

Evidence follows rhetoric – evaluating cultural development in an adaptive frame: Cultural development and Australian local government

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ABSTRACT

Over the last 50 years, local government in Australia has increasingly practiced cultural development as a means of supporting community cohesion, wellbeing, sense of identity and economic development. The practice includes activities intended to elicit, express or explore aspects of community life that lend themselves to these goals, including arts practices that are generally integral to the activities. The requirement of funding bodies to evaluate the effectiveness of subsidised programs has led to a tendency to view the arts instrumentally, that is, as a means to an end. That tends to leave discussion of the intrinsic value of the arts relatively undeveloped or unresolved. The paper argues for the use of an adaptive frame for evaluating cultural development and for cultural development's institutional contribution to local government and its communities to be better recognised. Integrated strategies are available for a systems view of cultural development and the paper discusses how this can contribute to governance approaches in local government.

INTRODUCTION

The value of the arts sector is realised through tangible and intangible economic, social, cultural and institutional benefits. However, difficulties identifying and measuring the value of the intangible benefits complicates evaluation of the arts. The value of the arts has recently been considered in the National Cultural Policy (NCP) *Discussion Paper*. The *Discussion Paper* outlines the contribution of the arts to the strength of the Australian economy, community cohesion and the building of national identity, as well as perceptions of society as vibrant, modern and inclusive (Office for the Arts, 2011).

Many organisations that sponsor arts activities, including local governments, are public in nature (Abfalter & Mirski, 2005). Typically, these organisations demonstrate an interest in measuring the contribution of the arts (see for example, Australia Council for the Arts, 2009). Considering what is valued about the arts and how it is valued is referred to in the literature as the public value of the arts. Holden (2009; 2004) discusses the public value contribution of the arts at the individual, institutional, instrumental and community/societal levels. For Holden (2004) *intrinsic value* is concerned with public interest in the quality and individual experience of the arts; *institutional value* considers the quality of public engagement and sense of identity and community provided by the arts, while *instrumental value* considers the tangible impact of the arts on achieving economic, social wellbeing and public policy goals.

Significant government funding systems and an increasing focus on accountability and transparency have seen the evaluation of the arts concerned with evidence of instrumental value (Caust, 2010; Turbide & Laurin, 2009). The subjective and implicit perceptions of intrinsic and institutional value complicate the attribution of arts sector benefits to policy outcomes (Radbourne et al., 2010). Holden (2004) notes that whilst intrinsic and institutional

values are of most concern to the public, policy-makers are most concerned with tangible evidence of instrumental value. Radbourne et al. (2010) identify an international trend away from evaluation and funding of the arts on the basis of cultural value toward evidence of instrumental value.

Abfalter and Mirski (2005, p. 2) argue that the funding arrangements, intangible benefits, amorphous goals and public interest of arts organisations define them primarily as non-profit entities. Caust (2010) suggests traditional business models often exclude the core outputs of artistic performance and excellence from evaluation of the arts. Caust (2010) further suggests that the focus on government accountability and attribution of funding outcomes has skewed the balance between the governance, expectations and activity of arts funding organisations.

Tensions arise when conceptualising ways to measure value, impacts and outcomes in the arts. Impacts are concerned with the transformative nature or intrinsic value of experiencing art and deal with questions of artistic quality and excellence. Alternatively, outcomes are perceived to be associated with the bureaucratic demands of governments to demonstrate the instrumental benefits of the arts such as economic value, rather than any institutional or intrinsic value that may be offered.

In this paper we argue that evaluation practices would benefit local government and the arts, in the first place, from a greater focus on the intrinsic value of the arts; evaluation of the arts has traditionally given a strong focus to the assessment of instrumental value and it has failed to adequately articulate, let alone assess or measure, intrinsic value (Holden, 2004; 2009; McCarthy et al., 2004). Further to this we argue that understanding the institutional value of the arts through practices such as community cultural development is important when assessing the value of arts practices supported by local governments.

The paper is comprised of four main parts. A brief literature review is presented examining work on community cultural development and highlighting discussions concerned with Australian local government. We then examine literature that considers gaps in local government capacity in cultural development, followed by a consideration of the role of evidence in assessing the value of cultural development. By way of conclusion, we draw together themes for managing these measurement challenges and indicate some questions for further research.

This paper is a preliminary offering which aims to provide an overview of ideas rather than a comprehensive treatment of the intersecting topics which are presented. There is an attempt in the concluding sections of the paper to demonstrate how articulating the public value of the arts is dependent upon understanding and articulating its intrinsic value. Then the beginnings of some components to be considered in an adaptive evaluative framework are put forward to stimulate discussion and to form the basis of further research.

