the visible over informal and community-based culture, that prioritising the former in regeneration strategies goes against the evidence that participatory arts activity generates better and often more sustainable benefits (Evans, 2005, p.977; also Oakley, *CVP Report*, p.7). It is in that context that the US studies lay down relevant research challenges for the UK.

This focus on smaller-scale cultural activities gives a different focus to the arts and regeneration argument, engaging with community or neighbourhood rather than infrastructural projects, distinguishing rapid commercial transformation from the more gradual and organic, and focusing on small-scale assets that link to a broader participatory culture.

In their *CVP Research Development Award* on 'The cultural value of live music', Brennan et al underline the neglect of small live music venues, which are often displaced in regeneration initiatives, yet which play a significant role

[37] A wide range of interesting reports from SIAP can be found at: *http://impact.sp2.upenn.edu/siap*

[38] An international collection on cultural mapping appeared too late to be included here, but promises to move the methodology forward (Duxbury et al, 2015)

in communities and in the arts ecology. The focus on the local and smaller-scale leads us to ask about more informal participatory and everyday cultural activities building social cohesion and community: the knitting circles, book clubs, dance groups, church choirs, community festivals and allotments which Oakley presents in her *CVP Critical Review* as offering great promise for future research.

Gilmore, faced with the paradox of Macclesfield appearing as a town with a high level of cultural engagement but a low level of formal cultural assets, asked about 'the privatised, commercialised or everyday forms of participation' which might not show up in formal arts participation surveys. She brings together place, built environment and cultural participation to show how the town's silk manufacturing past had left weavers' cottages and disused factory buildings that were now the sites for cultural participation: 'pool halls, crafts and juggling clubs, cup-cake making classes and arts exhibitions, *in lieu* of more recent capital investment in bespoke arts venues' (Gilmore, 2013, p.93). A conclusion from Rooke's *CVP Expert Workshop* 'Curating community? The relational and agonistic value of participatory arts in super-diverse localities' reinforces the hidden nature of much cultural activity in a different setting:

> *The deficit model of local culture and social capital overlooks diverse, vernacular and economically significant, cultural forms. The example was given of Nigerian and Nepalese film production in South East London, and the transnational flows of these cultural forms that rarely register on the radar of cultural industries strategies and mapping exercises. (Rooke CVP Report, Curating Community, p.7).*

The AHRC-funded Understanding Everyday Participation project, in which Gilmore is a co-investigator, seeks to identify from the bottom-up the range of actual cultural participation, in contrast to what they see as the 'deficit model' that identifies the issue as people's absence from defined, often publicly-funded cultural activities, rather than their involvement in other kinds of cultural activity that may not be captured by established surveys.[39] (For work leading to this project see Gilmore, 2013; Miles & Sullivan, 2012; for a Danish critique of the concept of the 'non-user', Balling & Kann-Christensen, 2013; for 'vernacular and everyday landscapes of creativity' see Edinsor et al, 2010.)

## Community arts

Community arts, which constitute a specific dimension of such smaller-scale initiatives, have already been encountered, in the US ArtPlace programme[40] and public arts initiatives earlier in this chapter, and, more substantially, in community health projects and those engaging with the criminal justice system. The Paul Hamlyn Foundation's ArtWorks project sought to develop skills and good practice amongst practitioners in community arts work. The artists surveyed were active in health, education, criminal justice, youth and community work, which most saw as of equal value to their own practice. Many artists choose to work in this way, and two-thirds of those surveyed did not see their art practice as separate from their practice in participatory settings (Burns, 2015; DHA, 2014, p.27). The relationship between the art and the community engagement varied: there were artists for whom the art was itself the focus; others for whom it was important, while also intended to lead to personal, social or community development, and others for whom the art was merely a vehicle to deliver these outcomes (Schwarz, 2013).

Matarasso describes a transition in community arts in Britain. In the 1970s it was embedded in programmes of the 'progressive left' to improve the conditions of a whole community, with activities linked to grassroots organisations, and mostly operating outside formal institutional and funding structures. By the 1990s he finds a different approach that was depoliticised, addressing individuals rather than communities (Matarasso, 2013). We must acknowledge the problem of aggregation for community arts impact studies: that of linking micro-level effects on individuals to the macro-level of communities when, economic impact apart, almost all impact studies examine how the arts affects individuals, by improving their health, confidence, self-esteem, skills and so on (Guetzkow, 2002). The shift is nevertheless due more to policy than to methodological considerations. Community

[39] *www.everydayparticipation.org/soundings-and-findings-a-connected-communities-research-conference*

[40] *www.artplaceamerica.org/about/introduction*; see also Project Row Houses in Houston's northern, historic, African-American Third Ward: *http://projectrowhouses.org*

arts practitioners still appear to be concerned to secure wider benefits in ways that are more socially engaged than mainstream provision, but Matarasso has highlighted a significant transition.

The ArtWorks reports reveal how the value of participatory arts in building social capital and community resilience still underpins much work.[41] Rooke's *CVP Expert Workshop* on 'Curating community' confirmed this, in discussing the tensions in community arts between practitioner objectives and urban regeneration policies. The workshop concluded, in ways that connect with our theme of civil society and the engaged citizen, that antagonism and heterogeneity in participatory arts play a valuable role in relation to the development of civil society.

A survey in north-east England reveals the variety of community arts. Amongst others it includes Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art's outreach and learning programmes; Equal Arts, which organises participatory arts projects with older people; The Forge, whose projects with young people and families cover the breadth of visual and performing arts; Helix Arts, which creates new artworks with the unemployed and young people at risk; and Live Theatre youth theatre group's issue-based work, which includes new plays written by primary school children. The motives are equally varied, with Baltic's concern to overcome gaps in its own audiences, the concern of The Forge for the development of social capital, and Helix Arts' belief that through creativity people can reflect on the narratives they use to understand their own lives and the wider world (Lowe, 2011). Impact Arts, a community arts charity and social business operating across Scotland, whose mission is 'to help people and communities transform their lives through creative activity and the arts', and whose programmes have included Fab Pad, where young vulnerable tenants work with artists and designers to learn the skills to be able to make a home; Urban Green, helping communities make green spaces on derelict land through creative landscaping; and Craft Café, which aims to reduce social isolation amongst older people (for an SROI evaluation of Fab Pad see Impact Arts, 2007).

The Art of Regeneration programme is an ambitious community arts project which was the subject of an effective evaluation carried out by the Barnardo's evaluation team. The National Theatre led a set of partners to work in the most deprived wards of North Lewisham and West Greenwich; the programme was based at The Albany in Deptford, a theatre and arts space that had long been a centre of community activism and aspiration. Programmes ranged from in-school creative workshops to out-of-school workshops and training, capacity building for artists, teachers, young adults and creative businesses, specialist skills development in digital arts and media, and an arts programme at the refurbished Albany to attract new audiences. 'In essence the Art of Regeneration was a vision for unlocking the creativity of a community that was operationalized as a four-year experiment in one of the most deprived areas of south east London.' (Ludvigsen & Scott, 2005a, p.2; full evaluation 2005b). Local community relations and practical problems meant that some activities were carried out more effectively than others, and the range of art forms contracted. There were, nonetheless, clear achievements in enhancing the confidence, social networks and motivation of those young people who participated regularly. Apart from the difficulties involved in what were seen as outsiders coming into anxious communities, the main problems associated with the programme apply more widely: evaluation for funders concentrated on outputs and activities rather than outcomes and real personal and community change, while even a three- or four-year programme was too short to identify sustained community changes (Ludvigsen & Scott, 2005b).

The development of social capital, which is an objective of many community arts activities, poses a challenge for evaluation. Campbell's *CVP Critical Review* looks at the outcomes from a number of evaluations that show some success. The evaluation materials include responses describing a sense of community and contact with others that emerge from interviews with participants, the growth of community organisations, improved levels of community confidence as attested to by stakeholders, increased levels of volunteering, and perceptions of reduced anti-social behaviour and improved security (Campbell *CVP Report,* pp.32-33; also Arts Council England, 2010). An earlier review similarly concluded, from the small number evaluations that were regarded as sufficiently robust, that there had been a range of significant

[41] The ArtWorks reviews and detailed reports may be found through the Paul Hamlyn website *http://artworksalliance.org.uk*; see also the valuable ArtWorks literature review on community arts practice and practitioners (Cox, T. & Gilmore, A., 2015)

What it is that the arts achieves in these settings that other forms of participatory engagement, such as sport, would not?

The configuration and role of culture in rural communities has received much less attention.

reported improvements in personal, community and economic outcomes (Newman et al, 2003).

Community and participatory arts are part of that pool of smaller-scale local activities seen from US studies as having greater potential to benefit residents and communities than larger-scale regeneration projects. Clarity of objectives and baseline data are needed if this potential is to be effectively understood. So, too, is attention to what it is that the arts achieves in these settings that other forms of participatory engagement, such as sport, would not. The challenge of evaluation in complex initiatives remains a difficult one, however, as the King's Fund observed in its 2004 survey of six UK and US community projects aimed at improving health and wellbeing:

> *Complex, community-based initiatives are hard to evaluate because of their size and the speed with which they are being rolled out, and because they are trying to address multiple problems within shifting political environments. (Coote et al, 2004).*

The participatory nature of community arts may mean that, notwithstanding the challenges, it has the greatest potential for developing sustainable communities.

## Coda: arts, culture and rural communities

In the debates and analyses that are drawn on in this chapter, the configuration and role of culture in rural communities has received much less attention, and it seems important to end this chapter by briefly highlighting some of the key issues. The category 'rural' is as simplistic as that of 'urban'. We've seen the differences between towns of different sizes and functions, and with it the problems in exporting regeneration models through the urban system. The category 'rural' in its turn embraces dormitory communities within reach of major conurbations as well as the Outer Hebrides which are the subject of a Research Development Award. It also embraces areas that have seen population growth as a result of migration from the towns, and other more isolated areas of continued out-migration, deepening the divide between accessible and remote areas (Shucksmith, 2012). Just two Cultural Value Project awards looked at rural arts and culture, with Oakley's *CVP Critical Review* also offering a brief but important overview (Oakley, *CVP Report* pp.10-12).

**The limits of rural distinctiveness**

A short report for Arts Council England in 2005 was built around the same themes as those identified for the arts in towns and more generally: community arts, economic impact, creative economy, place regeneration, public art and so on (Matarasso, 2005). Oakley argues against treating the rural setting as if it is entirely *sui generis* in terms of analysing the value of arts and culture. It is increasingly a location for creative workers migrating from the city, and being encouraged to do so by local and central government as a way of diversifying the economic base in the face of the decline of traditional industries. Bell and Jayne, after looking at the creative industries in Shropshire, nonetheless insist on the need 'to consider 'the countryside' as a place where the creative economy is differently manifested and articulated from the now standard 'creative script' based on cities.' They draw attention to rural distinctiveness including the balance of industries involved, the nature of networking and supply chains, and the relative weight of lifestyle occupations compared with entrepreneurialism (Bell & Jayne, 2010, quote p.210). Where the rural creative economy succeeds, it is often followed by gentrification and displacement effects as incomers and second-home-owners arrive. Oakley argues that cultural workers who choose to stay in or migrate to rural areas and small country towns signal what a less economically-focused or narrow version of regeneration might look like, but such processes are, she insists, no more socially or ethnically inclusive than they are in towns.

The profile of the rural residents who participate in arts and culture is, in fact, similar to that of town dwellers,[42] and the lower arts expenditure by many rural local authorities is in part because they can rely on neighbouring cities for museums, theatre, exhibitions and so on. Touring theatre and music companies, either on their own touring circuits or using intermediaries such as the National Rural Touring Forum or the Devon-based Villages in Action,[43] perform in village halls, small theatres and arts centres and churches. A study for the National Rural Touring Forum in 2004 showed that the schemes for which they were responsible were part of a larger

[42] *www.artsprofessional.co.uk/magazine/article/rural-versus-urban?utm_source=Weekly-Good-Reads&utm_medium=email&utm_content=Rural-versus-urban&utm_campaign=17th-September-2015*

[43] *www.ruraltouring.org; http://villagesinaction.co.uk*

rural arts eco-system, working with local volunteer promoters to bring professional and often challenging arts productions, which connected communities with the mainstream of current cultural life. Their embeddedness in local social relations made them very different from most urban professional arts experiences, there was intimacy of space, it was possible to meet the performers, and audiences knew each other (Matarasso, 2004). The artistic director of North Country Theatre recently noted the different social atmosphere and social role of their performances: 'in a main house the audience are the guests and the company the hosts, but in a village hall it's the other way round, you're in their place.'[44]

In village and dispersed rural settings, are voluntary and amateur arts (drama, choirs, bands, festivals, craft practice and so on) more important for local cultural experience, as well as for social capital, than they are in towns? A 2008 report on voluntary arts suggested that this was the case, but otherwise made no distinction between urban and rural settings (TBR, 2008). And how far are these amateur activities organised through other social organisations, such as churches, Women's Institutes, and, in Scotland and Northern Ireland in particular, Young Farmers' Clubs[45]?

The Understanding Everyday Participation project's eco-system studies will be welcome in this respect, with two looking at Dartmoor and Stornoway, and exploring key issues concerning participation, assets and value through local histories of participation, the mapping of cultural assets, longitudinal interviews, ethnographies in relation to formal and informal cultural environments, and social network analysis.[46] Their asking similar questions across rural and urban locations should identify the similarities as well as the differences in cultural participation in the different settings.

**Intangible heritage and rural settings**

Intangible heritage has often manifested itself strikingly in rural areas, and connects with a sense of place. In their *CVP Critical Review*, Jones & Leech cite research in a Scottish Gaelic-speaking context which highlights the intangible qualities of the concept *àite dachaidh* ('place of my home' or habitat). 'It refers to fluid oral narratives – such as litanies of names, places and the *loci* of particular events – that wend their way through community life in the production of Gaelic identities and a sense of place within the Outer Hebrides.' (Jones & Leech *CVP Report*, p.22). It is in the Outer Hebrides that intangible heritage comes together with digital technologies in Beel and Wallace's *CVP Research Development Award* 'Exploring value in digital archives and the Comainn Eachdraidh.' These Historical Societies are a grass-roots community movement which, since the 1970s, has worked with history, heritage and culture, collecting items of tangible and intangible heritage relating to local communities. These are not select groups, because almost all the islands' populations are involved. The key to it all is a concern for the objects, stories and genealogical knowledge that others might have missed or chosen not to keep, or which have simply never been recorded. 'The process itself, the shared experience of participating, collecting and listening with others; the sense of producing something of worth for the community and its ability to bring people together, contributed to a sense of wellbeing and cohesiveness.' (Beel & Wallace *CVP Report*, p.14).

This ethnographic study reveals how the character of the cultural value that results from the Comainn Eachdraidh has changed as they engage increasingly with digital archives and social media amongst a range of digital technologies. This energetic production of community heritage creates value in a variety of ways, developing connections between land, people and place that are fundamental to what they see as the liveliness of Gaelic culture. Meanwhile, the dialogues between people within the immediate community and in the diaspora take on new potential with the advent of digital methods. The complex ways in which cultural experience and engagement helps build and reinforce a sense of place returns us to the theme with which this chapter opened, one of several themes that can be neglected if we focus too exclusively on the regenerative potential of the arts and culture in urban, and now also rural, settings.

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[44] *www.theguardian.com/culture-professionals-network/culture-professionals-blog/2014/oct/23/rural-touring-theatre-companies-survival*

[45] Garrod's *CVP Report* notes the importance of the Wales Young Farmers' Club Eisteddfod

[46] *www.everydayparticipation.org/eco-systems*

## KEY POINTS FROM CHAPTER

- This chapter's themes include: the role of the built environment as heritage and a source of identity; the role of art and culture in the regeneration of cities; creative placemaking as a force revitalising urban space and communities and the clustering of creative industries within that process; and the more subtle influence of smaller-scale arts assets on neighbourhoods and community arts interventions.
- There has been a tendency to focus on the tangible in terms of the built environment. But it also has a dimension of intangible heritage, and there are issues of identity and belonging, memory and symbol, spiritual meanings and cultural practices that are often bound up with place.
- A prominent argument for the instrumental benefits of the arts has been the impact of major cultural buildings in urban regeneration, and the emergence of vibrant creative and cultural quarters. The report doesn't conclude that the benefits of culture for urban regeneration do not exist, but rather that limited progress has been made in demonstrating that they do. It argues that there is a distinction between the regeneration of places and the regeneration of communities. In urban regeneration there has been a tendency to focus on the spectacular, on the new, and on high art. How everyday cultural practices fit in is less clear. The difficulty in identifying the long-term consequences of major culture-led regeneration projects is underlined by evaluations of the European Capital of Culture programme.
- Culture-led regeneration often displaces population through gentrification, as property prices and rents rise and as the artists' and designers' studios and workshops, initially the launch pad for the new ecology in once run-down parts of the inner city, make way for uses of urban space as part of the 'experience economy', more about consumption than production.
- The chapter explores research on creative places and creative quarters which form a key part of the regeneration narrative, and identifies a problematic tension in this discourse between creative industries, cultural consumption, creative classes and communities. The arts and culture bring benefits to urban life but greater clarity is needed in the claims made.
- There is evidence that smaller-scale cultural assets have a more positive effect on neighbourhoods and communities: that small commercial, community and participatory arts, including for example design studios and small music venues, have more sustainable positive results, and may constitute a more balanced and organic path to regeneration.
- We briefly look at how some of the issues that are relevant to the cultural presence in towns might apply to rural communities and with a good deal of similarity, and also highlights the distinctive dimensions that include the place of touring companies, amateur arts, digital engagement and intangible heritage.

# CHAPTER 6

## ECONOMY: IMPACT, INNOVATION AND ECOLOGY

It has become common practice to consider the cultural sector in terms of its economic contribution.

The flow of statistics from those making the case for funding should dispel any doubts about whether the cultural sector is recognised for its contribution to the economy.

The Department for Culture, Media & Sport's *Creative Industries Economic Estimates* for 2013 reports that employment in the creative industries accounted for 1.71 million jobs; that the GVA of the creative industries was £76.9 billion and that it accounted for 5.0 per cent of the UK economy, compared with 4.0 per cent in 1997; that there were 2.62 million jobs in the creative economy, which includes creative occupations across the wider economy, and that since 1997 these had grown at four times the rate of jobs in the economy as a whole (DCMS, 2015). Then Arts Council England published a report evaluating the *Contribution of the arts and culture industry to the national economy*, which focused on the more narrowly defined cultural sector[47]. We learn that this sector generated £15.1 billion in turnover in 2012-13, contributing £7.7 billion of GVA and supporting 108,800 jobs. When the consequential effects of that expenditure for the rest of the economy are taken into account, the arts and culture industry was responsible for an aggregate GVA impact of £15.8 billion and supported a total of 259,000 jobs (Cebr, 2015).

Such reports remind us that it has become common practice to consider the cultural sector in terms of its economic contribution, especially given the interest in what are known

[47] Which excluded the creative industries, as well as museums and libraries



**Below:** ODYSSEY by Gary Wright and Sheila Teague, 2013. 22ct gold, sycamore, aluminium, wax, fragrance (amber, pine, fig, frankincense). Credit: Gary Wright and Sheila Teague

It is in some ways surprising that economic impact, often defined more narrowly than conventionally understood by economists, has become the principal way for proponents of arts and culture to argue its economic importance. Their wider consequences for creativity and innovation in the economy might be more significant, but have been the subject of less research.

as the creative industries (Myerscough, 1988; Pratt, 1997; DCMS, 1998). In the context of the 'new economy' and the 'knowledge-intensive economy', the cultural sector has, in the words of David Throsby, been 'rescued from its primordial past and catapulted to the forefront of the modern forward-looking policy agenda, an essential component in any respectable economic policy-maker's development strategy.' (Throsby, 2008, p.228). An outpouring of studies has demonstrated the economic impact of cultural organisations and heritage (Reeves, 2002; Dümke & Gnedovsky, 2013), and, for example, the economic contribution of museums to local and national economies (TBR, 2015). Interest has grown in the sector's ability to attract business and investment (Garcia, 2010), and to generate spillover effects and innovation across the economy as a whole (Work Foundation, 2007; Potts, 2007). As a UNESCO report observed, in many analyses the cultural sector or creative industries were seen as one of the few areas where dynamic economic development might be expected, spurring creativity and innovation across the economy as a whole (UNESCO, 2012).

The possible economic benefits flowing from arts and culture are therefore considerable, and so it is in some ways surprising that economic impact, often defined more narrowly than conventionally understood by economists, has become the principal way for proponents of arts and culture to argue its economic importance. Their wider consequences for creativity and innovation in the economy might be more significant but have been the subject of less research. Bruce Seaman's words, as long ago as 1987, remain pertinent: 'in a sense [arts proponents] are choosing to play one of their weakest cards, while holding back their aces.' (Seaman, 1987, p.280).

## The economic benefits of what?

Economic approaches to the importance of arts and culture generally mean two different things. Measuring the effects of the cultural sector on the economy using spending-measure techniques, for example economic impact studies, is the first. The other approach uses econometric valuation techniques (most commonly stated or revealed preference and subjective wellbeing valuations) to find the value that people attach to a range of non-market goods, and to express this in monetary terms. The Cultural Value Project has funded two pieces of research of this second kind: Bakhshi et al's *CVP Research Development Award* on 'Measuring economic value in cultural institutions' is concerned wholly with the application and development of contingent valuation and wellbeing valuation, while in the *CVP Research Development Award* 'Measuring the cultural value of the Royal Scottish Academy New Contemporaries Exhibition as a platform for emerging artists', Fillis et al use contingent valuation as one element in a wider evaluation process. This chapter considers the effects on the economy, while econometric valuation techniques will be considered in the chapter on *Methodologies*.

### Modelling the cultural sector and creative industries

There are a number of different ways of using spending-measure techniques to count the economic contribution of the cultural sector, but there is a prior question about what it is that should be counted. The greatest confounder in this area is the relationship between the cultural sector and the creative industries. The concept of the creative industries became a key focus of the UK's Department for Cultural Media & Sport under the New Labour government. Its 1998 Creative Industries Mapping Document defined the terrain as 'those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property' (DCMS, 2001). The Mapping Document and its successor in 2001 directed attention to an area that may have been defined and constructed through the document itself, but which was rapidly taken to be an objective reality. The activities constituting the creative industries for DCMS have evolved, most recently using a new methodology based on determining those industry and occupation codes that can be classified as 'creative' (Bakhshi et al, 2012). They now comprise: advertising and marketing; architecture; crafts; product, graphic and fashion design; film, TV, video, radio and photography; IT, software and computer services; publishing; museums, galleries and libraries, and music, performing and visual arts (DCMS, 2015).

The ways in which the cultural industries and the creative industries are modelled are subject to shifting political imperatives (Hesmondalgh & Pratt, 2005; Freeman, 2010). As a UNESCO report observed, different countries and international organisations have embraced different models

The creative industries are sometimes taken as a proxy for the economic contribution of arts and culture [...]. The arts themselves have as a consequence become a marginal part of policy discussions about the creative industries, especially one that increasingly focuses on the digital and high-tech.

of the creative industries, and choosing between competing versions is affected by path dependencies and political choices (UNESCO, 2012). Emerging economic areas generally struggle for definition and the new DCMS approach, based on work by Nesta, is welcome precisely because decisions on inclusion will in principle rest on more consistent criteria. Cunningham and Potts summarise the concept as bringing together established arts (visual and performing arts), established media (film, TV, radio and music), new media (software, games, digital content) and architecture and design. They observe: 'this continuum moves from the culturally specific and non-commercial to the globalized and commercial, where generically creative, rather than culturally specific, content drives advances' (Cunningham & Potts, 2015). The fact that these are being reshaped by digitisation and convergence positions the creative industries in the world of cultural as much as economic innovation, which is one of its sources of complexity.

The creative industries are sometimes taken as a proxy for the economic contribution of arts and culture, and the choice of creative industries model has significant consequences for how the cultural sector itself is seen. Throsby has shown that the economic contribution of the cultural industries to the national economy will differ significantly between the models, with the estimates of employment and output differing by a factor of two, depending on the model chosen (Throsby, 2004 & 2008). As Campbell shows in his *CVP Critical Review* 'The Role of Arts and Culture in the Regeneration of Urban Places and Urban Communities', the distinction between cultural sector and creative industries is either glossed over, or the connection is assumed to be unproblematic. He notes that the UK City of Culture competition requires applicant cities to supply an assessment of 'the current nature and strength of the cultural and creative sectors' in their area, and to show how being UK City of Culture will boost them. The successful Hull bid targeted a 10 per cent increase in creative industries employment by 2017. Campbell gives other examples of how links are readily assumed between cultural activity, new businesses and high economic rewards (Campbell *CVP Report,* pp.17-18). The arts themselves have as a consequence become a marginal part of policy discussions about the creative industries, especially one that increasingly focuses on the digital and high-tech (Oakley, 2009).

The real challenge, therefore, is less about size than about how the cultural sector itself fits into a creative industries model. Throsby's version is a set of concentric circles in which the coherence of the framework emerges from the relationship to a core made up of cultural goods. The stronger the thread linking a sector with the cultural core, the more central is its position in the framework of the creative industries. His 'core creative arts' at the centre comprise music, dance, theatre, literature, the visual arts and crafts, as well as newer art forms such as video art, performance art, digital and multimedia art. Beyond them are further circles according to the emphasis of commercial value over cultural content. The next circle thus contains 'other core creative industries' (film, museums, galleries, libraries, photography), followed by one with 'wider cultural industries (heritage, publishing, TV & radio, sound recording, video games) and, in the outermost circle, 'related industries' (advertising, architecture, design, fashion) (Throsby, 2008). In this model the creative arts are the source of ideas to be used by the sectors in the other rings. This is not the only model, and DCMS's mapping presupposed the core creative arts to be a part of the creative industries framework, but not the central one. The metaphors of description and visualisation in this area are more than just matters of convenience.

There is also a more fundamental question about how culture and economy interact. Potts and Cunningham have proposed models for how the creative industries (in which they include the cultural industries) figure within the economic framework and dynamics of development. The most relevant here are the competitive, growth and innovation models. In the competitive model, the creative industries are just another sector whose changes in size affect the whole economy, but only 'proportionally to its size, and it is structurally neutral on the global dynamic'. In the growth model, the creative industries are a growth vector, generating externalities that cause variations in the productivity or competitiveness of other sectors. Lastly, the innovation model proposes that the creative industries be seen not as a sector as such but rather as a structural part of the innovation system of the whole economy. 'Culture is indeed a public good, but for dynamic not static reasons' (Potts et al, 2008; Potts & Cunningham, 2010, p.172). This is helpful in thinking about the economic contribution of arts and culture for the creative industries and the wider economy.

A full economic impact analysis as understood by economists would include direct, indirect, imputed and spillover effects, but most studies produced within the cultural sector do not do so.

## Ways of counting

There are thus major research questions here, but the imperative to count the economic contribution of the cultural sector is driven above all by the political need for attention, whether to secure public funding or supportive public policies. The contributions are typically measures of economic activity expressed in terms of changes to macroeconomic aggregates such as GVA or employment. The most popular economic approaches overlap: economic impact assessment, economic size or footprint assessment and cultural satellite accounts. These techniques might be seen as being about the market benefits of culture, and only occasionally do they also assess how these cultural goods are valued by their users and non-users, employing public economics approaches such as contingent valuation.[48] A full economic impact analysis as understood by economists would include direct, indirect, imputed and spillover effects, but most studies produced within the cultural sector do not do so. Furthermore, public investment decisions, which such studies are often meant to influence, formally require an economic valuation rather than impact study, and this includes the value of non-market benefits. Assessments of this latter kind are less common, but include an economic valuation of the British Library which uses benefit cost analysis within a Total Economic Valuation framework, and includes the value it provides for both users and non-users (Oxford Economics, 2013).

### Economic impact analysis

Economic impact analysis looks at the effect of an activity or organisation on the economy, usually in a specific locality or region. It is most common to calculate three types of impact on measures such as GVA and employment: direct impacts by the activities of the organisation or sector itself; indirect impacts created through its supply chain, and induced impacts, which are the effects of spending in the economy by those employed by the organisation or its suppliers, using standard multipliers. The Treasury's Green Book requires that only additional economic activity be included in impact assessments, after account has been taken both of displacement (those spending on this activity were consequently not spending on something else) and deadweight (some of the spending would have happened anyway). More robust studies seek to do this, while acknowledging that calculating additionalities is difficult, and is about very approximate judgments. Gross impact studies are still undertaken, however, such as that by Oxford Economics on the heritage tourism industry (El Beyrouty & Tessler, 2013). Meanwhile, Cebr's study of the cultural sector for Arts Council England argued that additionality was not relevant, because the sector already existed and its impact in its current form would therefore suffice (Cebr, 2013).

A study of the economic impact of Dundee Contemporary Arts (DCA) in 2003 gathered data on the direct impact of DCA as an employer, the impact of its purchases in the local economy, and the local spending of its own employees and those employed by its local suppliers. It adjusted the expenditure by visitors from outside the town in proportion to the importance of the DCA to their visit, and included the expenditure of creative businesses which located or expanded because of the DCA. As the study accepted, notwithstanding the care taken to count only additionality, the results depended a great deal on judgment. A big number was announced because headlines of this kind are regarded as politically important: 'DCA's payroll of £561,507 generates a net impact of an additional £3,620,000 to the Tayside economy – a leverage of 6.5 to 1', though the largest part of this was due to the development of two businesses and their associated indirect and induced impact (Westbrook, 2003, p.48; for museums in the North East see ERS, 2014).

The impact assessment carried out for Festivals Edinburgh by BOP used extensive qualitative methods to augment the economic calculations. The latter followed Green Book principles and assiduously sought to measure only the additional expenditure. Taking displacement and deadweight into account meant that only 3 per cent of expenditure by local residents was deemed additional, in contrast to 85 per cent for visitors from elsewhere in Scotland and 79 per cent for those from outside Scotland. The largest of the 12 festivals attracted huge numbers, and in 2010 they were calculated to have generated for Edinburgh £245 million of new output and £59 million of new income, and to have supported 5,242 FTE new jobs. The qualitative research, which included 50 separate surveys involving 15,000 respondents, recorded effects that economic impact assessment cannot capture: unique,

[48] The approaches are usefully described by BOP in a guidance document produced for Arts Council England (2012)

Whilst economic impact analysis can be problematic, [...] what is not under question is *whether* cultural activity has a wider economic impact, but rather how this can best be understood.

world-class cultural experiences and audience development; learning impact on audiences, including learning about social and environmental issues raised through festival events; local pride in visitors' views of the city, and the development of skills amongst staff and volunteers (BOP, 2011).

These examples highlight both the potential and the limitations of economic impact assessments. The methodology was originally developed to calculate the effects of exogenous changes in demand on an area's economy, above all through the growth of local exports, with multipliers employed to show the overall benefits. It was then developed using input-output models to quantify the effect of opening or closing a facility.

The strength of economic impact studies may be most compelling when they examine exogenous spending increases, because local or regional cultural expenditure, whether by government or households, will always be competing with other potential uses, making the calculation of additionality essential to be convincing. Even exogenous spending raises the spectre, at regional or national level, of expenditure forgone elsewhere. The level of analysis becomes crucial, and national-level spend need not of itself produce growth effects. Above all, government investment decisions will always be subject to opportunity costs: even if cultural investment does produce positive effects on growth, greater growth might have come from investment in other activities or projects (Sterngold, 2004; Seaman, 1987; Madden, 2001). It has been suggested that using more sophisticated, multivariate analysis approaches to local and neighbourhood impacts would more effectively address the ecological context in which interventions take place (Stern & Seifert, 2010). Despite all these concerns, however, it is important to note Campbell's reminder in his *CVP Critical Review* that 'whilst economic impact analysis can be problematic, [...] what is not under question is *whether* cultural activity has a wider economic impact, but rather how this can best be understood.' (Campbell *CVP Report*, p.43).

**Other measures – size analysis and Cultural Satellite Accounts**

What may be seen as a second approach to the economic contribution of the cultural sector is through economic size or footprint analysis. Size calculations are an important signal that the creative industries and the cultural sector constitute a non-trivial part of the economy, when many might assume otherwise. These are, nonetheless, often seen as the most static of measures because, unlike economic impact assessments, they do not capture indirect effects on the wider economy. Nor do they tell us about opportunity costs; whether the same investment elsewhere might produce greater economic benefit (Throsby, 2008; UNESCO, 2012). Lastly, they do not say anything about the longer-term economic consequences. As a result, and as has been observed of the local studies in the US of the size of arts and culture non-profits and employment, 'these and other studies show that culture production is a significant sector of the economy, and in many areas the size of this sector is growing. They do not, however, demonstrate that increasing the size of this sector leads to an increase in economic prosperity or *per capita* GDP in the urban area' (Pedroni & Sheppard, 2013, p.2).

Cultural Satellite Accounts are a distinctive approach to measuring the economic contribution of the cultural sector; a specialist outgrowth of existing national accounts, but produced in a different way, better to capture the contribution of culture. Culture is not a single industry, and identifying its full contribution to the national accounts involves assembling parts of several different industrial accounts and bringing them together to create a satellite account. The UK already has satellite accounts for tourism and the environment. As the reports on developing a Cultural Satellite Account in Finland make clear, finely-grained work is needed on definitions and on identifying the parts of other industries that might legitimately be seen as being part of cultural activities (Ministry of Education, Finland 2009; also UNESCO, 2012; for Canada, McGaughey et al, 2014). The National Endowment for the Arts in the US has worked with the Bureau of Economic Analysis to develop an Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account (ACPSA), enabling estimates to be calculated for the cultural sector as a whole, and at much more finely-grained levels. In music, for example, this includes not just orchestras and chamber music organisations, but musical instrument manufacture, wholesale distribution of music supplies and musical instrument stores. This requires careful judgment, for example deciding to include fashion design but not clothing manufacture and sales. The most recent results show that the production of arts and cultural goods added more than $698 billion to the U.S. economy, which was 4.3 per cent of GDP. The press release makes presentational size

The creation of a favourable milieu that attracts people, companies, investments etc.

comparisons, pointing out that this value added is more than for construction, transportation, tourism, mining or agriculture (National Endowment for the Arts, 2015).