Cultural development in a socio-political frame: elite arts and community arts

There is a growing body of evidence to suggest that cultural actions and activities can fruitfully be used to promote community development (Guetzkow, 2002; Matarasso, 2007; Reeves, 2002; Salvaris, 2006). According to Hannigan (2012, p. 148) community art helps people to realise how their identities are interconnected to the places in which they live and 'offers valuable insight into the ways communities can develop or are affected by development'. These matters are of central concern to local government (see, for example, Grant & Dollery, 2011).

Evaluations of collective wellbeing are generally framed in economic terms, including quantitative indicators such as employment and unemployment rates, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) activity in core industries, consumer confidence and spending. However, arguments to incorporate more qualitative and holistic understandings of community wellbeing have gained

increasing salience. For example, Hoynes (2003, p. 775) writes that a more inclusive understanding should build upon measures of the full range of what constitutes a 'good society' and we would add 'good communities and places'. Underlying these debates is the understanding that community cultural development is a place-based approach that concentrates on creating assets that benefit people, and that it does so largely by building and tapping links to external resources (Vidal & Keating, 2004, p. 126). Assets can be conceived of in both individual and collective/community terms (Guetskow, 2002, p. 3) and they are of many kinds: physical, economic, political, social and cultural (Vidal & Keating, 2004, p. 126).

Art and community cultural development helps to build social capital and community arts programs offer 'an opportunity for capacity building by creating settings in which a sense of community is generated' (Sonn, Drew & Kasat, 2002, p. 22). The connection between art and community development can be seen in the development what Mills and Brown (2004, p. 10) termed 'bonding' and 'bridging' social capital. Bonding social capital refers to strong ties within localised communities, a sense of personal and collective trust and development of shared values. Bridging social capital refers to connections between diverse community groups and also between localised groups and expert systems.

Cultural development is an activity of governments that takes a number of forms. In the international literature it is framed as existing in a policy space arising from the tension between two constructions. The first is 'democratisation of culture', the more traditional concept that understands it in terms of support for 'high culture' for which elaborate infrastructure and services are required, for example, fine arts, ballet, opera and theatre (Zimmer & Toepler, 1999). The democratisation process is seen as making this culture available to audiences across divisions of social class and other boundaries (e.g. ethnicity and gender), as well as being geographically removed from the main centers of culture, usually in capital cities.

The second construction is 'cultural democracy'. At one level this has been understood simply as the goal of the democratisation of the consumption of high art by an increasingly large section of the population rather than by elites. However, an alternative interpretation insists that culture has assumed an intrinsic sense as something that both resides within and emanates from communities and is a distinctive aspect of local identities and heritage. Originally, in European settings, this may have focused on 'folk arts' manifest in the local manufacture of distinctive artifacts, ceremonies and traditions (see for example, Zimmer & Toepler, 1999). More broadly there is the particular status and recognition afforded to indigenous culture that has arisen from a long history of struggle against colonialism, imperialism and the gradual and contested assertion of the unique rights and standing of First Nations around the globe (Sonn & Quayle, 2013).

More recently, in the wake of the counter-culture asserted by left-wing urban movements across the industrialised world of the 1960s and 70s, 'community arts' or 'street arts' has increasingly been afforded a respected status and recognition by societies and governments – hiphop, graffiti, Sounds System are some examples from the last decade (Arnaud, 2008). All cultural practices are of interest, including sports (Brookes & Wiggan, 2009), although arguably arts practices have a central place in the negotiation and generation of identity and histories that make up cultural heritage (Arnaud, 2008).

Given the need for advocacy and support through funding, services and infrastructure that underpin local communities, a particular role for the agency of local government in support of 'cultural democracy' can be seen. Support of the production and consumption of community arts emphasises the institutional value of local government in achieving social and political goals rather than in achieving purely cultural ones (Selwood, 2000). Such goals may be community cohesion, wellbeing, inclusion of excluded groups or support of local ethnicities and identities.

Local government also engages in a version of the democratisation process by supporting the intrinsic values of culture, through processes of institutional support, particularly manifestations of local identities that may be construed as cultural heritage that need to be valued by the wider community (Bailey et al., 2004; Mulligan et al., 2006). This may occur where many cultures come together in one area through immigration, or where newer cultures move into an already established area with pre-existing cultures (Gibson & Homan, 2004; Merlino & Duffy, 2010). Democratisation is less about the promotion of 'high art' with unquestioned value and more about promoting acceptance of culture in plural forms – whether 'elite' or 'street'. It is important to recognise that these practices may come from *within* government: the work of cultural development that is engaging artists, communities and decision-makers in a range of practices to achieve multiple goals. Alternatively, it may originate from the community: the work of artists and other activists giving expression to 'native' cultural values and emergent 'scenes' with the avowal of shared identities as a key characteristic (Mulligan et al., 2006).

Cultural development in an evaluative frame: evidence follows rhetoric

There has been an observed resurgence of activity in cultural development seen in the advocacy for and implementation of urban regeneration projects over many decades since the 1970s (Dunphy, 2013; Selwood, 2000). These processes have often been initiated in response to the de-industrialisation of regions where political leadership has pursued policy programs of promoting arts and culture as a means of reviving local economies to accompany new cultural industries (Bailey et al., 2004). Arguably, a version of 'trickle down' logic is at play here, where creative industries are established bringing in new economic development and other social benefits (Colomb, 2011). Problems arise where the regeneration is seen as symptomatic of economic globalisation, promoting the commodification of cultures for the purposes of cultural tourism, or else swamping local cultures with an influx of arts and cultural practices (Evans, 2005). The dominant rhetoric from state agencies has moved from regeneration to community renewal, with little demonstrated understanding of the implications of what the difference means. Several observers (see for example, Carley, et al., 2000; Colomb, 2011) have argued that partnership with local government is needed in order to ensure that social goals are met and otherwise excluded communities are included.

Other observers (Bailey et al., 2004; Mulligan et al., 2006) have argued that there has been a tendency to advocate for major cultural projects on the basis of these social goals with insufficient evidence of their capability to affect these goals. More recently a number of longitudinal studies have suggested that there has been a tendency to 'over claim' the benefits of major cultural projects (see for example, Belfiore & Bennett, 2010). At the same time there is evidence that cultural regeneration does benefit people, although in more nuanced ways than may have been claimed in their advocacy (Mulligan & Smith, 2008). There is also some evidence that the drive for cultural regeneration peaked by the mid-2000s and now there is a retreat from the idea of centrally-funded *grand projects* (Bailey et al., 2004). Part of this retreat may be due to the unfulfilled promise of earlier projects; some of it may be simply a matter of the ideology of governments desisting with the funding of 'non-essential' services in the face of the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) that peaked in 2008.

However, data for Australia indicate that local government expenditure in field of arts and culture is growing. A report by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Cultural Funding by Government 2011-12* (ABS, 2013) provides data on spending by Commonwealth, state and local governments, with a breakdown against line items under broad headings of 'Heritage' and 'Arts'. Of the \$6,974.3m spent by all three tiers of government on culture in 2011-12, \$1,342.3 (19%) was spent by local government. This represents an overall increase of local government spending (Table 1).

Table 1: Cultural expenditure by level of government 2010-11 and 2011-12

Level of government	2010-11		2011-12		Year on year movement	
	Value of expenditure	Proportion of total expenditure	Value of expenditure	Proportion of total expenditure	2009-10 to 2010-11	2010-11 to 2011-12
	\$m	%	\$m	%	%	%
Australian Government	2,316.4	34.9	2,355.0	33.8	-2.3	1.7
State and territory governments	3,064.3	46.1	3,277.0	47.0	0.9	6.9
Local governments	1,259.9	19.0	1,342.3	19.2	5.2	6.5
TOTAL	6,640.6	100.0	6,974.3	100.0	0.6	5.0

Source: ABS 4182.0

A second source (Dollery, Kortt & Grant, 2013) includes data on spending on ‘recreation and culture’ in the context of a discussion of the financial sustainability and future of infrastructure finance in Australian local government. This account also includes a broader array of activities than the above ABS report, such as expenditure on including swimming pools and other sporting facilities, along with ‘parks, museums and art galleries’ (2013, p. 50). Dollery et al. (2013, p. 53) note a ‘slight increase’ in share of local government expenditure between 2001-02 and 2010-12, from 13% to 15%, coming to \$4,359m spent in 2010-11. This represents 35.6 % of total government outlays on recreation and culture. Further, Dollery et al. (2013, p. 54) comment that ‘local governments are increasingly playing a larger role in the development of cultural and social capital’.