The NEA explains that the fact that ACPSA does not appear within the BEA's main industry estimates means that satellite accounts can also draw on less conventional data sources, including data collected by private industry, household surveys and so on. Cultural satellite accounts are a work in progress with considerable potential, though constructing them is time-consuming and expensive. One of their major advantages is the possibility of systematising a variety of statistical data (social, demographic, economic, financial and cultural), so that it can be used not only for measuring the economic contribution of cultural industries, but also for analysing cultural phenomena in a broad sense.

## Agglomeration and attractiveness

The effects on urban and regional development of attracting visitors and spending, as captured by economic impact assessments, are limited by the short-term and static character of these calculations. Others have therefore presented the longer-term dynamic effects as more important; what has been described as 'the creation of a favourable milieu that attracts people, companies, investments etc' (UNESCO, 2012, p.10). This summarises the way that a city or a district might attract labour and business, or see agglomerations emerge where those businesses interact, with benefits spilling over to other industries that can use the specialised inputs developed by and for the cultural industries. These themes will be encountered again in the next section on innovation, and when considering urban cultural quarters in another chapter. Bakhshi et al have, through an econometric analysis of data for English cities, demonstrated an important complementarity between non-profit arts and cultural clusters and the creative and digital industries, indicating that non-profit activities may be more important to the wider economy than as simply a driver of tourism (Bakhshi et al, 2013a).

Hervas-Oliver et al used Eurostat data from 250 regions in 24 European countries to test an agglomeration model, and concluded that each 1 per cent increase in the share of the creative industries in regional employment correlated with an increase of 0.6 per cent in GDP per capita. At the heart of the process was the relationship between the creative industries and wider knowledge-intensive industries. The regions where the creative industries were largest were also characterised by having more high-tech manufacturing industries than other regions, whereas the number of low-technology manufacturing firms was similar irrespective of region (Hervas-Oliver et al, 2011; de-Miguel-Molina, 2011).

London emerged as the dominant creative industry cluster in Britain in a study by Chapain et al for Nesta, a dominance repeated in almost all creative sectors but especially in the most intrinsically creative layers of the value chain for each. They found nine other hotspots, amongst them Bath, Brighton, Edinburgh, Manchester and Cambridge. Co-location of creative with other innovative industries appeared in all the clusters, but the existence of a creative cluster was not on its own sufficient to produce the benefits identified. These included value chain linkages, shared infrastructures, creative business and commercial partners, and creative professionals moving into other sectors and taking with them ideas, techniques and ways of working. Those benefits required not only the existence of the cluster but further connectivity between firms within and beyond it (Chapain et al, 2010).

### Urban buzz and attractiveness

One benefit was the way that creative clusters generated an urban buzz that attracted highly-skilled workers and encouraged collaboration. Face-to-face interactions are fundamental to the collaborative, project-based, knowledge-intensive sectors in which creative industries often play a dynamic role (Storper & Venables, 2004). One of the key features that the creative industries and wider cultural sector are thought to bring to a city or district is the ability to attract start-ups and companies seeking to benefit from the specific positive externalities provided by creative clusters, as well as the high-quality staff for whom the creative and cultural scene provides an incentive to move to a place or to remain within it. In his *CVP Critical Review*, Campbell points to the claims of an influx of creative businesses and people made for Liverpool City of Culture, the opening of Turner Contemporary in Margate, and the Newcastle-Gateshead cultural development project, though these claims are rarely systematically tested.

The revitalisation of inner-city living from the 1990s has been shown to be driven in the US by the attractiveness

## Is a vibrant arts and cultural environment a factor in attracting high-quality staff and businesses?

of museums, theatres, cinemas and concert halls within the consumer economy, but this cultural environment is more the stuff of anecdote than research. Its most prominent formulation was in Richard Florida's theory of the 'creative class' which he argued was the driver of economic performance and whose members gravitated towards areas characterised by the 3Ts of talent, tolerance and high-technology. The argument resonated in policy circles and led to initiatives to promote clustering of a liberal-minded and technologically-aware workforce in creative occupations, in the belief that this would stimulate the knowledge-intensive economy. Florida's formulation has fallen into disfavour, not least for conflating the creative class with human capital more generally, and because real methodological problems about nomenclature and classification weakened the empirical evidence (Glaeser, 2003; Markusen, 2006 & 2008). Nonetheless, the broader question remains important: is a vibrant arts and cultural environment a factor in attracting high-quality staff and businesses?

Research on the location decisions of high-tech businesses in the UK and US underlines the importance of the quality of the residential environment, and social and cultural amenities, when companies of all sizes were asked about what they sought. It came 7th out of 29 factors that influenced the initial decision to locate in a place, after costs of space, business facilities, existing employees, good transport and the existence of an available local workforce. It was particularly important amongst start-ups, and remained an important reason for established businesses to stay in their current location, again especially so for smaller businesses (Baxter et al, 2005).

Quality of life factors have been found to be more important in location decisions for new economy companies than for more traditional manufacturing. With high-skill labour in short supply, firms were drawn to areas that could attract and retain scarce talent. Good-quality schooling was of greatest importance, with cultural amenities part of the broader quality of life mix (Salvesen & Renski, 2003). A survey of half a million individuals in Germany found that highly-educated, full-time employed people who had moved in the previous ten years ranked cultural offerings and an interesting cultural scene among the top five reasons (out of 15) for their location choice (cited in Falck et al, 2011; for Britain also Jones, 2014; Roger Tym & Partners, 2011).

There are, therefore, perceptions that a vibrant arts and cultural environment helps attract a highly skilled workforce, but there is only limited research into the attractiveness argument, which remains a proposition in need of testing. An impressively-constructed attempt to do so uses the spatial distribution of baroque opera houses in late-17th and 18th-century Germany, treated as an exogenous variable, for a quasi-natural experiment on the attractiveness of cultural amenities to high-human-capital employees, and the benefits that flow from that attraction. The project included control variables, as well as using counterfactual locations that might have had opera houses built in the baroque period but did not. It concluded that proximity to a baroque opera house significantly affected the distribution of high-human-capital employees, while 'a cross-region growth regression shows that these employees induce local knowledge spillovers and shift a location to a higher growth plan' (Falck et al, 2011, p.755). An opera house cannot, of course, be taken as a proxy for a wider range of cultural amenities and institutions, but the study remains a rare case of one systematic approach to an important question.

## The innovation economy

> *'It is conventional to represent the arts and creative industries broadly as suppliers of cultural goods and services. Yet this may be systematically underestimating their contribution to "the economy." Why? Because the creative industries produce another class of outputs, namely innovations.' (Potts, 2007, p.3).*

There has been a good deal of interest in recent years in seeing the role of arts and culture as part of a wider innovation system, rather than being simply linear inputs. Potts notes that the problems in accounting for the value of this to economic development are similar for science or education; those of capturing new knowledge and opportunities that are realised out of the reach of standard measures. We shall briefly highlight four dimensions of the way that the cultural sector and creative industries might contribute to innovation: the relationship between the creative industries and innovation in the wider economy; arts education and arts practice producing a more innovative workforce; a culturally engaged society being more innovative, and the way that the cultural sector itself innovates in ways beyond its own creative expression.

The proposition that the creative economy has an important role in innovation throughout the economy.

**Creative industries and innovation**

The growing sense that creativity might be important for the process of innovation led Bakhshi and colleagues to combine data from the UK's input-output accounts with that on innovation performance, to test the proposition that the creative economy has an important role in innovation throughout the economy. Were strong business-to-business linkages to the creative industries associated with high levels of innovative activity and performance? They found that industries with stronger links to the creative industries, as measured by expenditure on creative industries' products, had considerably stronger innovation performance. This could be explained by the products being direct inputs into innovation, but also by supply-side linkages facilitating the transfer of knowledge and ideas. They concluded that these knowledge spillovers needed focused research (Bakhshi et al, 2008). Subsequent work teased out the different kinds of spillover – product, knowledge and network – all of which drove innovation in other parts of the economy. With much of the creative industries being at the cutting edge of digital technologies, demands were made of suppliers that generated wider system benefits (Chapain et al, 2010). A preliminary attempt to test this, using creative credit vouchers in a randomised controlled study, found higher levels of innovation after six months which did not appear to be sustained after 12 months, suggesting the need for further case study work in this area (Bakhshi et al, 2013b).

An empirical study of 2000 creative enterprises in Austria explored three ways in which the creative industries might affect an economy's overall innovation performance. First, as a major source of innovative ideas contributing to an economy's innovation potential, including through new products and services. Second, by offering services which might be inputs to innovative activities in other enterprises, within the creative industries and beyond. Third, by creative enterprises, as users of new technologies, providing an innovative impulse for technology producers. Detailed analysis confirmed each of these contributions to innovation, though variation appeared within the creative sector, which was attributed to the differential dominance of small firms in separate creative industries. The study also noted the importance of workforce mobility, with workers trained in the creative industries taking their knowledge, skills and creativity into other sectors (Müller et al, 2008). Further analysis of the same survey revealed that almost half the firms in the creative industries had supported their clients in innovation activities, and this was particularly important for those parts of the industrial and service sectors that had a poor record of investment in creativity and R&D (Kimpeler & Georgieff, 2009).

An economic benefit study of the BBC by Deloittes identifies the spillovers from a large public cultural organisation, whose complex networks and supply chains, they argued, make it a considerable force for innovation through the wider creative, knowledge and high-tech economy. Examples given included developing technical standards for the industry; workforce skills training and new ways of working, disseminated when employees moved elsewhere in the creative economy and beyond; the development of knowledge clusters for knowledge sharing, most prominently in Salford and Cardiff; contractual and commissioning relationships with many smaller content providers, and, more broadly, through being integrated into its sector and beyond, through its supply chains (BBC, 2013).

Lee and Rodriguez-Pose highlighted the importance of creative occupations across the economy as a major driver of innovation, that can be traced back to the creative sector and creative education (Lee and Rodriguez-Pose, 2013). These 'embedded' creative workers are to be found in most industrial sectors, and are now a major part of the wider creative economy according to DCMS's economic and occupational statistics. KEA's report for the European Commission argued that 'culture-based creativity is linked to the ability of people, notably artists, to think imaginatively or metaphorically, to challenge the conventional, and to call on the symbolic and affective to communicate' (KEA 2009, p.3). Oakley concludes, from a study of over 500 graduates in fine arts disciplines, that 'some of the skills that are highly developed in the arts – the ability to deal with ambiguity, resilience and communications skills – are increasingly needed across the economy as a whole' (Oakley, 2009a, p.64).

**Cultural engagement and innovation**

Are people who engage with cultural activities more likely to be innovative? We know far too little to draw conclusions, but our earlier consideration of the relationship to reflectiveness and openness to new ideas suggests that there might be a link. The Italian economist, Pier Luigi Sacco, has juxtaposed

## Are people who engage with cultural activities more likely to be innovative?

two rankings: the EU Innovation Scoreboard for 2008, which provides a comparative assessment of the innovation performance of EU Member States, and Eurobarometer's Active Cultural Participation table for 2007. The two tables have strikingly similar rank orderings for the EU15 (Sacco, 2013). This is far from establishing a causal connection, but the relationship between cultural participation rates in a population and innovation rates is one that needs further investigation.

A precise attempt to test the proposition at the individual level was carried out by Niemi in a sample of 7,148 Americans drawn from the 1979 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth. In 1994 (when they were at 29-36 years of age and at a formative stage in their careers) they were asked about their arts interests. Niemi related their responses to their career history as reported in 2010. She draws on research showing a relationship between cultural engagement and openness to new ideas and experiences, tolerance of ambiguity, and an ability to maintain productive thinking in the midst of uncertainty, which are all important for being innovative in the workplace. She then matches the cohort's engagement with visual arts, music, and literature to their occupational innovation, as indicated by a history of business ownership, work leading to patent applications, and considering oneself an entrepreneur. She finds a strong association, above all for the visual arts, which holds even when controlling for personality characteristics thought to underlie innovation and creativity, such as self-mastery, risk-taking and educational attainment and aptitudes (Niemi, 2014).

### Cultural sector innovation and the rise of co-production

Discussion of the relationship between the cultural sector and innovation generally neglects innovation (other than content innovation) within the sector itself, but it offers models and potential spillovers beyond other cultural organisations and the commercial cultural economy. Bakhshi and Throsby's study of the National Theatre and Tate analysed the way that they drive innovation in four distinct areas: artform development, audience reach, value creation and business models. They highlight the importance of risk-taking, experimentation and co-production within both organisations' innovation processes (Bakhshi & Throsby, 2010).

An innovative business model, underlining the importance of experimentation and risk to successful art practice, is at the heart of Cotterrell's *CVP Research Development Award* 'Squaring the circle: examining cultural value through a re-evaluation of Arts Lab', which examined the experimental arts space in London's Drury Lane in the late 1960s. He argues that the policy of accepting every proposal as suitable for funding, which earned Arts Lab mythical status, was not implemented in reality, but nevertheless concludes that the aversion to risk and failure that he sees arising from current evaluation practices might be producing 'an overall erosion of artistic innovation.' (Cotterrell *CVP Report*, p.4). Innovative business models are, in this perspective, a key prerequisite of creative practice. The 'open innovation hub' that is Watershed in Bristol, connecting across a wide range of creative, cultural and commercial constituencies within the 'creative ecosystem' that it has helped bring into being, is very different from Arts Lab, but also represents an innovative business model that emerged within the cultural sector to drive creative networks in a changing environment (Leicester & Sharpe, 2010).

The creative industries, especially cultural and creative independents and micro-enterprises, operate in a networked, collaborative and people-centred way. Ways of working have developed that facilitate the generation and exchange of new ideas (Crossick, 2006), and that are important for the new economy more broadly. The growth of co-production of content is related to this, and is one of the most striking innovations arising from the creative and cultural sectors. There are increasing expectations that users (creative enterprises, other businesses and consumers) will engage with the innovation process, especially in video games, software, music and design.

This blurring of the distinction between producer and consumer, as we saw when considering the impact of digital technologies, is a key element in innovation in the cultural sector and creative industries and sits at the heart of a number of awards. In his *CVP Critical Review* 'Fandom, participatory culture and cultural value', Sandvoss examines radical forms of co-production in fan culture, and forms of 'user productivity that include practices of creating, disseminating, sharing and selecting texts' (Sandvoss *CVP Report*, p.2). Harwood's *CVP*

This blurring of the distinction between producer and consumer [...] is a key element in innovation in the cultural sector and creative industries.

Separating arts and culture into neatly separated sectors – such as commercial, third-sector, amateur and subsidised – misses the relationship between them, above all the ways in which the commercial sector is intimately connected to the rest in an ecological system.

*Research Development Award* 'Machinima: an investigation into the contribution of participatory user-generated machine-cinema to cultural values', and Allington's *CVP Research Development Award* 'Online networks and the production of value in electronic music', each show how co-production is a necessary part of certain forms of contemporary cultural production and expression. Innovation whose implications reach beyond their own domain is a fundamental part of what might seem to be niche initiatives.

The connection between co-production and innovation in design was a key conclusion of the workshop on 'the value of design' organised by the Cultural Value Project and Glasgow School of Art:

> *'Exploring the role design plays in the innovation process, and how this differs from other approaches, will help to evidence the value that is generated through design. Other innovation methods often start with the desired solution and then try to manage out any problems. In contrast using design helps explore options, generating many solutions, iterating and learning. The focus is on exploring requirements and being comfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity. As such it promotes the ability to think flexibly and to engage with a future that is mutable. Design is also a collective endeavour. Thus, if most successful innovations draw on expertise from a wide range of collaborators, design acts as a bridge and builds synergies between these multiple experts, encouraging sharable ambition, and helping to create ownership. Within this the role of design is as much about shifting underpinning attitudes as about specific tools and techniques: promoting curiosity, being open, valuing others' perspectives and optimism'.*[49]

The cultural sector is thus itself a generator of innovation within its own activities, through new business models, new ways of reaching audiences and new forms of co-production. Breaking down innovation into component parts highlights the contribution of specific aspects of cultural engagement, but there is a larger picture. That larger picture means turning from contributions to the wider economy and looking within the world of art and culture itself, considering how the different parts into which we fragment that world are interconnected. This means thinking about the ecologies of culture.

## Ecologies of culture

There has been growing recognition in recent years that separating arts and culture into neatly separated sectors – such as commercial, third-sector, amateur and subsidised – misses the relationship between them, above all the ways in which the commercial sector is intimately connected to the rest in an ecological system. In his *CVP Research Development Award* on 'The ecology of culture', Holden explains:

> *'An ecological approach concentrates on relationships and patterns within the overall system, showing how careers develop, ideas transfer, money flows, and product and content move, to and fro, around and between the funded, homemade and commercial subsectors. Culture is an organism not a mechanism; it is much messier and more dynamic than linear models allow.' (Holden CVP Report, p.4).*

This is a theme highlighted by the Warwick Commission when it writes of the 'cultural and creative industries ecosystem' (Warwick Commission, 2015). This ecological approach connects with work on clusters and agglomerations, and also with the Brighton Fuse, which examined the clustering of 'fused' businesses in the creative and digital sector in the town, where the combination of creative and technological skills within a business was found to drive more successful growth (Sapsed & Nightingale, 2013). These are, however, about linkages within the business world, rather than the ecology between different parts, non-profit as well as commercial, of the sector.

Martin Smith has observed, from his experience with the commercial cultural sector:

> *'West End theatres frequently take on shows that the National Theatre, the Royal Court or the Donmar Warehouse have spent months developing in rehearsal, enabling the original producers to recoup, through commercial partnerships, some or all of the costs of an expensive process. Film producer and director Danny Boyle (Trainspotting, Slumdog Millionaire) began his career in Birmingham with the Joint Stock Theatre*

[49] CVP Report The Value of Design. *www.ahrc.ac.uk/research/fundedthemesandprogrammes/culturalvalueproject/currentpastresearchactivities/projectworkshops*

*Company. Professional musicians move serially between commitments to subsidised orchestras and engagements with commercial recording companies and entrepreneurial promoters.' (Smith, 2010, p.6).*

The non-profit cultural sector contributes research and development for commercial cultural providers, with public funding enabling them to take risks with creative content and ideas. We nonetheless lack a systematic understanding of the processes that link the different parts of the cultural ecology. The terrain may be mapped along different axes: talent and careers, finance, and content and ideas. The financial flows within the system are not easy to track. Throsby has modelled them as a transactions or flow-of-funds matrix, with a first attempt at an application for the visual arts industry in Australia identifying the flow within the visual arts as well as between it and government and the rest of the economy (Throsby, 2004). Ecological systems are always dynamic, and reductions in public funding for the arts, alongside increasing availability of tax credits for the commercial sector, might alter the dynamic of collaboration between the publicly-funded and commercial.

**Nurturing talent and ideas**

The development and mobility of talent between the commercial, non-profit and community sectors has been studied for the US (Markusen et al, 2006 & 2008), but less so in this country. A survey of 1,129 UK theatre employees focuses on individual careers and the movement of ideas, which show the importance of the subsidised sector for shaping high-quality talent and innovative work. There was a high rate of labour mobility backwards and forwards between subsidised and commercial theatre, as well as elsewhere in the creative industries, notably in TV, film and advertising. Respondents emphasised the importance of subsidised theatre in providing the time for experimentation and new work (Albert et al, 2013). The Wyndham Report for the Society of London Theatre argued nearly 20 years ago that the success of the West End theatre drew on its 'symbiotic' relationship with the non-commercial sector (Cogo-Fawcett, 2003). *War Horse*, *Matilda* and *History Boys* are simply high-profile examples of work originating in the subsidised sector and succeeding on the commercial stage and film.

The role played by the BBC within much wider networks of creativity and innovation has already been noted from the Deloittes study of its network and supply chain connections, while the more recent study by Frontier Economics takes as case studies impacts and spillovers with respect to new music talent and innovative technologies. Nesta's data visualisation of the BBC's networks of off-screen and on-screen talent offers new ways into these issues, though it would benefit from being developed to capture connections outside the employment and commissioning context of the BBC itself (Frontier Economics, 2015; Nesta, 2015).

The ecology is, however, about more than large organisations. We know less about the place of amateur art practice within the ecology, but this has been shown to include maintaining the viability of marginal public and commercial venues by regular hires, progression of amateurs to professional work (notably in theatre), and providing income as well as skill diversification for professional musicians and performers, by employing them to augment amateur ensembles. (Dodd et al, 2008).

The advertising industry has long drawn on innovative art, such as that of the Italian and Russian avant-garde in the 1930s. A case study of advertising reaching into the small-scale arts sector comes from a campaign for the European launch in Copenhagen of Volkswagen's new Fox model, which drew on the city's alternative autonomous arts scene, for innovative, cutting-edge ideas for a 20-day multi-event experience. Far from simply picking up motifs, a member of the advertising agency project team tracked the creative interests of the target motor journalists, and found emerging trends in the city's artistic and musical underground to capture their attention at key events (Arvidsson, 2007). The involvement of individual creatives in this ecology can be found in a different way at Watershed in Bristol, a non-profit organisation which we have encountered already in relation to its innovative business model, and which fosters imagination and invention that feeds into the more mainstream innovation world, where creative, small businesses and more commercial funders bring the most artistically and commercially compelling of its ideas to fruition (Leicester & Sharpe, 2010).

Holden's *CVP Research Development Award* gathered evidence from in-depth interviews with 38 cultural practitioners across

the publicly-funded, amateur and commercial parts of the sector. He pieces together the complex interdependencies shaping the production of arts and culture across careers, ideas, products and money, and concludes that 'culture is an organism not a mechanism; it is much messier and more dynamic than linear models allow.' (Holden *CVP Report*, p.3). He endorses Smith's observation that 'the true picture on the ground is more often one of a complex intermingling of market and non-market arrangements.' (Smith, 2010, p.7). Precise examples abound in the report: leatherworkers from the costume department of the Royal Opera House go on work experience to Mulberry; the stars of *The Queen* had appeared at the National Theatre in recent years because, as director Stephen Frears explained, they would not be Oscar nominees but for their experience in publicly-funded theatre; Will Taylor, songwriter and vocalist for the funk indie band Flyte wanders the V&A, National Gallery and British Library to fuel his ideas and imagination; designer Es Devlin works with Take That, Kanye West, the Royal Ballet and the Almeida, and has said that 'everything that's alive in my work I attribute to those cross-fertilisations'; heritage buildings and streetscapes are repeatedly used for films, TV drama and fashion shoots.

As in any successful ecology, the different dimensions sustain each other. Holden offers a new way of conceptualising the different roles:

> *Guardians, who look after the culture of the past; Platforms, that provide the places and spaces for the culture of the present; Connectors, who make things happen and bring together other parts of the system; Nomads – all of us who, as artists or audiences, interact with the other three roles. In each case, these roles can be carried out by funded, commercial or unpaid amateur people or organisations. For instance Disney, the V&A, and volunteer heritage groups act as Guardians; and Connectors range from Local Authority arts officers to commercial film producers. (Holden CVP Blog)*

**Audience experiences**

Do distinctions such as commercial, publicly-funded and amateur matter to audiences? Murray et al's *CVP Research Development Award* on Leeds observed how their participants occupied the city's cultural ecology, moving through its places and spaces, without clear loyalties or a sense of how they were funded or how they related to each other. Several awards within the Cultural Value Project explore this question. Edelman's *CVP Research Development Award* on 'The value of subsidised, commercial and amateur theatre and dance for Tyneside's audiences' finds substantial areas of overlap in how audiences value these different sectors. There was no observable differentiation by taste when comparing amateur and local theatre companies; the responses to a wide range of questions about the experience showed convergence between the subsidised and commercial, although the former was judged more challenging and thought-provoking, and amateur performances, while not quite as highly rated as commercial, were not widely different from professional performance in the experience they provided to audiences.

In their *CVP Research Development Award* on 'Cultural Value and cultural policy: some evidence from the world of live music' Brennan et al explored audience experience through a case study of the Queen's Hall in Edinburgh. This venue hosts some 200 performances of live music a year, across musical genres from classical to indie. It receives some subsidy from Edinburgh City Council, but relies more on income from venue hire by commercial promoters, amateur and semi-professional artists, and the Edinburgh International Festival. Any tri-partite classification of concert promoters as 'enthusiast', 'state-funded', and 'commercial' breaks down in practice. They return to the interconnectedness of live music venues within a local ecology in their second *CVP Research Development Award* on 'The cultural value of live music from the pub to the stadium: getting beyond the numbers'. They examine how local ecologies operate at the level of music venues in Glasgow, Leeds and Camden in London, and conclude:

> *It has become increasingly apparent that reductionist notions of 'commercial activity', 'state subsidy' and 'investment' do little justice to the web of interactions between the myriad parties involved in live music production: artists, venues, local councils and their different departments, policymakers at national level, small, large and multinational businesses – the list is long. (Brennan et al CVP Report, Cultural Value of Live Music, p.5).*

Small live music venues are where most successful performers start, and constitute a key part of the ecology of the commercial music industry. In 2008 Ed Sheeran appeared at 312 small venues around the UK, and it is thought that most of

The need to consider the contribution of arts and culture to the economy in a perspective shaped not just by ideas of impact and of innovation […] but also that of ecology. It is through many of these lenses that one can see the economic dimensions of arts and culture not as something set apart from its wider value, but rather as something dependent upon it.

those appearances lost money for both venue and performer, a point that could be repeated for many other subsequently highly successful musicians.[50]

The Roundhouse in Camden exemplifies another aspect of how this live music ecology works:

> *Within one venue are examples of inputs from national state funding bodies, private charitable donations, hard edged commercial activity and charitable outreach work, as well as a longer term focus on training in the live music sector […]. Just as commerce and culture are difficult to disentangle, it looks likely that we need to reformulate our conception of how the private and public sectors interact in live music. (Brennan et al CVP Report, Cultural Value of Live Music, p.14).*

It is a conclusion that can be made more widely about the need to consider the contribution of arts and culture to the economy in a perspective shaped not just by ideas of impact and of innovation, as this chapter has shown, but also that of ecology. It is through many of these lenses that one can see the economic dimensions of arts and culture not as something set apart from its wider value, but rather as something dependent upon it.

[50] *www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/mark-davyd/live-music_b_7924070.html*

## KEY POINTS FROM CHAPTER

- It has become common practice to emphasise the economic contribution of arts and culture, especially given the importance of the creative industries. In the context of the 'knowledge-intensive economy' the cultural sector has come to play a very significant role as a driver of GVA and employment.
- Economic impact has become the principal way for proponents of arts and culture to argue its economic importance. The wider consequences of culture for creativity and innovation in the economy might be more significant, but have been the subject of less research.
- This chapter considers evidence for the economic effects of arts and culture in the narrow sense of impacts but also in terms of its ability to attract inward investment, drive broader innovation, and sustain the ecology of the publicly-funded, amateur and commercial sectors.
- We make an important distinction between measuring the effects of the cultural sector on the economy using spending-measure techniques, for example economic impact studies, and using econometric valuation techniques (most commonly stated or revealed preference and subjective wellbeing valuations) to find the value that people attach to a range of non-market goods, and to express this in monetary terms. (The Cultural Value Project has funded significant work on the latter which is reported in the chapter on *Methodologies*.)
- It is important to distinguish between the economic benefits of the creative industries and the effects of art and culture more broadly. The creative industries have become tied up with discussions about the economic importance of arts and culture, but we need clarity about how they relate to each other. Different models for how art and culture fit into the creative industries have been proposed.
- The imperative to count the economic contribution of the cultural sector is driven by the political need for attention. Typically measures of economic activity are expressed in terms of changes to macroeconomic aggregates such as GVA or employment. We consider the most popular economic and accounting approaches – economic impact assessment, economic size assessment and cultural satellite accounts. It is less common to include non-market benefits in the way required for public investment decisions.
- It is possible to argue that the longer-term dynamic effects of culture – such as the creation of a favourable milieu that attracts people, companies and investments – are more important than economic impact. The perception that a vibrant arts and cultural environment helps to attract a high-skill workforce, and with it inward investment, seems to be confirmed by research, but this needs serious testing.
- There has been a good deal of interest in recent years in seeing arts and culture as part of a wider innovation system. We draw attention to research which gives tentative support to claims of a relationship between the creative industries and innovation in the wider economy, through spillover mechanisms that include being a source of innovative ideas, the demand of the creative industries for product and process innovation elsewhere in the supply chain, and labour mobility from creative firms to other parts of the economy. There is also the role of arts education and arts practice in producing a more innovative workforce, with creative occupations across the economy being a driver of innovation. There is also some evidence for the proposition that high levels of cultural engagement are associated with innovation.
- It is essential to recognise the ecologies within what are too often seen as distinct parts of the cultural world, above all between the publicly-funded and commercial sectors, but also including amateur arts and co-production. Culture is an organism not a mechanism, messier and more dynamic than linear models allow. The non-profit cultural sector contributes research and development for commercial cultural providers, while public funding enables them to take risks with creative content and ideas. There is a continual exchange of talent, finance, and content and ideas.

# CHAPTER 7

## HEALTH, AGEING AND WELLBEING

Tunbridge Wells Museum & Art Gallery holds an impressive quilt of over 10,000 separate pieces, made between 1853 and 1856 by soldiers injured fighting in the Crimean War. The labour-intensive and creative work was seen as an effective form of therapy.[51]

That same war brought Florence Nightingale to prominence and, in her *Notes on Nursing* written just a few years later, she wrote:

> *The effect in sickness of beautiful objects, of variety of objects, and especially of brilliancy of colour is hardly at all appreciated […]. People say the effect is only on the mind. It is no such thing. The effect is on the body, too. Little as we know about the way in which we are affected by form, by colour, and light, we do know this, that they have an actual physical effect. Variety of form and brilliancy of colour in the objects presented to patients are actual means of recovery. (Nightingale, 1860, p.58).*

Art practice as therapy and the importance of art and design in the hospital environment are important ways in which art and culture is now seen as contributing to health, ageing and wellbeing. Many of these contributions may not be new, but arts in health has now become a major field of practice and research. The Royal Society for Public Health noted, in a major survey, the breadth of areas in which cultural engagement had been shown to be beneficial to health. It recognised that 'the involvement in creative activity and the arts in all its forms is

[51] Quilt making was specifically used as therapy for those injured in war. Thomas Wood's 1885 painting of Private Thomas Walker sewing a quilt is a well-known example *http://welshquilts.blogspot.co.uk/2012/03/private-walker-by-thomas-wood.html*

**Below:** Selfie booth at a co-designed community; one of the activities was a selfie booth as older people had mentioned that they felt invisible and no one asked to take their picture anymore. Credit: Open University.



[There is a] breadth of areas in which cultural engagement had been shown to be beneficial to health.

an important component in both overall health and wellbeing of society and for individuals within it [...]. This impact has been evaluated in different ways over time and the body of evidence is substantial.' It was, nonetheless, forced to conclude that 'the diversity of the interventions, as well as lack of standardisation in methodology and outcome measures, makes synthesis of results difficult.' (RSPH, 2013 p.3).

Staricoff published in 2004 a review of over 400 papers establishing the multiple benefits of the arts for health, broadly confirmed by a series of subsequent reviews. Daykin and Byrne's systematic review of arts in mental health care in 2006 was followed by the review of research on mental health, social inclusion and the arts led by Secker (Staricoff, 2004; Daykin & Byrne, 2006; Secker, 2007). In response to this growing interest, the Department of Health and Arts Council England jointly issued *A Prospectus for Arts and Health* (Arts Council England, 2007). Specialised systematic reviews followed, such as that of Daykin and Orme on the performing arts and adolescent health and behaviour, Beard on arts therapies and dementia care, and the Centre for Policy on Ageing's review on dance for older people (Daykin & Orme, 2008; Beard, 2012; CPA, 2011). This chapter draws on reviews such as these, alongside work carried out through Cultural Value Project awards, augmented by a very selective use of research papers in a substantial field.

This dynamic field of research is characterised by a diverse range of subjects and approaches: from clinical outcomes to the effects in healthcare settings and community health; from physiological to mental health benefits; from targeted interventions to the effects of broader arts in health projects; from time-specific arts therapies to the effects of long-term arts engagement; from the acute to the preventative and, of course, health being seen not simply as the absence of illness or disease. Above all, arts and health is about complex phenomena and complex interventions, even in what might appear to be straightforward therapies. It is, therefore, hardly surprising that evaluation and evidence present significant challenges. Types of evidence and evaluation methods for public and community health projects will be different from those testing the effectiveness of therapies in clinical settings, while epidemiological studies of large population groups over time will need yet other approaches. The issue of complexity remains, but it cannot in itself explain the concern repeatedly expressed in reviews about weaknesses of design and analysis in much evaluation in this field. One does not have to impose the strict requirements of Cochrane Reviews to recognise that much still needs to be done to improve evaluation.

## Therapeutic, clinical and environmental interventions

Arts therapies are typically delivered by qualified professionals, and their effectiveness is measured through standard clinical outcomes, such as measurable changes in health or quality of life, assessed in terms such as recovery time or quantities of drugs consumed. Research on arts therapies has grown considerably, and a review by Hurwitz applying the stringent criteria of the Cochrane Library found 27 Cochrane Reviews and 49 other reviews of sensory art therapies, representing well over 1,000 randomised controlled trials (Clift, 2012; also Slayton, 2010). The appropriateness of clinical outcomes alone in capturing the changes brought about by arts interventions has, however, come into question in recent years.

### Impact of arts interventions

Staricoff identified a wide range of impacts for arts therapies: cancer care, where visual art and music were found to be effective in reducing anxiety and depression during chemotherapy; cardiovascular care, where the use of music was associated with a reduction in anxiety and blood pressure levels, heart rate and demand for myocardial oxygen, and a significant reduction in the use of medication for pain after surgery (Staricoff, 2004). A subsequent review identified over a hundred studies of the effect of music interventions in a hospital environment, involving maternity, neonatal care, cardiovascular conditions, surgery and pain management, oncology and lung disease (Staricoff & Clift, 2011). When this was updated in their *CVP Critical Review*, Bungay et al were struck by the overwhelming dominance of music in the studies that met the criteria for their review of arts in therapeutic interventions, with the empirical studies mostly in surgical or post-surgical settings. They concluded their survey of predominantly quantitative studies, based on standard clinical scales and vital sign tests: 'Despite the varied settings and context most studies reported a positive effect of music listening in reducing anxiety, stress and pain levels for patients and service users. The studies also illustrated wider healthcare

benefits in relation to patient satisfaction, length of hospital stay and cost benefits.' (Bungay *CVP Report*, p.26).