While these two reports point to the significance of local government financial support of arts and culture, both work from assumptions about what constitutes the totality of local government’s outputs in the field. Other research has been conducted by the Cultural Development Network (CDN) into what the particular outputs in the Australian sector are, with a focus on cultural planning practices. The aim is to contribute to data that can inform ‘the growing investment in cultural development in local government in Australia’ (Dunphy, Metzke & Tavelli, 2013, p. 120). CDN has produced two reports, the first covering the sector (Dunphy, 2013a); the second drawing on desktop research of the Australian sector beyond Victoria (Dunphy, 2013b). At this preliminary stage both papers support the contention that local government will assume comparatively increased responsibility for these activities in the future (Dunphy, 2013a; Dunphy, 2013b).

Cultural development in an adaptive frame and the contribution of systems thinking

In the last decade or so insights into the relationship between cultural development and economic development point the way to integrated approaches to planning and accounting for cultural development. In this work the need for evaluation that can capture all the costs and benefits of cultural development has become paramount, with a number of key concepts developed from 2000 onwards that have informed decision-making and that seek to address the concerns of decision-makers while fully accounting for the resources committed to cultural development. These are:

- clarification of the relationship between culture and economy that proposes a systems view of culture's essential place in achieving wellbeing and prosperity for communities and nations (e.g. Throsby, 2001);
- re-development of the 'triple bottom line' of ecologically sustainable development to include culture as an essential 'fourth pillar' (e.g. Hawkes, 2001; 2004);
- proposals for holistic schemes for viewing and evaluating culture that integrate intrinsic, instrumental, institutional and/or industrial perspectives, albeit with a shifting description of the relation between, and nature of, these views (see, for example, Holden, 2009; Ryan & Phelps, 2013; Schultz, 2011). Some of this work focuses on public value;
- development of theory in the discipline of Information Systems that points to a way of viewing cultural value data, in particular clarifying what is framed as 'intrinsic value' that is otherwise opaque in government's conventional approach to accounting for value (see, for example, Lee, 2001; McKinney & Yoos, 2010).

DISCUSSION

The limits of instrumentalism

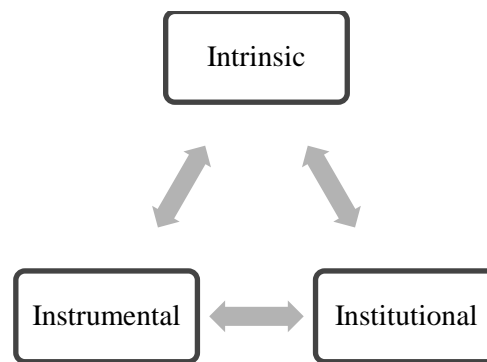
Mulligan et al. (2006, p. 10) emphasise a point made by many writers that dependence on indicators as a means of justifying or advocating for resourcing community, cultural development 'gives too much ground to the language of instrumentalism and ... threatens to throw the baby out with the bathwater in adequately understanding the less tangible, diffuse and often long-term outcomes of community art practices.' There is extensive literature on public value, particularly from the United Kingdom (Holden, 2004; 2009; Jowell, 2004; 2005; Wilkinson, 2008) and the United States (Brown, 2006; McCarthy et al., 2004). Holden's (2004; 2009) 'value triangle' of intrinsic, instrumental and institutional value is the most salient conceptual framework of public value cited and debated in the literature (see Figure 1). While there is not necessarily consensus on the relevance of Holden's model, it provides a useful basis from which to further develop thinking of how to evaluate the arts.

To reiterate our précis of this conceptual schema, according to Holden's (2004) model:

- intrinsic value is concerned with the quality and excellence of art and individual experience of the arts;
- institutional value considers the quality of cultural infrastructure, organisational capacity, public engagement and identity provided by the arts, while
- instrumental value is the tangible impact of the arts on achieving economic, social well-being and public policy goals.

The construction of the value of arts practice is as an interaction of three aspects, or 'viewpoints' of culture... *Intrinsic value* encapsulates the 'arts for art's sake' viewpoint – something good in its own right. *Instrumental value* relates to what art does - what art is 'good for'. *Institutional value* relates to how people organise themselves around art, for instance by keeping art in museums or galleries or the other ways of organising the production and consumption of art. This is inclusive of how it is funded and organisationally arranged. Holden (2004, p. 454) is careful to point out that 'all three values are viewpoints or perspectives of equal validity, and that they should be considered together'. He presents them in a triangle diagram to emphasise this point (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Three views of culture of equal validity



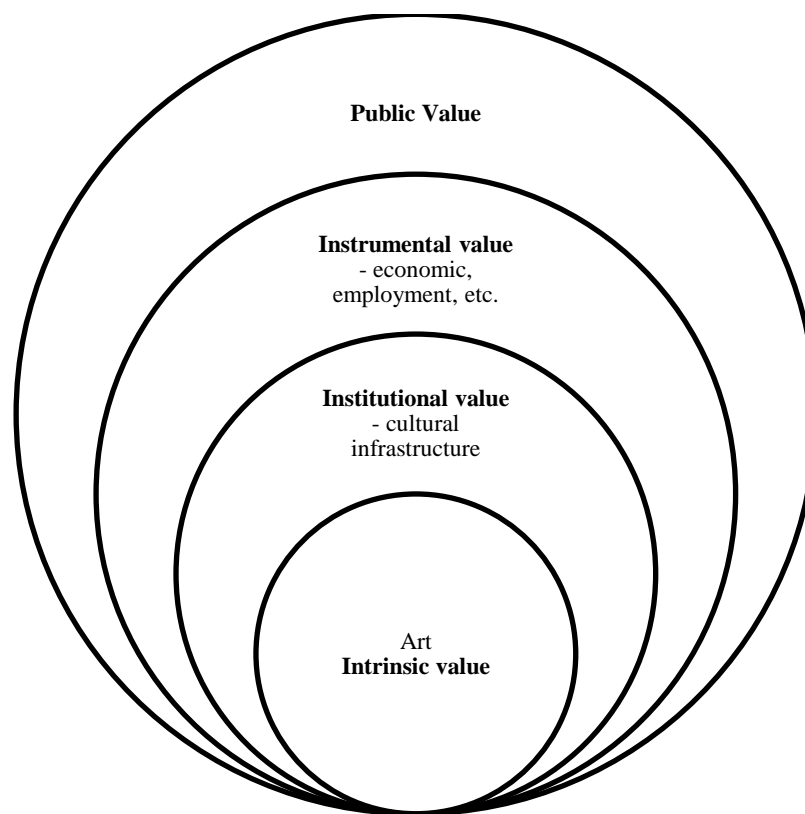
Source: Holden 2009

Holden's (2004) construction has wide circulation and has been adopted by influential writers keen to address issues of value and advocacy in the arts and cultural development (e.g., Schultz 2012; Ryan & Phelps 2013). Its chief value, it seems, is in giving a place to the intrinsic in the system of value, although arguably even here Holden's (2004) construction is inadequate to capture the essential nature of the intrinsic value of art. Its main strength seems to be rhetorical.

The overarching project of understanding culture systemically has been proposed by writers interested in holistic frames of reference, most notably those who have sought to see culture integrated in the already well-established triple-bottom-line concept that has underpinned the idea of ecologically sustainable development (Hawkes, 2001; Throsby, 2001). However, as Throsby (2001, p. 164) notes, 'in a world still moved in policy terms predominantly by an economic agenda, acceptance of cultural value as motivating force in policy decisions is still some way off'.

McCarthy et al. (2004) have built on this model further, arguing that intrinsic and instrumental value should not be viewed as distinct categories, rather as part of a continuum or scale of private and public benefits. What are considered intrinsic or individual benefits can often have wider community and public benefits. This is reinforced by Brown's (2006) view that the benefits of the arts are an intersection of individual, interpersonal and community benefits which occur and accrue over time. Figure 2 illustrates this conceptualisation of public value. The key insight here is that the realisation of public value *depends upon* excellent art and its intrinsic value to individuals. The other aspects of institutional and instrumental are not possible without the arts intrinsic value to individuals. The *cumulative effect* of this is what overall amounts to its public value.

Figure 2: Conceptualising public value of the arts (Ryan & Phelps, 2013, p. 20)



Intrinsic Value: The arts is a public good in its own right

Intrinsic value is the '...effects inherent in the arts experience that add value to people's lives' (McCarthy et al., 2004, p. 37). For Holden (2009) the arts have a value unique to themselves, emphasising that people engage with the arts because they find it captivating, pleasurable, enjoyable and aesthetically pleasing:

...intrinsic value establishes the arts as a public good in their own right and we should value dance and poetry because it is dance and poetry, and not only for other reasons, such as their economic and social impact (Holden, 2009, p. 452).

This is reinforced by Bakhshi, Freeman and Hitchen (2009), Jowell (2005; 2004) and McCarthy et al. (2004) all of whom argue that the individual enjoyment of the arts is key to understanding its public value and that there is often too much focus on instrumental value alone:

...the benefits of the arts arise from our enjoyment of the art itself, not from any secondary results such as the jobs that it creates....preferences for the art are not different from any other kind of preference. We eat chocolate not because it produces more jobs but because we enjoy eating chocolate (Bakhshi, Freeman & Hitchen, 2009, p. 3).