Examples of specific interventions include English National Ballet's Dance for Parkinson's programme, where artistically-driven sessions used live music, dance, rhythm, voice and creative expression. The results of a systematic evaluation using a control group did not show significant improvement for the dance group, using standard clinical scales for Parkinson's and biomechanical measures, except possibly for postural stability. Interestingly, though, they found through qualitative interview data that the dancers themselves, and those watching them, perceived there to be improvements in areas such as fluency, balance and gait that did not show up in the formal tests. The evaluation concluded:

> *The main benefits of dancing with Parkinson's are in the mental activity it provides and in emotional and social health and well-being. Scales and focus groups that looked at non-motor activity, such as cognitive functioning, psychological health, relationships and participant interaction indicated that the dance programme was providing particularly strong support for participants. (Houston & McGill, 2015, p.39).*

Individual art therapy in a clinical setting has been shown significantly to increase coping resources (measured by the Coping Resources Inventory) before as well as two and six months after the start of postoperative radiotherapy for women with breast cancer, compared with a control group (Oster et al, 2006). In a study using creative writing, HIV-infected patients were asked to write on an emotional topic for 30 minutes a day for four days, while a control group wrote on a control topic. HIV viral loads improved immediately in the experimental but not the control group, while the CD4+ lymphocyte counts of the emotional writing group gradually and continuously increased during the six-month follow-up, in contrast to those of the control group, which were largely stable (Petrie, 2004).

Although some of these studies used control groups not all did so, and, as was noted in a review of music therapy in hospice and palliative care, drawing general conclusions can be difficult because of sample size and the absence of controls, as well as varying approaches to music therapy (Hilliard, 2005). The fact that research design remains a problem in evaluating arts therapies should not obscure the many positive results that have emerged from studies.

An example is the study by Sarkamo and his colleagues who carried out a single-blind, randomised and controlled trial to examine the impact of music listening on the recovery of cognitive functions and mood after stroke in 60 patients. These patients were randomly assigned to a music group, a language group, and a control group. The music and language groups listened daily to self-selected music or audio books respectively over a period of two months, while the control group received no listening material. The patients were assessed at one week (baseline), three months and six months after the stroke using a range of cognitive tests, alongside mood and quality of life questionnaires. Sarkamo et al found that regular self-directed music listening during the early post-stroke stage can enhance cognitive recovery and prevent negative mood. After the two-month intervention, there was greater improvement in focused attention, verbal memory and levels of depression amongst those who listened to music than amongst the other two groups (Sarkamo et al, 2008; also Sarkamo et al, 2012).

The most pertinent issue concerning mechanisms is the extent to which reported changes can be attributed to the effects of a specific arts intervention, or to an enjoyable stimulus, irrespective of whether that was artistic or not. As Sarkamo et al point out, their findings are attributable to the effects of 'a general positive affective state or enhanced arousal and attention', which in turn affected the brain's plasticity; whether these are specific to music cannot, however, be ascertained (Sarkamo et al, 2008).

### Arts interventions and mental health

The picture is made more complex by the fact that the majority of studies in the reviews concern mental health – directly addressing mental health conditions and the mental health dimensions of physical health. The separation of mental and physical health – clinging to what many see as the Cartesian ethos of the NHS – is increasingly under scrutiny. Mental health issues now account for nearly 40 per cent of all morbidity, their effects are more debilitating than many physical diseases, and they are also responsible for substantially increased costs in treating physical diseases themselves (LSE Centre for Economic Performance, 2012). Mental health is a major challenge for health services.

The need for rigorous qualitative evidence to accompany quantitative evidence is important for the study of arts therapy in general, and its application to problems with a mental health dimension in particular.

In their *CVP Critical Review* on 'The effectiveness of the therapeutic use of artistic activity', Kelly et al reported that mental health was the most common condition in the 92 studies they examined. The review limited itself to quantitative studies, where patients were actively engaged with arts practice, and which included measurement of a health state. The most common arts activities were music, writing, art and drama. The characteristics of many studies, such as their attention to cross-sectional and qualitative evidence and narrative reviews, were not unique to arts therapies, and in the view of Kelly et al they were applied to many spheres where complex interventions make it difficult to isolate an intervention and its impact. They were concerned that when an arts therapy is judged positive, no need is felt to ask why it had been effective, whereas underlying reasons were sought when the results were negative, generally reasons to do with study design rather than anything more fundamental. They suggest that the Bradford Hill criteria for causation, whereby complex and observational studies make causality difficult to establish, could be applied to art therapy research, but have not been. They also call for longer-term follow-up studies and stronger evaluation designs, without these needing to be randomised controlled trials.

As Stacey and Stickley have observed, mental health problems are often equally acute but more difficult to identify, assess and treat compared to many physical conditions, which offer relatively straightforward, measurable milestones of improvement, trajectories of recovery and more objective standards of diagnosis (Stacey & Stickley, 2010). The need for rigorous qualitative evidence to accompany quantitative evidence is important for the study of arts therapy in general, and its application to problems with a mental health dimension in particular. As Kelly et al conclude, 'future research into the use of art therapy and healthcare will benefit from a synthesis of approaches that can retain the more robust aspects of, for example, RCTs with the insights that can be derived from qualitative methods.' (Kelly *CVP Report*, p.1). Daykin and Orme caution that a particular view of evidence and methods might lead to evaluation models that ignore the situation-specific character of arts interventions. The crucial element for them is to track the research process, so that conclusions can be related to evidence and research design, rather than retreating from the qualitative methods that are essential for understanding what is happening. They argue that by focusing on impact and process, rather than too narrowly-defined outcomes, qualitative research on arts and health can show its value (Daykin & Orme, 2008).

**Art and design in the healthcare environment**

The impact of art and design on the quality of the health care environment, and with it user satisfaction and clinical outcomes, has become a major theme. The King's Fund's Enhancing the Healing Environment programme was launched in 2000 to stimulate improved design at all levels of health care.[52] Practice might be seen in museum loan boxes, allowing patients to handle objects from museum collections (Noble & Chatterjee, 2008), and Elevate, a project at Salisbury District Hospital that has been favourably evaluated for its use of music, storytelling and creative reminiscences 'to raise the spirit of the patients staying in hospital through high quality arts events in hospital wards and in common areas within the hospital.' (Preti & Boyce-Tilman, 2015, p.9).

The use of art and design to improve existing hospital environments and develop new ones is more ambitious. Chelsea and Westminster Hospital claims to have been, in 1993, the first new-build hospital to integrate visual arts in its design. A rigorous evaluation found clinical benefits, such as reduced anxiety and depression among chemotherapy patients, alongside self-reported mood enhancement on the part of patients, staff and visitors (Arts Council England, 2006, Part 2). In 2004 the new Breast Care Centre at Barts and the London Hospital opened, with high-quality integrated artwork that was part of a broader Vital Arts programme. The goal was to provide a high-quality environment and provide distraction and relief from anxiety, while realising patients' aspirations for the centre not to look like a hospital (Arts Council England, 2006, Part 2).

Well-constructed evaluation of such developments is not always carried out, but the new Royal Children's Hospital in Bristol commissioned research that started before the old hospital was closed, and continued when the new one had opened. The design of the new building aimed to create a child- and family-centred caring environment in which

[52] For the full reports see: *www.kingsfund.org.uk/projects/enhancing-healing-environment/ehe-publications*

[There is] support for the claim that quality of environment affects clinical outcomes, health-care quality and patient satisfaction.

Using community arts activities to engage people in thinking about their own health, and help individuals in disadvantaged areas (and with health problems) to build the capacity to address them.

colour, themed levels and artwork were important. Extensive consultation with user groups, artists and designers made art and design integral from the outset. The outcome, a very different environment that responded to children's need for colour, contrast and excitement alongside comfort and distraction, received a very positive response in the evaluation (Redshaw, 2004). These experiences underline the way that design at its most effective is a collaborative process. In the words of Tom Inns, Director of the Glasgow School of Art, speaking at a workshop on 'the value of design' organised with the Cultural Value Project, design is now 'very much about finding pattern and symmetry within a challenge in a way that allows a diverse team of experts and users to communicate with each other.'[53] In healthcare environments this is altering the relationship between patients and their families on the one hand, and medical and care professionals on the other.

The impact of art and design on the healthcare environment is not, however, an area that has been subject to extensive evaluations. In their systematic review relating to mental healthcare, Daykin and Byrne found evidence for the impact of design on staff outcomes (affecting stress, fatigue and effectiveness), and support for the claim that quality of environment affected clinical outcomes, health-care quality and patient satisfaction. They observed 'the importance of patient involvement and control in mediating the impact of arts on health and well-being', which they saw as being enhanced by good design and cultural participation (Daykin & Byrne, 2006, p.23). The sense of empowerment and self-determination that patients may feel through artistic as well as design engagement contrasts with the lack of control that is often experienced in medical settings, though Bungay et al's *Critical Review* observed that very few studies involved patients hearing music that they had had any part in selecting, noting that where participants were allowed to choose their own preferred music style this in some cases led to greater positive effects.

Research 'considering which type of paintings/photographs are the most appropriate for different areas of the hospital, [and] evaluating the emotional and physiological response of patients' has been called for (Staricoff & Clift, 2011, p.21). Daykin noted a small number of studies that accommodated aesthetic and art-form considerations:

> *One study of 300 randomly selected inpatients examined their preferences for different images, concluding that patients preferred nature images but disliked abstract art […]. Another study […] suggests that inappropriate art styles can increase stress and worsen other outcomes. Interviews with patients in a psychiatric unit furnished with diverse paintings and prints revealed strongly negative attitudes towards artworks that were ambiguous, surreal or could be interpreted in multiple ways. The same patients reported having positive feelings and associations with respect to nature paintings and prints. (Daykin & Byrne, 2006, p.21).*

## Community-based arts and health

Arts and health initiatives in communities grew in the late-1980s, and within ten years a new government, ideas of active citizenship and social inclusion, and increased funding had combined with a genuine enthusiasm within the health field to produce considerable expansion. Multi-agency partnerships were formed by arts organisations, local authorities, and public and charitable agencies. The objective derived from the social model of health, using community arts activities to engage people in thinking about their own health, and help individuals in disadvantaged areas (and with health problems) to build the capacity to address them. This included social capital, which was viewed as essential to tackle the social and economic inequality which underpinned health inequalities (White, 2009). The enthusiasm was captured by Richard Smith's 2002 editorial in the *British Medical Journal* calling for a half of one per cent of the health budget to be devoted to the arts, because 'if health is about adaptation, understanding and acceptance, then the arts may be more potent than anything medicine has to offer.' (Smith, 2002).

Impressive community arts and health initiatives flourished. This report questions the over-neat distinction between individual and collective benefits, and the same can be said of individual and collective modes of intervention. Effective evaluation of projects is consequently more difficult, as was observed of the Common Knowledge programme on

[53] CVP Report The Value of Design *www.ahrc.ac.uk/research/fundedthemesandprogrammes/culturalvalueproject/currentpastresearchactivities/projectworkshops*

Arts activities led to participants' healthy personal development, there was clear evidence of healthy eating, healthy mothering and more positive mental health, and health information was more readily absorbed.

Tyneside (Smith, 2003; also Clift, 2012). As Atkinson and White explain, 'on the one hand, policy analysts observe an individualisation of responsibility and blame for the production of health and ill-health; on the other, attention to social determinants, inequalities and globalisation locate the production of health and ill-health within complex relationships shaped across space and time.' (Atkinson & White, 2013).

A 2003 report, partly funded by the King's Fund and examining community arts-in-health projects in north-east England, provides some good examples. The Looking Well project in Bentham, a small market town with a high incidence of health problems resulting from social isolation and precarious rural employment, established an informal meeting place for a variety of arts activities. Parents and children addressed emotional and mental health needs, an after-school club helped children develop social skills, a club helped to draw-in young men by creating landscapes and figures for war games, and a women's art group met with a psychiatric nurse present to address problems of isolation and depression. At the South Tyneside Arts Studio, people with mental health needs and members of the public could engage in visual arts activities together, avoiding the ghettoisation of mental health programmes, with GP practices referring patients in what became an arts-on-prescription scheme.

The Wickenton Lanterns Project, meanwhile, responded to the fact that Gateshead had the highest morbidity rate in the country for coronary heart disease. Young people made individual lanterns for an annual 500-strong procession whose centrepiece was the 'heart of community lantern', which was placed on a hill and illuminated at the end of the parade. Art practice nurtured emotional intelligence and health understanding, while focusing attention across the community on the challenge of heart disease. The thorough evaluation pointed out that the breadth of objectives made the assessment of outcomes difficult, but interviews with participants and professionals provided some evidence: arts activities led to participants' healthy personal development, there was clear evidence of healthy eating, healthy mothering and more positive mental health, and health information was more readily absorbed. The answer to the question of whether art engagement led to better health was positive, although without longitudinal studies the issue of sustainability could not be addressed (Everitt & Hamilton, 2003).[54]

Be Creative, Be Well is an extensive initiative funded by the Big Lottery Fund and coordinated by Arts Council England, which supported around 100 small participatory arts projects in disadvantaged areas in London. These included participatory dance activities to celebrate Canning Town's contribution to the modern English folk-dance movement; an arts, cooking and reminiscence project for older people in Canonbury; storytelling workshops in Lewisham; dance-theatre workshops in Westminster, where people explored our changing relationship to pharmaceuticals, and projects in which creative activities were used to encourage thinking about community cohesion and well-being. A systematic evaluation of the programme used quantitative and qualitative methods and a community-randomised trial. It found that 55 per cent of participants reported an increase in healthy eating, 76 per cent an increase in physical activity, and 85 per cent reported that they were feeling more positive. The quality of the experience and the professionalism of the artists emerged as important factors for participants (Ings et al, 2012; Cameron et al, 2013).

Bringing together quantitative data and qualitative findings has been endorsed by one of the few large-scale studies of participatory arts projects and health outcomes. It found modest but statistically significant improvements in empowerment, social inclusion and mental health needs for participants attending 22 arts and mental health projects in England, with most participants attributing improvement to their arts participation (Hacking et al, 2008; see also Secker 2007). The difficulties of evidencing subtle and often subjective changes in mental health, collecting data and implementing meaningful and comparable measures, means that work is needed to develop effective methodologies for evaluations in this area.

In the absence of a causal framework to understand the relationship between arts and health in community settings, social capital has in many studies become the bridge between the two. This is explored in a *CVP Research Development Award* on 'Cultural value and social capital: investigating social

[54] For further examples of community arts-in-health projects in the same region see White (2002) pp.27-56

[Studies show] an association between long-term arts engagement and positive health outcomes after controlling for relevant social, economic and demographic variables.

capital, health and wellbeing impacts in three coastal towns undergoing culture-led regeneration'. Clift and colleagues worked with staff, visitors, local residents and others affected by Turner Contemporary in Margate, the Creative Foundation's activities in Folkestone, and the De La Warr Pavilion in Bexhill. They conclude that the compound nature of the concept of social capital makes its use in health research problematic, because of the difficulty of isolating it as a variable. The role of the arts in nurturing social capital in a health context has been highlighted by many (Parr, 2006; Secker et al, 2009), but Clift and colleagues argue that it is not easy to establish the place of social capital as a mediator between arts and health.

## Longer-term health benefits and subjective wellbeing

The historic commitment in Nordic countries to keeping detailed population registers, with personal identifiers, allows data from different sources to be linked for social epidemiology research. Long-term health outcomes associated with cultural participation can be explored through longitudinal cohort studies, and intriguing results have emerged in Finland, Sweden and Norway. These studies, rooted in different theoretical frameworks, show an association between long-term arts engagement and positive health outcomes after controlling for relevant social, economic and demographic variables. These conclusions pose as many questions as they offer answers, but they highlight issues that have generally been ignored in the UK.

Here are three examples. The survival rate for 10,609 individuals for the period 1982-96 was examined by Konlaan and colleagues. They found a higher mortality risk for those people who rarely visited the cinema, art exhibitions, museums or concerts, compared with those visiting them most often, after controlling for age, sex, income buffer, educational level, long-term disease, smoking and physical exercise. They found no such benefit for those attending the theatre or church services, reading or making music (Konlaan et al, 2000). A nationally representative sample of 5,641 Finnish adults for 1978-2002 revealed that leisure participation predicts survival in middle-aged Finnish men but not amongst women. Other factors such as income, educational level and employment status did not significantly alter hazard ratios. Leisure participation included cultural activities and also involvement in voluntary associations, as researchers were interested in relating social capital to health (Hyppa et al, 2005). A randomly-selected cohort of 9,011 Swedish adults from the 1990-91 Swedish Survey of Living Conditions, followed up in 2003, showed that attendance at the cinema, theatre, art galleries, live music events and museums was associated with lower rates of cancer-related mortality. Rare, and to a slightly lesser degree moderate, attenders were significantly more likely to die of cancer than frequent attenders, after adjusting for age, sex, income, educational level, chronic conditions, smoking and leisure-time physical activity (Bygren et al, 2009).

There are few equivalent studies outside these countries, where data availability and scientific interest combined to drive research. Through her *CVP Research Development Award* on 'Evaluating the relationship between arts and cultural engagement and long-term health outcomes in the UK', Gordon-Nesbitt analysed this body of work, its methodological and theoretical parameters, and its implications for understanding in the UK. The report unpicks the complex analyses in these studies: the way gender and class surface, how cultural attendance may be simply one dimension of a healthy lifestyle, the varying range of activities defined as cultural, whether receptive and creative engagement are distinguished, and attempts to separate the cultural from the social, not least in relation to social capital. Gordon-Nesbitt nonetheless underlines the potential of this kind of research. She also points out that the evidence encouraged Nordic governments to implement national arts and health programmes. In Finland a national strategy to secure the health and wellbeing benefits of culture involved all levels of government and the private and third sectors (Liikanen, 2000; Hamari, 2010).

Gordon-Nesbitt considers the mechanisms that might explain the relationship between arts participation and health: social capital, where questions remain about how they might be connected; cognition, where neuroscience could help us better understand how arts engagement works; occupational health, notably the ability to cope with stress, and physiological dimensions such as psycho-neuroimmunology and endocrine and metabolic effects, including how stress-related physiological scores are associated with cultural participation. She acknowledges the real potential of this work

There is clear evidence of an association between arts and culture participation and self-reported subjective wellbeing, even when social, economic and lifestyle factors are taken into account.

for the UK, but also reminds us that cross-sectional studies cannot demonstrate causality, while longitudinal studies are demanding of resources and still present methodological challenges in establishing causality in such complex settings.

**Culture and wellbeing**

In 1946, the World Health Organization defined health as 'a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity,'[55] and today's interest in wellbeing and its determinants sits within that broader conception. A recent study which involved data-mining the Italian Culture and Wellbeing Project found that cultural access was the second most important determinant of psychological subjective wellbeing after multiple morbidities, outperforming factors such as occupation, age, income and education (Grossi et al, 2010 & 2012).

Wellbeing may be treated as an end in itself or as a contributor to other desirable outcomes such as health (Neve, 2013), but we are concerned here with the former, the direct relationship between cultural engagement and individual wellbeing. The interest of policymakers in subjective wellbeing has grown substantially in recent years (Layard, 2005; Dolan & White, 2007). The emphasis of the Office of National Statistics' Wellbeing Programme is on the hedonic aspect of wellbeing, that is to say individual satisfaction, over the eudemonic dimension associated with personal growth, self-realisation and being a fully-functioning person (Ryan & Deci, 2001). The difference between these dimensions was considered in the discussion of the capabilities approach in the chapter on *Cross-cutting themes*.

Research demonstrating an association with subjective wellbeing led the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Wellbeing Economics to highlight arts and culture as one of its four areas where policy could directly contribute to wellbeing, arguing that here was a non-market good capable of valuation through the wellbeing approach, as an alternative to focusing on instrumental benefits (APPGWE, 2014). Fujiwara's 2013 report for the Happy Museums Project measured the impact of museums on people's subjective wellbeing, drawing on data in the national Taking Part survey. The report attached a monetary value to that impact, using the wellbeing valuation approach that will be considered in the *Methodologies* chapter (Fujiwara, 2013).

There is clear evidence of an association between arts and culture participation and self-reported subjective wellbeing, even when social, economic and lifestyle factors are taken into account. An analysis for the Scottish Government of the 2011 Scottish Household Survey found that people who participated in culture or attended cultural venues and events were more likely to report that they were satisfied with their life (and also that their health was good) than those who didn't participate. This applied both generally and to individual cultural forms, with a 30 per cent to 50 per cent difference in likelihood over non-participants or non-attenders, after accounting for factors such as economic status, income, area deprivation, educational level and smoking (Leadbetter & O'Connor, 2013; for Canada see Hill, 2013). A study for DCMS, drawing on 40,000 households in the Understanding Society programme, found a significant positive association between most arts and cultural activities and life satisfaction. The study sought to control for confounding social, economic and other variables, but acknowledged that it was impossible to do so completely (Fujiwara et al, 2014).

More will emerge as large-scale studies are refined, but our understanding has already benefited from approaches that incorporate qualitative information. An international study of 1,124 choral singers used measures from the World Health Organisation's Quality of Life project to capture physical, psychological, social and environmental wellbeing, and any association of them with choral singing. The survey augmented this with open-ended questions. The responses from those participants with high scores on the singing scale, but relatively low psychological wellbeing, established the importance of choral singing for coping with mental, physical and personal problems (Clift et al, 2008).

The value of qualitative research on wellbeing emerges even more strikingly from the *CVP Research Development Award* led by Davis on 'Assessing the intrinsic value of The Reader Organisation's Shared Reading Scheme'. Volunteers spent six weeks in shared reading sessions and six weeks in a built environment study group, with two sets taking the activities in a different order. Evaluations of the impact of the shared reading sessions on wellbeing, assessed by standard scales

[55] Preamble to the Constitution of the World Health Organization 1946

The potential for the arts to maintain health and quality of life for older age groups in general, and to address problems associated with dementia in particular.

for mental health and subjective wellbeing, found that the two activities promoted different aspects of psychological wellbeing. Shared reading led to improvement in an individual's sense of purpose, by increasing a belief in the value of their contributions in their past and present life. The built environment study group saw a different kind of wellbeing benefit – personal growth through acquiring knowledge and skills. Each activity improved wellbeing, but in different ways. Qualitative research found changes to wellbeing to be related to participants' use of shared reading to reconfigure thinking about painful experiences and confront challenges in their lives. There were many other benefits, some considered in an earlier chapter, but the project reminds us that wellbeing is a complex and not uncontested phenomenon.

## Ageing and dementia

The proportion of the population in older age groups is significantly increasing in western societies, and this trend has made maintaining health and wellbeing in later life important, both for controlling the costs of medical and care services and also for the quality of life of older people themselves. The increasing pressure of dementia in older age groups is one specific dimension of this, with 670,000 people in England living with dementia in 2012. The Alzheimer's Society found that 67 per cent of people with dementia suffered from loneliness, isolation, anxiety and depression.[56] In this context, the potential for the arts to maintain health and quality of life for older age groups in general, and to address problems associated with dementia in particular, has emerged as a major policy issue. Many of the themes addressed elsewhere in this chapter are, of course, also relevant here, not least arts therapies, long-term health outcomes and wellbeing.

### Participatory arts and older people

This potential has generated precise studies, as well as initiatives and surveys. The Baring Foundation's *Ageing Artfully* mapping document was the background to their funding programme in this area (Cutler, 2009). Baring also commissioned a synthesis of systematic reviews and meta-analyses of the impact of participatory arts on older people. Music and singing represented nearly half of the studies reviewed, underlining their general prominence, alongside dance. Its conclusion, albeit with caveats about the quality of many of the studies, described a range of improvements in mental health and wellbeing, physical health, and engagement with others in family and beyond, as well as in attitudes towards ageing in the wider society (Mental Health Foundation, 2011).

The National Endowment for the Arts brought together US researchers in health, sciences, the arts and social sciences to explore the challenges in this kind of work. They heard about a project that showed that volunteers from retirement homes who were randomly assigned to acting, singing and control groups saw the greatest cognitive benefits by far emerging from the intensive acting course, while they and the singers also improved in terms of personal growth as measured on a standard quality of life scale, both in comparison with the control group. On the other hand, the findings of a review of studies on the use of music to manage dementia symptoms amongst people in severe stages of dementia were more mixed, with some interventions reducing negative behaviours and others achieving some cognitive improvement, but many resulting in no improvement at all (National Endowment for the Arts, 2013). The NEA workshop's prevailing emphasis was on the potential of the arts for ageing and for dementia, alongside frustration at the problems with research design that weakened much of the evidence, but this did not mean that what was needed was randomised controlled trials (RCTs). 'Because arts-based initiatives are multimodal, multilevel, and may produce subtle changes, they are difficult to evaluate with RCTs.' (p.10).

We are alerted once again to the need to balance qualitative and quantitative methods, and the number of controlled studies doing this is growing. Clift et al researched the impact of Silver Song Clubs for older people. Five new weekly singing groups were organised, and the team carried out a pragmatic randomised controlled trial. Measurements of physical and mental health, using established self-reporting questionnaires and scales, led them to conclude that 'measures of health were consistently higher among the singing group following the singing programme than among the non-singing group', and that 'three months after the singing groups stopped, the participants continued to be higher on measures of health.'

[56] Dementia figures from Dame Sally Davis's presentation to the Foundation for Science & Technology 2012. See *FST Journal*, 20, December 2012 p.16

(Clift et al, 2012a, p.2). Kattenstroth et al looked at the effects of a weekly dance class on a group of healthy older people compared to a matched control group. After six months they recorded no positive changes in the control group, but a host of beneficial changes on cognitive, tactile, motor performance and subjective well-being measures amongst the dance group. The greatest benefits were for those who had the lowest measures prior to the class's commencement. The fact that dance included cognitive demands, emotional and social interactions, and physical exercise, and was capable of being performed with varying levels of expertise, was important for the outcomes (Kattenstroth et al, 2013).

The Bronx Aging Study, a longitudinal cohort study on leisure activities and the risk of dementia in the elderly, involved a sophisticated design to minimise confounding variables without using a formal control group. The likelihood of later development of dementia was found to be much lower for those actively and frequently engaging in leisure activities, of which the most important were cognitive activities – reading, board games and playing a musical instrument. Amongst physical activities, only dance saw as striking a reduction in risk (Verghese et al, 2003). Systematic neuroscience approaches are being used, such as in a study comparing older people given 10-week-long hands-on art drawing and painting classes, and another group given art appreciation classes, which found through fMRI and other data a significant difference, with the first group showing the neural benefits of visual art production for psychological resilience (Bolwerk et al, 2014).

In seeking to arrive at measurable, especially clinically measurable, evidence of changes, studies necessarily smooth over individual perspectives, although many controlled studies are augmented by qualitative information from participants. Bernard, who led two different Cultural Value Project awards, was concerned that assessments of the health benefits of arts participation among older people minimise the perspective of older people themselves. In the *CVP Critical Review* on 'Ageing, drama and creativity', Bernard et al capture a wide range of formal studies covering devised productions, drama practice and workshops, inter-generational theatre, and drama for reminiscence and in care settings, indicating that there are benefits for health and well-being, group relationships, learning and creativity. They note, however, how few of the 75 studies used control groups, and the fact that none looked at long-term effects, thus underlining the unsatisfactory quality of much, but not all, research design in this area. They also note how little attention is given to the cultural and aesthetic value of arts participation for older people, arguing that involving them in the co-construction of the research might help establish what value the participation holds for them.

Their *CVP Research Development Award* 'Ages and Stages: the cultural value of older people's experience of theatre making' seeks to address this gap. The project turned their Ages and Stages Company in Stoke-on-Trent, in which older people devised and performed plays to general audiences, into 'a company of researchers' capable of interrogating and understanding their experience and its meaning for them. The greatest benefit came from taking older people out of their comfort zones, with fun and enjoyment being in creative tension with fear and risk. The theatre group was unusually committed, working together for a long time, and more conventional arts groups for older people need to be asked the same questions. The *CVP Research Development Award* led by Winters on the Grand Gestures Elders Dance Group, presented in an earlier chapter, indicates that this experience was not unique.

**Value of arts for people with dementia**

In the context of the social and human challenge presented by dementia, and the absence of clinical and pharmacological interventions that are anything other than palliative, the potential of arts therapies and arts participation for older people has led to initiatives where the arts are used to support people with dementia themselves, and, as we saw in an earlier chapter, their professional and informal carers. In their *CVP Critical Review*, Zeilig and colleagues considered a growing body of research on 'The value of arts and culture for people living with a dementia'. They concluded that

> *the participative arts are able to contribute positively to the lives of those living with a dementia in manifold ways […]. These include: aiding communication, encouraging residual creative abilities, promoting new learning, enhancing cognitive function, increasing confidence, self esteem and social participation and generating a sense of freedom – among other documented benefits. (Zeilig et al CVP Report, pp.35-36).*

The benefits of engaging with people with dementia rather than simply providing activities for them.

It is a conclusion they nonetheless seriously qualify, with a now recurrent theme: concerns over the theoretical and methodological design of many of the studies and the absence of longer-term evaluations. The most positive effects – from music, dance and visual arts, for example – relate to social and psychological wellbeing, where arts are shown to have greater benefits than other kinds of activity. They also highlight research suggesting that participative arts may provide unique access to the emotional and physical memories of people living with a more advanced dementia, even when their cognitive capacities are diminishing.

Arts4Dementia's 2012 London Arts Challenge was a major initiative, supporting 18 arts-based pilot projects, each of which was required to build evaluation into its plans. Participants overwhelmingly affirmed the benefits that they felt, such as creative achievement overriding memory loss, having greater confidence, developing new skills and feeling energised. The report cites evidence that the cognitive stimulus provided by the arts elevates people above the stresses of dementia, and can improve memory, thinking and social interaction (Gould, 2013). Storybox, a drama-centred initiative across different care settings in Manchester, also incorporated singing, poetry and crafts to give multiple ways of engaging people at different stages of dementia. Storytelling was used, in similar ways to TimeSlips, to help participants drive and not just follow the activity. The evaluation stressed the need in dementia interventions to assess process and not just outcomes, because the complexity created by environment, attention and circumstances mean simple clinical measures miss much of what is going on, and tell us little about how creative activity has effects. The benefits of Storybox, above all its effects on the experience and quality of life now, rather than improvement for the future, emerged from the close interaction of artists, participants and carers in a way that could not be replicated in different settings (Harries, 2013).

The Reader Organisation's study of the benefits of its shared reading model, for people living with dementia, similarly reported positive results in terms of the benefits of the process rather than precise outcomes. It concluded that 'the use of memory in shared reading is to do with personal reawakening triggered by literature in significant emotional areas that bring participants back to life for the moment.' (Reader Organisation, nd, p.68). They distinguished it from reminiscence therapy which uses autobiographical memory, and for which the evidence of success for people with dementia is at best inconclusive (Woods et al, 2009; Cotelli, 2012). This does not negate the way that art triggers memories and stories to engage older people more generally (Goulding, 2013).

The most interesting research often confirms the benefits of engaging with people with dementia rather than simply providing activities for them. This was the focus of Eades's *CVP Research Development Award* on 'Bloomsbury Festival in a Box: engaging socially isolated people with dementia.' Local house-bound people living with dementia were able to engage with the Bloomsbury Festival without leaving their homes. Specially-designed Festival Boxes were taken to them on weekly visits, engaging them in cultural activity to prompt memories, followed by an audio-recorded narrative interview reflecting on the experience. 'The project allowed people with dementia a space of narrative freedom in which to tell their stories, prompted by engagement with cultural activity,' something which Eades argued had implications for 'the broader critical reception of narratives produced by people with dementia.' (Eades *CVP Report,* p.44).

## Two cultures?

Eades's report confirms not only the distance we have travelled from the language of measurable clinical, health and wellbeing outcomes, but also the benefits of a wide range of approaches and interventions. The challenge of identifying value where artistic and health practices intersect arises from the disparity of institutional cultures, language and epistemologies. Rooke's *CVP Expert Workshop* on 'Arts and mental health: creative collisions and critical conversations' brought together professionals in mental health and the arts, as well as those in primary and secondary care provision. It became clear during the workshop that changes in individuals' psychology that were apparent from the perspective of the creative sector were not easily translated into the proxies used in the medical setting. 'The "artfulness" of these interventions, found in the relational, affective space they create, is lost in the epistemological orthodoxies of clinical and quantitative research methodologies.' (Rooke *CVP Report*, Arts and mental health, p.10).

Applying the medical hierarchy of evidence to arts interventions might be unsuitable in principle.

Unless the nature of what counts as acceptable evidence changes, our understanding of the contribution of arts and culture to health and wellbeing is likely to remain partial at best.

The methodological challenges in accounting for these less tangible effects of the arts recur in many areas where the value of culture manifests itself. A special difficulty for health is that, even if more appropriate methods to capture these effects were found, it is not clear how they would be regarded, given the evidence hierarchy in medical discourse. Randomised control trials are recognised for validating medical knowledge for a good specific reason: they are a reliable method for determining the effects of drugs. There are equivalent important reasons for valuing qualitative research methods, as many studies cited here show. The determination to use randomised control trials more extensively for art in health has limitations, because there are many questions that quantitative research cannot answer, including the ways that participants respond to interventions, the ability of interventions to meet participants' needs, the satisfaction of service users and, most strikingly, how it is that different arts have these effects (Petticrew & Roberts cited by Clift, 2012; Magee & Stewart, 2015). As Clift has argued, 'qualitative methods of data gathering including observations, interviews and focus group discussions, together with analytical techniques such as narrative, thematic and content analysis, are important tools for a deeper analysis of arts-based interventions.' (Clift, 2012, p.123). Chatterjee and Noble also stress the importance of mixed-method approaches with respect to health and museums: 'mixed methods can offer the dual benefits of scientific rigour backed up by statistical power afforded from quantitative methods, coupled with the richness and deeper, more contextualised understanding afforded by qualitative approaches.' (Chatterjee & Noble, 2013, p.105).

One important question is whether it is technically feasible to run RCTs on arts interventions, but the difficulties are more than just technical. In contexts such as mental health, where outcomes have to be subjectively validated by the participants and where intended outcomes may not translate straightforwardly into measurable health improvements, applying the medical hierarchy of evidence to arts interventions might be unsuitable in principle. Developments such as the Aesop framework represent a welcome attempt to establish a platform for comparisons between different types of study and evidence, but run the risk of reinforcing this existing hierarchy (Fancourt & Joss, 2014).