People are drawn to the arts not for their instrumental effects, but because encountering a work of art can be a rewarding experience—it can give individuals pleasure and emotional stimulation and meaning. These intrinsic benefits are the fundamental layer of effects leading to many of the instrumental benefits that have dominated the public debate and the recent research agenda.' (McCarthy et al., 2004, p. 3).

Too often politicians have been forced to debate culture in terms only of its instrumental benefits to other agendas...In political and public discourse in this country we have avoided the more difficult approach of investigating, questioning and celebrating what culture actually does in and of itself.’ (Jowell, 2004, p. 8).

Intrinsic value is difficult to define and measure, but we can work towards a shared language to better articulate it. Intrinsic value deals with subjective questions around what constitutes excellence and what is ‘good and bad art’ (Holden, 2009). There are difficulties associated with clearly defining and measuring intrinsic value in the same way that instrumental value is defined and measured. Because instrumental value (such as economic benefits) is seen as more tangible and easier to capture, it is one reason why it has tended to dominate policy debate and the research agenda. Holden (2009) and McCarthy et al. (2004) have pointed out that while the public and advocates of the arts may believe intrinsic benefits are of primary importance, there is often a reluctance to draw attention to it:

Many arts advocates are uncomfortable with an exclusive reliance on instrumental arguments but are also reluctant to emphasize the intrinsic aspects of the arts experience lest such arguments fail to resonate with funders. The problem with this reluctance is that it ignores two important facts: intrinsic benefits are the principal reason individuals participate in the arts, and the intrinsic effects can produce public benefits of their own (McCarthy et al., 2004, p. 68).

However, Jowell (2005) argues that while it may not be possible to clearly describe and measure the value of culture ‘once and for all’, it is important that effort is focused on developing a shared language or vocabulary that can:

...deal with the sophisticated, the complex, and the changing, that moves away from...the bureaucratic...I need to be able to account to the electorate for the amount of money we spend on ballet, on orchestras, rather than say, classrooms, or hospitals. And I need to be able to do it in a way that means something to the person asking me that question, rather than the arts professional or the politician (Jowell, 2005, p. 4).

The individual subjective response to art and artistic experience matters, and it is the basis on which we are attracted to engage in the arts at all, hence its placement as central in Figure 2. with the other forms of value dependent on it in the first instance. Public value is the cumulative value of the intrinsic, institutional and instrumental values. A comprehensive view of evaluating the arts cannot be achieved without all three dimensions being accounted for and without placing the intrinsic value of the arts in the center of the framework.

Cultural development and generativity

In a case study of their sound-based community development project at Officer, Victoria Merlino and Duffy (2011) shed some light on the subject of the intrinsic value of arts practice in cultural development. Merlino and Duffy (2011, p. 72) are critical of the ‘spell of the representational narration that underpins much community cultural development work’, highlighting instead the generative nature of their project. They invited their participants, ‘young people aged 10-12 years living in Melbourne to explore their social connections and what “home” might mean for them’ Merlino and Duffy (2011, p. 71). The participants were invited to listen to, digitally capture and then manipulate their aural landscapes ‘under the guidance of a sound design artist’; further they suggested that this activity did not merely replicate what exists in a particular location, but instead ‘led to the construction of different kinds of space, ones in which the children were not passive subjects but active creators’ Merlino and Duffy (2011, p. 75).

Placing to one side an instrumental reading of art as its main function in cultural development, Merlino and Duffy (2011, p. 75) seek to demonstrate that there is ‘no need to create a rupture between self and environment through the artifice of an overt ‘arts project’; instead the ‘creativity was a consequence of the connection itself’, as elicited through the participants’ own engagement with the soundscape. While professional artists facilitated the youth involved to interpret and compile their work for final exhibition, it was the participants themselves who were the makers of the work and the beneficiaries, as described, of their re-worked relationship with their landscapes. This reading offers a counterpoint to the kind of limiting discussion of arts projects in which desirable social or community outcomes are observed as a result of arts practice or cultural development programs, often inferring that the arts are instrumental without a clearly demonstrated understanding of the intrinsic qualities of the practices themselves (McHenry, 2011; Stadler, 2013).

The idea of generativity is an important contribution to the discussion of the value of community arts that seeks to find the ‘balance’ at least between instrumental and intrinsic views of culture. It is an idea that resonates with the idea of giftedness (Hyde, 1983) in which people participate in community events and arts projects, motivated more by a desire to “‘give something to the community’” than by any simple wish to enjoy inexpensive entertainment’ (Mulligan et al., 2006, p. 35). Mulligan and Smith (2008, p. 37) stress the need for local government to employ the arts, among other approaches, as a key means of addressing ‘the creation of inclusive communities’ that forestalls any ‘rise in social tensions and conflict’ stemming from increasing pressures of a globalising world economy. They point to the need for artistic projects to have a ‘wow factor’ (2008, p. 38) if these projects are to succeed, and for local government to be both ambitious and judicious in the development of cultural development projects.

Institutional value is the value organisations create through the way they engage with the public. It is (at least in this understanding) an opportunity for local governments to play an enabling role. Holden (2009) argues that the way in which organisations relate to the public can impact on a range of broader public values:

They are part of the public realm and how they do things creates values as much as what they do. In their interactions with the public, cultural organisations are in a position to increase – or indeed decrease – such things as trust in each other, our idea of whether we live in a fair and equitable society, our mutual conviviality and civility, and a whole host of other public goods (Holden, 2009, p. 454).

It is possible that this so-called ‘wow factor’ points to how the generativity of cultural development may be experienced, and to the need to reconcile a number of themes explored thus far in this paper. These include the question of what the intrinsic value of art is in the process of cultural development and what it is that is generated that may or may not have instrumental value that will be of interest to the local government sector. If government is to be capable of an expanding project of cultural development then there needs to be a safeguard against purely instrumental views of value. This can eschew the twin perils of ‘simplistic instrumentalism’ on one hand and ‘arts mysticism’ on the other (Mulligan et al., 2006, p. 10), through a nevertheless full-blooded engagement with arts and culture.

This is likely to include an investment in the renewal of institutional arrangements. It will also entail an undertaking to break out of the ‘narrow frames for methods of enquiry or types of questions asked’ (Lavarack & Ohlin, 2013, p. 13). Ongoing research, including evaluating its benefits, into the place of arts in cultural development, for instance, ought to include arts practice itself and not just the study of it, since the intrinsic value of the arts is only understood from the inside or, at least, from very close up.

Moving to a more engaged reading of cultural development in local communities

The contention that information about the intrinsic value of cultural development tends to be 'invisible' to conventional instrumentalist views has a particular bearing on how local communities are engaged in planning and development of places, infrastructure and services. In cultural development the power of the arts in this is to give primacy to the imagination. In Hyde's (1983, p. 196) words: 'the imagination creates the future ... [and] without the imagination we can do no more than spin the future out of the logic of the present'. An approach is needed to understanding information about cultural value that, while it may be inimical to traditional bureaucratic thinking, can have far-reaching consequences if it is not taken into account (Weick, 2006).