There is a growing body of evidence for the effectiveness of using the arts to influence people's health and wellbeing. Although some research works with large sample sizes and control groups, most studies do not. Strengthening this aspect of research design is necessary in some areas, but to insist on it exclusively may not do justice to the character of arts interventions used in relation to health, nor to their outcomes (Stacey & Stickly, 2010). In White's words, 'the research agenda is vast and there is now a broad spectrum of practice and it is still innovative and curious. We must not stifle the emergent vision and potential by only seeking a proven evidence base for arts in health that is narrowly defined through "control"-based interventions.' (White, 2013). This does not mean that the effectiveness of art practices in health cannot be captured using evidence-based evaluation, but those evaluation methodologies need to be developed with stronger attention to the character and robustness of qualitative research design, something which reviews have regularly found wanting. This is a challenge for arts in health because, unless the nature of what counts as acceptable evidence changes, our understanding of the contribution of arts and culture to health and wellbeing is likely to remain partial at best.

## KEY POINTS FROM CHAPTER

- There is a breadth of areas in which cultural engagement has been shown to be beneficial to health. Much needs to be done to improve evaluation, though this has proved challenging given the complexity of variables and contexts. Diversity of evidence and methods of evaluation are not surprising: those appropriate for public and community health projects will be different from those testing the effectiveness of therapies in clinical settings, while epidemiological studies of large population groups over time will need yet other approaches. The chapter calls for the standards of the good studies that integrate quantitative and qualitative methods, and where appropriate use controls, to be matched in future work.
- Arts therapies are typically delivered by qualified professionals, and their effectiveness is measured through standard clinical outcomes, such as measurable changes in health or quality of life in terms such as recovery times, quantities of drugs consumed, pain on clinical scales or coping resources. Research indicates that there are considerable benefits, but the mechanisms explaining the relationship between arts interventions and clinical outcomes are far less explored.
- The impact of art and design on the healthcare environment, and with it user satisfaction and clinical outcomes, is now a major area, with positive outcomes found in the best examples, especially where the artists or design team engage with staff and users in a process of co-design.
- Arts and health interventions in communities rather than in the medical environment have been significant since the late 1980s. Community arts activities help to engage people, especially those in disadvantaged areas, in thinking about their own health and building the capacity to address it. The quality of the experience and professionalism of the arts practitioners appears to be an important contributor to success. There is some evidence of their improving social inclusion, mental health etc, but the prevalent explanatory tool that is social capital is difficult to capture independent of its supposed effects.
- Does long-term engagement with arts and culture have demonstrable effects on health? Longitudinal cohort studies of health in the Nordic countries show an association between long-term arts engagement and positive health outcomes, after attempts to control for relevant social, economic and demographic variables. We call for long-term questions about arts and cultural engagement to be included in major UK cohort studies in the future and for these questions to be stable over time to enable longitudinal research.
- There has been growing interest among policymakers in subjective wellbeing. There is clear evidence of an association between arts and cultural participation and self-reported subjective wellbeing, even when demographic and lifestyle factors are taken into account. Greater clarity will emerge as large-scale studies are refined and given a more longitudinal dimension, and Cultural Value Project awards have shown the benefits of incorporating qualitative evidence.
- There is particular evidence of the benefits of participatory arts for older people. Improvements have been seen in mental health and wellbeing, physical health and engagement with others. There is also evidence of such benefits for people living with dementia, especially when the activities engage with them and draw on their continuing capacity for creativity, story-telling and so on.
- A key conclusion of the chapter is the need to step back from the established hierarchy of evidence that places randomised controlled trials and experimental approaches at the top, not least in contexts such as mental health, where outcomes have to be subjectively validated by the participants, and where intended outcomes may not translate straightforwardly into measurable health improvements on clinical scales. The best balance of quantitative and qualitative evidence will depend on the nature of the intervention and the character of the knowledge being sought.

# CHAPTER 8

## ARTS IN EDUCATION: A NOTE

The significance of arts education has been highlighted in recent reports that voice alarm at its apparent current decline in English secondary schools. The Warwick Commission set this in the context of fears for the quality of the creative industries, and for young people's future capacity to enjoy and benefit from cultural engagement, other than those whose parents have given them opportunities outside school, with the danger of reinforcing patterns of social and cultural inequality.

Its report also expresses concern at how little crossover there is between science and arts subjects at A-Level, which is seen as damaging to careers and to future creativity within the British economy. The Crafts Council's *Our Future is in the Making* underlines this, with evidence of the significant decline in craft education in schools, and a major fall in those taking craft and design subjects at GCSE. According to such reports, the threat to arts education in secondary schools carries major problems for the future of cultural engagement, for the development of skills needed for the creative industries, and (as far as craft is concerned) for the development of people who are used to working with materials and with their hands, which is seen as an important preparation for a wide range of careers other than those in the arts (Warwick Commission, 2015; Crafts Council, 2014). The importance of engaging with arts and culture during childhood for the likelihood of doing so when an adult is frequently cited (Miles & Sullivan, 2012; Novak-Leonard & Brown, 2011; Oskala et al, 2009; National Endowment for the Arts, 2015), while a recent call for the importance of a cultural education, based on the authors' experience of reporting to successive English governments, pitched its appeal imaginatively wide rather than directing it to narrowed educational gains (Sorrell et al, 2014).

These concerns have a bearing on the capacity of cultural engagement in the future to deliver the outcomes that are

**Below:** The Dancestry project enabled school children in Saddlesworth to explore their local heritage through dance with professional dancers and Professor Richard Morris (University of Huddlesfield). Photo: Olivia Burgess



The argument that education in the arts has wider benefits for learning, attainment and skills development in school education.

identified in this report, and much can be learned from the uneven history of policy in relation to the arts, education and young people since the 1940s (Doeser, 2014). This note is concerned with a more specific dimension of arts in education, that is the argument that education in the arts has wider benefits for learning, attainment and skills development in school education. It has been argued that participation in the arts has an influence on young people's learning outcomes, skills and development. Although the Cultural Learning Alliance's 2011 overview report on the benefits of arts learning cited specific studies showing improvement in attainment, the report focused above all on other cognitive and personal skills, the likelihood of going to university, and pro-social behaviours such as volunteering (DCMS, 2010; Cultural Learning Alliance, 2011).

**The character of benefits and the notion of 'transfer'**

A recent literature review by Arts Council England devoted several pages to evidence on arts in education and, although it pointed to some evidence that it improved attainment as demonstrated by performance in standardised tests or public examinations, most of the studies that were cited were concerned with motivation and confidence, attendance, skills such as the ability to work with others, and social capacity such as volunteering (ACE, 2014). The Cultural Value Project decided to cover a field where there is already considerable literature, primarily by drawing attention to important meta-reviews and other major evidence, to highlight some of the key questions and to fund research in some quite precise areas. The two most central to this note are Thomson et al's *CVP Critical Review* 'A critical review of the Creative Partnerships archive', a major initiative of the New Labour government to extend arts engagement in England's schools, with a view to developing wider abilities and capacities, and Rimmer et al's *CVP Research Development Award* on 'Understanding the cultural value of In Harmony-Sistema England', inspired by El Sistema in Venezuela.

The considerable amount of research in this area has generated meta-reviews and surveys of research on the effects of arts and culture on school-level education The most ambitious meta-evaluation was the US research conducted by the Reviewing Education and the Arts Project (REAP), which in 2000 identified 188 relevant studies carried out between 1950 and 1998, and conducted a set of 10 meta-analyses of these (Winner & Hetland, 2001). The Arts Education Partnership two years later published a compendium of arts education research, offering a qualitative commentary on 62 studies, and drew a firm distinction between the effects of arts education on achievement and performance in standardised tests on the one hand, and improvements in social skills and student motivation on the other (Deasy, 2002). Other reviews focused on specific themes: on how art education could contribute to cultural learning for pupils aged 5 to 16 (Mason & Gearon, 2006), and on individual art forms, such as music (Standley, 2008; Hallam, 2010), drama (O'Toole et al, 2009), and the visual arts (Hetland et al, 2013). There has also been work arguing for the importance of craft, and haptic work with materials, for the development of cognitive and other capacities (Nair, 2012; Pollanen, 2009). Recent years have seen longitudinal reviews of arts and achievement in at-risk youth (Catterall et al, 2012), and others comparing school, home and community factors in shaping the role of arts participation on academic and non-academic outcomes (Martin et al, 2013). These two studies assemble a substantive body of data and existing research, but they also offer some indication of why firm conclusions and an agreed body of evidence have proved difficult to reach.

Studies with experimental or quasi-experimental design are rare, although these might be thought necessary if the case for improvement in attainment is to be sustained. Furthermore, long-term data for meta-reviews appears to be scarce, and the differences in age-groups make comparisons difficult. As Catterall puts it, 'a standard weakness of the literature, however, has been a dearth of large-scale, longitudinal studies following the same populations over time, tracking the outcomes of students who received intensive arts exposure or arts learning compared with students who did not' (Catterall, 2012, p.8). Although some have called for more random assignment studies, they have also acknowledged that 'methodological weaknesses often indicate a lack of theoretical reflection about why and how desired effects of arts education would be achieved' (Winner et al, 2013, p.12). This is not an uncommon observation, and it makes problematic simple claims about arts education or engagement 'improving' attainment or leading to other more general gains, as opposed to the more cautious claim of their being 'associated' with

them. It was argued a decade ago that 'the field is in need of an overarching theory that pinpoints the mechanisms behind the effects of these activities, that is, a more holistic perspective that highlights (a) general profiles of adolescents participating in different activities and the configurations of these activities and (b) the causal relationship between participation and adolescent functioning' (Feldman & Matjasko, 2005, p.160). One further proviso must be made, however, and that is that such effects of arts learning, for example on cognitive abilities, are rarely compared with those brought about by intensive interventions through other disciplines.

Thomson et al in their *CVP Critical Review* analysed a considerable body of reports in the extensive Creative Partnerships archive, and noted a degree of conceptual blurring, one example of which was the conflation of creativity with arts learning, and another equivocation over what counts as a process input and what counts as an outcome. Thus, on this last point, student leadership is said to contribute to wellbeing, but a sense of safety and security, which are characteristics of subjective wellbeing, is also seen as contributing to student leadership (Thomson et al, *CVP Report*, Creative Partnerships). The archive enables Thomson et al to draw some cautious conclusions, which seem to match those of many other studies and reviews:

> *There is some research evidence in the archive for CP [Creative Partnerships] supporting modest gains in learning within formal school curriculum areas, as measured by tests and exams. There is stronger evidence for it encouraging enjoyment and engagement in school: this evidence ranges from improvements in attendance to increased motivation. Our analysis of the publicly available research in the CP archive suggests that overall the programme did produce considerable benefits for young people in the areas of wellbeing, citizenship and work-related skills and habits. (Thomson et al CVP Report, Creative Partnerships, p.4).*

The notion of 'transfer', with learning in one context assisting learning in another, has also caused some concern. It has become customary to consider what the arts might do for other domains of learning by way of transferable skills and knowledge; to ask for example whether music improves mathematical learning, more than looking at the specific learning affordances of the arts. As well as concerns over what might be seen as the instrumentalisation of arts learning, such analyses raise questions about the hierarchy of disciplines and learning outcomes. It would, after all, be considered unusual to investigate the effects of mathematical learning on musical abilities, though one has to ask why the rarity of that reversal should be the case. In any case, it may be more appropriate to see the importance of participation in the arts, and arts education, as less about a simple set of generic or transferable skills, and more as contributing to the habits of mind that provide a platform needed for all learning, such as following curiosities and possibilities, having a willingness to practice repeatedly, not taking things for granted, and developing a strong inner critic.[57]

The landmark REAP study found some precise academic and cognitive benefits associated with arts training, for example through classroom drama improving a variety of verbal skills, and dance improving visual-spatial skills. The meta-analytic review nonetheless concluded that, in most of the cases they looked at, it was not possible to demonstrate that academic achievement improves when students are exposed to the arts (Winner & Hetland, 2001). These findings have since been confirmed by many other studies and meta-reviews. A systematic review based on the DCMS Culture and Sport Evidence (CASE) database concluded that participation in structured arts activities improves academic attainment in secondary school-aged students by between one per cent and two per cent, on average, above that of non-participants, all other things being equal (DCMS, 2010). The review is careful to identify the methodological difficulties it encountered, but these findings are echoed by other meta-reviews. The Education Endowment Foundation's conclusion was that: 'overall, the impact of arts participation on academic learning appears to be positive but low. Improved outcomes have been identified in English, mathematics and science learning' (Education Endowment Foundation, 2015). A more recent CASE overview of studies in this area did conclude that there was some evidence of an impact on attainment, but observed that mediation through wider cognitive, social and skills benefits might well be the source of this, and the actual mechanisms were not known (Taylor et al, 2013). The Creative Partnerships archive, insofar as it allows for general conclusions

[57] On this point we are grateful to Pat Thomson for sharing with us thinking arising from her current research with Tate

Much stronger evidence can be found for the positive effects of arts participation on the processes involved in learning, remembering and problem-solving, and the formation of transferable skills such as communication skills and social competency skills, than in the narrower area of formal attainment in standardised tests.

to be reached, confirmed modest gains in learning as shown by formal tests in formal curriculum areas.

The same quotation from the Thomson et al review nonetheless went on to highlight far more significant gains in cognitive and behavioural areas other than formal attainment, and this seems to be confirmed by more systematic studies. The systematic review, drawing on the CASE database, concluded that 'participation of young people in such 'structured arts' activities could increase their cognitive abilities test scores by 16% and 19%, on average, above that of non-participants (all other things being equal)', while the increase in transferable skills test scores was by 10% and 17%' (DCMS, 2010, p.29). These are strong examples of how much stronger evidence can be found for the positive effects of arts participation on the processes involved in learning, remembering and problem-solving, and the formation of transferable skills such as communication skills and social competency skills, than in the narrower area of formal attainment in standardised tests. These significant findings should be emphasised, rather than being treated as less important than (at best modest) increases in attainment levels, even if the policy discourse at any one time might be thought to favour the latter.

**Arts learning and disadvantaged young people**

There is some evidence that these effects are particularly positive for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, an area where arts learning has an established tradition (Fiske, 1999; Lewis, 2004). Not only is there evidence that self-discipline, concentration and motivation are helped, but there are some signs that benefits may stretch to academic outcomes. Catterall at al find, again for the US, that:

> *'Teenagers and young adults of low socioeconomic status (SES) who have a history of in-depth arts involvement show better academic outcomes than do low-SES youth who have less arts involvement. They earn better grades and demonstrate higher rates of college enrollment and attainment.' (Catterall et al, 2012, p.12).*

The benefits of arts learning for those from disadvantaged backgrounds are even more pronounced when it comes to non-academic skills and cognitive abilities. The Dana Consortium's three-year set of studies by leading US cognitive neuroscientists started with a fundamental question: 'are smart people drawn to the arts or does arts training make people smarter?', and it was concerned with potential impacts on the ability of the brain to learn in other cognitive domains. One strand of the work with young people from low socio-economic status backgrounds asked whether the arts strengthened abilities to focus attention, with benefits for learning. Pre-school children in four groups of special Head Start classes comprised the study: there were those who received various types of music training, those who received training in how to focus their attention, those who received regular Head Start instruction in smaller size classes, and a fourth group who received normal Head Start instruction in regular-size classes. Each of the first three groups showed strong and significant improvement in cognitive test scores (non-verbal IQ, numeracy and spatial recognition), and it was assumed that the ability to focus attention was the underlying factor, with the first group having the additional pleasure of the music training that produced that result (Dana Consortium, 2008; also Clawson & Coolbaugh, 2001). This kind of study helps distinguish the different elements at play in arts learning interventions.

The National Endowment for the Arts outlined some of the key research in a report that emerged from a conference with the US Department of Health and Human Services, and, while careful not to overstate the claims for the benefits of arts in education, highlighted strong connections with respect to confidence, student behaviour and pro-social attitudes, especially among socially disadvantaged young people (National Endowment for the Arts, 2011). The causal relationship that brought about the variety of cognitive and skill changes is much less well understood, in part because these cognitive abilities are complex and difficult to measure in standard ways.

> *Individual studies invoke terms such as 'theorizing' (developing theories to predict the consequences of actions); 'persistence and resilience' (the capacity to sustain focused attention and to surmount distractions, setbacks, or frustration), and 'respect for authentic achievement' to describe fundamental aspects of arts learning and art making. Terms such as these prompt us to explore the interrelationships between these abilities and attitudes as they are brought into play or produced in the context of arts learning and in other*

The benefits of arts learning for those from disadvantaged backgrounds are even more pronounced when it comes to non-academic skills and cognitive abilities.

> *academic, personal, and social contexts and situations. So the term 'theorizing' may comprise a 'constellation' of mental processes that are cultivated and strengthened by application in disparate contexts including the arts. (Deasy, 2002, p.iv).*

Context and confounding factors are therefore important; for example whether arts learning is undertaken as part of the curriculum or as an extra-curricular activity, and whether it takes place in school or not (Feldman & Matjasko, 2005; Martin et al, 2013).

In Harmony-Sistema England (IHSE) is an internationally high-profile example of a music intervention with young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, inspired by the Venezuela El Sistema programme – an approach that has been rolled-out in over 25 countries, in ways fitting the context and policy goals of each, but generally focused on overcoming social exclusion through classical music tuition and playing. The Raploch estate in Stirling saw the first European attempt to follow the El Sistema model. A project in West Everton, Liverpool has been subject to a longitudinal evaluation programme which, while acknowledging the difficulties of fairly small sample sizes in what is a small school, reports strong benefits, such as improved educational attainment, decreased school absenteeism, substantial involvement in after-school music tuition as well as the main provision within the curriculum, and increased pride and confidence within the community (Burns & Bewick, 2012; 2015). In their *CVP Research Development Award*, 'Understanding the cultural value of In Harmony-Sistema England', Rimmer and colleagues explored the value that primary school children, parents, teachers and musicians attached to the IHSE programme, in schools with a high proportion of disadvantaged pupils in Norwich, Telford and Newcastle. They concluded that:

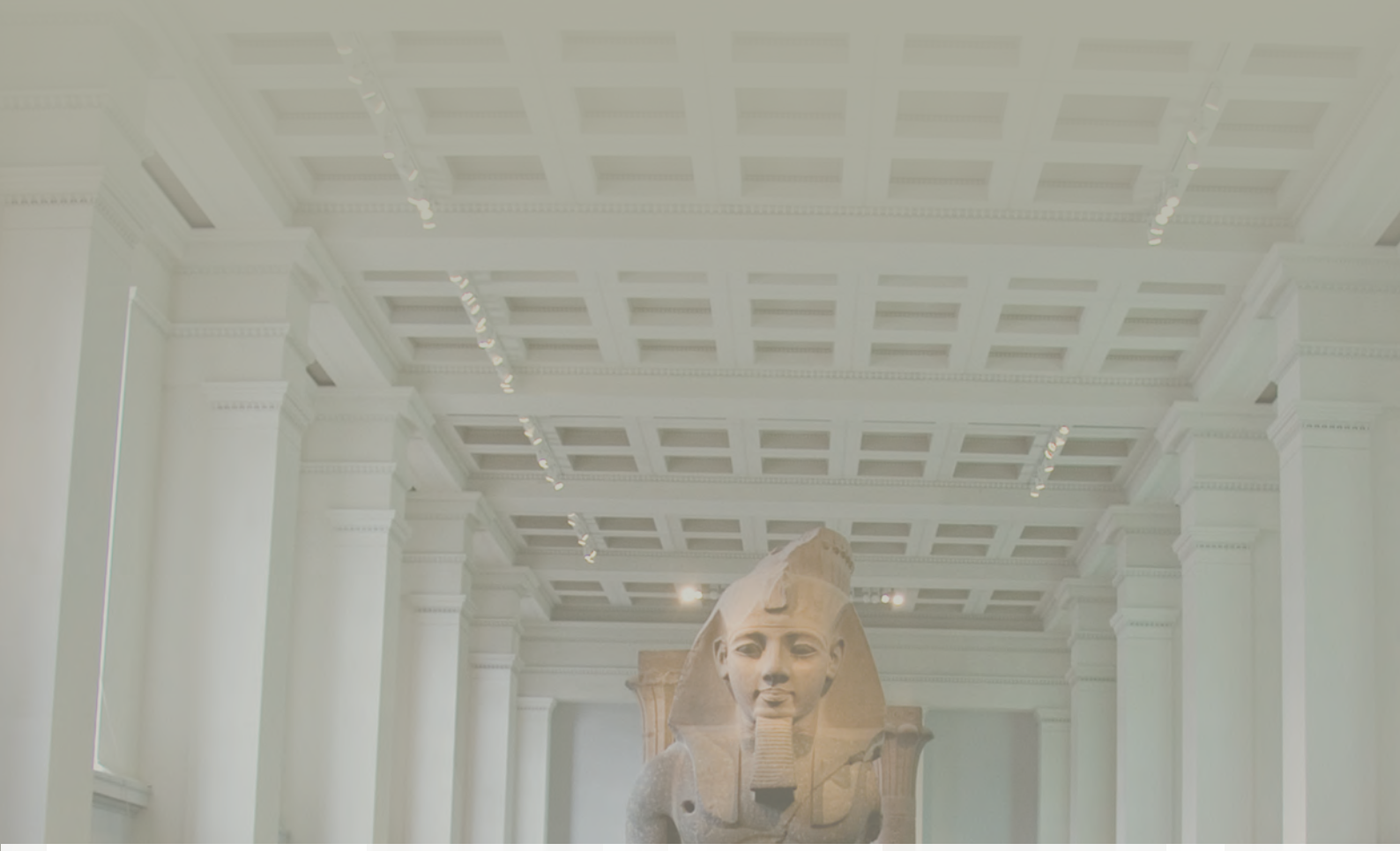
> *While children's responses to IHSE participation […] were varied in terms of the value attributed, underpinning them were a series of discernible trends which appeared to be principally informed by levels of parental support and validation for IHSE instrument learning from the home; [and] children's broader levels of school-commitment (IHSE was seen by many as akin to a school lesson). (Rimmer CVP Report, p.2).*

Context clearly matters, in this instance, in shaping how the value of arts participation is perceived by the young people themselves, although what constituted that context might have been different had IHSE worked with secondary school students.

A recent review looks specifically at the role of arts participation based in the different settings of school, home and community (Martin et al, 2013). Martin concludes that ecological models are essential to understand the effects of arts learning, underlining the benefits of applying ecological systems theory to education, that had been highlighted a decade ago (Feldman & Matjasko, 2005). It directs attention to the bi-directional processes by which the individual and contexts affect each other; where a child's surrounding environment interacts with and influences their development, but where the child influences their experience of these settings as well. If we are to speak of valid inferences and reliable effects with respect to the wider benefits of arts learning, we need a better understanding of the processes involved, as well as the contextual elements that might contribute to positive outcomes.

## KEY POINTS FROM CHAPTER

- The significance of arts education has been highlighted in a variety of reports voicing alarm as its apparent current decline in English secondary schools and the effects this might have on a number of outcomes, including academic attainment as well as wider benefits for learning and skills development. The Cultural Value Project decided to cover a field where there is already a considerable literature by drawing attention to important meta-reviews and other major evidence, as well as by funding research in certain quite precise areas.
- It has become customary to consider what the arts might do for other domains of learning by way of transferable skills and knowledge – to ask, for example, whether music improves mathematical learning. As well as concerns over what might be seen as the instrumentalisation of arts learning, this raises questions about the hierarchy of disciplines and learning outcomes. It would be considered unusual to investigate the effects of mathematical learning on musical abilities and one has to ask why the rarity of that reversal should be the case.
- It may anyway be more appropriate to see the importance of participation in the arts and arts education as less about a simple set of generic or transferable skills, and more as contributing to the habits of mind that provide a platform needed for all learning: habits such as following curiosities and possibilities, a willingness to practice repeatedly, not taking things for granted and developing a strong inner critic.
- The evidence for arts education leading to improvement in attainment on standardised tests is limited, and suggests small gains at best. The limitations of theory and methodology in this area make problematic simple claims about arts education or engagement 'improving' attainment. Nonetheless, the evidence is strong that there are gains from arts education in school for other fundamental requirements of a successful education, such as cultivating confidence, motivation and pro-social behaviours as well as cognitive abilities.
- Extensive systematic research indicates that there are more significant gains in cognitive and behavioural areas than in formal attainment – what might be seen as building the crucial platform for all learning and development, through positive effects on the processes involved in learning, remembering and problem-solving, and the formation of communication skills and social competency skills.



PART 3

# Methodologies



# CHAPTER 9

# METHODOLOGIES: EVIDENCE, DATA AND VARIETIES OF EVALUATION

## The life of methods and the politics of evidence

Research, evaluation and valuing are not the same activity, yet they seem to occupy much of the same terrain when we talk about arts and culture. Designing an academic research project into the effects of arts and culture, undertaking an evaluation of an arts programme, or putting in place a performance monitoring framework for a cultural organisation each takes place in concrete situations, and each is shaped by the specific perspectives and objectives arising from those situations.

In considering the different methodologies that are used, it is important to recognise that research and evaluation have different objectives. Research carried out in an academic setting aims at improving our understanding of how cultural value is constituted and captured, seeking to understand better the experiences or effects associated with arts and culture. Whether through precise case studies or large-scale data analysis, the findings of the research are intended to offer more general conclusions. Evaluations, on the other hand, are intended in most cases to assess against their objectives the effects and outcomes of phenomena such as an event, an organisation or national government spend. There are evaluations that arts organisations carry out for themselves, to capture the strengths and weaknesses of their activities with a view to making changes as appropriate, which might be formative evaluations to allow adjustments as a programme is being developed or summative evaluations after it is finished. The other kind of evaluation is carried out for third parties, whether it is required by funders or to influence policy. Although these conceptual distinctions need to be made, there will be significant overlap in the methods used for each.

Research into cultural value, as carried out for the Cultural Value Project and in the literature on which it draws, is not bound by the specific objectives of these kinds of evaluations, but that does not mean that it is free of constraints. The tools used to collect data are determined by the methodological framework of analysis, which is in turn connected to explicit and implicit assumptions made by the researcher about what constitutes knowledge and what theoretical frameworks should be used to analyse and make sense of data. One might, in very general terms, anticipate that a methodological framework rooted in positivist assumption will employ different methods from one embedded in a constructivist framework, with the former more likely to rely on standardised metrics and quantifiable units of analysis and the latter on qualitative and narrative approaches to meet its primary concern with meaning-making. The same necessarily applies to evaluation.

Two different evaluations of art-in-prisons initiatives, carried out within three years of each other, provide an insight into




**Below**: The Stories of Change project is investigating energy – past, present and future. The 'Future Works' strand investigates energy and manufacturing across the English Midlands, including at Portland Works, Sheffield, the location of these postboxes. Image: Julia Udall

## Research and evaluation have different objectives.

the varieties of approach: Miles and Strauss's evaluation of Dance United's intensive project with young offenders and young people at risk of offending, and the evaluation of arts in the criminal justice system undertaken by New Philanthropy Capital (Miles & Strauss, 2008; New Philanthropy Capital, 2011). The former used both qualitative and quantitative data from interviews, questionnaires, observation, focus group work and official records. Additionally, an embedded ethnographer documented and analysed the daily workings of the programme and the relationships formed by all participants. The New Philanthropy Capital evaluation offered a thorough assessment of three charities in terms of economic returns on investment, based on their records of costs and outcomes. Each was a high-quality evaluation that used credible methods and sought robust evidence, yet the character of the evidence and the methods they used were very different. What the evaluations sought to accomplish, how they were to be used and the audiences they were addressing were also very different. The New Philanthropy Capital report was devised to fit the methods of cost-benefit analysis applied by the Treasury when making spending decisions, methods that were considered for the cultural sector in O'Brien's influential AHRC/DCMS report (O'Brien, 2010). Miles and Strauss argue that the approach favoured by the Treasury would not be sufficient to show the complexity of changes registered in the programme. They presented their mixed-method 'realist' evaluation model as an approach that was 'both sensitive to context and explanatorily powerful.' (p.9). An important difference emerges clearly from these distinct paths: the quantitative must simplify to achieve the standardisation needed to achieve the required comparability, while qualitative methods thrive on meaning and content but can find comparability more difficult.

Equally striking illustrations exist of what can be gained and lost when selecting approaches in research. Hutter and Shusterman in the same article narrate two parallel ways of accounting for artistic value, one derived from economics and the other from aesthetics. They stress that while the valuation processes of aesthetic philosophy and economics remain logically distinct, with their own histories, theories and techniques, they are in real life interdependent (Hutter & Shusterman, 2006). Far more commonly, however, disciplinary outlooks and paradigms co-exist without interacting, yielding only 'parallel' accounts of cultural value.

Research and evaluation come in many different shapes and sizes, because the very practice of each is situated in its own circumstances. The notion that methodologies in these areas are universally applicable has come in for criticism (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) and the sociology of evaluation and valuation have helped us understand the complexity of these situations (Lamont, 2012; Berthoin Antal et al, 2015). Measurement, evaluative approaches and values need to be disentangled (Adkins & Lury, 2011; Law et al, 2011; Savage, 2013). Policy agendas, institutional pressures, the limitations of disciplines and historical path dependencies are amongst many factors at work. Hierarchies of what constitutes rigour and credibility are part of this mix, opening up the possibility that there might be 'more than one version of disciplined, rigorous inquiry' (Denzin, 2009, p.152). As science itself struggles with the challenge of reproducibility, with some science disciplines arguing that this is not surprising when complex variables are at play, the neatness of hierarchies of causality, rigour and evidence are called into question.[58] The range of methodologies used in the awards made by the Cultural Value Project, and in the wider literature on which we and the project's critical reviews have drawn, are a contribution to this unfolding debate.

The term 'the social life of method' has been coined to explain the need to understand some of the determinants of the methodologies that are chosen. The term has two meanings. The first is that methods are 'tools that tend to reflect the concerns of those who advocate them, and that they subsist in particular ecologies.' There is, however, also 'the social life of method, version two: the idea that methods are in turn implicated in the social world. They are thus also of the social in that they constitute and organise it', as when a change to a questionnaire used in the Canadian census led to the rapid 'emergence' of a new ethnic identity (Law et al, 2011, pp.8 & 10). Two conclusions follow. The first is that this chapter on methodologies cannot be read as separate from those on the components of cultural value, because evidence and methods are entwined. The second is that, because methodologies are not applicable abstractions to be followed like a recipe, this report cannot offer a toolkit for cultural value. We nonetheless

[58] See Professor Ottoline Leyser's comments on biology, in Paul Jump, 'Reproducing results: how big is the problem?', *https://www.timeshighereducation.com/features/reproducing-results-how-big-is-the-problem*

Qualitative research is far more suited to certain research purposes, in the same way that quantitative research is better suited to others.

hope that many of the methodologies and tools identified here will be ones that those interested in evaluation and in value might want to explore further.

**Hierarchies of evidence?**

The Culture and Sport Evidence (CASE) programme, led by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, recently observed that evidence varies in quality, and set out a hierarchy of evidence according to what was seen as its reliability and effectiveness. Ten methodologies were ranked, with systematic reviews/meta analyses and randomised controlled trials (RCTs) in the top two positions, followed by cohort studies and time-series studies, passing by case studies and cross-sectional studies amongst others, before reaching narrative reviews and expert opinions at the bottom (Taylor, 2015, p.16). The ordering and positioning of each methodology is less relevant for our purposes than the fact that such a hierarchy was drawn up and regarded as broadly applicable, with the criteria for such a hierarchy assumed to be agreed.[59] Such rankings are common. The Maryland Scientific Methods Scale, for example, which was drawn up to assess the evidence base in crime prevention, has a five-point scale with RCTs at the top and qualitative methods as the bottom (Sherman et al, 1997). Kelly, in her *CVP Critical Review* 'Reviewing art therapy research: a constructive critique' follows a similar hierarchy, though she acknowledges the implications of deciding only to review quantitative studies.

Good-quality research is thus assumed to be that which adheres to the standards set by the defining characteristics of controlled experimental studies. That is to say, external validity (the degree to which findings can be generalised across different settings); external reliability (whether the results of the study are repeatable); internal reliability (defined as inter-observer consistency), and internal validity (a match between theory and observed reality, or congruence between concepts and observation) (Bryman, 2004). This creates problems for qualitative research, which often aspires to capture contextual specificity rather than to satisfy the conditions of reproducibility or certain forms of generalisability. Qualitative research does not necessarily eschew generalisation, but it uses it in ways that are not necessarily recognised as such within controlled experimental studies.

Qualitative and quantitative approaches may be seen as differently distributed on a spectrum between breadth and depth. 'At one extreme, this may mean an approach that emphasizes arriving at conclusions valid across a range of empirical situations (breadth). At the other extreme, it means an approach that seeks to account for the complexity of human behaviour in specific situations or cases (depth).' (Power & Gendron, 2015, p.153). The subject-dependent and context-bound nature of much qualitative evidence means that it cannot be satisfactorily fitted into the conventional scales referred to above. They would, for example, require that social situations and contexts be frozen, and would find it hard to accept case studies or in-depth analyses of small samples (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Bryman, 2004). One proposal for establishing standards for qualitative research includes 'trustworthiness' as one of its criteria. This is broken down into four components: credibility (confidence in the 'truth' of the findings); confirmability (elimination of the researcher's bias); dependability (consistency of the findings), and transferability (applicability in other contexts) (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Being able to make generalisations from qualitative evidence would seem to be a requirement for analysing the value of culture, but the character of these generalisations must derive from the specific characteristics of qualitative research.

It has been proposed that qualitative research can generalise by extrapolating from a particular context, and by virtue of 'abductive reasoning whereby the researcher argues from an instance or case to the circumstances or hypothesis that might explain it, rather than drawing a general conclusion from many instances (induction).' (Power & Gendron, 2015, p.158). Simons proposes conditions that make arguing from single, context-bound cases acceptable, by focusing on two essential elements of case studies – context and particularity:

> *Making inferences from cases with a qualitative data set arise more from a process of interpretation in context, appealing to tacit and situated understanding for acceptance of their validity […]. Such inferences are possible where the context and experience of the case is richly described with sufficient detail of time, place and person for the reader to recognize and connect with the events and experiences portrayed. Generalizations then are not abstractions, independent of place and context, but depend for their meaning on*

[59] They do note, however, that 'a well conducted, extensive,cross-sectional study may provide more convincing evidence than a poor RCT.' (p.16)

Contextual sensitivity [...] invites neither relativism nor any lessening of the rigour of good research practice and outcomes.

Capturing what happens in cultural experiences is not an easy task.

> *maintaining a connectedness with the particulars of the concrete case in context. (Simons, 2015, p.178).*

Qualitative research need not be less rigorous than the quantitative, experimental studies that are automatically placed at the top of the hierarchy, but they operate with different criteria of rigour. Qualitative research is far more suited to certain research purposes, in the same way that quantitative research is better suited to others. The issue is the character of the knowledge and understanding that is being sought, because each will have its own benefits and drawbacks.

Over the last 60 years, the Randomised Controlled Trial has gone from being the established method for testing pharmaceutical interventions, in which variables must and can be tightly controlled, to being proposed as the necessary method for testing all public policy interventions (Haynes et al, 2012), to being treated as the gold standard for evidence more generally. Qualitative research has come to be seen as second-best, because a specific scientific model of research has been reinforced by the development in recent decades of a culture of audit, and targets requiring quantitative performance indicators. Various arguments have been developed to explain the prioritisation of numbers, including the emergence of the modern rational and administrative state and its need for common comparable forms of measurement (Habermas, 1987; Desrosières, 1998). The key issue is that the hierarchies of evidence reflect historically contingent circumstances and agendas.

Power and Gendron underline this point from within accounting and auditing:

> *Reality is too complex, unstable, and contradictory, and human thought is too fertile and productive […] to constrain the selection of research methods and orientations through which we choose to approach phenomena like auditing. Alternative viewpoints do not need to compete against one another in the search for better understandings, but can generate complementarities where each new angle generates an incremental increase in our knowledge. Is auditing an act of cognition? Is it the act of a contracted agent subject to incentives? Is it a practice through which the identity of professionals is formed? Is it a policing activity that deters earnings management? Is it even a widely diffused model of governance and control with society-wide effects […]? It can be seen as all of these things and more, and a certain methodological pluralism is therefore warranted. (Power & Gendron, 2015 p.148).*

Approaches concerned with how the world is experienced, in specific situations by specific people at specific times, seems an essential element in most approaches to the value of arts and culture. It is important to stress, as those have done who have been grappling with this challenge since Matarasso raised it two decades ago (Matarasso, 1996), that contextual sensitivity of this kind invites neither relativism nor any lessening of the rigour of good research practice and outcomes.

As one of us has argued (Kaszynska, 2015), in a special edition of *Cultural Trends* devoted to developing empirical approaches to cultural value, and which drew its articles from work funded by the Cultural Value project, capturing what happens in cultural experiences is not an easy task. Sophisticated ethnographic, anthropological and sociological techniques are needed and sociological work is now emerging which uses a range of empirical methods to explore these experiences (e.g. Born, 2005; DeNora, 2000). A good deal of work has developed techniques for describing one's subjective experience in the second person (Petitmengin, 2006), arts-based methods to interrogate cultural experience (Reason, 2010), and ethnographic approaches to interrogate sensory registers and the somatic dimension of cultural experiences (Paterson, 2009; Pink, 2009). The Cultural Value Project has from the outset sought to help broaden approaches beyond the prevailing framework for exploring the value of arts and culture. The funding calls emphasised the fact that the key issue in research design, alongside rigour, was appropriateness for purpose and for the character of the subject being explored.

**Qualitative data and the Cultural Value Project**

The important place that the Cultural Value Project attached to the actual experience of art and culture in its objectives means that many of the funded projects employed rich qualitative data, harvested using a range of methods and analytical approaches. A handful of examples must suffice, although other awards might equally have been cited. Ethnographies, where the researcher studies a cultural group in its own setting to understand its meaning-making practices, can be found in Winter et al's *CVP Research*

The methodological approaches that emerge from the awards, alongside other research drawn on for this report, will play their role in shifting the debate onto new territory.

*Development Award* 'A Somatic Ethnography of Grand Gestures Elders Dance Group'. Elements of grounded theory, where attempts are made to derive a general theory of a process grounded in oral or written expression, emerging from participants and activities, figure in Reynolds et al's *CVP Research Development Award* 'The Story of Lidice and Stoke-on-Trent: towards deeper understandings of the role of arts and culture'. Case studies, in which the researcher explores in depth a specific event, activity or process underpins Rees Leahy's *CVP Research Development Award* 'Learning from the Past: cultural value, then and now, in principle and in practice'. Phenomenological research, focused on understanding 'lived experiences' as apprehended by participants, can be seen in Froggett's *CVP Research Development Award* 'Public Art and Local Civic Engagement'. And, as a final example of methodology, narrative inquiry explores the various ways in which the 'self' is created in and through narrative, and is a key part of a multi-disciplinary research framework in Eades' *CVP Research Development Award* 'Bloomsbury Festival in a Box: engaging socially isolated people with dementia'.

The importance of ethical research standards and, where needed, the norms guiding action research may be seen for example in Ashley's *CVP Research Development Award* 'Memorialisation as valuation: examining public culture at the Chattri Sikh Memorial, Brighton' and Bernard's *CVP Research Development Award* 'Ages and Stages: the cultural value of older people's experiences of theatre making'. These are examples of awards which recognise the need to capture the experiences of the participants, expressed in their own words, as one key element in the research process where appropriate to the subject.

While more awards use qualitative methods, many combine these with quantitative approaches, while some focus primarily on the latter. Important work testing and developing econometric approaches to establishing value was carried out in Bakhshi, Fujiwara et al's *CVP Research Development Award* 'Measuring value in cultural institutions' and Fillis et al's *CVP Research Development Award* 'Measuring the value of the RSA New Contemporaries Exhibition as a Platform for Emerging Artists'. Quasi-experimental methods are used by Clarke et al as part of their *CVP Research Development Award* 'Music, empathy, and cultural understanding'. Although innovation can be found across a number of these awards, including the model for capturing cultural value proposed in Gillespie's *CVP Research Development Award* 'Understanding the changing cultural value of the BBC World Service and British Council', many necessarily work within established methodologies that include literature reviews, interview coding, participant observation and so on. It must be acknowledged that methodological innovation is limited, in spite of its being encouraged in research proposals. It could be an indication of a reluctance of researchers in this field to engage with new methodologies, but might also reflect what can be achieved given the modest size of awards.

We are nonetheless confident that the methodological approaches that emerge from the awards, alongside other research drawn on for this report, will play their role in shifting the debate onto new territory. The need for this is underlined by the theoretical reflections on methods and models of value in Cultural Value Project awards which question some inherited approaches. Hoskins' *CVP Research Development Award* 'Locating value: assigning significance in the historical built environment, a trans-Atlantic review' and Cotterrell's *CVP Research Development Award* 'Squaring the Circle: examining cultural value through a re-evaluation of Arts Lab', and more theoretically Taylor's *CVP Critical Review* 'Cultural Value: a perspective from cultural economy' or Ladkin's *CVP Critical Review* 'Against value in the arts', from their distinctive perspectives, reinforced the context-dependent character of valuing. Although some of the methodological and technical pieces of the puzzle might still be missing, we hope that the Cultural Value Project has played a role in advancing our thinking about how one might not only understand but also capture cultural value.

## Types of evidence, approaches to evaluation and kinds of framework

In this section we move forward to consider the different types of evidence and data (we organise it into quantitative, qualitative, mixed and non-verbal) which are used as evidence for testing hypotheses or claims relating to cultural value, as well as the evaluation models and frameworks within which they are deployed.

**Types of evidence and data sets**

Well-established large data sets on cultural engagement exist at the international level, as do broader data sets based on relevant questions that make them suitable for data mining. The UK was a relative latecomer when it launched the Taking Part survey in 2005: the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in the US has worked with the US Census Bureau since 1982 to measure adults' arts participation rates. Its Survey of Public Participation in the Arts is a rich data set which allows for fairly sophisticated analysis. Thus it was that in 2008 it registered (for the first time since the survey began) the fact that overall attendance rates had declined across most art forms; this was the first decline amongst adults over the age of 45, typically the stronghold for arts participation. The NEA response was to commission researchers to explore the data in more depth, and the results were striking. First, too much was being made of arts attendance and demographic change, because the generational cohort differences accounted for less than one per cent of the variances in participation since the surveys began. Second, participation in arts lessons and classes when a child was the most significant predictor of arts participation in later life, even after controlling for income and other variables. Third, too much attention was being given to attendance alone, when participation was 'multi-modal.' Looking at the picture across three modes – arts creation or performance, arts engagement through electronic media, and attendance at a broader array of activities – gave a different story to that of decline. The same proportion of adults – 26 per cent – participated in all three modes as in none (Novak-Leonard & Brown, 2011). The lesson is clear: large surveys might be at their most valuable when, instead of simply charting high-level trends, those trends provoke new questions and more detailed research.

Since 2005, the Department for Culture, Media & Sport in England has led an annual Taking Part survey of engagement with arts, sports and heritage activities. In 2012/13 a longitudinal component was included, in which the same sub-set of individuals is interviewed, to provide data on change over time at the individual level as well as pathways in and out of participation (though it will be some time before the benefits of longitudinal research for any relationship of participation to other variables become apparent). When Miles and Sullivan used the Taking Part dataset to explore how expressions of taste relate to the value that individuals place on engaging in cultural activities, they argued that the survey variables were limited because they were 'selected for the purpose of assessing performance against government targets, rather than for social research purposes' (Miles & Sullivan, 2010, p.5). Notwithstanding these limitations, others have argued that, with its longitudinal component in particular, Taking Part has real potential for tracing the impact of arts engagement on health and wellbeing in ways that are difficult with cross-sectional studies alone (Gordon-Nesbitt, *CVP Report*; Fujiwara, 2014). The data gathered in the Taking Part survey needs some adjustment, better to capture informal everyday participation, as well as new areas of cultural activity, such as video games and digital engagement beyond mere use of cultural websites. The main challenge, however, is to get more searching analysis of the Taking Part data that recognises the complexities of what defines and shapes participation, and to develop longer-term understandings to inform policy, not only in terms of culture but in relation to other government departments as well.

Understanding Scotland's Creativity, the Eurobarometer surveys for the 27 Member States of the European Union, and reports on Australia and Canada, are examples of participation surveys in other countries. Differences in data categories and presentation make comparison difficult, not only between countries but over time in a single country. This has been strikingly shown for Denmark, where seven surveys undertaken since 1964 were shaped by the changing relationship between state and citizens in Danish society. The early surveys' focused on how citizens spent their leisure time when working hours were falling, and used a broad conception of culture, whereas later surveys saw culture more narrowly and treated the citizen as a customer, with the survey concerned above all with use of state-subsidised activities and attitudes to the Ministry of Culture's expenditure. The data that emerges and the conceptualisation of users and non-users consequently changes over time (Balling & Kann-Christensen, 2013). Novak-Leonard and Brown's concept of 'multi-modal participation', and that of the Understanding Everyday Participation project referred-to in an earlier chapter, similarly acknowledge that many surveys take too little account of the complexity of what constitutes participation.

In order to consider some of the wider issues involved in arts participation surveys, the Cultural Value Project collaborated with the National Endowment for the Arts to organise an international symposium on 'Measuring cultural engagement amid confounding variables: a reality check', which took place in Washington DC in the summer of 2014. The presentations and discussions at the symposium are captured in its report (*Measuring Cultural Engagement,* 2014) and explored a wide range of challenges that face those trying to capture large-scale data on how people engage with arts and culture: the imperatives, political and social, behind measuring cultural participation; questions around what is meant by participation in an increasingly complex cultural landscape; the challenge of encompassing new media and digital participation; alternative sources of data, including data extracted from digital activity, and alternative units of analysis, and finally, how one thinks about motivations and barriers with respect to the different kinds of participation identified. The plethora of new organic data generated by the digital traces of individual activities seemed to some to herald a new world, in which surveys were no longer needed, but many were cautious about such a future. The ethical implications of harvesting and analysing such data partly explains this hesitation, but there was also a sense that if acceptable organic data were to be available on a continuing basis, census-style surveys would still be needed to contextualise it.

In their major report on the value of 'big data' for the cultural sector, which was presented at the symposium, Lilley and Moore point out that, although it is characterised by enormous volume and variety, what really matters about big data is how it is used. The availability of data of this scale and granularity should in principle be a gold mine for analysis, but the potential of these sources remains relatively underexplored, not least for significant methodological and technical reasons. The limited character of data collection systems at most cultural institutions is a further constraint. The cultural sector, argue Lilley and Moore, needs to see data as an asset rather than as a tool of accountability, and, recognising that there is a long journey to travel, they call for development projects to establish the methodologies needed (Lilley & Moore, 2013).

In that context, the Arts Data Impact Project,[60] supported by the Digital R&D Fund for the Arts, seems both promising and urgent. Under the project, the first ever data scientist in residence for the arts was to work at the Barbican, English National Opera and National Theatre, to interrogate their ever-growing data resources, with a view to developing data-driven techniques and a toolkit of data visualisation and data storytelling approaches. As the Audience Agency, one of the project's partners, explained 'it's easy to talk big data, but much harder to put it into practice. Just dealing with all this data demands more computational capacity, more complex analyses and, most importantly, a way to find meaning in it.'[61]

The challenge will be to translate the learning into settings where it might enable big data to inform wider agendas concerned with evaluation and value, and this probably requires a significant change for institutions that are used to the analogue world. As Walsh shows in her *CVP Research Development Award* on 'Modelling cultural value within new media cultures and networked participation', the embrace of the digital revolution by the cultural sector itself at times seems skin-deep.'Museums predominantly understand and employ the digital as a tool and continue to adopt the analogue broadcast model of one-to-many transmission based on traditional models of institutional cultural authority and disciplinary expertise.' (Walsh *CVP Report*, p.2). The fact that the Arts Data Impact Project will fund digital ethnographers, in seeking to understand the cultural change issues that arise from increased use of data, could help progress in these areas. As Lilley told the symposium, the analytical tools available are not designed for cultural data, which means that they are not yet useful for answering questions around cultural value and cultural policy, but his report offers longer-term hope that the better generation and use of data by cultural organisations will lead to its availability for discussions about these questions (Lilley & Moore, 2013).

### Qualitative, quantitative and non-verbal data

Research and evaluation based on quantitative, qualitative and, to a lesser extent, non-verbal data have appeared throughout earlier chapters, and we shall address them further in this

[60] *www.nesta.org.uk/news/digital-rd-fund-arts-answer-big-questions-about-big-data#sthash.chVczf22.dpuf*

[61] *https://artsdataimpact.wordpress.com*

chapter on methodologies, which means that the distinctions need no more than highlighting here.

Quantitative data involves collecting and analysing data in numeric form, and has been widely used to demonstrate the effects of arts participation and cultural engagement, and the impact of the cultural sector and cultural industries more broadly. Quantitative techniques are commonly used in experimental and quasi-experimental research designs, but in our field that are widely deployed in non-experimental approaches such as surveys, economic impact studies, economic valuations, the analysis of statistical databases such as Taking Part, biometric and physiological indicators for health, systematic reviews such as those carried out within the Cochrane framework, cultural assets in communities as captured by the Social Impact of the Arts Project, and much else. Quantitative data is frequently derived from the aggregation of qualitative, individual judgments, especially from surveys and observation, which blurs the distinction between types of data, as opposed to that between types of analysis.

Qualitative data is diverse in origin, character and analytical approaches, and is characterised by empirical sources such as we have already encountered, including individual and aggregated case studies, stories and other accounts of personal experience, interviews, focus group discussions, and researcher observation within ethnographic and other frameworks.

As we have already observed, although many Cultural Value Project research development awards used a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods, and some primarily used arts-based or quantitative methods alone, qualitative research is considerably the most common in the work undertaken. The hybrid quantitative-qualitative approach may well have emerged from the recognition not only that the two blur at the margins, but that all methods have their limitations as well as their advantages. There has been some academic discussion about the problems in combining the two (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Rapport et al, 2005), but the hybrid model has been taken up widely in the cultural sector. Prominent examples are the UK Film Council's major report that brought together literature review, interviews, case studies and statistical data and analysis (Narval Media et al, 2009), and the Understanding Everyday Participation project, which combines historical analysis (an element often neglected in research and evaluation), survey data, qualitative research involving texts and interviews, and the substantial fieldwork regarded as a core aspect of the project.[62]

A wide variety of non-verbal sources that we might call visual, haptic and audial data has gained prominence in recent years, following the 'sensory turn' across disciplines, and the appreciation that the senses are interconnected and that experiences, and indeed knowledge, are multi-sensory. This has required new forms of evidence that reflect the importance of the non-verbal, sensory and tacit. This poses considerable challenges, as we shall see; these are less to do with ascertaining that this kind of appreciation exists, and more about capturing and articulating it as evidence. We shall return to the important distinction between the use of such non-verbal approaches for eliciting verbal responses, and their use to obtain and articulate meanings and value in non-verbal ways.

**Approaches to evaluation**

Emerging trends in evaluation of cultural activities and experiences reflect the appreciation that evaluation models are dynamic and must be more sensitive to what they evaluate, as well as more forward-looking (e.g. Power & Gendron, 2015). The increasing interest in participatory evaluation, in which all those involved in the project under scrutiny are actively involved in the process, adds a further dimension. The idea of consultative and participatory evaluation can be linked to the public value paradigm in public management introduced in the mid-1990s (Moore, 1995), an approach trialed by key cultural organisations in the UK, including Arts Council England (Bunting, 2007), the Heritage Lottery Fund (Holden & Hewison, 2004) and the BBC (Collins, 2007). Although criticised in some quarters as a defensive tactic for publicly-funded institutions, and a rhetorical device to create an impression of more inclusive and consensual decision-making to win public legitimacy (Alford & O'Flynn 2009; O'Brien, 2013), the idea of involving different communities in a more participatory evaluation practice has more recently been getting a second hearing in relation to cultural value. The Balanced Scorecard approach and the Manchester Metrics Pilot are examples of this, as we shall see.

[62] *www.everydayparticipation.org/about*

The different interested parties do, of course, have conflicting motives, as the King's Fund observed in its report on complex health interventions. They noted the different needs of civil servants, ministers, researchers and practitioners:

> *These conflicting interests set up a range of tensions, for example: between the need to address complex interventions in community settings and the need for clear research findings; between the desire of politicians to get positive results quickly and the requirements of robust, impartial evaluation; between monitoring local practice and supporting it; and between measuring impact and action-based learning. (Coote et al, 2004).*

The need to move evaluation from the narrow imperatives of target-setting and accountability, with which it is coloured for many in the cultural sector, emerged in Rooke's *CVP Expert Workshop* on 'Curating Community? The relational and agonistic value of participatory arts in super diverse localities'. The workshop saw people working in a variety of participatory arts settings pondering what an alternative to traditional approaches to evaluation might look like. Internal evaluation was seen as one of the options:

> *Whilst evaluation provides a coherent account of a project, which is beneficial to funders and commissioners, it was felt that those who participate in a project should benefit from the opportunity to learn and reflect. In contrast to external evaluation's focus on developing 'good practice' and evidencing success, internal, processual evaluation is often concerned with making sense of unintended outcomes, the things that didn't happen and lessons learnt. Internal process evaluation lends itself well to developing an understanding of the 'community impact' of participatory arts, which allows for the relational significance of participation for individuals and the 'communities' that are curated in these processes. (Rooke CVP Report, Curating community, p.2).*

The notion that external evaluation always ends up 'evidencing success' may be overstated (see for example the evaluation by Barnardos for the Art in Regeneration project in south-east London discussed in an earlier chapter, Ludvigsen & Scott, 2005b), but it is a problem felt by many cultural practitioners. Clarification of the objectives of evaluations might help. Summative evaluation at the end need not in itself be limiting, providing the objectives for a project or programme are effectively defined and the evaluation approach chosen to effectively assess the extent to which those objectives have been met. Formative and participatory evaluation, on the other hand, has been less well developed, primarily because they are rarely required by funders, who are seen as the principal drivers of evaluation. Nor has the cultural sector itself generally grasped the potential of wider approaches to evaluation, though initiatives such as the Arts Impact Assessment programme did see the sector exploring new approaches, which could be valuable to practitioners themselves if embedded in the organisation's culture, as well as to funders and policy makers.[63]

An initiative to develop 'a different set of evaluative vocabularies, which would attend more to the distinctive nature of arts practices and concentrate on processes instead of outcomes' asked how community theatre understood and evaluated its work (Thomson, P. et al, 2013, p.2). The project revealed the frustrations that community theatre practitioners felt, not so much with being required to evaluate and report on their work, but the short-term and what they saw as instrumental character of the reporting that was expected. They wanted rather to emphasise the often ambiguous outcomes and the longer-term character of change, and to focus on artistic outcomes that they felt to be excluded from existing formal evaluations. 'We were seeking to move perceptions away from evaluation as something to get through and as a means to an end, and towards evaluation as a learning and development opportunity.' (p.15). Formative evaluation needed to address challenging issues in the process that were rarely captured in summative evaluation, a conclusion bound-up with the findings that the most effective learning took place when emotion and participation were present, and that anxiety, fear and irritation could be a necessary part of the experience of developing a performance. They also concluded that the involvement of experienced researchers, through relationships with local universities, might be necessary.

Evaluation needs to capture the audience experience in ways that go beyond the simple test of enjoyment. We shall turn shortly to the Manchester Metrics Pilot, which is one attempt

[63] The Arts Impact Assessment project ran through 2013, and its outputs can be found at w*ww.arts-impact-measurement.co.uk/#*

to do so. Another saw the Independent Theatre Council, the Society of London Theatre and the Theatrical Management Association jointly commission the New Economics Foundation to prepare a practical manual to conducting post-show surveys for internal evaluation. This provided the tools to evaluate performance against a set of indicators derived from a survey of theatregoers and interviews with theatre professionals. Evaluating the experience was one part of the toolkit, and it was carried out in relation to five themes: engagement and concentration, learning and challenge, energy and tension, shared experience and atmosphere, personal resonance and emotional connection. Here, as with the Brown and Novak-Leonard intrinsic impact indicators (Brown & Novak-Leonard, 2007; Brown & Novak-Leonard, 2013), is a framework built around a set of multi-dimensional indicators, a necessary development in evaluation practice.

The museum sector has been particularly active in evaluation initiatives. In a *CVP Critical Review* on 'User value of museums and galleries: a critical view of the literature', Dodds et al examine the approaches proposed and the contexts from which they emerged. Generic frameworks, such as Generic Learning Outcomes, Generic Social Outcomes and now Generic Wellbeing Outcomes, are ambitious attempts to provide a sector-wide structure of evaluation. They conclude that the initiatives have been criticised for being primarily directed at unlocking funding, and they have been embraced with varied degrees of enthusiasm. The Happy Museum Project has been more widely welcomed; one of its objectives is to develop an evaluation model based on the Life Satisfaction Valuation methodology developed by Fujiwara, which we consider later in this chapter. It rests on a Story or Theory of Change methodology which, the authors argue:

> *strongly supports two of our purposes: it is designed to identify causality; but is also used to build empowerment. It is simple, but remarkably effective. We start by identifying a vision together – a fundamental enabler in any change programme – in this case, along the lines of reimagining museums for a sustainable future. We then work backward to plan what difference we want to make and therefore what we need to do. Finally we plan our investments, both costs and good practice commitments. (Fujiwara & Barnett, 2013, p.69).*

Recognition that the organisations evaluated should play a role in choosing which criteria they regard as significant is a distinctive element in this approach. In this respect it resembles the Social Return on Investment (SROI) approach, which similarly enables stakeholders to collaborate in producing an agreed set of objectives to be evaluated, including less tangible outcomes. The Museum of Liverpool's House of Memories programme to train those working in the care of people with dementia combined standardised, quantitative measures, completed through an online survey form, with an SROI workshop when the programme was extended to the Midlands. The aim was to establish 'the cost benefit of House of Memories to National Museums Liverpool and the region'.

These various initiatives show the museum sector seeking to develop good, and at times innovative, practice for evaluation. Davies and Heath's assessment of how museums use their summative evaluations of the visitor experience, however, concludes that they do not feed back into organisational learning in ways that would enable the evaluations to be more than external in their purpose. 'The organisational and institutional context in which summative evaluation is commissioned, undertaken and received', they conclude, 'can impose contradictory demands and undermine the opportunity of learning from and applying the findings of evaluation.' (Davies & Heath, 2013, p.57).

### The Balanced Scorecard and other models

We have noted that effective evaluation models needed to be more responsive to what it is that they are evaluating, and the Balanced Scorecard approach offers one way to meet this requirement. It was developed by Kaplan and Norton, and used in the corporate world to monitor performance against strategic goals, responding to concerns that an exclusive reliance on financial measures is insufficient in a management system, because they are lag indicators, and are likely to prioritise short-term performance over long-term value creation (Kaplan & Norton, 2001). It is 'balanced' in combining financial indicators with more 'subjective' measures concerning organisational culture and performance, and also in being able to account for conflicting dimensions in its assessment, for example high revenue along with levels of support for the workforce. This perspective might be helpful for cultural organisations needing to balance the sometimes contradictory

interests of a broad range of stakeholders – artists, communities, funders, the public, employees, and so on.

Boorsma and Chiaravalloti argue from an arts marketing perspective that the triangle of artistic relationships derived from the missions of non-profit arts organisations – customers, community and the professional artistic field – must drive evaluation of performance. They propose the Balanced Scorecard as the way to do this, so that the artistic mission that is distinctive to each organisation and its stakeholders may be effectively tested to articulate the different sorts of artistic value created by the organisation for its key stakeholder groups (Boorsma and Chiaravalloti, 2010). The Boston Consulting Group developed the Balanced Scorecard approach for the Benaki Museum in Athens, with whom they identified the four dimensions of value against which to measure performance: artistic contribution, public benefit, learning and growth, and finance and governance. It was also used for the long-term evaluation of the Heritage Lottery Fund's Townscape Heritage Initiative Schemes, whose report and associated Research Manual explain the procedure, why this approach was chosen, and how the indicators were selected and triangulated from several data sets (Reeve & Shipley, 2013).

The Balanced Value Impact Model developed by Tanner, to provide evidence of impact for digital resources in the cultural, heritage, academic or creative industries, is an initiative of this kind devised for the cultural sector (Tanner, 2012). In her *CVP Critical Review* on 'The cultural value of arts and humanities research: a configurative approach', Oancea proposes a model for the cultural value of research that is based on qualitative network analysis, or configuration tracing and analysis. Both Tanner and Oancea's work respond to the need for more participatory and qualitative approaches within the mainstream of evaluation. As Oancea observes 'despite their recognizable connection with the types of inquiry specific to the arts and humanities, configurative approaches are less systematically explored at the moment in the literatures on research impact and value, in favour of overwhelming attention to aggregative (particularly retrospective) methods'. The approach she proposes balances what she sees as aggregative measures (cost benefit analysis and measures of participation such as surveys and cultural sector statistics) against what she calls configurative approaches (such as case studies and narratives).

The *CVP Research Development Award* of Gillespie et al on 'Understanding the Changing Cultural Value of the BBC World Service and British Council' developed a Cultural Value Model (CVM), which claims to achieve culturally and experientially sensitive understandings of cultural value, in ways that similarly fit within these emerging context-sensitive approaches. The CVM is presented as an innovative device for conceptualising, analysing and assessing value in a multidimensional and visual way. 'The CVM is designed for planning, monitoring and evaluating projects and organisations over time, alongside existing performance indicators and impact measures.' (Gillespie *CVP Report*, Executive Summary). At the heart of the model is something called 'constellation mapping', where the members of the organisations involved devise a set of components of cultural value, deploying the 'Imagine' approach, which uses aspects of free associating, similar to the Visual Matrix developed by Froggett and colleagues and used in their *CVP Research Development Award*. The model is multidimensional, bringing together different components of value, emerging from consultations with stakeholders inside and outside the organisations. The collective assessment and scoring of these components of cultural value produce a range of indicators which are then presented in visual form as a diagram. The CVM approach is generic enough to be used by different organisations, but flexible enough to be adjusted to specific needs. The concepts of balance and configurations that we have explored here offer important ways of making evaluation relevant to organisations.

### Large-scale frameworks

Frameworks are broader than evaluation models, and are in many ways determined by the character of data available. Yet choices are clearly involved in shaping the framework in the first place, as can be seen in the divergent approaches on display in the special issue of *Cultural Trends* dedicated to national approaches to measuring cultural value (*Cultural Trends*, 2014). The articles reveal considerable differences in how measuring and evaluating cultural value is approached in different countries, including an article setting out the Cultural Value Project (Crossick & Kaszynska, 2014). As the editorial for the special issue explained:

*National approaches to measuring cultural value are the subject of projects in several countries. Their initiators vary – arts and cultural ministries, bureaux of statistics and academia – among others. In some countries, there has been a long and uneven history of previous attempts to measure cultural value and a more recent consultative phase preceding decisions on which approach to adopt. The drivers for these projects vary, but strong economic imperatives are discernible in models focusing on publicly funded culture. Acknowledgement of the intrinsic dimensions of culture is part of the conversation, though not necessarily part of the solution.' (Scott, 2014, p.1).*

Differences of emphasis and of substance are clear: the economic emphasis of Canada's Culture Statistics Program derives from its being based on satellite accounting data, and the focus on identity, social cohesion and diversity in the Cultural Indicators for New Zealand Project reflects a preoccupation with community outcomes, whereas Australia's Vital Signs was intended to accommodate social as well as economic impacts before being halted by political developments.

A large-scale, nationwide approach of a different kind has been established by the National Endowment for the Arts in the US. Its Five-Year Research Agenda, with a 'system map' and 'measurement model', sets out existing and future possibilities for capturing the value of art and culture. Although the NEA collects quantitative data from satellite accounting, the *How Art Works* map goes far beyond the quantitative data currently available. With art creation and participation at the centre, it distinguishes between first-order outcomes to do with quality of life for individuals and communities, and second-order, broader societal impacts involving capacities for creativity, innovation, and self-expression. The map emphasises the interconnected nature of the system, which has to be 'dissected' for the purpose of measurement. This acknowledges the complexity of the ecosystem of cultural engagement, as much as the limitations of existing statistical approaches (National Endowment for the Arts, 2012).

The most ambitious framework in terms of scope is UNESCO's Framework for Cultural Statistics, which in 2009 represented a significant first step towards establishing principles for internationally comparable data. 'The challenge for a robust and sustainable cultural statistical framework is to cover the contributory processes that enable culture to be created, distributed, received, used, critiqued, understood and preserved.' (UNESCO, 2009, p.19). The problem is that most countries are not collecting fine-grained data on the production and consumption of arts and culture, even before efforts are made to render different systems compatible. UNESCO's Culture for Development Indicator Suite, comprising 22 indicators across 6 dimensions, is an example of a multiple indicators approach, but it accepts that its attempts to measure culture's contribution to development 'have been confronted with, and ultimately, restricted by the methodological challenge of finding the appropriate approach to quantifying such a complex area'. Hence an indicator suite which draws together thematically indicators from different dimensions 'in order to better understand a policy area where outcomes are more abstract, difficult to measure or with incomplete data […]. By focusing on the interconnections between indicators, an indicator suite aims to achieve insights into aspects of a complex policy area that an indicator on its own cannot provide.' (UNESCO, 2011 p.8). The different dimensions covered by the suite are economy, education, governance, social participation, gender equality, communication and heritage. The value of the arts and culture can arguably be demonstrated for each of these dimensions, but cannot be aggregated. Multi-index approaches recognise that cultural value is best captured as part of an ecosystem where different dimensions interact.

The evaluation models and large-scale frameworks considered in this and the last section serve different purposes, and reflect pragmatic choices related to the availability of data. Our question should therefore not be which is best, but which serves best a given objective or agenda. Some general principles do seem nonetheless to be emerging. There is a growing scepticism about reducing the value of the arts and culture to single number registers, recognising that the effects of art and culture cut across many dimensions. The increasing use of visual representations (as in the NEA model) and multiple indexes (as with UNESCO) are indicative of this concern to capture the effects of cultural engagement as an ecosystem, rather than as a set of discrete dimensions. The second emerging principle is the need to be explicit about objectives. Evaluations can serve different purposes, such as to measure and benchmark performance, to establish good

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practice, to develop new practitioner understanding and to facilitate learning. Being transparent about one's objectives, and what a given evaluation seeks to accomplish, might help the choice of appropriate approaches, types of evidence and methods. The same applies to large-scale frameworks, where transparency about motivations and limitations can ensure that the data is better organised and used.

Finally, there is clear impetus behind making evaluation and data collection more open to a multiplicity of stakeholders, though this is more widespread in aspiration than practice. Matarasso was right 20 years ago in saying that the solution is to develop 'sensitive, creative, people-centred approaches to evaluation which begin to address the outcomes, rather than the outputs' (Matarasso, 1996, p.13). The reports by the Getty Conservation Institute, on the values of heritage conservation and of heritage itself, spelt out what developing such an approach may entail in practice, and what challenges it may involve. As the introduction to the second report observed: 'conservation professionals are faced with two particular challenges arising out of these social and political contexts: challenges of power sharing and challenges of collaboration' (Getty, 2002, p.4; also Getty, 2000). This chapter argues that appropriate methods and methodologies can be found. Some of the different types of methods will now be explored.

## Social science approaches and the digital turn

A range of established methods are used as sources of evidence in the social sciences, including surveys, questionnaires, focus groups and interviews, and these are deployed in a significant number of Cultural Value Project awards. Garrod's *CVP Research Development Award* on 'Investigating the role of Eisteddfodau in creating and transmitting cultural value in Wales and beyond' combined surveys administered face-to-face with 941 participants at two Eisteddfodau, in order to elicit through a questionnaire the value that they associated with the events: these were analysed using a frame of five forms of value, and 29 in-depth follow-up interviews were carried out, with a sub-set of those surveyed. Pitts's *CVP Research Development Award* on 'Dropping in and dropping out: understanding cultural value from the perspectives of lapsed or partial arts participants' embeds these methods in a broader portfolio approach. The research in this case was conducted in several layered strands, with one main group combined with supplementary samples. It started with an online survey, conducted by questionnaire, to gather demographic information, level and type of current and past arts engagement, and attitudes towards it. Follow-up face-to-face interviews with some respondents covered similar questions in more depth, with an emphasis on formative experiences of arts engagement, and factors that may have led to a decline in participation or attendance. These interviews were transcribed in full and analysed using a phenomenological approach, which focused on the structures of individual experiences. A modified version of the questionnaires was also distributed to different groups, to harvest more information and gain a means of comparison. Some members of this supplementary group participated in a focus group discussion. The focus group discussions were transcribed and analysed alongside the responses from the main group questionnaires. The elaborate design and laborious data collection illustrated here by the Pitts project exemplifies how established social science methods can bring together breadth of information and depth of analysis.