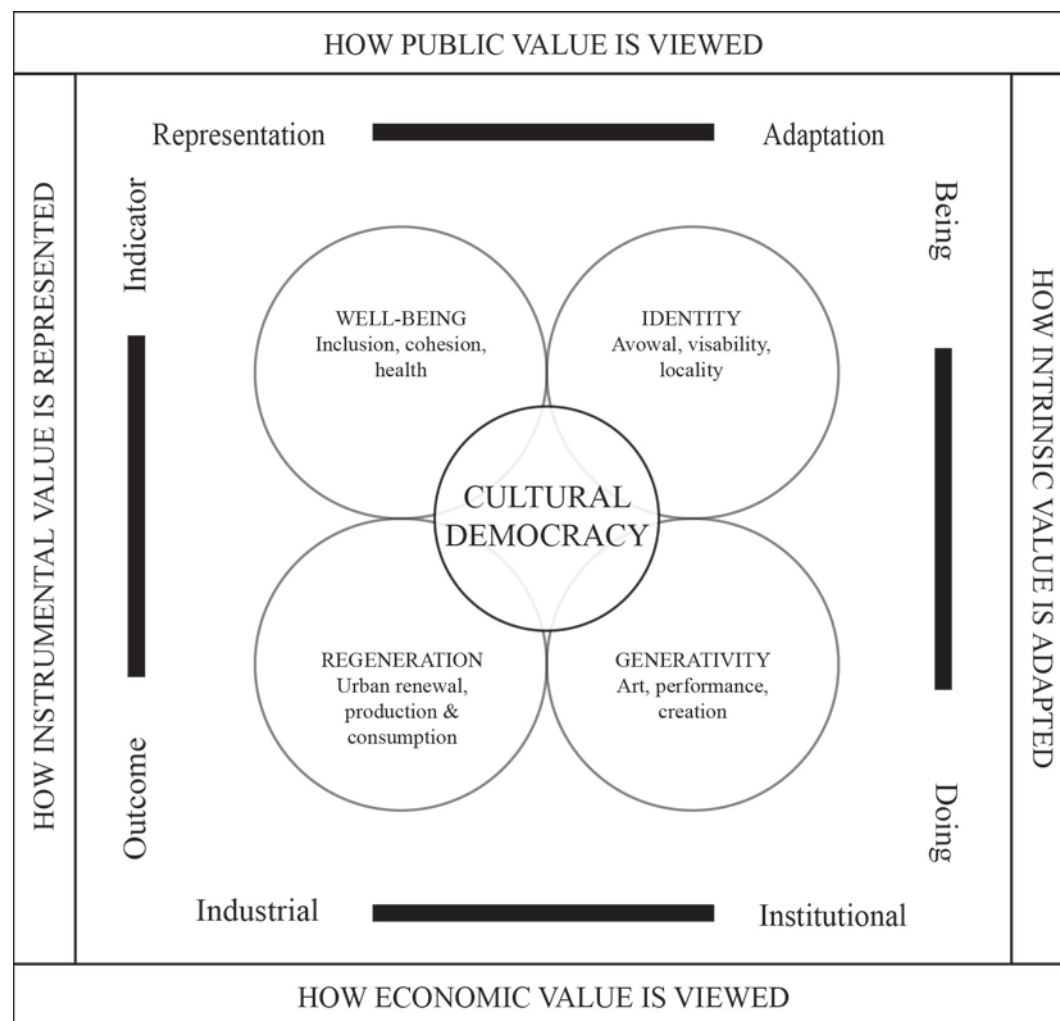
This draws on creativity and imagination, requiring the building of the capacity of local government to employ cultural 'detective work' in research undertakings. This emphasises sense-making over decision-making, drawing upon a theory of information that understands 'data' in an *adaptation* view (McKinney & Yoos, 2010). This view of information 'requires an ontological paradigm shift, from the belief that there is an objective reality independent of perception, to the recognition that reality is subject to perception' (McKinney & Yoos, 2010, p. 339). This stands in contrast to another view, termed the *representation* view, which offers 'an objective reality' (McKinney and Yoos, 2010, p. A2). It is important that the 'spell of representational narration' does not eclipse what may be an equally, if not more, important way of encountering information through the direct experience of being changed by arts, events, performance or other manifestations of culture and identity.

An approach to investigating intrinsic qualities of culture is possible that will call upon a range of inquiry approaches that incorporates those that are generative in intent, including arts practice and the direct experience of culture. Importantly it offers the potential of developing information about cultural development for which its systemic nature is more than rhetorical. This requires an emphasis on the institutional value of the arts and the potential role of local government in enabling this. The outcome sought is a strengthened approach to local governance that can more fully account for the values of cultural development as a focus for planning, development, evaluation and advocacy.

CONCLUSION

The work of local government in cultural development is characterised by the particular luxury the sector enjoys in being the level of government 'closest to the people'. Given its mandate for neighbourhoods and places, it is feasible to include in the scope of its operations and interests the relations of communities and residents in local places and spaces, along with the grand plans of cultural regeneration and economic renewal. This is the particular place in which local government plays in the development of public value, by offering a local counterbalance against global concerns to advocate, plan and act on behalf of the particularities of place, culture and heritage. Cultural development for local communities is a plural idea, bringing together a range of undertakings and dynamics to achieve what is understood as cultural democracy (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Mapping value in the democratisation of culture



Examining Figure 3, this map of cultural values (the four large ovals) represent aspects of cultural development that ‘gravitate’ to instrumental value on one side or intrinsic value on the other. Underpinning cultural practice is industrial value on one hand, reflecting the economic means of culture engaged in production and consumption. On the other hand is institutional value reflecting the means by which culture is accommodated and collectively valued by society. The overarching value is public value, which is not to be considered as somehow intrinsic to culture itself, but an idea that is informed by all the values that local government may take into account in cultural development (Grant et al., 2014).

This paper leads to a number of questions worth pursuing. First, how should local governance be informed by these ideas, particularly in relation to *intrinsic* and *institutional* values of culture and cultural practices that may lie outside the influence of policy as it is traditionally understood? Second, how should cultural values and economic values be weighed up against one another, particularly in relation to providing access to economic bases for arts and cultural practitioners? Third, how might this articulation of value impact the evaluation of the value of arts practices? Finally, how can an adaptation view be called upon in the planning, implementation, evaluation or advocacy of community cultural development?

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