Virtually all the Research Development Awards working with empirical data used such a portfolio of methods, in recognition of this need to negotiate reach and breadth on the one hand, with depth and precision on the other. In the words of Reinelt et al, in the report of their *CVP Research Development Award* 'Critical Mass: theatre spectatorship and value attribution':

> *Our study was designed to face the challenge of designing methods of capturing 'being there': existential, phenomenological aspects of personal/individual experience – aspects of 'inner life' not necessarily easy to reach. At the same time, we needed to study enough subjects to be able to make some claims for our results. We decided on a portfolio of research methodologies that would include surveys, in-depth interviews, and creative workshops as well as theoretical and conceptual analysis. (Reinelt et al CVP Report, p.94).*

A pattern emerges in which a net is initially cast wide with surveys and questionnaires, followed by a more selective 'harpoon' method where qualitative inquiry is used to elucidate some of the initial findings.

## Established social science methods can bring together breadth of information and depth of analysis.

A good example of 'methodological eclecticism, treating a range of methodological tools as complementary rather than competing', is Miles and Sullivan's analysis of Taking Part (Miles & Sullivan, 2012, p.322; Miles & Sullivan 2010). They decided to take two different approaches to cultural participation, in what included a pioneering attempt, alongside the major ESRC-funded Cultural Capital and Social Exclusion project (Bennett et al, 2009), to use Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) and qualitative inquiry applied to a large-scale survey to explore the relationship between cultural capital and social exclusion. This included analysing personal narratives of participation from two different sets of in-depth interviews. Whereas MCA allowed them to detect detailed patterns between the variables, and identify configurations which might be difficult to spot deductively using traditional regression techniques, the qualitative inquiry provided insights into the choices and processes underpinning people's decisions. In the words of the authors:

> *Qualitative data can provide important perspectives on the subjective meanings and significance attached to types of participation, for example, revealing information about the intensity of engagement for example, or the social stakes of personal cultural investment. They can also allow [sic] reveal much about the process of engagement, such as how decision-making occurs or interests and motivation develops, and how engagement occurs in relation to everyday and life course processes […]. As well as the substantive knowledge such data can produce, they can also perform an important control and monitoring function with respect to survey development. By enabling researchers to get behind the meaning attached to variables, they can help us to refine and ask better questions and can also suggest where new or different questioning is required. (Miles and Sullivan, 2010, p.30).*

Qualitative data can also help improve the effectiveness of surveys, which is particularly pertinent in the context of large ones. As we have seen, in Danish surveys since 1964 the category of 'user' was effectively constructed through the design of surveys in a way that distorted the reality of participation (Balling & Kann-Christensen, 2013). As we have observed, methods are not just shaped by social realities but play a role in constituting them.

Methodological eclecticism has drawbacks as well as advantages, however, which become apparent from evaluations of museums and galleries. As Davies and Heath show, these involve a portfolio of methods:

> *The particular combination of methods used in summative evaluation varies from project to project, but ordinarily involves at least two or three of the following: surveys, face to face interviews (both structured and unstructured), focus groups, accompanied visits, gallery observation (both participant and non-participant), anatomies of museum visits, vox pops, and personal meaning maps. (Davies & Heath, 2013, p.59).*

These auxiliary techniques can capture illuminating detailed information about particular projects, yet also create some difficulties:

> *From the point of view of an individual evaluation, it makes sense to gather a range of data that enables consideration of a wide diversity of issues. However, as different evaluations use different combinations of methods, it proves difficult to compare and contrast findings and results between evaluations, sometimes even between evaluations undertaken within the same institution. To make matters more difficult, the same methods will be applied in very different ways, with significant variations in sample sizes, interview schedules, observational criteria and the like (Davies & Heath, 2013, p.59).*

Variation in methods used, and in the interpretation of findings, create benchmarking problems, and a situation where we can speak of findings specific to particular projects but without their being readily useful for the sector. Davies and Heath call on the sector to create not centrally-administered standardised evaluations but 'a data corpus and analytic framework to support the development of a collection of comparable insights, findings and recommendations' (p.67).

Building evaluation platforms that can be used and shared would be one way to allow organisations to speak with a single voice. The Qualia project, designed in consultation with social scientists and funded by the Digital R & D Fund for the Arts, aims to design a digital evaluation platform and a tool for the collection of feedback from audiences. In the words of Jensen, in his *CVP Critical Review* 'Measuring cultural value

Building evaluation platforms that can be used and shared would be one way to allow organisations to speak with a single voice.

and cultural impact using technology-enhanced methods', 'the goal was to build a high quality open source system that could be used by arts and culture institutions across the UK with a bare minimum of customisation required to deliver automated evaluation results. While this project proved the potential of such a system, it also revealed more barriers.' (Jensen *CVP Report*, p.42) He investigates the relationship between automated systems and digital technology, and some more traditional social science approaches, and shows how surveys, interviews and data gathering more generally are often technology-enhanced or technology-enabled, and how technology can on occasions be used creatively. Surveys can be carried out through mobile phones, allowing collection of spatial survey data. A good example is the Mappiness project,[64] which used the new spatial and temporal dimension of data, and over two million geo-tagged photos collected from the photo-sharing website Flickr,[65] to investigate how people respond to heritage (Jensen *CVP Report*, p.19).

Digital technologies and platforms thus allow for new kinds of data to be collected, which can be fed into more traditional analysis using interviews, focus groups and so on. A good example is Harwood et al's *CVP Research Development Award* on Machinima, which we encountered in the chapter on *Cross-cutting themes*. Harwood employed some traditional approaches, such as semi-structured interviews and content analysis, alongside virtual focus groups conducted within the 3D virtual environment of Second Life, as a means to engage groups of active machinimators. Selections from the virtual focus group discussions were edited to produce a digital machinima artefact of the events and the research activities.

Jensen's critical review identifies a range of work, still in its early stages, seeking to harness digital technologies for data sorting and analysis, such as Artificial Neural Networks, Self-organising Maps and Deep Learning Networks (Jensen *CVP Report*, p.41). He also points to the use of automated methods of analysis in the cultural sector, including Sentiment Analysis, Twitonomy, Buffer and Music Metric. Limitations remain, however, in the accuracy of the qualitative analysis of large datasets by such systems, while in a recent report Demos has raised significant concerns about the challenge of representativeness in using data drawn from social media (Demos, 2015).

The effective use of social science approaches has been described by Brown and Novak-Leonard as 'designing simple and intuitive questions about complex and abstract constructs' (Brown & Novak-Leonard, 2007, p.21). This is where Brown's work with the WolfBrown consultancy has been making a mark. They have been developing survey-based methodologies to measure the 'intrinsic' impacts of arts experience (Brown, 2006; Brown & Novak, 2007; Brown & Ratzkin, 2012; Brown & Novak-Leonard, 2013). The strength of their approach derives from the conceptual model they have developed to inform their use of social science techniques. This breaks down the notion of impact, initially using six constructs: captivation, intellectual stimulation, emotional resonance, spiritual value, aesthetic growth and social bonding, though they later reduced it to four (Brown & Novak-Leonard, 2013). Instead of using one blanket question regarding what happened, this approach acknowledges that arts participation has emotional, intellectual, aesthetic and social dimensions, and should be evaluated accordingly. The model also factors-in the fact that impacts depend on 'readiness-to-receive', because the way that people engage with the arts is affected by their frame of mind, which will include their cognitive and emotional state when entering the performance, as well as their expectations.

The model presents some significant conceptual shifts. It sees impacts as a sequence of events: the experience at the very moment and in near proximity to the initial experience, and how these benefits accumulate and reverberate over time through multiple encounters with the arts. This replaces the intrinsic-instrumental continuum along the vertical axis with a measure of time. In accounting for readiness-to-receive, Brown and colleagues identify the obvious yet hitherto neglected fact that preceding events and experience shape subsequent expectations and experience. Brown recognises the multifaceted character of cultural experiences, with emotional and cognitive elements alongside broader social reverberations. This allows him to articulate a model of cultural value which dispenses with the dichotomy of private and public goods, placing the importance of arts participation for cultivating human relations at the centre, while recognising the interconnectedness of different manifestations of cultural value (Carnwath & Brown, 2014).

[64] *http://bit.ly/1mijT1o*

[65] *http://heritagecalling.com/2014/02/11/can-flickr-help-us-better-understand-our-relationship-with-historic-buildings*

It is possible to reach a consensus within the cultural sector on the issue of what constitutes quality.

This work shows how established social science methods can harvest data about the complex psychology of arts participation and the phenomenology of cultural engagement. The authors acknowledge the influence of psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, whose influential theory of 'flow' sought to grasp the phenomenology of art experiences. They nonetheless note the limitations of survey-based methodologies and self-reporting, accepting Belfiore and Bennett's claim that:

> *any attempt to investigate empirically the aesthetic experience is therefore inevitably going to explore only its conscious aspects and will result in a fragmented and incomplete reconstruction of what it feels like to have an aesthetic experience and the range of effects it can have. (Quoted in Brown &Novak-Leonard, 2013, p.226).*

Brown and Novak-Leonard explicitly embrace another challenge in their approach – the non-comparability of findings:

> *Impact results are fundamentally non-comparable across sites. Impact is inherently contextual on several levels. Different artistic programmes will create different impacts, and not all programmes should be expected to have all impacts. Thus, researchers must work to avoid situations in which impact measurement becomes a contest among arts groups to see who gets the highest scores. (Brown & Novak-Leonard, 2013, p.229).*

They may, nonetheless, not disagree with Davies and Heath about building a data corpus and analytic framework for the sector. The challenge of aggregating individual level impacts, and of generalising across different programmes within art forms, as well as drawing inferences about art practices across art forms, is for them a research challenge worth embracing, and one that can be addressed if we accumulate enough relevant data.

The Manchester Metrics pilot, a collaboration between consultants and 13 arts organisations in Manchester, supported by Arts Council England, has proposed a solution to measuring the key dimensions of quality and reach, and to building a rich data set for the sector. Based on the Culture Counts tool developed for Western Australia, this proposal articulates a standardised and aggregatable system that measures the perceived quality of artistic productions. The metric captures feedback from the public, artistic peers and self-assessors from within the organisation, all of whom complete a short survey and score each 'metric' by indicating how much they agree or disagree on a sliding scale, using an app downloaded to a smartphone or tablet. Self and peer (but not public) assessment is carried out both before and after an event, to see how expectations match up, while the artistic organisation's reflections on the results make interesting reading, and indicate real learning potential as they triangulate between the three groups of respondents and the before-and-after scores. The range of criteria goes beyond the routine. The core ones are presentation, distinctiveness, rigour, relevance, challenge, captivation, meaning, enthusiasm and local impact; for peer and self-assessment a further five are added – concept, risk, originality, local excellence and global excellence. The metrics system had to be applicable to a wide range of cultural experiences, ranging in the pilot from pantomime to opera, from a Victoria Wood play to a Jeremy Deller art exhibition (Bunting & Knell, 2014). This ability to evaluate across a wide range of criteria, to compare expectations and outcomes, and to triangulate the results between three groups, makes this a distinctive evaluation method that offers clear potential.

This approach may present an answer to the question of how to produce large data sets that make benchmarking possible, without externally imposing the assessment criteria. The data generated could also be useful in formative assessment, as the feedback that cultural organisations receive allows them to reflect on their practices. Moreover, this work demonstrates, in a practical way, the fact that it is possible to reach a consensus within the cultural sector on the issue of what constitutes quality. In making quality central to the metric framework, Bunting and Knell build on the work done by WolfBrown on measuring intrinsic impacts, and demonstrate how other indicators of reach, along with more instrumental impacts, might be seen to cascade from this centre.

## Approaches from economics

As noted in the chapter *Economy: impact, innovation and ecology*, economic approaches to cultural value usually mean either spending-measure techniques or economic valuation techniques. Each expresses cultural value in terms of financial

values, but they do so in very different ways. Whereas the former is an accounting approach that looks at market goods generated by and through cultural activities, valuation techniques are used to monetise what are essentially non-market benefits. We dealt with spending-measure techniques at length in that chapter, outlining the character of the evidence delivered through economic impact studies, and exploring both the strengths and some of the limitations of these approaches in terms of methodology and interpretation. Readers are referred to that chapter and the works cited there for a fuller discussion of these issues. The Treasury's Green Book approach requires additionally that the non-market benefits be subject to valuation, and the Cultural Value Project reports considered here seek to test and develop relevant approaches.

Economic valuation approaches need not, in fact, be about the economy in any direct sense, and may instead be thought-of as capturing what are often seen as the intrinsic benefits of culture (Bakhshi et al, 2009), and the improvements to wellbeing that it might deliver (Fujiwara et al, 2014). Social Return on Investment (SROI) offers a further approach which engages stakeholders in defining the criteria, and can combine a variety of measures, including spending-measure and economic valuation methods, alongside many other techniques. Each of these has significant potential, both as evidence of cultural value and as contributions to policy making, though each inevitably also has limitations when taken alone.

The Green Book, the UK Treasury's technical guidance on how public expenditure decisions should be evaluated in order to deliver the greatest benefits to society in the most efficient way, recognises that 'the full value of goods such as health, educational success, family and community stability, and environmental assets cannot simply be inferred from market prices, but we should not neglect such important social impacts in policy making.' (HM Treasury, 2011, p.57). It recommends that in a full cost benefit analysis, valuation of non-market impacts be undertaken using economic valuation techniques. Although the Green Book prefers the use of preference-based techniques – stated preference, also known as contingent valuation, and revealed preference – it now recognises the potential of an evolving methodology of subjective wellbeing approaches. These different valuation techniques are of considerable relevance to the Cultural Value Project, for reasons that include their recognition in government policy-making frameworks.

Economic valuation approaches attach a monetary value to non-market goods by looking at changes in individual utility or welfare. Preference-based techniques and wellbeing valuations do this in different ways. The two main types of the former are stated preference and revealed preference. In stated preference techniques, a hypothetical market may be constructed for non-market goods, with prices attached to these goods by asking people directly about how much they would be willing to pay for it, or how much they would have to be compensated were this good not to be available. Revealed preference techniques, on the other hand, derive valuation from how people actually behave, such as how much they pay to travel to a museum or pay for a house in an area with strong cultural amenities. Wellbeing valuation approaches are a relatively recent addition to the toolbox of valuation techniques in the Green Book, and establish changes to people's reports of their own wellbeing associated with an activity, and calculate the monetary value of this change in welfare.[66] O'Brien's report for DCMS on measuring the value of culture presents an overview of the methods supported by the Green Book at that time (O'Brien, 2010).

The use of these approaches for the cultural sector is relatively new, and the absence of sustained empirical testing and methodological refinement has hampered progress with their application. This was the starting point for the *CVP Research Development Award* undertaken by Bakhshi et al on 'Measuring economic value in cultural institutions'. This substantial research report,[67] the first comparison of contingent valuation and wellbeing valuation methods in the cultural sector, not only compares how well each technique performs, but also explores how the two methods could be combined to optimise their use by cultural institutions.

The work engages with two major cultural institutions, the Natural History Museum and Tate Liverpool. Data from on-site visitor surveys and online general population surveys was analysed to identify the use and non-use values attached by

[66] This is the amount of income that would produce the same impact on their wellbeing as engagement with culture

[67] This work was initiated by the Cultural Value Project and jointly-funded with DCMS

Economic valuation solutions can be formulated that are sensitive to the specific needs of the cultural sector.

visitors, and the non-use option values attached by the general population. Non-use values are those attached by people who do not directly benefit; for example the perceived value of a museum to someone who never visits, but who might appreciate its value to those who do use it now and may do so in the future. The research found contingent valuation to perform well in estimating use and non-use values in different types of cultural institution. As far as wellbeing valuation is concerned, momentary wellbeing indicators, such as happiness and purpose, also delivered credible valuations, but the broader life satisfaction approach did not yield meaningful estimates. The researchers then developed an innovative hybrid contingent/wellbeing valuation approach, which takes the questionnaire structure of contingent valuation and combines it with the underlying theory of wellbeing valuation, and this was shown to work well in both of the museum case studies. This is significant for cultural institutions and funders, because the hybrid contingent/wellbeing valuation approach testing the willingness to accept can be used in situations where there might be sensitivities about asking visitors even hypothetically about their willingness to pay for entry or make a donation.

This comparative analysis of valuation approaches is important for a number of reasons. As far as methodology is concerned, empirical testing can improve individual methods and understanding, and enable their comparative strengths and weaknesses to be addressed. The technical challenges in using contingent valuation and wellbeing valuation approaches are outlined in the report, and the authors propose improved techniques for contingent valuation applied to cultural institutions. More than these advances, however, it is improving their suitability to meet the needs of the cultural sector that makes this report important. As the authors explain, 'a detailed comparison of the methods therefore holds out the promise of a more fit-for-purpose approach to economic valuation in the cultural sector that is also recognised by policymakers.' (Bakhshi et al *CVP Report*, p.6). The proposed hybrid approach is an illustration of how economic valuation solutions can be formulated that are sensitive to the specific needs of the cultural sector.

The *CVP Research Development Award* led by Fillis on 'Measuring the cultural value of the Royal Scottish Academy New Contemporaries Exhibition as a platform for emerging artists' had somewhat different objectives. It set out to measure the cultural value associated with this exhibition as a platform for newly graduating art school students. It aimed to capture not just visitors' impressions of the exhibition, but also the quality and perceptions of the 'true' value of artworks as opposed to their market prices. It examines price-setting and the art market, as well as the impact of the New Contemporaries Exhibition on the future career paths of early-career artists. It combines qualitative and quantitative techniques using primary and secondary data, conventional surveys for willingness to pay, and travel and time costs analysis, all of which are interwoven with face-to-face interviews and focus groups.

The emphasis it attaches to 'non-economic valuation, psychological influences, and interdisciplinary interpretations in moving forward from existing understanding of cultural value' is a distinctive feature of the work (Fillis *CVP Report*, p.13). In addition to using standard techniques, Fillis et al test the ways in which standard economic valuations are subject to biases and framing. They ask whether and how the responses given in willingness-to-pay and willingness-to-donate surveys vary with the manner in which questions are asked. They find the framing of questions to be significant: for example, telling people that the gallery does not receive any core local or central government funding significantly increased the percentage of people who thought that the fee charged was too little. Economists working on contingent valuations within the standard framework have been working to correct for such framing effects and biases; this is an important feature of the research by Bakhshi et al discussed above, and is addressed in their report. Fillis et al go beyond methodological issues and interpret the perceived fractures and inconsistencies in how people attach value to artworks as telling us something about the complexities of cultural value. A heterogeneous conception of value emerges from their account. The New Contemporaries Exhibition carries a special value for the exhibiting artists, while it has a different resonance for the cultural sector more broadly, the public at large, and employees of the gallery. What emerges is a complex picture of how cultural value is produced, received, marketed and traded.

Social Return on Investment (SROI) has, in recent years, become popular with third sector organisations (NPC, 2010). It has been used in a number of arts project evaluations, in particular those

Some economics-based approaches are more suitable to the needs of cultural organisations than others.

with clearly identified social aims and outcomes. An evaluation of National Museums Liverpool's Dementia Training Programme (National Museums Liverpool, 2012) and its regional versions, such as the Northern model (National Museums Liverpool, 2013) and the Midlands model (National Museums Liverpool, 2014), uses SROI. It has also been employed by the Institute of Cultural Capital's collaborative working partnership with Mersey Care NHS, to examine the economic value of creative interventions in mental health care, and the impacts of these upon mental health and wellbeing, particularly in a community setting[68]. SROI was used in another NPC evaluation, this time of arts in the criminal justice system, which took a more critical view of the potential and limitations of the approach (Johnson et al, 2011).

The appeal of SROI to the cultural sector and charities is not surprising. While taking the well-accepted format of a metric designed to measure rates of return on money invested, SROI has been devised to take account of environmental and social value not reflected in conventional financial accounts. It is also a collaborative method that starts with accounting for different stakeholders' views of impact, in order to draw an 'impact map' and to plot a theory of change, a map of how an organisation or a project intends to deliver its desired outcomes (Kail & Lumley, 2012). SROI allows organisations to reflect on how they deliver value, and whether their strategies are suitable to meet that end. On the other hand, plotting a complex theory of change might be challenging in terms of providing rigorous evidence and estimating monetary value for the proposed impacts.

The second important step in the SROI approach is to calculate market values by using available financial data, and putting financial proxies on all those impacts identified by stakeholders which do not typically have market values. Economic valuation approaches may be used, but a range of techniques is acceptable. There is also a version of SROI where qualitative data can be used, without assigning financial proxies (Scholten et al, 2006). Monetisation is a challenge, in particular for impacts such as increased resilience, levels of trust, and self-esteem. Good SROI practice also takes into account the effects of deadweight and displacement in the same way as with economic impact assessment.

The most difficult aspect of the SROI approach for some is that the monitored impacts are defined collectively by stakeholders, and thus are not uniform across different projects and institutions. Comparisons are not encouraged even though, with results often expressed as a financial ratio, these are difficult to resist. The SROI approach occupies an ambiguous position. It is not endorsed as a technique which would allow policy-makers to make decisions in the cost benefit analysis framework, but it relies on the standard techniques whose benefit is precisely that of giving commensurate estimates. The SROI Network and Inspiring Impact have each been working to see how the SROI methods might be standardised.[69] These challenges notwithstanding, the principles behind the Theory of Change and SROI approaches might help the cultural sector to understand the value it delivers, and to reflect on what data gathering and evaluation practices would be most suitable to evidence this.

The economic approaches considered here have the considerable advantage of inserting themselves into current policy discourses about evaluation. Most would claim to yield commensurable estimates for cost-benefit analysis, even though in practice (as Bakhshi et al make clear in their study) direct comparisons across organisations may be difficult. Carrying out economic valuations can also be helpful in understanding the objectives and aims of organisations, and even the character of cultural value itself, in particular when combined with other modes of inquiry such as narrative accounts of cultural value and multi-criteria analysis (O'Brien, 2010). The two Cultural Value Project reports in this area show how these techniques can be combined with other approaches, providing the flexibility that the cultural sector may need. Some economics-based approaches are more suitable to the needs of cultural organisations than others: economic valuation techniques are often more convincing than economic impact assessment, not least in accounting for non-market values which are so important for cultural value.

The fact that economic valuation techniques cannot capture the whole of cultural value is well-established amongst many cultural economists, not least due to the important contributions of David Throsby. He argued more than twenty years ago that there were limits to the extent that

[68] *http://iccliverpool.ac.uk/?research=joining-the-dots*

[69] *http://socialvalueuk.org/; http://inspiringimpact.org*

standard utility theory, grounded in individual preferences and augmented welfare benefit, could account for the value of culture (Throsby, 1994). In contending that there are aspects of culture which are collective or irreducibly social – as Charles Taylor argued (Taylor, 1990) – and which cannot be entirely captured in terms of individual preference, he subsequently wrote:

> *There is behaviour, distinguishable from the economic behaviour […] which can be termed 'cultural'; such behaviour reflects collective as distinct from individualistic goals, and derives from the nature of culture as expressing the beliefs, aspirations and identifications of a group […]. Thus the cultural impulse can be seen as a desire for group experience or for collective production or consumption that cannot be fully factored out to the individuals comprising the group.(Throsby, 2001, p.13).*

Throsby continues, nonetheless, to work on developing and applying economic valuation techniques, and there are good reasons for doing so. As O'Brien observed, 'without the data offered by economic valuation techniques the richness of the narratives of cultural value are likely to be less influential' (O'Brien, 2010, p.9). Economic valuation methods are part of the repertoire of approaches that are open to cultural institutions wishing to 'demonstrate in quantitative terms the value that they create for society in a manner that is consistent with best-practice methodology within government' (Bakhshi et al *CVP Report*, p.5). Their significance does not, however, lie solely in their ability to influence policy. These methods can also help us understand and evidence the complex, and often conflicted, processes shaping how individuals experience and attach value to cultural engagement and cultural institutions.

## Ethnography and network analysis

Ethnography, comparative inquiry into the cultural aspects of human nature, has generated methodologies that might be characterised as multimodal in relying on a range of mostly qualitative research methods and techniques. These range from more traditional ones such as interviews (informal, structured and semi-structured), questionnaires and surveys, through to a range of techniques in observational and participatory approaches, such as participant observation, field notes, and iterative-participatory evaluation. O'Reilly characterises ethnography in ways that are pertinent to research and evaluation on arts and cultural engagement. It is:

> *iterative-inductive research (that evolves in design through the study), drawing on a family of methods, involving direct and sustained contact with human agents, within the context of their daily lives (and cultures), watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions, and producing a richly written account that respects the irreducibility of human experience, that acknowledges the role of theory as well as the researcher's own role and that views humans as part object/part subject. (O'Reilly, 2005, p.3).*

In addition, many ethnographers rely on 'the physical mapping of the study setting, conducting household censuses and genealogies, assessing network ties, and using photography and other audio/visual methods' (Whitehead, 2005, p.2). The ethnographic approach frequently shades into creative or arts-based research methods as in the Cultural Value Project awards led by Winter, Hawkins and Pajaczkowska. One might add that ethnography is itself opening up to 'sensory ethnography' in ways that stress the interconnectedness of the senses (Pink, 2009). It is also drawing on network analysis, the study of relations between discrete objects which is attractive from the point of view of ethnography for its potential to capture the intentions of individuals in the context of the social environments in which they are embedded. Whereas one strand of social research explained an individual's outcomes or characteristics as a function of other characteristics of the same individual (for example, income as a function of education and gender), social network research looks to the individual's overall social environment.

A number of Cultural Value Project awards have drawn on the research methods of ethnography and cultural anthropology. In their *CVP Research Development Award* 'Exploring Value in Digital Archives and the Comainn Eachdraidh', Beel and Wallace employed traditional ethnographic methods, encompassing periods of fieldwork involving participant observation sessions, along with semi-structured interviews with participants and key stakeholders. They also used digital technology to elicit responses and frame data-observation sessions, with

participant observation carried out during digital archive training and digital archive data entry, as the Comainn Eachdraidh (Historical Societies) underwent their own digital turn. The project pursued this with what Beel and Wallace called a 'netnography', defined as 'comprehending the ways in which different groups represent themselves online and the interactions they create with other followers' – taking account of Facebook and other social media outlets (Beel & Wallace *CVP Report*, p.29). The ethnographic approach that was employed is set out in the report, and provides a grounded understanding of the activities taking place in the participating communities.

In her *CVP Research Development Award on* 'Experimental Methods for Exploring Environmental Encounters', Hawkins shows how ethnographic research may overlap with arts-based approaches. The project used an ethnographic research strategy to interrogate the encounters with the environment that were catalysed by art works, and the kinds of transformations these encounters can bring about in artists, in scientists involved in the production of these works, and in the audiences that experience them. The project drew on standard methods from the ethnographic tool-kit, namely participant observation, interviews, focus groups and auto-ethnography. Hawkins also developed what she called 'creative, experimental ethnographies' which employed creative practices, such as photography and video making, sound recording and social media methods, developed as part of an embedded arts evaluation strategy. She also explored what forms ethnography might look like in terms of creative outputs. Experimenting with video and artists' books, Hawkins explored what it might mean to produce an ethnography that responded to the types of data coming from creative practitioners.

Developing methods attuned to the subject matter being researched was also at the heart of the *CVP Research Development Award* led by Winter, 'A Somatic Ethnography of Grand Gestures Elders Dance Group'. The ethos of her project was co-production, and facilitating group activities was important in meeting the research objectives. The central ethnographic method was participant-observation fieldwork with the Grand Gestures group, involving dancing, classes and social events with group members. The participant-observation was supplemented by interviews, including artwork-elicitation interviews, where works such as reflective journals produced by group members formed the basis for interviewing. Finally, ancillary texts and artworks produced by the group, such as paintings, pottery, journals and blogs, were collected and analysed.

The project's most taxing ambition may have been to register and articulate the somatic aspect of the participants' experiences. As Winter herself observed at a Cultural Value Project methodological workshop, 'attention to the somatic realm can access multi-layered or ambiguous meanings and values that can escape when the main focus is on the visual and/or on language. For example, someone who does not interact verbally very much and might seem, from some perspectives, to be socially cut off, might feel a profound sense of kinaesthetic connection to others when dancing'.[70] This last statement starts to unravel what it is that ethnographic methods have uniquely to contribute to the research into cultural value.

Allington et al's *CVP Research Development Award* on 'Online Networks and the Production of Value in Electronic Music' is very different from that on the Grand Gestures Elders. It sets out to consider what may seem to be disembodied practices of online networking, but its conclusion returns it to the observation of interactions taking place in real physical spaces:

> *With regard to electronic dance music, the key site for the production of value remains the club or rave, where the key acts of valuing appear to be (a) the DJ's decision to include a track within a live set, and (b) the audience's embodied responses to that decision. (Allington et al CVP Report, p.65).*

The project also shows the usefulness and the challenges of studying acts of valuing as a directed graph, through the use of network analysis. Networks of SoundCloud users were identified, initially by using a snowball sampling method to collect public data automatically from SoundCloud, before moving on to employ a 150,000-user random sample to confirm some of the patterns apparent from the snowball sample. The research was able to set some hypotheses regarding the construction and dissemination of value in electronic music, in relation to geographical locations and

[70] Note to Cultural Value Project Workshop on Ethnographic Methods, University of London, 11 June 2014

music genres, amongst other variables. Combining network analysis with more traditional ethnographic and social science approaches, such as participant observation and interviews, Allington et al were able to understand better some of the network patterns. A similar approach to the networked nature of cultural value can be seen in work on cultural value networks carried out as part of the Connected Communities Programme (Bachmann et al, 2012).

The *CVP Critical Review* by Oancea on 'Developing innovative methods for configurative capture of the cultural value of arts and humanities research' further demonstrates the usefulness of network analysis in examining valuation practices, alongside some of its limitations. The study used qualitative network analysis (or configuration tracing and analysis) to understand flows of cultural value-specific networks surrounding research projects. While the empirical component of this project focused on the value of research, rather than the arts and culture, the method and the models developed as part of this study are of considerable relevance to understanding the value of the latter, and represent a significant application of network analysis.

As Beel and Wallace observe, 'ethnographic methodologies are always reflexive in nature and always hold a certain power dynamic between researcher (observer) and participant (observed). This therefore represents both a strength and weakness for these methods.' (Beel & Wallace *CVP Report*, p.29). The fact that ethnographic research is contextually embedded, is in many instances co-constructed by researcher and researched, and often rests on individual case studies, does not accord well with standards of validity derived from experimental studies. Isolating external confounding factors would neither be plausible nor desirable, because it would lose the very insights that ethnographic research brings. The Cultural Value Project Workshop on Ethnographic Methods explored the need to integrate the kind of data produced through ethnographic research into the existing culture of evidence, without reducing it to the merely illustrative or anecdotal. Network analysis might, perhaps unexpectedly, be open to similar challenges of subjectivism. Networks are conceptually endless but practically curtailed, which raises the question 'upon what basis and according to what criteria the network is delimited. This question is a challenge both for the anthropologist and the social network analyst, albeit for different reasons.' (Knox, 2006, p.135). Making sense of the mechanism through which the ties are produced, and understanding how value moves between the nodes, are issues for qualitative inquiry. Its quasi-scientific appearance notwithstanding, network analysis appears as open to the same questions as are the other ethnographic methods considered here, in the context of expectations of evidence derived from experimental science.

Many researchers working within the ethnographic tradition would argue that, while it may be neither possible nor desirable to speak of accuracy in conventional scientific terms of findings in ethnography, it is appropriate to inquire whether the constructs that are derived represent categories of human experience, or more concretely whether they would be recognised as accurate by research participants. In other words, there are ways of ensuring rigour in ethnographic research. Winter suggests that rigour be established through reflexivity, which might be taken to mean that reflexivity puts checks in place by committing the researcher to a collaborative model. This might mean collective data gathering, iterative co-analysis, consultation on the findings and participation in the dissemination process. It makes the findings more reliable by bringing multiple perspectives to bear on an issue. Auto-ethnography, as part of reflexivity, extends the source of data by providing a first-hand exposure to the sensory and affective dimensions of audience experience. Ethnography also ensures that theoretical considerations are salient and integrated into the study, and that theoretical preconceptions are revised in the light of new evidence, to make a good fit between concepts and data.

Network analysis can also be tailored to suit its data. As the project led by Allington made clear, network analysis and qualitative research work very well together, making for a better fit between the idiosyncratic features of unique contexts, and generic ways of analysing data through network analysis. It has also been suggested that this might be possible on a larger scale. Even when using a basic template for network analysis, in conjunction with standard computer software for calculating network statistics and visualising networks, the analysis can still be crafted to answer questions specific to individual organisations (Oehler & Sheppard, 2010).

Ethnographic research is, however, resource-intensive in terms of time, expertise and money, and many organisations lack the resources to engage in ethnographic studies. In their *CVP Critical Review* on 'Valuing the historic environment: a critical review of existing approaches to social value', Jones and Leech outline practices in the world of heritage which offer ways forward, and they are sufficiently helpful to merit extended quotation:

> *In a US context, a method of Rapid Ethnographic Assessment has been developed to address a manager's need to make informed choices about alternative courses of action in the context of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Rapid Ethnographic Assessment is usually carried out by researchers with ethnographic training and involves a battery of methods including focus groups, transect walks, and community mapping […]. It is not regarded as a substitute for more in-depth research, but it does provide a level of knowledge and understanding within resource constraints. Jackson […] provides examples of the application of such methods exploring the forms of social value produced at former slave plantation sites within US National Parks.*
>
> *Australia has also been at the vanguard of developing new approaches to social value in the heritage sector. For instance, the National Parks and Wildlife Service, in New South Wales, has developed a successful suite of methodologies for identifying and recording contemporary meanings and memories. Over the past decade, these have focused on "mapping" attachments and social values in relation to the historic environment through work with both indigenous and non-indigenous communities […]. Such mapping involves the integration of archival evidence, such as maps and aerial photographs, with other qualitative research methods such as place-based oral history interviews, site walks with community members, and audio-visual recordings […]. For example, Byrne & Nugent […] encouraged participating members of the community to mark their memories, movements, and practices on maps during interviews and field visits. This data set was then used to create composite digital data sets using GIS, allowing intangible heritage to be recorded in a tangible form. In New South Wales, this is encouraged within routine heritage assessments and practices, as it provides particularly useful and clear information about frequently complex issues and values for developers, landowners, heritage planners and the community stakeholders concerned. (Jones & Leech, CVP Report pp.32-33. The references are in the report).*

These ethnographic techniques offer clear advantages to arts organisations wishing to supplement more traditional evaluation tools, such as exit questionnaires and on-line surveys. More sustained ethnographic approaches offer even more, in evaluation and also in research. A particularly effective demonstration of the contribution made by ethnographic methods can be found in Miles and Strauss's report in 2008 on Dance United's Academy, an intensive 12-week dance-led programme for young offenders, or young people at risk of offending, in Bradford, Leeds and surrounding areas. They wanted to go beyond outcome measures alone as a form of evaluation, augmenting them with other approaches that include interviews, questionnaires, focus groups and official data. In addition, an embedded ethnographer was present at the sessions, in part because the researchers wanted to know what was going on in the dance session in terms of experiences and relationships that they felt could only be obtained by these methods. They concluded that 'it is the day-to-day record of ethnographic research conducted at the Academy […] that has shed most light on the specific dance-informed processes underlying the outcomes.' (Miles & Strauss, 2008, p.28). It was these ethnographic methods that identified some of the key outcomes for the young people at The Academy noted in our case study of the criminal justice system: focus, embodied confidence, co-operative and non-verbal learning interactions, teamwork and group identification, an emotionally-charged field, inspiration and aspiration.

## Arts-based methods and hermeneutics

Recent years have seen growing interest in a more systematic approach to using artistic materials and processes as a means of inquiry (Liamputtong & Rumbold, 2008; Leavy, 2009 also Prosser & Schwartz, 1998). There has been a concomitant search for interpretative methods suited to making sense of something as rich and open-ended as art (Simons & McCormack, 2007), and this has led to renewed interest in the older tradition of hermeneutics (Kinsella, 2006; Gadamer, 1976). The term arts-based methods refers to instances where music, performance, dance, the visual

arts, poetry, and so on are used to elicit, convey and/or analyse information as part of inquiry. Hermeneutics is an umbrella term for a range of interpretative methods which acknowledge the mediated nature of human understanding: its location, historicity, the role of language and the context more broadly (Robinson & Sullivan, 1979; Lorenzer, 1978 on 'scenic understanding'; on narrative inquiry see Clandinin & Connelly, 2004). Arts-based and hermeneutic approaches are different, but can be fruitfully combined.

These techniques are by no means confined to the scholarly realm. Projective techniques such as word association tests, drawing, sentence and story completion, and photo elicitation are well-established in forensic evidence gathering, clinical psychology and market research (Reason, 2010). This broader context helps us appreciate how the limitations of more traditional methods make these approaches needed. As Gauntlett explained with respect to market research on media audiences:

> *using methods such as interviews or focus groups, researchers typically expect media consumers to provide more-or-less instant accounts, in words, of their feelings about these complex visual or audio-visual experiences. There is little reason to think that this would be an easy or straightforward task for most people. It is difficult to generate, on demand, a verbal account of a complex audio-visual experience. (Gauntlett, 2004, p.2).*

Arts- and hermeneutics-based methods in research and evaluation offer the prospect of capturing data and understanding which might escape more traditional methods. Arts-based techniques, it has been claimed, can register the haptic, multisensory, non-verbal aspects of human experience (Rapport et al, 2005). Working with hermeneutic techniques, this data can in turn be articulated verbally. These approaches have therefore been developed in response to the specific problem of communicating non-linguistic experiences, and those that are difficult to translate into words.

Simons argues that the creative arts have different roles, at distinct stages, in designing the evaluation process, interpreting the data, and communicating the findings. She cites work using a wide range of art forms: dance and movement, music and sound and painting (Simons & McCormack, 2007; Simons, 2015). Bernard notes two health projects in her *CVP Critical Review*. The Evaluation of Coventry's 50+ Creative Gymnasium used ethno-drama, photography and sharing of artefacts, while the devised theatre Penelope Project in Wisconsin, US took an arts-based action research and narrative inquiry approach, utilising visual records and artefacts alongside qualitative interviews and participant observation (Bernard *CVP Report*, Critical Review, p.8).

Meanwhile, an example of a rigorous application of the hermeneutic method to data analysis in health is Moss and O'Neill's study of the artistic and cultural experiences of older hospital patients (Moss & O'Neill, 2013). Narrative methodologies are used by Rapport et al to explore peoples' experiences of illness by analysing patients' stories, through categories such as emotive expressions, life stories or records of someone from a particular demographic group. The presentation style, environment and culture of the narrator can in this way be examined, to enhance understanding of the recovery process (Rapport et al, 2013).

Techniques such as these have been used in a number of Cultural Value Project awards, and their reports reveal the benefits and some of the difficulties associated with them. Thomson's *CVP Research Development Award* 'The experience and value of live art: what can making and editing film tell us?' used film as a means of elicitation, expression and reflection. The project saw a choreographer run a five-day dance workshop for young people. The workshop was filmed by a professional film-maker, and a selection of film was given to the young people for them to edit with a professional editor, and then use to curate a collective exhibition at Tate Britain. The film itself was analysed using conventional content analysis, and shown for interpretation by others at three separate seminar events. The choices made in editing the film were seen in part as a way to articulate the young people's view of where the value of the dance workshop lay for them. Pajaczkowska's *CVP Research Development Award* 'Empathy by design' looked at user-led textile workshops at a care home for people living with dementia, where textile practices were used to activate reminiscence about tactile, embodied encounters with materials. In Manchester and Pett's *CVP Research Development Award* 'Teenage kicks: exploring cultural value from a youth perspective', which examined how young people

create judgments of value for everyday as well as more formal cultural activities, a wide range of methods were used. These included drawing, improvised performance, collages, singing and mapping, alongside group discussion.

Finally, Froggett et al's *CVP Research Development Award* 'Public Art and Civic Engagement' used a visual matrix as an innovative combination of both arts- and hermeneutics-based methods. The visual matrix is a group-based research method which combines image elicitation with explicit hermeneutic techniques. The visual matrix comprises between 6 and 30 participants who bring their associations as a group to image-based material. A frame for the matrix is created by images related to the research question. Participants are asked to associate from the images elicited in them by the framing material, rather than concretely to discuss or analyse, as would happen in a focus group. A facilitated process is set in motion whereby further images, thoughts and feelings are produced and exchanged, with the patterned responses audio-recorded and transcribed for analysis.[71]

So, what do we learn from these uses of arts-and hermeneutics-based techniques? They are used in different ways and do not serve a single research function. In Pajaczkowska's project, textile work and design was used as an observational practice for collecting data, which revealed new understandings of the power dynamic between staff and residents in the care home. For Thomson the interpretation of the edited film proved far from straightforward, suggesting that it can be seen as an 'extended qualitative quotation' through which the participants set out their views of the experience, using materials provided for them. The use of extended quotations of participant experience is common in narrative and other forms of arts-based research, and can be revealing, but the decision not to carry out formal interviews with the participants made interpreting the editorial decisions difficult. The researchers eschewed formal interviews about the film because they would alter the dynamics of the research. This was not the case for Froggett, where the visual matrix was used with more traditional methods to understand better people's experiences and the value they attributed to the two public artworks. Whereas focus groups depend on people's ability to articulate explicit views and opinions, the visual matrix was effective in capturing their immediate and less mediated experiences of artworks, including aesthetic and emotional responses. It allowed people to explore the very personal and affective impact that an artwork might have, before articulating the shared and collective value in a more reasoned context. Meanwhile, Manchester and Pett found their arts-based methods adaptable to different groups, facilitating a breadth of expressions of cultural value, while the workshop format provided a safe space for very diverse groups of young people to express themselves. These projects used arts- and hermeneutics-based approaches in different ways, but each opened up the process of evaluation and research through a deliberate choice of these methods.

'Watching Dance: Kinaesthetic Empathy' is an AHRC-funded project that explores different ways of knowing in the context of audiences' experience of dance.[72] The research approach is multi-modal, and includes audience research and neuroscience. It is partly because of difficulties in accounting for dance using language alone that arts-based research techniques have been employed. The project suggests that the positive value of these methods consists in the mediating impact of the creative process:

> *The key points are an understanding of the importance of process, including the manner in which creative audience research is a reflective process taking place over time, and recognition that arts-based approaches offer opportunities for visual thinking that engage the brain in a different way than purely verbal responses. In other words, the process of thinking visually and creatively allows for the development of different kinds of knowledge and for individuals to express themselves in different manners, utilising different skills. (Reason,2010, p.23).*

Understanding and interpreting the meaning of artistic expressions is, of course, challenging. Hermeneutic methods are time-consuming and difficult to carry out without the necessary expertise, but that is true of most methodologies other than the most formulaic. They each contain a strong element of reflexivity, and an awareness of the impact that the researcher's subjective perspective has on the research

[71] Note to Cultural Value Project Workshop on Hermeneutics- and Arts-based Methods, University of London, 28 May 2014

[72] *www.watchingdance.org*

Some make ambitious claims that creative research methods capture and convey different, non-discursive forms of knowledge.

findings. Issues are legitimately raised about ensuring methodological rigour, scaling up for evaluation purposes, and the generalising of findings. The way to ensure methodological rigour using arts- and hermeneutics-based methods will be the same as with methods in many other areas, that is to say through ensuring good research practice resting on the principles of multi-modality (cross-tabulating different techniques and approaches) and iterability (verifying one's findings through seeking other opinions and modifying in this light). A form of iterability is at the heart of the hermeneutic circle method, where rigour is ensured by introducing fresh insights in successive cycles, while continuously testing against the original data. A range of criteria are being developed for arts-based inquiry (Simons & McCormack, 2007). As far as scalability is concerned, Froggett and colleagues have been working on testing whether the hermeneutic method that is used to interpret the matrix offers a framework for data interpretation that can be applied consistently within and across different studies, and, importantly, whether the visual matrix can be standardised enough to become a tool of evaluation (Froggett et al, 2015; Muller et al, 2015).

There may be a trade-off between scalability and the character and complexity of understanding. Although some make ambitious claims that creative research methods capture and convey different, non-discursive forms of knowledge, a more modest and compelling reading shows how the process of reflection that arts- and hermeneutics-based approaches enable access to forms of knowledge and awareness that are difficult, but not impossible, to articulate in words (on the former, Pink, 2009; Paterson, 2009). Where they are used as a means of understanding cultural engagement, these methods involve reflective meaning-making and imaginative re-visiting of the original experience, accessing thoughts that go beyond immediate responses (Reason 2010). From the point of view of researchers and evaluators, the longer engagement can yield better-quality data, more nuanced and thoughtful testimonies. For practitioners, arts- and hermeneutics-based methods can provide a way to close the traditional gap between practice and research: they may be especially productive when rooted in a multi-modal approach to research or evaluation. As Simons argues, 'in advocating the use of the creative arts in evaluation we are not claiming that it should replace other approaches to evaluation. To evaluate comprehensively or holistically may require a range of different approaches.' (Simons & McCormack, 2007, p.294).

The benefits of this can be seen in Clarke et al's *CVP Research Development Award* on 'Music, empathy and cultural understanding.' The aim of the project was to interrogate the idea that music affords insights into other consciousnesses and subjectivities, and that this has important potential for cultural understanding. The work drew on a wide literature that included neuroscience and psychology, ethnomethodological and micro-social approaches to music in everyday life, to the hermeneutic methods of analytical and cultural musicology. As they explained at a Cultural Value Project workshop, their aim was not to avoid the challenge of offering an understanding of what is going on, but to base that understanding on observable practices and attitudes that are grounded in people's actual and everyday musical practices.[73]

## Approaches from science and medicine

This section highlights some approaches to research and evaluation that use scientific methods, as well as scientific findings that may throw light on cultural experience and cultural value. We have already considered how many regard experimental research as representing the gold standard of quality in research, engendering confidence in the robustness of evidence and the reliability and validity of findings. Even here there are significant differences between randomised controlled trials, experiments and quasi-experiments. It is very doubtful that the conditions of a genuine experiment, let alone an RCT, can be satisfied when testing the effects of art and culture. Cultural experiences take place in real-life contexts, with their effects subject to a great many confounding factors, meaning that variables can rarely be isolated in the way required by a genuine experiment. Nor is random assignment to treatment and control groups, as required by RCTs, generally feasible. As a result, research tends to take the form of quasi-experimental studies, defined as lacking one or more components of a true experiment: pre- and post-test design, a treatment group and a control group, and random assignment of study participants. In quasi-experimental studies on the

[73] Note to Cultural Value Project Workshop on Hermeneutics- and Arts-based Methods, University of London, 28 May 2014

It is very doubtful that the conditions of a genuine experiment, let alone an RCT, can be satisfied when testing the effects of art and culture.

value of culture, the use of other than random methods of assignment is the most common difference.

A good example is an evaluation of the health benefits of a participative community singing programme for older people. The controlled experiment compared participants and non-participants after the end of a 12-week programme, and again 3 months later. The measurement tools used were clinical practice questionnaires: York SF-12, which measures health-related quality of life by asking people to rate their own health under a number of headings containing physical and mental health components, the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale, which measures anxiety and depression, and the Euroqol Five Dimensional Scale, which asks people to put a value on their health, and which can be used when calculating the costs of health and social care in supporting different health states (Clift et al, 2012). Scales of this kind can be used with or without control groups. Eastern and Coastal Kent Primary Care Trust funded a project in which a network of singing groups across East Kent involved people with a history of severe and enduring mental health issues. The evaluation used a validated clinical assessment questionnaire (CORE), supplemented by qualitative feedback. The questionnaire provides an overall measure of 'mental distress', with an established clinical cut-off point and clinically significant change scores (Clift & Morrison, 2011). It is in the arts and health field where quasi-experimental methods are particularly visible, with the Time-Slips programme, considered in the case study of carers, another good example, with intervention and control care homes matched so that the two groups were alike in terms of other variables (Fritsch et al, 2009).

Recent years have seen an increase in the popularity of wellbeing scales. The best-known are the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS), used to measure positive mental health, the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule, used to measure affects, and the multi-dimensional Ryff Psychological Well-Being Scales. A practical example of how such wellbeing can be applied to cultural value is the UCL Museum Wellbeing Measures Toolkit, used to assess levels of wellbeing arising from participation in museum and gallery activities (Thomson & Chatterjee, 2013). The *CVP Research Development Award* led by Davis provides further insight into the usefulness of these measures for the value of arts and cultural engagement, and has led to specific methodological conclusions regarding the suitability of certain scales for interventions for people suffering from low mood. Davis et al concluded that 'the specific benefit seen to purpose in life does not translate into improved general wellbeing as measured by the commonly used, short but over-simplified WEMWBS. It is therefore important that when the GiR [Get into Reading] model is evaluated in the future, specific features of psychological wellbeing are measured using sensitive and appropriate tools such as the Ryff scales.' (Davis *CVP Report*, p.10).

There are quasi-experimental studies which use measures of physiological responses and biometric data directly to examine the effects of arts and culture. Tröndle and Tschacher argue that it is both possible and productive to track the 'physiology of phenomenology' in the effects of artworks, and attempted to do so in a five-year research project, 'eMotion – mapping museum experience.' The goal was to assess the effects that artworks had on museum visitors, and it did so by testing hypotheses such as 'does a famous work attract more attention than a less renowned one, and a "loud" artwork more than a subtle one? Do similar artworks generate similar visitor reactions? Does an artwork lose its attraction if it is manipulated?' They used technologies that allowed them to track visitors' physical movement, and to measure physiological markers such as heart rate and skin conductance. They also gathered qualitative data on the visitors' subjective assessments of their museum experience, which allowed them to demonstrate strong correlations between artworks, the physical reactions of the visitors, their spatial behaviour and aesthetic ratings (Tröndle & Tschacher, 2012). There is a body of work in psychology and neuroscience relating to museum object handling that looks at the relationship between sense of touch, multi-sensory experiences and psychological and physiological states (Chatterjee & Noble, 2013). A question for evaluation, as opposed to that of understanding the physiological processes, is what physiological information such as this adds when it correlates closely with the qualitative findings.

Neuroscientific research in arts participation has also been gaining popularity in recent years. Freedberg and Ramachandran are the best-known proponents of studying the brain and neural process in relation to aesthetic experiences,

particularly in the visual arts (Freedberg & Gallese, 2007; Ramachandran & Hirstein, 1999). Neuromusical research has also received sustained attention over the last two decades, and the Musical Brain Imaging Research Database (*MusicBIRD*) contains close to 500 studies (Upitis, 2011, p.28).

The AESOP framework, where arts activities in health are treated as complex interventions, to be assessed in line with the Medical Research Council's guidelines for developing and evaluating complex interventions (Fancourt & Joss, 2014), seeks to situate arts and health research in relation to experimental standards. As we have observed, these mostly (and for good reasons) take the form of quasi-experimental studies. The small scale and relatively limited levels of funding mean that experimental approaches are not well represented in the awards made by the Cultural Value Project, but there are attempts to use elements of experimental design. For instance, Clarke et al's *CVP Research Development Award* on empathy and cultural understanding, and Rumbold's *CVP Research Development Award* on the uses of poetry, each considered elsewhere, use pre-intervention and post-intervention comparisons, and contrast treated and non-treated groups to gauge the effect of arts interventions.

The question of causality inevitably surfaces here. The fact that we cannot run experiments, because we cannot feasibly come up with scenarios where the counterfactual logics can be tested, makes it impossible to establish causality in the traditional sense. Kelly et al do, however, in the Critical Review considered in our chapter on *Health, ageing and wellbeing*, draw attention to the Hill criteria, which seek to meet the challenge of demonstrating causality without experiments in the complex area of public health research. One possible conclusion is that it is a mistake to seek to demonstrate causality in relation to cultural engagement, and that we should instead focus on refining our correlational and associational models. We might, alternatively, think again about the received model of causal relations and impact assessment. This latter is the approach being taken by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, in relation to valuing ecosystem services (DEFRA, 2007). A further example is in a study commissioned by the Department for International Development. Recognising that only 5 per cent of development programmes supported by donors such as DFID are suitable for randomised controlled trials, the study proposes a more suitable model for assessing causal impact in complex interventions. It identifies approaches to causal inference that have been overlooked in past evaluation: multiple causality and configurations, and theory-based evaluation that can be used to analyse causal mechanisms. In an important formulation, the study argues that these approaches make it possible to attribute 'contributory causes' to development interventions.

> *They 'work' as part of a causal package in combination with other 'helping factors' such as stakeholder behaviour, related programmes and policies, institutional capacities, cultural factors or socio-economic trends. Designs and methods for IE [Impact Evaluations] need to be able to unpick these causal packages […]. This also has implications for the kind of evaluation questions that can usefully be asked. It is often more informative to ask: 'Did the intervention make a difference?' which allows space for combinations of causes rather than 'Did the intervention work?' which expects an intervention to be a cause acting on its own. (Stern, E. et al, 2012, p.ii).*

Although this model of contributory causes is not currently widely accepted in mainstream evaluation, it might help to overcome the conceptual limitations within the 'what works?' model, which, according to its critics (McNeill, 2006 and 2009; Porporino, 2010), unduly isolates interventions that in reality take place in complex processes of change, where multiple factors come into play simultaneously and at different times. In such changes, asking whether the intervention 'worked' against some specific target may miss what actually happened, and what difference was brought about. The model of contributory causes thus promises a more accurate account of how complex transformations actually take place.

A final observation. Many of the scientific methods discussed in this section bring a fresh perspective to investigating the effects of arts and culture. They may be thought to have the advantage of fitting these effects within the conventional hierarchy of evidence but, irrespective of that, they are also compelling in testifying to the profound effects, intensity and visceral nature of aesthetic, artistic and cultural responses. Their suitability to register the effects of art and culture may, nonetheless, be questioned on the grounds of fit between the subject matter under investigation and the methods

There seems to be real value in extending the use of ethnographic, arts-based and network analysis approaches. We have encouraged exploration of the application of cohort health studies which have yielded interesting findings in other countries, the use of digital media for capturing participation and value, and the Balanced Scorecard approach. We have also suggested the principles which need to underpin a framework for using and combining these various approaches.

chosen. They are legitimately designed to capture physical, physiological changes and psychometric transformation, but this constitutes only a partial approach to understanding the value of arts and culture. It is therefore not surprising that those who use these methods tend to supplement them with qualitative analysis. The challenge, in what is an innovative area of work with considerable potential, is to build an understanding in which physiological and qualitative findings augment and enrich each other.

## Methods and approaches: some conclusions

This chapter has presented an overview of a wide range of methods, methodologies and types of evidence used in relation to cultural value, and it started from the need to distinguish between the different yet overlapping objectives of research, formative evaluation and summative evaluation, and valuing. We have been able to point to interesting methodological innovations that originated in awards from the Cultural Value Project, such as the visual matrix (Froggett), the hybrid model of economic valuation (Bakhshi, Fujiwara et al), and the configurative model of cultural value using constellation mapping (Gillespie). We have also discussed innovative approaches which have been developed elsewhere, which offer a good deal of promise; for example a method of rapid ethnographic assessment, the model of heritage value and assessment processes from the Getty work, Brown's development of survey-based methodologies to capture the 'intrinsic' impact of arts experience, and the very interesting framework for assessing the quality of arts and cultural production that was developed and piloted in the Manchester Metrics project. Innovation, of course, is not a pre-requisite for developing evaluation methods, and we have explored the potential of a wide range of existing approaches, and there seems to be real value in extending the use of ethnographic, arts-based and network analysis approaches. We have encouraged exploration of the application of cohort health studies which have yielded interesting findings in other countries, the use of digital media for capturing participation and value, and the Balanced Scorecard approach. We have also suggested the principles which need to underpin a framework for using and combining these various approaches.

Our starting point has been an in-principle parity of methods and of key paradigms. As we wrote in the Introduction to the Cultural Value Project in its early days, 'qualitative evidence should not be seen as a fall-back position when quantitative is not available – there will be no prioritising of one over the other, but rather recognition of the need to seek the most appropriate and robust evidence.' The issue of whether and how the qualitative and quantitative paradigms are commensurate, and whether they can be combined, is one that continues to be discussed. When we look at the work funded by the Cultural Value Project, and the other research upon which we have drawn, we find ourselves in agreement with Denzin and colleagues, when they wrote that 'the information may be quantitative or qualitative. Responsive evaluation does not rule out quantitative modes, as is mistakenly believed by many, but deals with whatever information is responsive to the unresolved' (Denzin, 2000, p.174). Indeed, methodological innovation may consist in the combining of existing methods, paradigms and methodologies, rather than necessarily in inventing new methods as such.

It is, of course, the case that many and perhaps most of the metrics and ways of organising data that are currently used in the evaluation of cultural value originate in judgments. Not judgments about the units and methods of analysis, which all quantitative evidence involves, but judgments in the sense of how answers to what were originally qualitative questions are packaged up into units which make comparison possible. This does not make metrics inappropriate, but it does require us to be aware in our analyses of the process that has produced them. Many methodologies discussed in this chapter contain a strong element of personal reflexivity, that is to say an acceptance that the point of view of the researcher and the research participants will be imprinted on the findings. This should be seen not as a problem to be eliminated, but as an asset for the kind of understandings that are being sought. Taking account of the subjectivity of the researcher and the research participants is, in any case, now common practice in many strands of qualitative research, precisely as a way of validating research findings. Intersubjective validation and testing consists in exposing findings to scrutiny, by fellow researchers and the community described in the research. In this sense, subjectivity does not imply subjectivism – far from it.

We have proposed that an assessment of methods and methodologies be made on the basis of how robust, rigorous and appropriate they are. This implies that an account

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Methodologies might be adapted and changed according to the subject matter at hand.

can be held to be 'valid or true if it represents accurately those features of the phenomenon that it is intended to describe, explain or theorise' (Hammersley, 1992, p.69). It follows that researchers need to work 'between data and theoretical ideas', and that methodologies might be adapted and changed according to the subject matter at hand, rather than being 'followed like recipes, without deviation from the established procedures' (Rapport et al, p.40). The continuing work to align data and theory is a strength and a source of explanatory power in research into cultural value. Although decisions will need to be made about the trade-off between being faithful to what is being evaluated on the one hand, and the benefits of commensurability for benchmarking purposes on the other, tailoring evaluation procedures to objectives and aims may constitute a key element in improving the quality of evaluation practices.

## KEY POINTS FROM CHAPTER

- In this chapter we consider methodological approaches that are used to assess the value of art and culture. Identifying what happens in cultural experiences is not an easy task. The Cultural Value Project has played an important role in advancing thinking about how to capture as well as understand cultural value, but methodologies are not applicable abstractions to be followed like a recipe, and this report cannot offer a toolkit for cultural value.
- Research, evaluation and valuing are not the same activity, yet they seem to occupy much of the same terrain when we talk about arts and culture. Research carried out in an academic setting aims broadly at improving our understanding of how cultural value is constituted and captured. Evaluations, on the other hand, are usually intended to assess the effects and outcomes of phenomena such as events, organisations or national government spend, against their objectives.
- Funders are currently seen as the principal drivers of evaluation: we call in the report for the wider application or development of evaluation as a tool within the cultural sector itself, rather than as something carried out just for accountability purposes. Formative and participatory evaluation, as opposed to summative evaluation at the end, is less well developed and needs more attention.
- It is essential that evaluation models become more sensitive to what it is that they are evaluating, and amongst several promising examples that we highlight is the Balanced Scorecard approach, which combines financial indicators with more qualitative measures concerning organisational culture and performance. It might be helpful for cultural organisations, which need to balance the sometimes contradictory interests of a broad range of stakeholders – artists, communities, funders, the public, employees and so on.
- We question the hierarchy of evidence that sees experimental methods and randomised controlled trials as the gold standard even in areas where these cannot effectively be applied, because of the difficulty in isolating variables in complex situations. Qualitative research (with the depth that it gives) need not be less rigorous than quantitative, experimental studies (with the breadth that they provide), but it operates with different criteria of rigour. Qualitative research is far more suited to certain research purposes, and quantitative research is better suited to others. The issue is the character of the knowledge and understanding that is being sought, because each approach will have its own benefits and drawbacks.
- Some of these approaches are more scalable than others, yet the fact that greater understanding often emerges from close case studies should encourage the development of ways of generalising from them. Intense and rigorous case studies are

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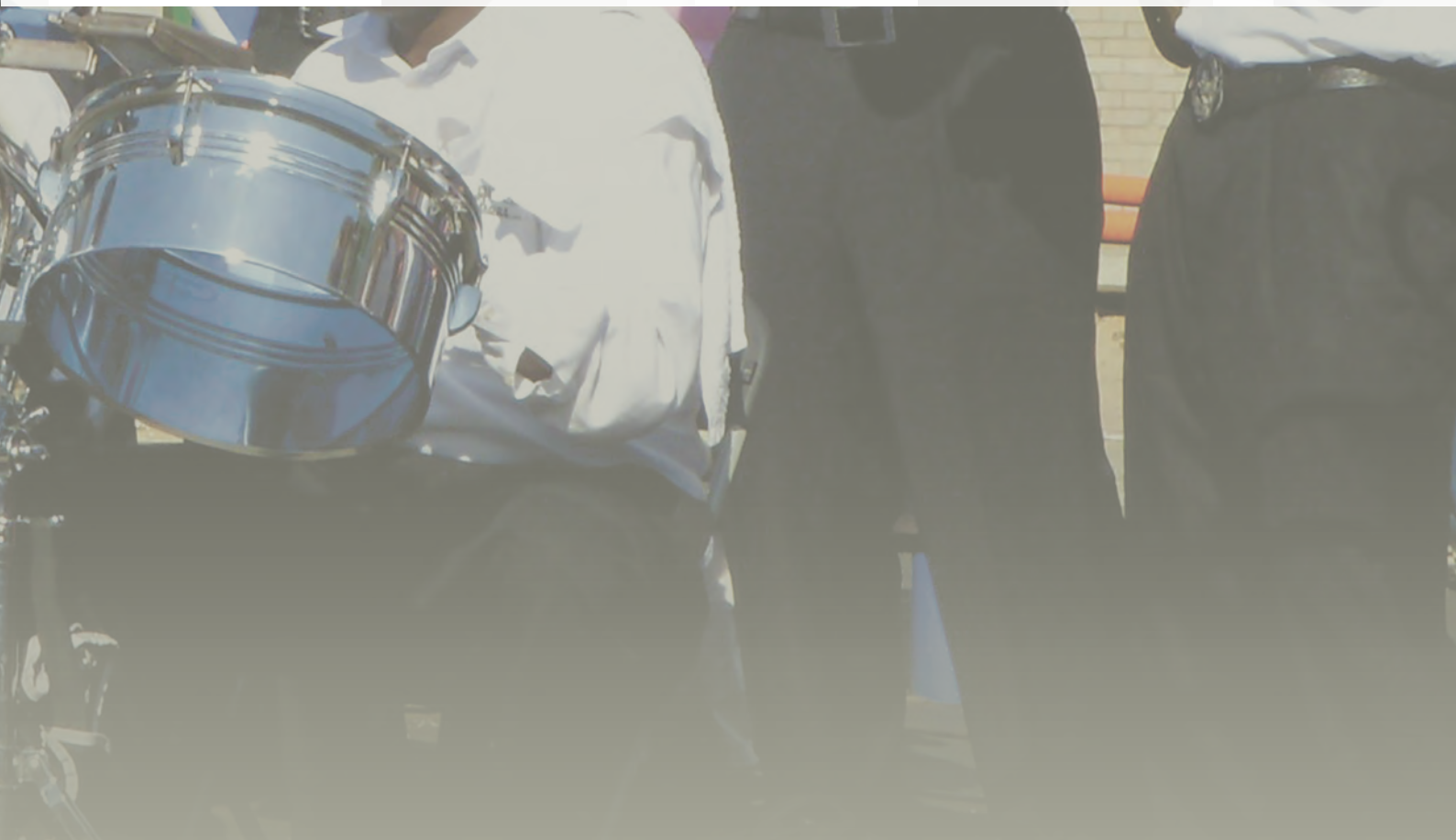
valid and important notwithstanding the difficulties of scaling up the approaches. This is one of the great strengths of what the arts and humanities bring to society's knowledge and understanding.. Extrapolation from case studies might be the first step towards creating both scalable and sensitive evaluation methods, enabling us better to understand the underlying process and those aspects which matter and are shared across different contexts.

- Too much evaluation of the effects of arts and culture does not meet the necessary standards of rigour in specification and research design, especially but not only in the use of qualitative methods. The oft-cited observation that data is not the plural of anecdote has to be repeated here. The high research standards visible in many of the studies upon which we draw in this report needs to become much more the norm across both research and evaluation.
- There is also an emerging recognition of the need to be explicit about objectives. Evaluations can serve different purposes, such as to measure and benchmark performance, to establish good practice, to develop new practitioner understanding and to facilitate learning. Being transparent about one's objectives, and what a given evaluation seeks to accomplish, will help the choice of appropriate approaches, types of evidence and methods.
- The chapter explores examples of some of the significant methodologies that are being developed for evaluating the effects of arts and cultural engagement. These include social science research methods, approaches from economics, and others derived from ethnography and network analysis.
- The Cultural Value Project has made a significant contribution to economic valuation methodologies through the research development award that compared the use of stated preference and subjective wellbeing valuation methods to the cultural sector, refined the methods and also developed an innovative hybrid approach combining the two. These methods are recognised by the Treasury's Green Book for the evaluation of public expenditure decisions.
- We argue that ethnographic techniques offer clear advantages to arts organisations wishing to supplement more traditional evaluation tools such as exit questionnaires and on-line surveys, while sustained ethnographic approaches offer even more for evaluation and research.
- We also consider arts-based methods which use music, performance, dance, visual arts, poetry and so on to elicit, convey and/or analyse information as a part of inquiry, as well as hermeneutic interpretative methods. In addition, arts-based techniques can, arguably, register the non-verbal aspects of human experience, something which is obviously important in cultural experience, while hermeneutic techniques can help articulate these verbally.
- We also look at the potential of approaches from science and medicine, including in evaluating the health benefits of arts interventions, the use of wellbeing scales to measure positive mental health, the direct capturing of physiological responses and biometric data to examine the effects of arts and culture, and the application of neuroscience methods. In discussing these approaches we also reflect on the question of causality in the absence of an ability to conduct experiments.
- Accounting for human experiences of art and culture calls for multi-criteria analyses and a range of approaches, in order to span the depth and the breadth of research. The Cultural Value Project has funded work that has used a wide range of established methodologies, and has also identified areas of real innovation and potential.



PART 4

# Conclusion



# CHAPTER 10

## CONCLUSIONS AND LOOKING FORWARD

The Cultural Value Project was established, as we explained at the start of this report, with precise objectives. These were to identify the various components of cultural value across a variety of contexts and within a unified approach, and to consider and develop methodologies that might be used to assess those dimensions of cultural value. It has led us on a journey, in which we have considered how the concept of cultural value has emerged, and the struggles to give it coherent meaning, through debates that have often been as much about influencing policy as about any more detached and theory-driven understandings.

We have identified a range of components of cultural value, probing familiar ones in what have at times been unfamiliar ways, and also giving prominence to some whose importance has been too little acknowledged. We have also examined the varying objectives of evaluation and research, and explored the range of methodologies that have been and might be deployed, to gather the evidence and understandings through which those components might be better captured. In all of this we have drawn substantially on the work undertaken through the many awards made by the Cultural Value Project, on the discussion and ideas that emerged from the range of symposia, workshops and events that we organised, and on selective use of a much wider research literature, to augment the inevitably uneven topic distribution of Cultural Value Project awards.

The Executive Summary presents a succinct overview of some of the key findings and other conclusions in this report, and there is no need to repeat them here. Instead, we shall offer some concluding reflections, and consider how the work might best be taken forward. Through the awards and wider

**Below:** A member of the public trying out the Near Field Communication technology at the City Hall London exhibition in July 2014; Credit: Pablo and Roxana Allison



Conventional discourse, above all when directed to advocacy for purposes of public funding, has often given pride of place to benefits that were thought to resonate with governments, and this may have deflected analytical attention away from dimensions of equal or perhaps even greater overall importance.

literature, we have considered the importance of many of the key areas of difference that the arts and culture make, and in so doing we have endorsed their importance in spheres such as the economy, urban society, the health and wellbeing of individuals, and education. On each of these, however, we have found reason to question or at least nuance some of the benefits that are conventionally claimed, not in order to deny their relevance, but rather to probe the confidence with which the claims are made.

**Shifting focus**

Conventional discourse, above all when directed to advocacy for purposes of public funding, has often given pride of place to benefits that were thought to resonate with governments, and this may have deflected analytical attention away from dimensions of equal or perhaps even greater overall importance. Thus, when examining the benefits of arts and culture for the economy, we have emphasised the way that innovation is fostered through network, knowledge and talent spillovers from the creative sector to the broader economy, and the way that a vibrant cultural infrastructure provides the setting both for the commercial creative industries, and an environment capable of attracting talent and inward investment. The economic impacts that are more conventionally deployed in arguments to government remain powerful, but they are also more problematic when the methods and sources of evidence on which they are based are scrutinised perhaps less in the case of the major national-level data, but more when considering local or organisational impact studies that are not always conducted according to the best economic principles for such work.

This same rebalancing, and one which again relates to the way that individuals are affected by arts and cultural engagement, can be seen in the urban sphere, where large-scale, culture-led regeneration projects are more ambiguous in their effects on urban societies than small-scale, distributed arts assets, which are better embedded within their communities, rather than being disruptive of them. In the course of our briefer note on education, we have questioned whether the evidence of a link between arts education in schools and educational attainment (according to standard tests) is as significant as is claimed, while nonetheless underlining its considerable contribution to the development of a range of skills and capacities that build the platform on which wider learning can take place.

Some of the components of cultural value around which the report has been organised may therefore be familiar ones, though our examination of them involves some significant shifts of emphasis. On the other hand, in stressing the importance of the experience of arts and culture itself, and in presenting as key components the ways in which this affects individuals' capacity for reflection and behaviour as citizens, our intention has been to augment those more familiar effects with ones that have been neglected in the dominant discourses rather than to replace them. The renewed emphasis on experience, however, also provides a thread that can be traced through the other components and the methodologies considered in the report.

If we turn to more precise examples, such as that of arts in the criminal justice system, which was the subject of a case study in the chapter on the reflective individual, we find that the benefits need to be sought in ways that are sensitive to the potential of the activity and the context in which it is set. If we ask that arts in prisons reduces re-offending, we find that the many variables involved in influencing this outcome make it very hard to isolate the effectiveness of any single one, especially when that activity will be less powerful in the short-term than factors such as employment, personal relationships and housing. Yet the evidence is that arts interventions across the criminal justice system make a major contribution to helping individuals form positive identities, build new narratives and imagine another self with other options. Desistance from crime is a long journey, and developing in these ways is thought to be critical to that journey, indeed critical to whether that journey is even embarked upon.

Arts and cultural activity and engagement brings with it many direct and sometimes immediate benefits to the economy and society, as we have seen frequently through the report. But we draw from the project the further conclusion that one of the most significant ways in which they bring value to individuals and society is by creating the conditions for change, with a myriad of spillover effects that include an openness, a space for experimentation and risk-taking at the personal, social and economic levels, an ability to reflect in a safer and less direct way on personal, community and societal challenges, and much else. These changes may involve significant personal transformations, as we have seen in a number of places in the report, such as through improved self-understanding and a

Creating the context and conditions for change is a fundamental benefit of cultural engagement. Its consequences flow through so many areas [...] that its importance must be grasped even where the effects may not be as susceptible to conventional forms of measurement, and need to be evidenced in other ways.

breaking of routine ways of thinking, and they may also affect how we relate to others through increased empathy. Cultural engagement can also, of course, lead to assertion of identity in ways that may create separation, as we saw in the discussion of the role of culture in conflict and post-conflict situations.

Not all change will be of this magnitude, of course, but creating the context and conditions for change is a fundamental benefit of cultural engagement. Its consequences flow through so many areas – from innovation to mental health, from dealing with climate change to coping with care responsibilities, from a workforce with the skills to thrive in the face of ambiguity and uncertainty to an ability to accept and enjoy the presence of difference within communities and societies – that its importance must be grasped even where the effects may not be as susceptible to conventional forms of measurement, and need to be evidenced in other ways. These various strands of the report find their starting point in the chapter on the reflective individual, but the threads are woven through the other components, and we have found them to be an underlying element in many of the benefits identified there.

We have from the outset described the Cultural Value Project as being about 'the value to individuals and to society'. The report has confirmed the importance of that distinction. There are, indeed, a wide range of benefits that can be identified, evidenced and appreciated at the level of the individual but, as far as social outcomes (and many of the economic ones) are concerned, these cannot be inferred from the mere aggregation of individual benefits. The relational and collective changes, the impacts on community cohesion and identity, the systems and ecologies through which the effects of arts and culture move, are all more than an aggregation of changes for individuals. As we observed at the start of the report, the effects of cultural engagement may originate in individual experience, but they certainly do not end there. Methodologies for evaluation that are limited to the individual can in many cases, as we have seen, be no more than partial.

### Public policy and public funding

At an early stage of the project, when we established that its starting point should not be the justification of public funding for some elements of arts and culture, we insisted on the need for our research to escape the artificial distinctions between commercial, amateur and publicly-funded engagement. As we have argued, emphasis on the last of these leads to a concentration on the benefits thought to have most traction with the government of the day, and a neglect of others which might have longer-term significance. Furthermore, by broadening the world of cultural value, we might also influence government policy in areas other than direct subsidy to the arts: examples amongst many include planning policy and the survival of the small live music venues that are critical to the music economy, the facilitating of affordable studio spaces to keep artists and designers in creative districts where their presence is so important to the local ecology, the management of prisoners and ex-offenders, the place of the arts in school education, and much else.

Public policy and public funding are a crucial part of the overall landscape occupied by arts and culture, and the ways that they are able to achieve the many effects identified in this report. If the report is not directed primarily at making the case for public funding it is, nonetheless, hoped that those making such a case will have found in it relevant material and helpful arguments. The report is, however, not an advocacy document, but the outcome of a research project. As such it has sought to evaluate the case for the value of the arts on the basis of the arguments, and the evidence that we have found through our funded reports and in a wider literature. This means accepting where arguments are weak, methodologies unsatisfactory or evidence insubstantial. When we say that we hope that the Cultural Value Project will play a role in generating a more grown-up conversation about why the arts matter, this only in part means broadening the scope of the difference we say that they make. It also means accepting when conventional claims turn out to be hard to substantiate.

### Differences between art forms

It might sometimes appear to those from outside the academic world that researchers rarely close the page on an area of investigation without pointing to the need for more research. Any challenging research in underexplored areas throws up new questions, identifies roads less well travelled, and makes clear the limitations of the new knowledge. The Cultural Value Project is no different in this respect, especially given its

The impacts on community cohesion and identity, the systems and ecologies through which the effects of arts and culture move, are all more than an aggregation of changes for individuals.

concern to broaden the areas, approaches and methodologies through which we seek to understand cultural value.

A particularly challenging question, especially given the essentially ostensive and inclusive character of the field that we have explored, is whether every form of art and culture has the effects attributed to them collectively. It would be unlikely for the answer to that question to be yes, but research to establish what it is that is specific to any particular cultural form is not extensive, while projects or analyses that compare cultural forms is very rare indeed. Bungay's Critical Review of studies on arts in clinical and therapeutic settings found that music overwhelmingly dominated the studies, but that little or no attention was given as to why music was chosen over other art forms, though we might ask whether the passivity of listening might have been an unspoken motive. At various points through the report we find projects that establish what is thought to be special about literature, whether in terms of reading aloud in the project led by Davis, or poetry in that led by Rumbold. Others that seek theoretically or practically to capture why music has the effects attributed to it, whether in establishing empathy across cultures (as in the work led by Clarke) or influencing classical music taste (in that led by Rimmer). Others still show how collecting and curation make distinctive the object-led world of museums and are seen to generate the effects captured in the project led by Dodd on the cultural value of museums. Heritage, meanwhile, has been associated with the formation and configuration of identities in the projects led by O'Sullivan on faith buildings in Leicester and by Ashley on a Sikh war memorial near Brighton, as well as through intangible heritage in the work on the Historical Societies of the Outer Hebrides in the project led by Beel. When considering art in prisons, we asked whether collaborative art forms might have different effects on those involved than individual ones, especially when the latter are carried out in the cell; we encountered the distinctive somatic experiences of dance in the project led by Winter, and its discipline and intensity were described in the study of the Leeds work with young people at risk of offending, in the ethnographic evaluation considered in Chapter 3. With respect to the role of culture in post-conflict societies, we asked whether durable cultural forms (such as museums, archives and monuments) might have quite different effects on a reconciliation process than ephemeral forms such as festivals, art practice and street theatre, because of the tendency of the former to articulate a fixed view of the past, while the latter was able to respond to shifting needs and understandings. While asking about the durable we need to consider the relative importance of different forms of major new infrastructure in urban regeneration, whether concert halls, art museums and theatres all have the same consequences for creating lively cultural districts, let alone the role of small-scale spaces such as artists' studios and small live-music venues. The list could go on, and each of these projects raises very important questions. Nonetheless, as with all analysis that rests on comparisons that remain tacit, only research that is built around making those comparisons explicit can help us move forward in understanding the different effects that might be produced by different art and cultural forms.

**Other areas neglected by research**

If the ways in which these effects are produced is a particularly striking area where research is needed, the report has thrown up many others. Research has effectively probed the methods used in many economic impact studies, and the claims made for them, and it has also questioned and nuanced the effects of major culture-led urban regeneration projects, but we need far more work in areas that we have highlighted as possibly being of greater importance, such as the ways in which arts and culture supports the creative industries, and how cultural vibrancy underpins an innovative economy and society, along with the potential for small-scale arts and cultural assets to sustain stable and low-stress urban communities. We might add a range of big questions about the less tangible psychological effects of cultural engagement, for example its effects on the capacity for empathy or in aiding recovery from mental health problems. Some of the particularly interesting themes that we have highlighted in this report are ones where research remains at an early stage, and needs to be developed further. If these kinds of question have been insufficiently studied, it is because they are more difficult to research, and probably also because their complexity makes them less striking for short-term advocacy.

When we say that we hope that the Cultural Value Project will play a role in generating a more grown-up conversation about why the arts matter, this only in part means broadening the scope of the difference we say that they make. It also means accepting when conventional claims turn out to be hard to substantiate.

There are other areas which we need to understand far more than we do now, if we are to embrace the breadth of cultural value and the way that it is derived from different modes of access. In spite of seeking to include fully the experience of predominantly commercial art forms or commercial provision, such as film, music festivals and video games, the awards that were made and the wider research literature were very limited. Meanwhile, the growth of digital engagement has only begun to be the subject of serious research, yet it is becoming increasingly important, whether by changing the way that commercial culture is accessed, for example through downloads and streaming, by enhancing existing trends towards cultural experience in the home and while travelling, and by making it easier for people to participate actively in creative communities through specialist online environments, of which the awards made to study SoundCloud and Machinima are rare examples. If these are general lacunae in existing research, there are more precise examples in the report. One is the long-term impact for health of sustained cultural engagement, where studies in the Nordic countries have identified important issues that we are currently unable to research for the UK. Gordon-Nesbitt's *CVP Report* identifies the data sets that might be developed for this purpose, but real progress will not be made until consistent and stable cultural questions are included in health and cohort studies, so that longitudinal data can be obtained. We call for that to be done.

**Methodologies**

These considerations lead us to reflect on wider issues of methodology which play an important part in this report. Research and evaluation may draw on similar evidence and methodologies but, as we have shown, generally have different objectives. Evaluation in the cultural sector has been too closely tied to meeting the accountability needs of funders, which has had the effect of weakening its ability to inform and support cultural practitioners and organisations. We have argued strongly for multi-criteria evaluation that presents a range of relevant outcomes wherever that is appropriate, and it is indeed appropriate for most evaluations of cultural activity and engagement. Such evaluation is in general not suited to accountability, which often needs headline results, often single measures and perhaps weighted aggregate measures, and this is why it is important that evaluation should not be primarily thought of as being undertaken for the purposes of accountability.

We make the case for a much broader approach to evaluation that could deliver these broader benefits, while often at the same time providing more meaningful information for funders. If this is to happen then it is important that there is greater commitment to the evaluation of the principal objectives of arts and cultural activities, because only when these are included will the process of evaluation command the respect amongst practitioners and providers that is needed, for the evaluation of other outcomes to be seen as more than just a formal requirement. It also means that the relationship between research and evaluation should be strengthened; if the objective of research is to improve our understanding, and if evaluation aims to provide more meaningful and relevant information, then there clearly is an overlap between the two activities, not just in their methods but aspirations as well. There is a great deal of potential if evaluation is seen, as it often but not routinely is, as a valuable tool within both the research community and the arts and cultural world.

We explore the range of methods that are available to evaluate and research the effects, at the individual and more collective levels, of engagement with arts and culture. In doing so we question the hierarchy of evidence that places experimental methods in general, and randomised controlled trials in particular, at the top, and sees all others as less adequate. The arts and culture operate in a world of complex variables and complex outcomes, where these kinds of experimental methods can rarely be applied effectively without losing sight of the very phenomena being explored. We conclude that arts and humanities research methods are well-specified and rigorous, and capable of addressing these requirements. We therefore call for a broad approach to evaluation and research methodologies, one that does not presume a hierarchy in which quantitative evidence and methods are necessarily more rigorous than qualitative, or in which controlled experiments are necessarily more convincing than richer multi-variable studies. We should recognise the potential, but also the

Evaluation in the cultural sector has been too closely tied to meeting the accountability needs of funders, which has had the effect of weakening its ability to inform and support cultural practitioners and organisations.

limitations, of approaches such as those emerging from neuroscience and medicine, as well as correlational, large-scale statistical studies. We should acknowledge the standard methods of social science such as surveys and interviews, while also remaining open to small-scale, introspective and reflexive studies.

The issue should not be a hierarchy of methodologies, but the appropriateness of each to what is being studied, and the rigorous way in which each is applied. As our consideration not only of methodologies but also of their components makes clear, however, too much evaluation of the effects of arts and culture does not meet these standards of rigour in specification and research design, especially but not only in the use of qualitative methods. The much-cited observation that 'data is not the plural of anecdote' has to be repeated here. If arts and humanities methods are capable of capturing many of the more complex effects of arts and cultural engagement, and we argue strongly that they are, then the high research standards visible in many of the studies needs to become much more the norm across both research and evaluation.

We have funded work that has used a wide range of established methodologies, and have also identified areas of real innovation and potential. These particularly include the use of ethnographic methods, arts-based and hermeneutic approaches, and economic valuation methodologies, in all of which we have funded research that contributes in innovative ways, as does some of the other work on which we have drawn. We recognise that some of these approaches are more scalable than others, yet the fact that greater understanding often emerges from close case studies should encourage us to develop ways of generalising from them. We argue that intense and rigorous case studies are valid and important, notwithstanding the difficulties of scaling-up approaches of this kind. This, surely, is one of the great strengths of what the arts and humanities bring to society's knowledge and understanding. And we are interested in understanding and not simply measuring, even if the latter remains important where it contributes to that understanding. Extrapolation from case studies might be the first step towards creating both scalable and sensitive evaluation methods, enabling us better to understand the underlying process, and those aspects which matter and are shared across different contexts. In this way, case studies might be an important element in constructing better evaluation frameworks, because they will be underpinned by better understanding.

There was no expectation at the outset of the Cultural Value Project that we would come up with a single phenomenon called cultural value, susceptible to measurement, or even evaluation, by simple techniques, even if sophisticated methodologies exist for capturing some dimensions of what we understand by cultural value. A good example are the economic valuation methodologies, with respect to which the project has made an important contribution, but few are the economists (especially the cultural economists) who would claim that these methodologies can themselves articulate the full range of cultural value. Ecological, multi-component and multi-level models rather than one-dimensional ones are therefore needed, because of the complex nature of the effects of cultural engagement, themselves a function of the dynamic processes by which the individual, the community and the contexts affect each other.

**Observatory for Cultural Value**

In the short time since the Cultural Value Project was launched, there has been a growth of interest in how we identify the benefits that arts and culture bring to individuals and to society, and we have been pleased to have contributed constructively to thinking, language and discourses, even in advance of this report's publication. The AHRC imaginatively seized the research initiative, as something genuinely separate from advocacy, in a way that only a research organisation can. There is now a need to maintain the critical academic research focus in this area. With this in mind, we conclude by recommending that the AHRC consider establishing something that might be thought of as an Observatory for Cultural Value. This would be located in a university and, with modest staffing, be tasked with identifying the research activities, outputs and needs in the areas covered by this report; publishing surveys and overviews, maintaining a database of relevant work (taking into account existing activities in this area, and ensuring that these are embraced rather than duplicated);

and recommending to the AHRC and other funders initiatives for further research that may be needed. This Observatory for Cultural Value need not constitute a major resource commitment, and could perhaps be undertaken with one or more partners drawn from the cultural sector or the research sectors. Its character would make it necessarily an interdisciplinary initiative led by the arts and humanities. In the context of the broadening of interest in this area in recent years, we believe that the AHRC could, through establishing such an Observatory, effectively continue the lead that it has given with the publication of this report.

## KEY POINTS FROM CHAPTER

- This report has considered many of the key areas of difference that engagement with arts and culture makes, in spheres such as the economy, urban society, education, and the health and wellbeing of individuals. While endorsing their importance, in each of these areas we have found reason to nuance the benefits that are conventionally claimed. Previous work, especially when driven by the needs of advocacy for public funding, has focused on areas of importance to governments, and left some equally important ones neglected. In this report, the renewed emphasis on first-hand experience provides a linking thread. In stressing the importance of the experience of arts and culture itself, and in proposing as further key components the way this affects individuals' capacity for reflection and civic behaviour, we have augmented these familiar effects with ones that have been neglected in the dominant discourses. The renewed emphasis on experience, however, also provides a thread through the other components and methodologies in the report.
- Arts and cultural activity and engagement bring with them many direct and sometimes immediate benefits to the economy and to society. But they also bring value to individuals and society by creating the conditions for change; a myriad of spillover effects that include an openness, a space for experimentation and risk-taking at the personal, social and economic levels, an ability to reflect in a safer and less direct way on personal, community and societal challenges, and much else.
- The value of art and culture is not always easy to evidence, for a number of reasons. We often find ourselves dealing with the currency of human experience and first-person perspectives. Furthermore, the effects of cultural engagement may originate in individual experience, but many social and economic outcomes are not just the aggregation of individual benefits. Rather than working on a simple trajectory of an isolated intervention causing easily delineated effects, art and culture often create conditions for change through a myriad of spillover effects. Given the impossibility of constructing counterfactual scenarios that we can monitor over a period of time to compare the world with art and culture to the world without it we need to adjust our methodologies accordingly.
- We explore the range of methods that are available to evaluate and to research the effects, at the individual and more collective levels, of engagement with arts and culture, and we have identified areas of innovation to which we have contributed through the project. In this context we have questioned the established hierarchy of evidence: arts and culture operate in a world of complex variables and outcomes, where experimental methods can rarely be applied effectively. We call for a broad approach to evaluation and research methodologies, that does not presume a hierarchy in which quantitative evidence and methods are necessarily more rigorous than qualitative. The issue should be the appropriateness of each methodology to what is being studied, and the rigour with which each is applied.
- We have argued strongly for multi-criteria evaluation. Such evaluation is often not suited to accountability, which often needs headline results, single measures and weighted aggregates. This is why it is important that evaluation should not be thought of as being primarily undertaken for the purposes of accountability or advocacy.
- The Cultural Value Project, and this report, are not directed primarily at making the case for public funding. There has been too much of a tendency in the past to concentrate on benefits that were thought to have most traction with governments and other funders, neglecting other benefits that might have longer-term significance. This report is not

*Continued...*

an advocacy document, but the outcome of a research project. Those making such a case for public funding will find in this report relevant material and a breadth of helpful arguments. As the outcome of a research project, however, the report has to indicate where arguments seem to be weak, methodologies less than satisfactory and evidence insubstantial, and it has sought to do so. We hope to generate a more grown-up conversation about why the arts matter. That means broadening the scope of the difference that we say they make, but also accepting when conventional claims turn out to be hard to substantiate.

- In this light it has been important to note the relatively neglected areas of research that seem essential to the breadth of cultural engagement and its effects. These include the question of whether every art and cultural form has the effects attributed to them collectively, how arts and culture underpins both the creative industries and an innovative economy and society, the potential for small-scale arts assets to contribute to low-stress urban communities, the experience of commercial arts and culture and of digital engagement. We also regret the way that the long-term impact of sustained cultural engagement for health has been neglected in this country and call for consistent and stable cultural questions to be included in health and other social cohort studies so that wide-ranging longitudinal data can be obtained.
- With the Cultural Value Project, the AHRC has imaginatively seized the research initiative and there is now a need to maintain the critical academic research focus. We conclude by recommending that the AHRC consider establishing an *Observatory for Cultural Value*. This could be located within a university and, with modest resources, be tasked with identifying the research activities, outputs and needs in the areas covered by this report, publishing surveys and overviews, maintaining a database of relevant work, and recommending to the AHRC and other funders promising and relevant areas for further research.



# Annexes



# ANNEX 1

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### CHAPTER 1 RETHINKING THE TERMS OF THE CULTURAL VALUE DEBATE


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## CHAPTER 3 THE REFLECTIVE INDIVIDUAL

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## CHAPTER 6 ECONOMY: IMPACT, INNOVATION AND ECOLOGY

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## **CHAPTER 7** HEALTH, AGEING AND WELLBEING


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## CHAPTER 9 METHODOLOGIES: EVIDENCE, DATA AND VARIETIES OF EVALUATION

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# ANNEX 2

## AWARDS MADE BY THE CULTURAL VALUE PROJECT

The full list of the awards are detailed below to read the final reports of each award go to *www.ahrc.ac.uk/cvpawardreports*. Page references in this report are to the award reports submitted to the AHRC. Where the awardholder has changed the format for the web version these may not be the same.

### Research Development Awards

**Allington, Daniel** *Open University*
'Online networks and the production of value in electronic music'

**Ashley, Susan** *Northumbria University*
'Memorialisation as valuation: examining public culture at the Chattri Sikh Memorial, Brighton'

**Bakhshi, Hasan** *Nesta*, **Fujiwara, Daniel** *Simetrica*
'Measuring economic value in cultural institutions'

**Beel, David** *University of Aberdeen*
'EViDAnCE – Exploring Value in Digital Archives and the Comainn Eachdraidh'

**Belfiore, Eleonora** *University of Warwick*
'The politics of cultural value: towards an emancipatory framework'

**Bernard, Miriam** *Keele University*
'Ages and Stages: the cultural value of older people's experiences of theatre making'

**Brennan, Matthew Thomas** *University of Edinburgh*
'The cultural value of live music: a case study of enthusiast, state-funded, and commercial events at the Queen's Hall'

**Brennan, Matthew Thomas** *University of Edinburgh*
'From pub to stadium: The ecology of public and commercial investment in British live music venues'

**Clarke, Eric** *University of Oxford*
'Music, empathy and cultural understanding'

**Clift, Stephen** *Canterbury Christ Church University*
'Cultural value and social capital: investigating social, health and wellbeing impacts in three coastal towns undergoing culture-led regeneration'

**Cotterrell, David** *Sheffield Hallam University*
'Squaring the circle: examining cultural value through a re-evaluation of Arts Lab'

**Davis, Philip Maurice** *University of Liverpool*
'Assessing the intrinsic value, and health and well-being benefits, for individual and community, of The Reader Organisation's Volunteer Reader Scheme'

**Eades, Michael** *University of London*
'Bloomsbury Festival in a Box: engaging socially isolated people with dementia'

**Edelman, Joshua** *Royal Central School of Speech and Drama*
'The value of amateur, subsidised and commercial theatre for Tyneside's audiences'

**Fillis, Ian** *University of Stirling*
'Measuring the value of the RSA New Contemporaries Exhibition as a platform for emerging artists'

**Flinders, Matthew** *University of Sheffield*
'Participatory arts and active citizenship'

**Froggett, Lynn Patricia** *University of Central Lancashire*
'Public art and local civic engagement'

**Garrod, Brian** *Aberystwyth University*
'Investigating the role of Eisteddfodau in creating and transmitting cultural value in Wales and beyond'

**Gillespie, Marie** *Open University*
'Understanding the changing cultural value of the BBC World Service and British Council'

**Gilmore, Charlotte** *University of St Andrews*
'The enactment of cultural values and taste-making within contemporary classical music'

**Gordon-Nesbitt, Rebecca**
*Manchester Metropolitan University*
'Evaluating the relationship between arts and cultural engagement and long-term health outcomes in the UK'

**Harwood, Tracy** *De Monfort University*
'Machinima: an investigation into the contribution of participatory user-generated machine-cinema to cultural values'

**Hawkins, Harriet** *Royal Holloway, University of London*
'Experimental methods for exploring environmental encounters'

**Holden, John** *City University and University of Hong Kong*
'The ecology of culture'

**Hoskins, Gareth** *Aberystwyth University*
'Locating value: assigning significance in the historical built environment, a trans-Atlantic review'

**Lamarque, Peter** *University of York*
'Cognitive and aesthetic values in cultural artefacts'

**Lambert, Catherine** *University of Warwick*
'The value of live art: experience, politics and affect'

**Lang, Anouk** *University of Strathclyde*
'Developing methods for analysing and evaluating literary engagement in digital contexts'

**Manchester, Helen** *University of Bristol*
'Teenage kicks: exploring cultural value from a youth perspective'

**Munt, Sally** *University of Sussex*
'Cultural values from the subaltern perspective: a phenomenology of refugees' experience of British cultural values'

**Murray, Stuart** *University of Leeds*
'Approaching cultural value as a complex system: experiencing the arts and articulating the city in Leeds'

**O'Sullivan, Deirdre** *University of Leicester*
'Mapping faith and place: exploring cultural values in the buildings of South Asian Faiths in Leicester'

**Pajaczkowska, Claire** *Royal College of Art*
'Compassion by design'

**Pitts, Stephanie** *University of Sheffield*
'Dropping in and dropping out: understanding cultural value from the perspectives of lapsed or partial arts participants'

**Rees Leahy, Helen** *University of Manchester*
'Learning from the past: cultural value, then and now, in principle and in practice'

**Reinelt, Janelle** *University of Warwick*
'Theatre spectatorship and value attribution'

**Reynolds, Jacqueline** *Staffordshire University*
'The story of Lidice and Stoke-on-Trent: towards deeper understandings of the role of arts and culture'

**Rimmer, Mark** *University of East Anglia*
'Understanding the cultural value of In Harmony-Sistema England'

**Rumbold, Kate** *University of Birmingham*
'The uses of poetry: measuring the value of engaging with poetry in lifelong learning and development'

**Sandvoss, Cornel** *University of Surrey*
'The value of commercial arts and culture: A comparative mixed-methods approach to the reception of popular culture'

**Studdert, David** *Cardiff University*
'Using Facebook to investigate local history: experience, value and policy implications in one town'

**Thomson, Patricia** *University of Nottingham*
'The experience and value of live art: what can making and editing film tell us?'

**Walsh, Victoria** *Royal College of Art*
'Modeling cultural value within new media cultures of networked participation'

**Winter, Patricia (Trish)** *University of Sunderland*
'A somatic ethnography of Grand Gestures Elders Dance Group'

**Wright, Martin** *London Metropolitan University*
'Case study: cultural value of accessible theatre'

**Vis, Farida** *University of Sheffield*
'The cultural values of digging'

## Critical Reviews

**Banks, Mark** *Open University*
'The values of cultural work: ethics, interests and motivations in the cultural and creative industries'

**Bernard, Miriam** *Keele University*
'Ageing, drama and creativity: a critical review'

**Bungay, Hilary Anglia** *Ruskin University*
'Caregivers perceptions of the value of the arts in therapeutic and clinical interventions'

**Campbell, Peter** *University of Liverpool*
'The role of arts and culture in the regeneration of urban places and urban communities – Critical Review'

**Cooke, Paul** *University of Leeds*
'Experiencing the digital world: the cultural value of digital engagement with heritage'

**Dodd, Jocelyn** *University of Leicester*
'The cultural value of engaging with museums and galleries'

**Jensen, Eric** *University of Warwick*
'The role of technology in evaluating cultural value'

**Jones, Sian** *The University of Manchester*
'Valuing the historic environment: a critical review of existing approaches to social value'

**Kelly, Shona Sheffield** *Hallam University*
'A critical review of the effectiveness of the therapeutic use of artistic activity'

**Ladkin, Samuel** *University of Sheffield*
'Against value in the arts'

**O'Brien, Dave** *Goldsmiths University of London*
**Oakley, Kate** *University of Leeds*
'Cultural value and inequality: a critical literature review'

**Oancea, Alis Elena** *University of Oxford*
'Developing innovative methods for configurative capture of the cultural value of arts and humanities research'

**Oakley, Kate** *University of Leeds*
'Creating space: a re-evaluation of the role of culture in regeneration'

**Samuel, Flora** *University of Sheffield*
'The cultural value of architecture: a critical review with specific reference to UK homes and neighbourhoods'

**Sandvoss, Cornel** *University of Surrey*
'Fandom, participatory culture and cultural value – a critical review'

**Singh, Jasjit** *University of Leeds*
'An analysis and review of British South Asian engagement in minority ethnic arts'

**Taylor, Calvin** *University of Leeds*
'Cultural value: a perspective from cultural economy'

**Thomson, Patricia** *University of Nottingham*
'A critical review of the Creative Partnerships archive: how was cultural value understood, researched and evidenced?'

**Zeilig, Hannah** *University of the Arts London*
'The arts in dementia care – A critical review of cultural and arts practices in dementia care in the UK'

## Expert Workshops

**Boschi, Elena** *Liverpool Hope University*
'Culture, value and attention at home'

**Carman, John** *University of Birmingham*
'Heritage value: combining culture and economics'

**Cowman, Kirsta** *University of Lincoln*
'From parlour sing-songs to iplayers: experiencing culture in the 20th and 21st century homes'

**Gamman, Lorraine** *Central St Martins, UAL*
'Arts and the criminal justice system'

**Milling, Jane** *University of Exeter*
'Expert workshop on amateur and voluntary arts'

**Rooke, Alison** *Goldsmiths, University of London*
'Curating community?'

**Rooke, Alison** *Goldsmiths, University of London*
'Creative collisions and critical conversations'

# ANNEX 3

## CULTURAL VALUE PROJECT ADVISORY GROUP

**Hasan Bakhshi**
Director, Creative and Digital Economy, Nesta

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**Dr JD Hill**
Head of Research, British Museum

**Professor John Holden**
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Hong Kong University

**Professor Nigel Llewellyn**
Former Head of Research, Tate

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West Bridge Consulting

**Professor Helen Weinstein**
Director, History Works and Life Fellow,
Clare College Cambridge

# ANNEX 4

## SYMPOSIA, WORKSHOPS & EVENTS

### Cultural Value Project Workshops

*Aesthetics and cultural value*
London, 18 December 2012

*AHRC-funded research and the Cultural Value Project*
London, 28 February 2013

*Methodologies for evidencing the value of culture: taking on the challenge*
London, 11 April 2013

*Hermeneutics- and arts-based methods*
London, 28 May 2014

*Ethnography and anthropology-based methods*
London, 11 June 2014

*Value constellations and network analysis*
Oxford, 3 July 2014

### Collaborative workshops and symposia

*The Value of Design*
Workshop in collaboration with Glasgow School of Art, Glasgow, 24 February 2014

*Measuring Cultural Engagement amid Confounding Variables: A Reality Check*
Symposium in collaboration with National Endowment for the Arts in the USA, Washington DC, 2-3 June 2014

*Culture, Conflict and Post-conflict*
Symposium in collaboration with AHRC Care for the Future Theme, London, 9 -10 September 2014

*In Conversation: Arts and Science*
Workshop in collaboration with AHRC Science in Culture Theme and Arts@CERN, London, 9 October 2014

*In Collaboration: Arts and Science*
Workshop in collaboration with Institute of Advanced Studies, University of Birmingham and AHRC Science in Culture Theme, University of Birmingham, 16 September, 2015

*The Value of Culture and Environmental Sustainability*
Workshop in collaboration with Julie's Bicycle, London, 7 October 2015

### Presentations and talks

Presentations by Director except where indicated as by Project Researcher (PK)

*AHRC Advisory Board*
London, 16 November 2012

*AHRC Knowledge Exchange Hubs for the Creative Economy Forum*
London, 29 November 2012

*University of Leicester*
Leicester, 24 January 2013

*Cultural Value Project Town Meetings*
Glasgow, Manchester and London, 18-21 March

*CHEAD Annual Conference*
London 20 March 2013

*University of Warwick*
Warwick, 14 May 2013

*Venice Biennale Culture Forum*
Venice, 27 May 2013

*Creative Industries Breakfast Talk*
London, 27 June 2013

*AHRC Subject Associations Meeting*
London, 26 September 2013

*What Next*
London, 2 October 2013

*Third Ear Symposium on Speaking for the Arts*
London, 6 December 2013

*Arts, Culture and Quality of Life in Global Cities Forum*
New York, 9 December 2013

*Conservatoires UK Research Forum*
London, 12 February 2014

*Festival in a Box: Sharing Knowledge on Dementia and the Arts*
London, 1 May 2014

*University of the Third Age*
Bury St Edmunds, 17 June 2014

*University of the Arts London*
Latimer Place, 30 June 2014

*Creative Citizens Conference*
London, 18-19 September 2014 (PK)

*What Next North London*
24 September 2014

*TNA Big Ideas Presentation*
The National Archives, 6 October 2014

*European League of Institutes of the Arts Biennial Conference*
Glasgow, 13 November 2014

*Research Leaders Programme: Public Engagement*
University of Nottingham, 6 May 2015

*Sustainable Communities and the Revitalizing Role of the Arts*
Stavros Niarchos Foundation Conference,
Athens, 25-26 June 2015

*AHRC Advisory Board*
London, 12 November 2015

*Being Human Lab*
Festival of Humanities, University of London,
London, 12 November 2015





Arts & Humanities
Research Council

Published by Arts and Humanities Research Council
Polaris House, North Star Avenue, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN2 1FL
www.ahrc.ac.uk

©Arts and Humanities Research Council 2016
Published March 2016

Design by Rumba. Printed by JRS on paper containing 80 percent post consumer waste